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MULTILINGUAL MATTERS 134
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Language Diversity in the Pacific

Endangerment and Survival

Edited by
Denis Cunningham, D.E. Ingram
and Kenneth Sumbuk

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Dedication

Professor Stephen A. Wurm

This volume is dedicated to the memory of our dear colleague, Stephen Wurm, who passed away on 24 October, 2001. Most of the contributors to this volume knew Stephen personally and several of us had worked with him on a range of projects concerned with the disappearance of the world's linguistic diversity.

It was Stephen's recognition of the value of this diversity which characterised his vision. His life and academic work were a celebration of this diversity and he contributed an impressive range of publications, the best known being the *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Disappearing* (1996)[1]. He also helped find a solution by bringing this topic to the attention of the wider public, politicians and international bodies such as UNESCO.

We trust that the contributions to this volume continue the task, begun by Stephen, of documenting and finding answers to the threat to the world's linguistic diversity.

Peter Mühlhäusler
University of Adelaide

1. Wurm, Stephen A. (1996) *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Disappearing*. Paris/Canberra: UNESCO Publishing/Pacific Linguistics. 2nd edition, 2001.

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Foreword

Fèlix Martí
Chairman, UNESCO Advisory Committee for Linguistic Pluralism and Multilingual Education

At a meeting on linguistic policy held in the Basque Country (Spain) in March 1996, the Director General of UNESCO, Federico Mayor, proposed that a report be drawn up on languages from a global point of view. A text was needed that would help the governments of UNESCO member states to have objective information on hand regarding the world's linguistic diversity, the threats facing the universal linguistic heritage and the directions to be taken by linguistic policies at national and international levels. At the same time, a text was needed that would be circulated beyond the exclusive circles of experts. The UNESCO report would become a reference for many of those involved in language policy – teachers, journalists, social leaders, religious authorities, non-governmental organisations, businesses and cultural agents of all sorts.

The proposal by the Director General of UNESCO was determinedly and generously taken up by the Basque Government, who entrusted the drafting of the report to UNESCO Etxea, the UNESCO Centre of the Basque Country, based in Bilbao. A management team was set up for the project, as well as a scientific committee and a technical commission in charge of preparing the text of the report. These structures began serious work in 1997. Two lines of approach were agreed.

Firstly, a worldwide survey of linguistic communities was to be carried out to allow experts as well as representatives of the communities themselves to provide meaningful data and opinions on the present and future of languages everywhere. Thousands of questionnaires were sent out to informants on every continent and a sufficient number of completed replies was received to enable collation with significant figures. The aim was not to obtain a statistically representative sample but to gather meaningful opinions on the problems affecting languages and on the range of circumstances conditioning languages' existence. The UNESCO World Languages Report was to take into account the contributions provided through the survey and build upon this through further consultation.

Secondly, meetings of experts were organised on different continents to study the points of view of specialists on the present and future of languages on each continent. Thus, meetings were held in Mons (Belgium)

in 1998, Cochabamba (Bolivia), Elista (Russia) and Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) in 1999, and in Mysore (India) in 2000. For the area of Australia and the Pacific, renowned experts were invited to contribute papers for publication. The present publication exists in that wider context.

As the Pacific Basin is probably the most linguistically diverse area of the planet, it harbours the greatest complexity of linguistic contacts. The reflections of experts, of their experiences, of problems and expectations of the languages of Australia and the Pacific, are of considerable value in the context of the whole world language situation. Some of the countries studied in this publication can be considered as genuine laboratories for the observation of relations between linguistic communities. The chapters in this volume are intended to reveal how those languages in contact are evolving and to predict the future of the prodigious linguistic diversity of these countries and of the region as a whole. Many of them also offer recommendations to government and non-governmental agencies for the preservation of linguistic diversity as a treasure for the whole of humanity.

There are many universities and sociolinguistic research centres that publish descriptive works or linguistic maps but in the UNESCO report (as in this volume), we focus on an analysis of the changes affecting linguistic communities and especially on the recommendations that ought to be taken into account to safeguard the linguistic diversity of each country, of each continent and of the whole of humanity. Far from being a descriptive study of the languages of the world, the report and this present volume are designed to have an orientation towards the future.

It may be useful to remember that languages are subject to many conditioning factors. Linguistic communities evolve according to their adaptation to their surroundings and the replies they have to make to the political, economic, media, technological, social and cultural challenges affecting them. Knowledge of the factors that determine how languages evolve from the sociolinguistic point of view allows linguistic management beyond merely looking on at the shrinking and death of many languages or at new forms of linguistic colonialism. The UNESCO study and report as a whole, and the present volume on the Pacific area, constitute texts on linguistic ethics, in the sense that their observations and recommendations can help linguistic communities everywhere to plan their future. In the same way that there is now a widespread ecological ethic that proposes the protection and furtherance of all living species, these publications are texts on linguistic ethics serving the protection and the esteem of all languages. In a context heavily marked by economic relations, it is worth pointing out that linguistic diversity has an unquestionable economic value. Linguistic ethics can reveal that economic progress and the promotion of linguistic diversity are perfectly compatible. In addition, a linguistic ethic can underline the importance of respecting linguistic and cultural diversity in the furtherance of understanding between peoples and of security and peace.

This is why UNESCO refers to its linguistic programs as Linguapax, that is, peace between languages and peace through languages.

A linguistic ethic must reveal the cultural nature of languages. Languages are not just equivalent means of communication. Each language is an epistemological and axiological universe. Each language offers original metaphors, ideas and symbols for understanding and expressing the world, society and human experience. Each language is a vehicle for values, ethics and aesthetics expressing desires and utopias. All languages have shared territories and are enriched through interaction with one another. The defence of linguistic diversity and the other aims of the linguistic ethic are part of a future-oriented project through which humanity can gradually replace violence with an ethic of reason, harmony and peace. We would not like to see the dizzying increase in relations between cultures condemn them to a future of uniformity and of repression of diversity on behalf of economic or political interests. We want a future in which the gradual assertion of an agreed common ethic is compatible with esteem for the diversity of peoples, identities and cultures. The opening up of all cultures and all linguistic communities need not involve their dissolution in a supposedly universal culture or language. What needs to be universalised is the admiration of diversity, the spirit of dialogue and shared responsibility in the search for global replies to global challenges.

This publication – as well as the UNESCO World Languages Report – hopes to speak out on behalf of those who believe in the possibility of a linguistic ethic and in the possibility of linguistic policies inspired by principles of respect and diversity, of non-violent relations and of interest in cross-cultural dialogue. Universal linguistic diversity will probably not be something natural. In the future, linguistic diversity will be the result of freely taken social and cultural decisions. Up to now, many communities have maintained their linguistic personalities as a result of isolation or lack of communication. Languages with few links to political, economic or media power will now continue to exist only if the linguistic communities exercise a specific wish, that is, if they freely decide to continue using their language and if, also, the more powerful languages abandon their colonially oriented policies and adopt a linguistic sympathy for minority or relatively less widespread languages. From this point of view it seems important to encourage a form of language learning that can open the doors of multilingualism to all citizens of the world. The citizens of small linguistic communities must have the chance to be multilingual if they are not to live condemned to a linguistic ghetto. The citizens of more powerful linguistic communities must have the chance to be multilingual so as to be able to get their cultural coordinates into perspective and establish fraternal relations with the speakers of weaker languages. Language learning is the basis of the linguistic empathy the speakers of all languages must share with one another.

Editors' Note

This volume should be seen in the context of the UNESCO-sponsored study of the world's languages and the World Languages Report being undertaken by the UNESCO Centre of the Basque Country in Bilbao and the UNESCO Centre of Catalonia. The preparation of this volume brought together eminent linguists and applied linguists whose research has made them expert in the Asian-Pacific region, indubitably the linguistically richest and most diverse area of the globe.

The sheer vastness and linguistic diversity of the Asia-Pacific region provide the greatest of challenges to linguists, researchers and educators both in documenting that language wealth and in finding ways to maintain and develop it in the face of heavy contrary pressures arising not least from the dominance of world languages such as English and French and the impact of the many other features of globalisation. It is fitting that a text be devoted to the challenges of linguistic diversity in the Pacific, the dangers confronting it and the strategies and actions that are being taken to try to ensure its survival.

As the editors of this volume, we would like to acknowledge our gratitude to the many organisations and individuals who assisted in making this publication possible:

- the UNESCO Centre of the Basque Country and the UNESCO Centre of Catalonia for their initiative and expertise and for their support in bringing together the contributors for this volume;
- the Australian National Commission for UNESCO, for its support;
- the members of the Scientific Committee of the World Languages Report for their persistence in the cause and, in particular, Professor Fèlix Martí for his invaluable assistance and advice; and
- the Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes for its support and, especially, that of its Executive members and their liaison with UNESCO.

For the preparation of this publication, we would like to thank all who contributed to the volume and provided assistance in editing the papers. Gratitude is also expressed to Multilingual Matters by both the editors and the other contributors, for their support and advice on the compilation of this book.

Denis Cunningham, David Ingram and Kenneth Sumbuk

Chapter 1

Language Diversity in the Pacific: Endangerment and Survival: An Overview

D.E. INGRAM

The Pacific Basin but, more specifically, the countries of the Western Pacific, the focus of this volume, constitutes, as Martí says in the Foreword to the present volume, 'the most linguistically diverse area of the planet [and] harbours the greatest complexity in linguistic contacts'. This volume demonstrates the linguistic diversity of the Pacific countries and the enormous wealth of languages and cultures that that wealth entails. It also reveals in clear terms the danger that that linguistic and cultural diversity might be at least reduced, if not lost altogether, unless steps are taken to safeguard the diversity, to recognise the economic and cultural value of linguistic and cultural diversity, and to recognise, as Martí says, 'the importance of cultural diversity in the furtherance of understanding between peoples and of security and peace'. However, language diversity and especially the minority languages within that diversity will continue to exist only if the communities of speakers themselves value the languages and continue to use them and if all societies recognise their value, accept multilingualism as the desirable norm, and adopt educational and social policies and practices that support and foster multilingualism.

The chapters in this volume fall into three broad parts. If the languages of the Pacific are to continue to exist, the first step is to identify them, study them, and record their form and usage. Hence, the first four chapters (those by Barreña *et al.*, Mühlhäusler, Lauder and McConvell and Thieberger) deal especially with issues of data collection, as does, in part, Sumbuk's chapter in the next group. The next six chapters (Sumbuk, Tryon, Bradley, Hajek, Charpentier and Clyne) describe the state and use of languages in various parts of the West and South-West Pacific, focusing especially on particular language communities. Many of the languages of the Pacific, both those that are indigenous[1] to the region and those that, while no less languages of the region, have been brought to the West and South-West Pacific by immigration. If the language diversity is to survive, it is fundamental that educa-

tional and other policies must support it and so the final group of chapters (those by Amery, Ingram and Cunningham) mainly discusses practical issues concerning language revival, maintenance and education.

Data Collection Issues

Probably the most ambitious project, which highlights some of the difficulties in gathering comprehensive data on the world's languages, is the UNESCO World Languages Review, described and discussed by Barreña and others in the first chapter. The aim of the project was to describe the problems affecting languages and, to this end, a survey of the world's languages was undertaken by questionnaire. The chapter draws attention to the problems encountered in trying to obtain information on the state of the world's languages but it also reveals some of the problems facing many languages in the context of what the authors call the 'global tendency towards language homogenisation'. Though the number of languages actually reported upon by the time this chapter was written was only a small proportion of the world's languages (at 725 fewer, in fact, than the languages of the small country of Papua New Guinea in the South-West Pacific), nevertheless the study identifies many of the problems confronting languages around the world, such problems as family transmission, the impact of the more prestigious languages, population movements, and mixed marriages. The survey highlighted the extent of the problem since almost half (some 42%) of the languages reported were in danger of disappearing with the dominant reason in most places being economic or cultural subordination or discrimination. Where languages were more secure, this was, according to the survey, generally because there were language policy and planning organisations that supported the languages and because they are used in education. However, other uses, for example, in the media, and the attitudes of the speakers and other communities towards any language were also influential.

Mühlhäusler and Lauder focus on different aspects of the problems involved in studying languages, especially those in remote parts of the globe. A most basic problem for researchers exploring language diversity is, as Mühlhäusler argues, the very notion of what a language is and how the users of languages conceive of a language. Even the naming of languages is fraught with difficulty with most names having been imposed by outsiders using any of a great variety of non-linguistic or linguistic sources. This, in turn, leads to difficulties in classifying languages, in understanding their relationships and status, and even in recognising whether two languages are different or, in fact, the same language, i.e. in drawing boundaries between languages and what may or may not be dialects of a single language. Thus, Mühlhäusler concludes that vast prob-

lems remain in identifying and counting languages and dialects. He concludes by questioning whether the influence of linguists has always been good and has contributed to sustaining language diversity or whether their imposition of descriptions based on systems developed in other linguistic contexts may actually have been harmful. He also wonders whether the rate of change experienced by the languages of Papua New Guinea and Australia may have been too fast to allow adaptation to occur.

Lauder is an Indonesian linguist who works amongst the languages in remote villages and islands of Indonesia. Indonesia, with 10% of the world's languages, is said to be second only to Papua New Guinea in the number of languages in the one nation. Lauder draws on her experience of language mapping, especially in remote areas, to discuss the problems that confront linguists undertaking an inventory, description and the preservation of Indonesia's linguistic diversity. All the data gathered is computerised, and each village in Indonesia is identified and linked to the linguistic data that is gathered and entered into the computerised database with 10% of the world's languages. Lauder discusses the problem of selecting and training field workers and of identifying informants who, together with their immediate ancestors, have to be natives of the village being studied. A standard questionnaire is used to elicit local lexis for a standard set of words and phrases, while local folk tales are also recorded. Particular problems exist with isolated tribes, partly in identifying that they actually exist and partly in then accessing them. These problems are aggravated by the lack of secure data about them in official government records and by the fact that, because many of the houses that have been built for these people have been inappropriately designed, they are not occupied. The languages of the isolated tribes have been of particular interest for dialectology, describing boundaries between languages and dialects. Lauder also discusses the variety of viewpoints from which languages might be studied and she goes on to describe the array of difficulties that linguists encounter in trying to visit the isolated tribes in order to map their languages. These issues include gaining government permits, the reliability of the information gathered, problems in using guides and interpreters, the logistics of actually getting there, and how to cope within the customs of a tribe.

McConvell and Thieberger mainly focus on how to keep track of the changes in the viability of indigenous languages in Australia. They emphasise how important it is to accurately describe the current state and trends in Australia's languages if effective policies and programs for their maintenance are to be identified and maintained. At the same time, they provide a picture of the state of indigenous languages in Australia. Of the 250 indigenous languages spoken when the first Europeans settled at Sydney Cove in 1788, more than half are no longer spoken; of the remaining 100 or so, at least half are spoken by only a dwindling number of old people;

and the other 50 or so also show signs of language shift towards forms of English and are also endangered. McConvell and Thieberger consider a variety of means by which to identify the current state of languages but see the Australian census as the most practical tool even though its questions and data are limited and need expansion. They note that the inclusion of indigenous languages in the five-yearly Australian State of the Environment report is a 'breakthrough'. They dispute the use of minimum absolute numbers of speakers as an indication of endangerment, especially since most of the figures proposed (from 10,000 to 100,000) would suggest that all Australian languages were 'doomed', even before European settlement. They refer to the geographical pattern of endangerment with the strongest language areas being those where more than 79% of the population speak the language at home. The languages have died out where European settlement occurred earliest and with most impact on the indigenous people. They note that, while the percentage of people who speak an indigenous language at home shows an accelerating decline, especially in the oldest age group, there is some indication that the decline may have slowed in the 15–24 age group. At the same time, they acknowledge that, because of the pyramidal age structure of the indigenous population, percentage figures may be disguising a growth in absolute numbers. It is also possible, perhaps as a result of more prestige being attached to being indigenous and speaking an indigenous language, that there is some over-reporting of indigenous language skills. In discussing regional patterns of language shift, they especially note the success of an active language revival movement around Kaurna, in Adelaide, a project reported on also by Amery in a later chapter of this volume. McConvell and Thieberger go on to consider various measures of endangerment, including the usefulness of the Australian census, the Canadian approaches, the use of age profiles of the indigenous population, and dedicated language surveys though the lack of consistency in the frameworks used for local and state surveys is a serious problem. Language endangerment can be classified in various ways. In particular, McConvell and Thieberger discuss approaches based around Wurm's ranking of languages from 'extinct' to 'full tribal use' or 'not in danger' and suggest some modifications. They see value in tracking the state of, and changes in, the occurrence of indigenous languages in order to build an indigenous language 'ecology' that will enable help to be given where speakers wish to maintain their languages and so that people can know whether language maintenance programmes are actually working or not.

The State and Use of the Languages of the West and South-West Pacific

The second group of chapters in this volume largely describe the state and use of languages in the West and South-West Pacific. **Sumbuk**'s chapter discusses the state of the languages in what is probably the world's most linguistically diverse nation, Papua New Guinea (PNG), which has some 860 languages amongst a population of about 5 million. Sumbuk questions Krauss's estimate of the need for 100,000 speakers if a language is to survive, and points out that many languages in PNG have co-existed harmoniously for a long time with as few as 50 speakers. Hard data on the linguistic diversity of PNG (the actual number of languages and the number of speakers) is not available because there has been no national linguistic survey. Thus, it is difficult to identify the actual linguistic trends, though studies of individual languages suggest that massive language extinction could already be occurring. Nevertheless, many languages with numbers well below 100,000 have survived for a long time. Sumbuk illustrates some of the issues by describing the specific cases of two neighbouring languages, Kaningara and Sare (the latter being Sumbuk's own mother tongue). He also discusses the factors that will influence the survival of PNG languages, including such factors as technology, the need for documentation of the languages, globalisation, education (or the lack of it), and the social, political and economic rights of the people. He concludes by pointing to three priority needs if the languages of PNG are to survive:

(1) a nationwide linguistic survey documenting the number of languages and their speakers and trans-generational language transmission;
(2) education about the importance of the languages;
(3) the need for the people and the government to decide whether they really want to preserve the nation's linguistic diversity.

Tryon discusses the state of the languages in the region known as Oceania, stretching from the island of New Guinea eastwards as far as Easter Island. This is probably the linguistically most diverse region of the world with approximately 1200 languages, generally spoken by very small communities for whom the language is seen as an 'ethnic badge' or 'identity marker'. There are two major language families in the region (the Austronesian family of some 550 languages and the Papuan family of about 750 languages) together with a number of pidgins and creoles used as lingua francas and the main colonial languages of English and French. The Austronesian or Malayo-Polynesian family extends from Singapore in South-East Asia to Easter Island and is believed to originate in Taiwan. Languages of the Papuan family are mainly spoken on the island of New Guinea, but are also found on some of the Indonesian islands, Timor, the

Bismarck Archipelago, Bougainville, the Solomon Islands and east to Santa-Cruz. These languages are unrelated to the Austronesians, are more ancient, and have been dated back as much as 50,000 years at sites in Papua New Guinea. Tryon provides an extended discussion of the groupings within both the Austronesian and Papuan families of languages. A significant factor in the maintenance and preservation of these languages is the increasing diaspora of the peoples of this region with considerable movement within the region and with large numbers in the Pacific rim countries and as far away as France. The linguistic consequences of this diaspora are severe, with language loss or impoverishment occurring amongst the displaced peoples, not least because of the impact of English or of English-based pidgins and creoles such as Tok Pisin in Papua New Guinea or Bislama in Vanuatu. Despite the remaining multiplicity of languages within the region, considerable language loss has already occurred. The linguistic diversity has resulted from a variety of factors including geographic isolation, the rugged topography in New Guinea, inter-tribal hostility, and the contiguity of, and interaction between, the Austronesian and Papuan languages. Tryon draws attention to the urgent need for more documentation of these languages and notes that many are under threat from increasing urbanisation, the increasing use of pidgins and creoles, the impact of English and French, political decisions to use a language (generally a pidgin or creole) for nation-building purposes, evangelisation (commonly based around an English-based pidgin), and inter-marriage. Tryon concludes by pointing to how little is being done to arrest the loss of languages (except in Vanuatu where the local people are making efforts to record local languages, preserve the records, and transmit them to their children).

Bradley briefly outlines the current policy framework for endangered languages and the distribution of endangered languages in China, especially in the south-west and in the neighbouring countries of South-East Asia. He says that China illustrates both the problems of, and the solutions to, language endangerment. Whereas in other parts of the West and South-West Pacific, the dimensions of the language endangerment are reasonably well understood, this is not the case in the region that he discusses. Part of the problem seems to lie in the difference between the officially designated national minorities (55), and the great linguistic diversity within any minority. A contrast is drawn between such major groups as the Han, which share a common character-writing system and a sense of identity despite linguistic differences, and many of the 'composite national minorities' that lack such unitary feelings. Within the Yi of South-West China, for example, there are six official 'dialects', but more than 100 mutually unintelligible languages within them. While there has been considerable linguistic work on the major language recognised as the 'standard' for each minority, that is

not so for the other languages in each group. In Thailand, much useful linguistic work has been done, Malaysia has a policy of support for indigenous peoples, but there is no support for their languages and cultures and the use of Malay is spreading rapidly. The state of the minority languages in Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia and Burma is also difficult and, though some documentation has been carried out in Laos and Vietnam, throughout these countries priority is given to the national languages with a consequential adverse effect on the languages of the ethnic groups. In Burma, for instance, the policy of using only Burmese for official purposes and education has led to the situation where, in Bradley's view, the languages of 135 recognised ethnic groups are endangered, with only Burmese being secure. Bradley reports on his surveys of languages in Yunnan Province of China, and suggests that there are many more unreported languages. The cause of this situation, he notes, lies in several facts: local authorities are not much interested in preserving minority languages, the small groups are classified within a larger national minority, and, as administration, education, communications and economic development have spread, *putonghua,* another local variety of Chinese, or the language of a larger local minority has displaced the traditional languages. He provides a case study of the Sanie people in and around Kunming, which, he says, presents 'a typical example of language death in progress'. The exact situation differs according to the proximity of the village to the major urban centre and hence the impact of the Han Chinese. Only in the most remote villages are the young people fluent in the traditional language while the youngest children, in many instances, do not speak Sanie. Part of Bradley's response has been to survey the languages and to devise a romanisation for Sanie at the request of the local authorities. He concludes by noting that, in addition to the 144 languages known to be endangered in the countries identified earlier, there are many others yet to be described and many more are endangered to some degree. This region is of particular importance because it has about 10% of the world's linguistic diversity and, unlike many other parts of the world, the languages are not being replaced by Indo-European languages but by more or less closely related languages. Part of Bradley's conclusion is worth quoting as an overall summary, not only of what he says about South-West China and neighbouring countries but of what this book is about:

> For more than ten years, UNESCO and related bodies ... have been supporting urgent work to document disappearing languages and, where possible, to reverse language shift ... It is of crucial importance that the momentum achieved should continue so that we may try, as linguists, to avert the ecolinguistic catastrophe widely predicted for

> this century: the disappearance of 90% or more of the world's languages. (Bradley, this volume)

Hajek reports on language vitality and endangerment in Indonesia and East Timor (in contrast to Lauder, who, in the chapter already discussed, mainly focuses on the difficulties of fieldwork and data gathering in Indonesia). East Timor was part of Indonesia until 1999 when it gained its independence but the two countries are in stark contrast: Indonesia has a population of some 206 million, East Timor approximately 800,000, Indonesia has 731 languages and East Timor just 20. Austronesian and Papuan (or non-Austronesian) languages occur in both countries. Hajek briefly outlines the turbulent history of East Timor, its long administration by Portugal and then by Indonesia for a further 23 years. In the circumstances, the indigenous languages have shown considerable resilience and few languages are seriously endangered or extinct. He describes at some length the diverse linguistic situation in Indonesia. Only three languages, Javanese, Sundanese and Madurese have extremely large numbers of speakers. Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian) is promoted as the sole official language and as a unifying link among the Indonesian people. Its spread has been successful, growing from 40% of the population in 1970 to 67% by 1990 as a result of compulsory schooling, the mass media, and the government policy of transmigration in which large numbers of people from Java and Bali have been re-settled elsewhere. In addition, mother tongue teaching in the lower school grades is restricted to those languages with more than a million speakers. Religious influences have also contributed to the decline since the Catholic Church adopted a policy of using only Indonesian while, in some areas, conversion to Islam has encouraged a shift to Indonesian or Malay. Consequently, Hajek points to census figures that indicate a substantial decline in the number of young speakers of the larger languages. He provides a region-by-region report on the languages of Indonesia, noting that the diversity increases the further east one goes and, in addition to the factors just listed, identifies such influences as the expansion of the oil and logging industries, natural disasters, and sectarian turmoil as impacting on the survival of many of the languages. In some areas (Maluku and West Papua, for instance) the average size of the language communities is small with a quarter having fewer than 500 speakers and so especially vulnerable.

Charpentier focuses on the two Melanesian island groups of Vanuatu and New Caledonia, in both of which the French were the colonial power, together with the British in the condominium of New Hebrides (now Vanuatu). The indigenous languages are Austronesian with 40 languages in New Caledonia (38 living and 2 extinct) and 106 in Vanuatu (of which 8 are nearly extinct and 17 moribund). In both areas, the languages vary in

size from as few as 10 speakers to Dehu in the New Caledonia group with 15,000 speakers and Lenakel in Vanuatu with 11,500 speakers. In Vanuatu, the indigenous languages were protected for a long time by its island structure and its remoteness from the rest of the world. Nowadays, however, the high mobility of the people, the cash economy, inter-marriage, the closeness and mutual intelligibility of the languages, and the people's readiness to accept other languages (including the pidgin, Bislama) have reduced their security. Charpentier also notes other, especially cultural, factors that have impacted on the languages and political policies that seem to favour European languages. In New Caledonia, on the other hand, he notes that the former system of reserves has served to foster a diglossic situation and to protect the indigenous languages, with French and Western culture being separated from the indigenous languages and traditional culture with limited interference between them. Unlike the situation in other countries, French and English seem to have a smaller and, he says, decreasing influence. In Vanuatu, only Bislama seems to be expanding while, in New Caledonia, French is the only lingua franca and the only one permitted for education, governance, business and media. Contact between languages has different effects: Bislama in contact with English becomes Anglicised whereas, when Bislama interacts with the indigenous languages, it is the indigenous languages that are affected. In New Caledonia, French and the indigenous languages serve different purposes in different semio-cultural worlds with fewer adverse effects on the local languages. In Vanuatu, more efforts seem to have been made to secure the indigenous languages with numerous plans from religious, political and international organisations, though not all of these have been carried through. All the languages (106 indigenous languages plus English and French) have status under the constitution. Overall, it seems that French will continue to decline in Vanuatu to be replaced by Bislama, but a Bislama more and more influenced by English. In New Caledonia, the present diglossic situation is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

Unlike the other chapters in this section, the chapter by **Clyne and Kipp** focuses especially on the language diversity in Australia resulting from immigration. Their data is based on census findings of the Australian Bureau of Statistics, though they indicate that the extent of language use in Australia is undoubtedly under-estimated because of the nature of the question used, which asks what language is used at home. According to the 1996 census, 14.6% of Australians use a language other than English at home. The pattern of languages has changed with the pattern of migration,[2] which has, itself, changed with different waves from different parts of Europe and Asia, the latter predominating in recent decades. Most recently, the nation's language diversity has increased with substantial communities speaking such languages as Chinese (especially Mandarin), Vietnamese

and Macedonian. On the other hand, more traditional languages such as Greek, Italian and Maltese have declined significantly. Languages such as Tamil, Hindi and Korean, though small in actual totals, have increased considerably in percentage terms. Economic values have influenced the choice of languages in the education system, with priority given to Chinese (Mandarin), Indonesian, Japanese, and Korean. The maintenance pattern also differs across languages, with a relatively high percentage of Australian-born speakers of such long-established languages as Greek, Arabic, Italian, Macedonian and Turkish but with low maintenance rates for Dutch, Hungarian, and German. Geographically, most migration has been to urban areas, especially to Sydney and Melbourne, with the pattern of languages also differing according to the area most favoured for settlement by different ethnic groups at different times in the history of migration. Melbourne received a higher proportion of post-World War II European migration, Sydney receiving more from the newer (predominantly Asian) waves. Brisbane also has received more migration in recent decades and Queensland, being the most decentralised State, is the only one with significant numbers of community language speakers outside the main urban areas. More than 60% of the home users of Aboriginal languages are in the Northern Territory. Clyne and Kipp consider at some length the occurrence of language shift, i.e. the percentage of people born in a particular country who now speak only English at home (first generational language shift) or the percentage of people born in Australia with one or both parents born overseas who now speak English at home (second generational language shift). The rate of first generational language shift differs between languages, with cultural distance from English being a major factor in determining its extent. The closer the culture is to English, the more likely it is that language shift will occur – in contrast to Chinese-speaking cultures, for instance, which have a relatively low shift rate. In addition, languages are best maintained in those States where they are most represented, and Clyne and Kipp conclude that relative concentration of speakers is more important than absolute numbers of speakers in favouring language maintenance. They identify the birthplace of the parents as an important factor influencing language shift, which is greater where only one parent is from the country of origin of the language. Other factors considered include the time when migration occurred, gender, age and period of residence in Australia with males, for instance, tending to shift more to English in the home than females. Clyne and Kipp conclude that the data suggests 'the ultimate inevitability of home language shift in the immigrant Australian context'. Looking to the future, they predict that Arabic, Cantonese and Vietnamese will gradually displace Italian and Greek as the most widely used languages in Australia (after English). They comment that the advent of more 'pluralistic' (i.e. 'multicultural') policies over recent decades may

be contributing to the relatively lower rate of language shift in the 'newer' community languages.

Practical Issues concerning Language Revival, Maintenance and Education

The final group of three chapters considers practical ways in which the survival of languages may be assisted. **Amery**, whose focus is on indigenous languages in Australia, starts by considering practical issues in the description and documentation of languages, before focusing on language development and usage. The lack of proficiency in indigenous languages by government personnel and others interacting with indigenous people inevitably reinforces the role of English and reduces the domains in which indigenous languages can be used. This has not been helped by the 'strong tendency' for linguists to focus on traditional domains so that, for instance, very few items relating to 'introduced concepts' or 'post-contact items' appear in word lists or dictionaries of indigenous languages. Where efforts have been made to introduce words to enable, for example, health workers to communicate in the language of their patients, these words do not always survive very long. However, if the languages are to survive, there is need for them to be used in all the domains in which the people use language and for them to be seen and treated by linguists as living languages responding to the needs of the people today. Consequently, there is need for intensive language development, analogous to the development that has occurred in Maori in New Zealand, where thousands of new terms needed for use in such domains as science, technology, government, or economics have been introduced. Amery emphasises, however, that language development cannot be considered in isolation from the massive health and social problems that exist in many indigenous communities in Australia. He illustrates his discussion of language development with reference to the revival work he has been involved in with Kaurna, an indigenous language of Adelaide and the Adelaide Plains, which had not been spoken on a daily basis since the 19th century. He describes how the project identified the language and developed it further, its use as an 'auxiliary language' in the public domain, and its introduction to all levels of education. Amery concludes by emphasising that language revival is not just a matter of examining a language as an historical relic, rather it needs to be transformed to meet present day needs.

Ingram's focus is on some of the ways in which language education can contribute to the maintenance and development of Australia's language resources and enable the languages to contribute to the social and economic development of the nation. He makes three basic assumptions in the chapter: that languages are intrinsically and extrinsically valuable; that a