# A Grammatical Sketch of Kove: Some Challenges

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## Research Issues

▸ Indifferent or negative language attitudes

▸ Negative feelings about working on their language

▸ Unawareness with the importance of their language

▸ Indifferent about preserving their language

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## Outline

▸ The background of Kove

▸ Some challenges

▸ My work and goals

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## Kove



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## Language Situation

▸ 34 villages

▸ 8000 people living in Kove

▸ Five other indigenous languages spoken in broader region

▸ Due to modernization, educational developments, and social interactions, Tok Pisin and English are used frequently in place of Kove.

## Education In Kove

▸ Five primary schools
▸ No secondary schools
▸ Kove is used for the first and second year as an instruction language. (Only English after that.)
▸ Neither Kove language nor Kove culture are taught.

## Some challenges: before one even starts to write a grammar

▸ What if speakers' attitudes are indifferent to their language?

▸ What if speakers don't care whether the language is spoken or not?

▸ What if speakers are not interested in working on the language?

## Observation I:

▸ They don't care what kind of data I collect.

▸ They don't care whether I make a grammar book or a dictionary.

▸ They don't understand why I am there and what I want to do.

▸ Elder speakers see nothing wrong if they lose the language.

## Observation II

▸ Wasim          ahe-mu
  wash           leg-2sg
  'Wash your legs.'

▸ Children cannot fully understand.
▸ Children do not fully acquire Kove.
▸ Parents choose Tok Pisin for their communication.
▸ Parents don't care whether their children speak Kove or not.

## Observation III

▸ A consultant:
   Willing to help

▸ Community members:
   Why did she help me ?
   What was the advantage to her ?
   No benefits from me and my research
   → Stopped her from helping me

⇒Other community members: negative feelings about my research and my visit

## Problems

▸ Indifferent or negative language attitudes

▸ Negative feelings about working on their language

▸ Unawareness with the importance of their language

▸ Indifferent about preserving their language

⇒  Difficulties before one starts to write a grammar

## My work

- (2001), 2002, 2003, 2007

- A few great consultants

- Recording stories and elicitation
→a couple of publications and presentations at conferences
→ Grammatical Sketch project

- Have a good relationship with the community

## Harmonious relationship



## Plans and Goals: To build a corpus

- The corpus includes audio and video recordings.

- narratives (myths, historical stories, legends, children's stories); public events (ceremonies and rituals); and conversations (daily matters, politics)

- Texts that the community allows to be released will be provided with IPA fonts, interlinear glosses and English translations.

## Plans and Goals: Producing a Grammar

- Based on the documentary method

- I will provide links in the grammar to sources of data, establishing that examples exist in a corpus of texts with cross-reference numbers.

- The lexicon of each text, as well as elicitation, will be entered in a dictionary using interlinearlization in Toolbox.

## Plans and Goals: Archiving

- The files will be deposited with sufficient metadata: folder number, title, speakers, language name, time and location of recording, linguistic type, description, genre keyword and so on.

- The formatted data will be stored at Kaipuleohone, which is a digital archive out of the Department of Linguistics at the University of Hawai'i.

- The data will be also deposited in the University of Hawai'i library system for long-term security

## Plans and Goals: Archiving at Kaipuleohone

2010/1/20
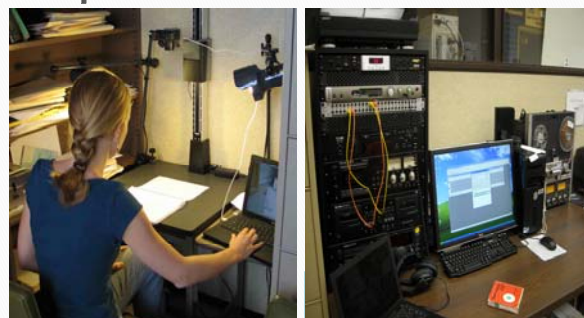
## Conclusion: What should I do?

- Create a solid foundation of Kove documentation for future research

- Continue my good relationship with the community

- Keep talking to the community about the importance of their language

## Thank you to...

- Linguistics Dynamics Science Project
- Tokyo University of Foreign Studies
- Participants in a seminar course 'Writing Grammar'

and

Thank you, all!