



Australian  
National  
University

# ANU Tok Pisin Language Program



Ranked

#1

ANU is ranked #1 in 12 Academic Disciplines in Australia

\*QS World University Rankings by Subject 2025

## Why study Tok Pisin?

With English and Motu, Tok Pisin is one of the three national languages of Papua New Guinea (PNG). With more than 6 million speakers, it is the most widely spoken language in the country and the fastest growing language in the Pacific – one that connects the most culturally and linguistically diverse nation in the world.

Learning Tok Pisin gives insight into the Melanesian spirit, and the multitude of cultures whose languages shaped it. Although largely built on English vocabulary, it carries the richness of Melanesian expression, deriving from many languages of PNG. Students will gain an appreciation of how the language has reached far beyond its historical label 'Pidgin English' to become the cultural and political vehicle of a modern nation.

**“Taking the Tok Pisin course was a fun and essential part of my fieldwork preparation – it was engaging, well-structured, and full of practical applications. It gave me the skills I needed to navigate PNG with confidence and connect meaningfully with people there.”**

— CAROLINE HENDY, PhD STUDENT, ANU SCHOOL OF CULTURE, HISTORY & LANGUAGE



### Studying Tok Pisin at ANU

Learning Tok Pisin through the ANU program gives students a deep insight into Papua New Guinea's diverse cultures, history, politics and economics. It also puts into context the relationships between Australia, Papua New Guinea, the Pacific and other global powers with political and economic interests in the region. Following the first year, during which basic grammar and conversation is taught, we embark on exploring authentic spoken Tok Pisin through a variety of audio-visual materials recorded in real-life situations and explore various non-technical topics such as the history of the language, the spiritual world, ancestral stories, witchcraft and violence, logging and mining, elections and politics.

Students completing Tok Pisin as Minor will gain competence in speaking, listening, reading and writing. They will be equipped to communicate in culturally appropriate ways in various social situations. This will place them in a favourable position to confidently pursue research, work, travel and any other interests related to Papua New Guinea.

- ANU Students: Choose to study Tok Pisin an elective or minor (24 units/4 courses) as part of your ANU degree
- Open Universities Australia (OUA)/Non-Award: Enrol in individual courses for professional development or personal interest without pursuing a full degree
- Cross-institutional offerings available
- In addition to semester-long courses Tok Pisin 1 to 4, CHL also offers a short intensive Tok Pisin Language and Cultural Awareness

Students with prior language experience must take a Language Proficiency Assessment (LPA) for proper level placement. For details, see the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific (CAP) language proficiency assessment site.

Study Tok Pisin language at at the Australian National University.

### Further Information

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