

## The German Language in Papua New Guinea

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### 1. The German colonial period

German influence (some would say meddling) in Melanesia dates from the 1860s, when planters and traders such as Johann Cesar Godeffroy & Sohn of Hamburg established copra plantations in what became known as the Bismarck Archipelago (Dotlan 2005). The actual German colonial administration of what became known as German New Guinea (Kaiser Wilhelmsland and the Bismarck Archipelago) began on 3 November 1884 with the proclamation of German sovereignty over 249,500 square kilometres of northern Melanesia and, in the following year, most of Micronesia (Anton n.d.). After German East Africa, this was the largest of the colonies of the pre-World War I German Empire. As was so often the case during European imperialism, German sovereignty was proclaimed in a foreign language, German, without the consent or even the knowledge of the sovereign indigenous peoples living there.

At first, German colonial administration was delegated to the Neuguinea-Compagnie, an actual colonial government not being formed until 1899 (Schnee 1920: 578). This brief attempt at creating a colonial empire ended with the outbreak of World War I, when Australia and Japan invaded and then occupied the parts of German New Guinea that eventually became the League of Nations mandated territories of New Guinea (under Australian administration) and

Micronesia (under Japanese administration), respectively.

Although German colonial rule was relatively short, the effects of German colonial rule can still be felt in contemporary Papua New Guinea. Disputes involving land alienated during the German colonial period flare up from time to time in the northern coastal and island provinces, much retail commerce in East New Britain and New Ireland is still in the hands of ethnic Chinese families whose ancestors were brought in as workers during the German period, and the Bulominski Highway in New Ireland, named for the German governor who had it built, is still one of the best highways in the nation. Even the spread of Tok Pisin as a lingua franca had its roots in the German period. The German language itself however, has left few lasting traces other than some geographic names and a relatively small number of loan words in Tok Pisin and some vernacular languages.

### 1.1. German in administration and education

When the Germans arrived in New Guinea, they found a lingua franca already in place, the Pidgin English that became Tok Pisin. As Keesing (1988) has shown, this language had its genesis in the sailing ships of the central Pacific with their multilingual Pacific Islander crews. When Melanesians were recruited, often by force or fraud by 'blackbirders', to work on plantations in Fiji, Queensland, and German Samoa, this pidgin became a lingua franca among workers and with outsiders, such as European employers and Chinese traders. When workers returned home, they brought knowledge of the pidgin with them and taught it to others.

Because a lingua franca already existed, there was no urgent drive on the part of plantation owners or other commercial interests to promote German as a language of wider communication. While German was, of course, spoken among the relatively small number of colonial administrators and other Germans in the colony and used in all government correspondence, there was some feeling that it was good to have a linguistic distance between the indigenous population and their 'masters'. Indeed, some went so far as to feel that the indigenous population should be denied access to German altogether so that the ruling European

minority could have a 'secret language' (Mühlhäusler 1984: 35).

While the government position was not this extreme, only modest attempts were made to introduce education in German, in spite of public statements about the duty of a colonising power to promote European "civilisation" and to provide at least primary education (Schnee 1920: 308). In Germany itself, there was nationalistic interest in promoting German in all the colonies. In 1897, for example, the German Colonial Society lobbied the government to provide grants to missions following a government curriculum that encouraged learning German (Schnee 1920: 308). Mühlhäusler (1984: 34) reports that as World War I broke out, the colonial government was drafting legislation to embark on a significant expansion of German-language education in an effort to replace Tok Pisin with German. It never had the chance to enact this legislation.

Education was a responsibility overwhelmingly undertaken by the various missions in the colony. The *Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon* mentions only two government schools in the colony, one in Rabaul (Simpsonhafen) and the other in Saipan, then a part of German New Guinea. In contrast to this paltry government involvement in education, it lists 56 Protestant and 189 Catholic schools, all at the primary or vocational school level. These schools sometimes taught in German, but more often used a local language or a vernacular that had been selected as a 'church lingua franca', such as Kâte or Jabem in Kaiser Wilhelmsland or Kuanua in the Bismarck Archipelago. Although as late as the 1970s, there were some individuals in Rabaul with a communicative command of German as a result of attending these schools (Volker 1982: 10), this was individual, not community, bilingualism.

There is no evidence that a true pidgin German developed in the colony. Mühlhäusler (1986: 35-36) gives examples of what he calls 'Pidgin German' written or spoken by New Guineans working at German mission stations, but there is so much variation in the data that these samples must be regarded as the poorly learned German typical of second language learners, rather than as any kind of systematic language for interethnic communication. The highly variable features typical of pidgins in his data, such as the lack of a copula and a lack of inflections, can be explained as second language learner transfer by speakers of Tok Pisin.



## 2. Rabaul Creole German

Although there is no evidence of any type of Pidgin German developing as a lingua franca in the colony, German New Guinea, however, did produce what seems to be the only attested case of a German-lexifier creole language (Mühlhäusler 1986: 36), Rabaul Creole German or Unserdeutsch ('Our German'), the language of the 'mixed-race'<sup>2</sup> community that developed around the Vunapope Catholic mission near Rabaul in East New Britain. Rabaul Creole German had its origin in the orphanage opened in 1898 by Catholic missionaries at Vunapope, outside of what was then Herbertshöhe (today Kokopo), the capital of German New Guinea on the Gazelle Peninsula of New Britain (then Neupommern) (Volker 1989b). The orphanage was opened specifically to educate children of indigenous, usually Tolai, mothers and fathers from Europe, Asia, and Micronesia. At first, the school served only abandoned children, who were often brought in by village leaders. With the Australian invasion at the beginning of World War I and the subsequent repatriation of German nationals at the end of the war, the number of students increased, as the majority of German men living in family situations with indigenous mothers left their children at the orphanage before being repatriated to Europe. Moreover, in a policy reminiscent of the kidnapping of the 'Stolen Generation' of Australian Aboriginal children, after establishing control of the German colony, the early Australian administration also often forcibly removed mixed-race children who remained with their indigenous mothers in local villages.

Some of the children would have been too young to speak any language when they arrived at the school. Others came to the school speaking a number of different languages. Many spoke Kuanua, the language of the Tolai. Others spoke other indigenous languages and/or smatterings of one of the several immigrant languages, such as Malay, Cantonese, Tagalog, Trukese, or German. Most of those old enough to speak had a reasonable knowledge of the early form of Tok Pisin. Indeed, when they came together in the orphanage dormitories, they may have been the first community of prepubescent children for whom Tok Pisin was the

primary language. In the school, the language of instruction and communication with the German and Dutch teaching and other mission station staff was German, even after the Australian takeover of the colony. English was introduced as an academic subject after World War I, but did not become a language of instruction until after the school was reorganized after the end of World War II. By this time several generations had passed through the school, usually marrying each other.

After the upheavals and destruction of New Britain during the Japanese occupation in World War II, the community regrouped, with most people remaining on the Gazelle Peninsula. Because of the restrictive racial divisions of the time, most members of the community married each other; integration into white Australian society and emigration to Australia itself were not possible, and mixed-race persons were encouraged to remain separate from indigenous people around them.

American teaching missionaries were brought in so that the Vunapope school could be restarted as an English-speaking institution. German was used for increasingly fewer purposes in the Vunapope mission community, so that the younger members of the community grew up as trilingual as their parents, but in Rabaul Creole German, Tok Pisin, and English, not German. The Vunapope mixed-race community did retain a strong German identity, however, with some even referring to themselves as 'brown Germans' and to the German 'homeland' they had never seen as the *Vaterland*. German Christmas carols and food were important even to families who were not descended from Germans at all (Volker 1982: 12).

### 2.1 Genesis as a creole

When the Vunapope orphanage first opened, all three of the classic conditions for the establishment of a pidgin language mentioned by Hymes (1971) were present, namely contact among several different languages, with one, German, dominating, distinct boundaries between the languages, and, given the authoritarian pedagogical practices of the time, considerable social distance between the students and German-speaking staff. Nevertheless, since the students already had

a common pidgin language at their disposal, Tok Pisin, the question remains as to why a new language was developed.

Inventing new ways of speaking, often intentionally chosen to infuriate an older generation, are, of course, a common phenomenon to youth around the world. Often, as with contemporary *Chillaal* street language in the Netherlands, this can involve aspects of language mixing (Appel and Schoonen 2005). In at least one other instance in Papua New Guinea, the resulting youth register has been a relexified pidgin language (Volker 1989b). In the case of the Vunapope mixed-race community, there was the additional need for an ethnic identity, which in Melanesia is often marked linguistically. Rigid racial barriers prevented mixed-race persons from assimilating into other ethnic communities in the Gazelle Peninsula; as one older Rabaul Creole German speaker explained, "We were neither real Germans nor Kanakas. We needed our own language".

This feeling, together with the near-universal ability of youth to invent their own speech registers, means that Rabaul Creole German is best regarded as a cant, i.e., a language specifically created to exclude outsiders. Just as Laycock (1989) has described for Pitcairinese, Rabaul Creole German was created by persons who always had access to a European language, but who, because of their plural heritage and sense of historical uniqueness, felt a desire to express a separate ethnic identity from the mainstream community of European speakers of that language.

## 2.2 How creole is Rabaul Creole German?

The syntax and morphology of Rabaul Creole German have been described in some detail by Volker (1982 and 1989a). These descriptions show a number of features that are common among creole languages around the world. Moreover, these features are so different from their equivalents in Standard German that they must be regarded as quite different phenomena than those of the modified immigrant dialects spoken by bilingual German settlers and their descendants elsewhere. Most striking in the examples below is the complete lack of German subject-verb agreement morphology and case inflections.

Unlike Germanic languages, pidgin and creole languages often have serial

verb constructions. Rabaul Creole German serial verbs are much like those in Tok Pisin:

- (1) RCG Du holen Eimer komm.<sup>3</sup>  
           you:SG fetch bucket come  
       TP Yu kisim baket i kam  
           you:SG fetch bucket PM come  
           'Fetch the bucket.'

Rabaul Creole German also uses a Tok Pisin-like prepositional construction as the most common genitive construction:

- (2) RCG Haus fi Tom  
           house for Tom  
       TP haus bilong Tom  
           house of Tom  
           'Tom's house'

As in many pidgins and creoles, 'for' (*fi*, from German *für*) is used as a complementiser:

- (3) I bin am denken fi kaufen ein Ferd.  
       I am PPT think for buy a horse  
       'I'm thinking of buying a horse.'

Rabaul Creole German also shows several features that are not necessarily creole by nature, but which exist in Tok Pisin and Austronesian languages, but not German. Foremost among these is the differentiation between inclusive and exclusive first person plural pronouns (*yumi* and *mipela*, respectively, in Tok Pisin, and *uns* and *wir*, respectively in Rabaul Creole German).

Like Tok Pisin and most Austronesian languages, Rabaul Creole German



places interrogatives in a sentence-final position, whereas they are usually fronted in German:

- (4) Du laufen geht wo .  
 you:SG run go where  
 'Where are you running to?'

Whereas German uses morphological affixation and internal change to mark singular and plural, Rabaul Creole German, like Tok Pisin, uses a plural marker, *alle* (in German 'all'), which is cognate with the Tok Pisin plural marker *ol* (from English *all*):

- (5) De Chicken war gestohlen bei alle Rascal.  
 the chicken was stolen by PL criminal  
 'The chicken was stolen by the criminals.'

As the preceding example shows, the passive construction, rare in pidgin and creole languages, is a calque of the English construction using *be*, immediately followed by a past participle, and *by* followed by the underlying subject, rather than the German passive construction using *werden* 'become', the preposition *von* 'of' followed by the underlying subject, and a sentence-final past participle. Another construction that seems to be modelled on English is a durative construction with *be* and a present participle, as in example (3) above.

Vestiges of German remain in the use of an inflected copula, rare in pidgins and creoles, and in much of the morphology of polysyllabic content words, such as *Deutschtum* 'Germanness' and *Hochzeit* 'honeymoon' (literally *hoch* 'high' + *Zeit* 'time'). These vestiges, together with the apparent borrowing of non-creole-like English constructions, give credence to the view expressed above that, like Pitcairnese, Rabaul Creole German is a cant, i.e., a deliberately invented language variety created to provide a means of ethnic identity among people who were both German and Melanesian. This explains why it lacks many of the typical creole-like

features discussed by Bickerton (1981) in his examination of creoles with a genesis in traumatic slavery or indentured service plantation conditions.

### 2.3 Reasons for the decline and extinction of Rabaul Creole German

The number of Rabaul Creole German speakers was never very large. In 1913, near the end of German rule, the total number of mixed-race persons in all of the settlements of German New Guinea was only 281 (Schnee 1920: 315). Policies of strict racial segregation during the Australian administration helped to foster cohesion and in-group marriage in the small community.

As Independence approached, however, the community began to lose this cohesion. The abolition of the White Australia policy and the granting of Australian citizenship to previously stateless mixed-race persons in New Guinea meant that many could move to Port Moresby and Australia. At the same time, the relaxing of the colour bar brought about an increase in marriages outside the community, both with European Australians and indigenous Papua New Guineans. At Independence in 1975, most members of the community opted for Australian rather than Papua New Guinean citizenship, and within a few years, almost all had moved to Australia. By the turn of the century, only a few dozen members of the community still lived on the Gazelle Peninsula, and only a few elderly persons could speak Rabaul Creole German. Although family ties and nostalgia for the Gazelle Peninsula remain, Rabaul Creole German itself is not used for daily communication. It is likely to become a completely extinct language during the first quarter of the twenty-first century.

### 3. Lexical influence of German in Papua New Guinean languages

Although like Rabaul Creole German, the German language itself has almost entirely disappeared from Papua New Guinea, linguistic reminders of German colonial rule do remain in the German names of many prominent geographic names and in loan words of German origin in some Papua New Guinean languages.

### 3.1 Geographic names

An important enduring linguistic heritage of the German occupation of Papua New Guinea is geographic names, including the name of the highest mountain in the country, Mount Wilhelm. As was common among all European imperialists, the German colonialists gave their own names to settlements, geographic features, and islands. Usually this was in spite of a commonly used local name, but in some cases, such as in the name of a large mountain range or island, the indigenous people of the area did not travel widely enough to have their own name. Many of these names were changed when the Australian administration took over after World War I, but in some cases they are still used in modern independent Papua New Guinea. A list of the most prominent German geographic names is found in Appendix 1.

### 3.2 Loan words of German origin

German loan words can be found in both vernacular languages and in the main lingua franca of both colonial German New Guinea and modern Papua New Guinea, Tok Pisin. In the vernacular languages found in areas where German control was strong along the north-eastern coast of the New Guinea mainland ('Kaiser-Wilhelmsland') and the islands of the Bismarck Archipelago, German words were often adopted together with items introduced by the Germans. These included plant names such as *nanas* 'pineapple' in the Nalik language of New Ireland (from German *Ananas* 'pineapple'), names of introduced technology, such as *mesa* 'metal knife' in several Bougainville Island languages (from German *Messer* 'knife'), and religious terminology, such as *Satan* 'Satan' (German *Satan*) in many languages of the region. In many cases, the introduction of the word was either via Tok Pisin or reinforced by its introduction into Tok Pisin. For many, and probably most, speakers today, the German origin of these words is unknown.

Although derived from an English-lexifier South Pacific Pidgin English, Tok Pisin became established as the main lingua franca in northern New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago during the German colonial period, and so it is only

natural that many words came into Tok Pisin from German. These include some of the most common and distinctive words used in modern Tok Pisin, such as *rausim* 'remove' (from German *raus* 'outside'), *popai(a)* 'miss the mark' (from German *vorbei* 'past'), and *gumi* 'rubber tyre' (from German *Gumi* 'rubber'). In addition, there are several Latin-based words used by the Roman Catholic church, which have German cognates, such as *pater* ('religious father/priest' in both German and Tok Pisin), with many words that have identical or close cognates in English and German, such as *haus* 'house' (German *Haus*) or *Katolik* 'Catholic' (German *Katholik*) is not possible to say which of the two is the sole source. Indeed, in most cases, it is probable that hearing the word from two sources reinforced the introduction of the terms in the early stages of Tok Pisin.

With increasing exposure to English, and a marked decrease in long-term German-speaking residents in Papua New Guinea, most German-derived words in Tok Pisin have been or are being replaced by English-derived terms. This is particularly true with technical terminology. Whereas once most carpentry terms were German-derived, for example, today words such as *hobel* 'plane' (German *Hobel*), *maisel* 'chisel' (German *Meissel*), and *sigmel* 'sawdust' (from German *Sägemehl*) have been replaced by English-derived *plen*, *sisal*, and *pipia bilong so* (literally 'rubbish of the saw') (see Mihalic 1971 for more examples from a time when both German- and English-derived forms were current). In many coastal areas, German-derived words, such as *beten* 'pray, prayer' (from German *beten* 'to pray') and *ananas* 'pineapple' (from German *Ananas* 'pineapple'), are used mainly by older speakers, with younger speakers preferring English-derived equivalents such as *prea* 'pray, prayer' and *painap* 'pineapple'. Most speakers of Tok Pisin in the Highlands, which were never under German colonial control, do not use many of these German-derived words at all.

An often quoted percentage of the Tok Pisin lexicon that is German-derived is 7% (e.g., Mühlhäusler 1986: 192). Given the decline in the use of many words of German origin in recent years, it is likely that this percentage is exaggerated. In the online Mihalic Tok Pisin Dictionary (Burton and Gesch n.d.), for example, only 2% of the entries made as of July 2005 were of definite German origin, with



a further 5% of possible joint German and English origin. Nevertheless, it must be stressed that those German-derived words that do remain are often words such as *rausim* 'get out' that have high-frequency use.

#### 4. German in Papua New Guinea today

The enduring influence of the German government and its colonial policies is not reflected in any real presence of the German language in Papua New Guinea today, other than in the surprising number of German geographic names that still remain (see Appendix 1). German is not taught at any school attended by Papua New Guineans, and even the Papua New Guinean Foreign Service does not feel a need to provide German language training for its diplomats.

There were once two schools operating after World War II which were German-medium, both primarily for the children of central European missionaries. During the Australian colonial administration and for some time after Papua New Guinean Independence in 1975, German Lutheran and Catholic missionaries and lay workers continued to play an important role in the educational and other activities of their respective churches. After World War II, a German primary school, the Kathrine Lehman Schule, was operated by the Lutheran Church in Wau, a former gold mining centre in the mountains of Morobe Province inland from Lae. A similar German-speaking school teaching grades five to nine was opened near Goroka, Eastern Highlands Province by the Swiss Evangelical Brotherhood Mission, which started missions in the Highlands and Sepik areas of Papua New Guinea in 1954. Both of these schools enrolled only children from German-speaking families, the vast majority of whom were affiliated with these or other missionary organisations. These schools did not enrol Papua New Guinean students.

After Papua New Guinean Independence in 1975, government policies strongly encouraged missions and companies to replace foreign workers with Papua New Guinean citizens. These localisation policies and a sharp increase in violent crime in the years since Independence made the pool of German-speaking

families in Papua New Guinea much smaller. The Lutheran school closed in the mid-1990s. The Swiss Evangelical Brotherhood Mission school is still open, as the Mission has a policy to keep its school open as long as any of its workers are in the country with children. In 2005 there were, however, only ten pupils at the school, of whom only three were from the Swiss mission itself.

As neither of these mission schools enrolled Papua New Guinean students, neither had a direct impact on the use of German by indigenous Papua New Guineans. Since German is not taught at any of the six universities in Papua New Guinea, the only place where Papua New Guineans have had an opportunity to learn German formally since Independence was at the Lae International High School. This school has also been affected by the decline in the number of expatriate families. Because of the downsizing this imposed, German was dropped from the curriculum in 2003. At the time German classes were discontinued, about twenty students were studying German, about half of them Papua New Guinean.

There is little likelihood that German will again be taught in any school attended by Papua New Guineans. This does not, of course, mean that there is no demand by individual Papua New Guineans to learn the language. Students studying in central Europe do study the language formally in Europe, and there is the occasional desire to learn German formally or informally because of international marriage or other personal relationships. Nevertheless, given Papua New Guinea's position in the English-dominant Asia-Pacific region and the fluency of most educated central Europeans in English, there is little need for large numbers of twenty-first century Papua New Guineans to learn German. The position of German in Papua New Guinea today has therefore returned to the position it had before German imperialism imposed itself in Melanesia in 1884, the language of a few linguistically isolated foreign sojourners. It is no longer a language of Papua New Guinea.

## Appendix 1

## Major Geographic Names of German Origin

German name*	Modern name	Changed?
Adelbertgebirge	Adelbert Range (Madang Province)	no
Alexishafen	Alexishafen (Madang Province)	no
Berlinhafen	Aitape (East Sepik Province)	yes
Binnenhafen	Binnen Harbour (Madang Town)	no
Bismarckarchipel	Bismarck Archipelago	no
Bismarckgebirge	Bismarck Range (Eastern Highlands, Simbu, Madang Provinces)	no
Dallmannhafen	Vanimo (Sandaun Province)	yes
Finschhafen	Finschhafen (Morobe Province)	no
Finschküste	Rai Coast (Madang & Morobe Provinces)	yes
Französische Inseln	Vitu Islands	yes
Friedrich Wilhelmshafen	Madang	yes
Hansemannküste	Sepik coast, northern coast	yes
Hagenberg, Hagengebirge	Mt. Hagen	no
Hatzfeldhafen	Hatzfeldhaven (Madang Province)	no
Herbertshöhe	Kokopo (East New Britain)	yes
Kaiserin-Augustafluss	Sepik River	yes
Kaiser-Wilhelmsland	NE New Guinea mainland	yes
Konstantinhafen	Erimba (Madang Province)	yes
Neuhannover	New Hanover (also Lavongai) (New Ireland Province)	no
Neulauenburg,	Duke of York Islands	yes
Neu-Lauenburg	(East New Britain Province)	
Neumecklenburg,	New Ireland	yes
Neu-Mecklenburg		
Neupommern, Neu-Pommern	New Britain	yes
Ottilienfluss	Ramu River	yes

Potsdamhafen	Gabun (?), (Madang Province, east of the mouth of the Ramu River)	yes
Preußen-Reede	Lae	yes
Sattelberg	Sattelberg (mountain in Morobe Province)	no
Schleinitzgebirge	Schleinitz Range (New Ireland)	no
Schouten-Inseln	Schouten Islands (East Sepik Province)	no
Schradergebirge	Schrader Range (Madang Province)	no
Seeadlerhafen	Lorengau (Manus Province)	yes
Simpsonhafen	Rabaul, Blanche Harbour	yes
St. Matthias-Inseln	St. Matthias Islands (New Ireland Province)	no
Stephansort	Bogadjim (Madang Province)	yes
Stoschberg	Suilik? (New Ireland Province)	yes
Varzinberg	Vunakokor (East New Britain)	yes
Weberhafen	Nonga (East New Britain)	yes
Wilhelmsberg	Mt. Wilhelm (tallest mountain in PNG)	no
Willamezhalbinsel	Willamez Peninsula (West New Britain)	no

German data from Dotlan (2005), Moran (2004), and Schnee (1920)

## \*Translations of German geographic terms:

Archipel = archipelago	Hafen = harbour	Küste = coast
Berg = mountain	Halbinsel = peninsula	Neu = new
Binnen = inner	Inseln = islands	Ort = place
Fluss = river	Kaiser = emperor	Preußen = Prussia
Französische = French	Kaiserin = empress	Reede = road

Gebirge = mountain range



## Appendix II

## Examples of Rabaul Creole German (Unserdeutsch)

## 1. Genitive constructions:

(a) Haus fi Tom  
house for Tom  
'Tom's house'

(b) Mein Vater-s Haus  
my father-s house  
'my father's house'

(c) Diese Car de Tyre  
this car the tyre  
'this car's tyre'

## 2. Comparative / superlative:

(a) Maria is mehr klein denn Des.  
Maria is more small than Des  
'Maria is smaller than Des.'

(b) Diese is de größ-te  
this is the bigg-est  
'This is the biggest.'

## 3. Inclusive / exclusive 'we':

(a) Uns bis neben Salz-wasser.  
we:exclusive are next.to salt-water.  
'We (but not you) are next to the ocean.'

(b) Wir alle geht Rabaul.  
we:inclusive: all go Rabaul  
'All of us, including you, are going to Rabaul.'

## 4. Word order with auxiliary verbs:

I wird bleib zwei Woche in Lae.  
I will stay two week in Lae  
'I will stay two weeks in Lae.'

cf. Standard German:

Ich werde zwei Wochen in Lae bleiben.  
I will two weeks in Lae stay

## 5. Serial verbs:

(a) Du holen diese Eimer komm!  
you fetch this bucket come  
'Bring that bucket here.'

(b) Du laufen geht wo?  
you run go where  
'Where are you running to?'

## 6. Durative verbs:

(a) Er wollte wissen ob Yvonne is am gehen.  
he wanted know if Yvonne is at go  
'He wanted to know if Yvonne is going.'

(b) Nachher de Königin war de ganze Abend  
afterwards the queen was the entire evening  
am denken von alle Namen....  
at think of all name  
'Afterwards the queen was thinking all night long of the names...'

## 7. Passive:

Sein Schtoa war gefärbt bei ein Chinesen  
his store was painted by a Chinese  
'His store was painted by a Chinese.'

8. Complementiser *fi* 'for'

I bin am denken fi kaufen ein Ferd.  
I am at think for buy a horse  
'I am thinking of buying a horse.'

## Notes

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2. Although possibly considered pejorative elsewhere, 'mixed-race' is the common term used in Papua New Guinea for and by persons with multiethnic heritages. Because it is a term of self-identification and one that does not have negative connotations in a Papua New Guinean context, it is used here.
3. Rabaul Creole German was a completely oral language and not used in writing. Because the phonology differed only slightly from German, a modified German orthography is used here.
4. The following abbreviations have been used in linguistic examples:  
 PL = plural  
 PM = predicate marker  
 PPT = present participle marker  
 RCG = Rabaul Creole German  
 SG = singular  
 TP = Tok Pisin

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