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Conference 2022

Preserving and Promoting the Indigenous Languages of the South Pacific in IDIL 2022-2032
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Preserving the unheard, promoting the unspoken:
The challenges of documenting, preserving and promoting Kibiri,
a critically endangered isolate

MOISÉS VELASQUEZ

PHD CANDIDATE

UNIVERSITÉ SORBONNE NOUVELLE – PARIS 3, FRANCE

LANGUES ET CIVILISATIONS À TRADITION ORALE (LACITO) LABORATORY

FRENCH NATIONAL CENTRE FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH (CNRS)



Core questions

- What are the consequences of lack of language use on documentation?
- How can language ideologies of nearly extinct / moribund languages affect the perspectives of promotion for future generations?

Summary

- Introduction to Kibiri
 - The people
 - The language
 - Geographical situation
 - Sociolinguistic facts
 - Verbal number
- Signs of language and culture death
- Language ideologies of and about (the) Kibiri
- Is Kibiri dead?
- Social death and documentation
- Perspectives of preservation: Archiving
- Perspectives of revitalization
- Conclusions



Handout

Introduction to Kibiri: The people

- Endonym: *Kibiri* or *Kibiri moro* ‘Kibiri people’.
- Ca. 300 people (Kimuri Kaini, p.c).
- **Kikori, Doibo, Veiru, Babeio, Kerema, Veraibari, POM.**
- **Intermarriage with Kerewo: 1960’s approx.** (“*Mixed Kibiri, pure Kibiri*”).
- **Languages: Hiri Motu,** Kerewo, TP, Porome, some English.
- Fishing, hunting, agriculture, a few land owners, carpenters, housewives.
- Christianity (UC, SDA) + beliefs (health, weather).

Introduction to Kibiri: The people

- Clans:
 - Oatara moro: F ancestor + people
 - Iriba moro: M ancestor + people
 - Neuri moro: PN mountain + people
 - Doibo moro: PN river + people
 - Varo moro: Root (HM?) + people



Arrival,
Kikori airstrip
(January 27th 2022)



Kibiri dancers
(April 8th 2022)

Introduction to Kibiri: The language

- *Kibiri moro dara* ‘Kibiri people’s language’.
- Etymology: *Kitouri* tree.
- Intelligible with Porome: “Kibiri-Porome” (Hammarström 2017 : 297)
- Isolate (ibid)
- Franklin (1973, 1975): 5 – 8% relationship with Purari (lexicostatistics)
- Ross (2005): Kiwai. Pronoun-based.
- Pawley and Hammarström (2018): Characteristics of TNG.
- Work on Porome:
 - Wordlists: Franklin (1973), Z’graggen (1975).
 - 1 Recording: 47 min, Dutton 1980?. PARADISEC
 - Petterson (SIL): Picture dictionary, phonology, morphosyntax.
- Kibiri: 6 phrases, Franklin (1973).



Kitouri tree,
Uro Creek
(June 4th 2022)

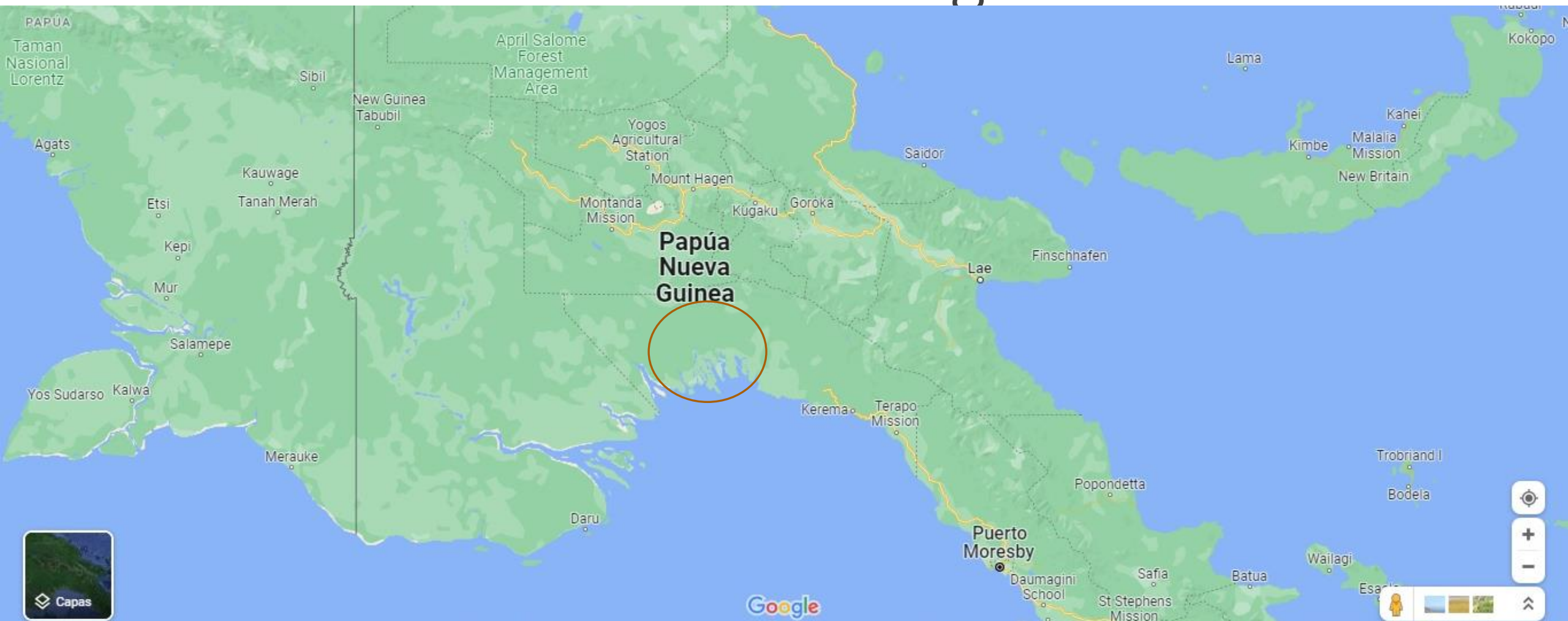
Introduction to Kibiri: The language

- Nb. Of **fluent** speakers: 32 (Kimuri Kaini, p.c) (Unlike *Ethnologue* 2011 = 280)
- 39 – 90 years old
- Litteracy: 3 speakers, “the phonics”.
- Dialects: Coastal Kibiri and Inland Kibiri: *ikeri* vs *ipori* ‘go across’
- Differences with Porome
- Lexical: *Uperepi* (K) vs *Timuri* (P) ‘Prawn’; *aparo* (K) vs *maina* (P) ‘Good’

• Phonological:

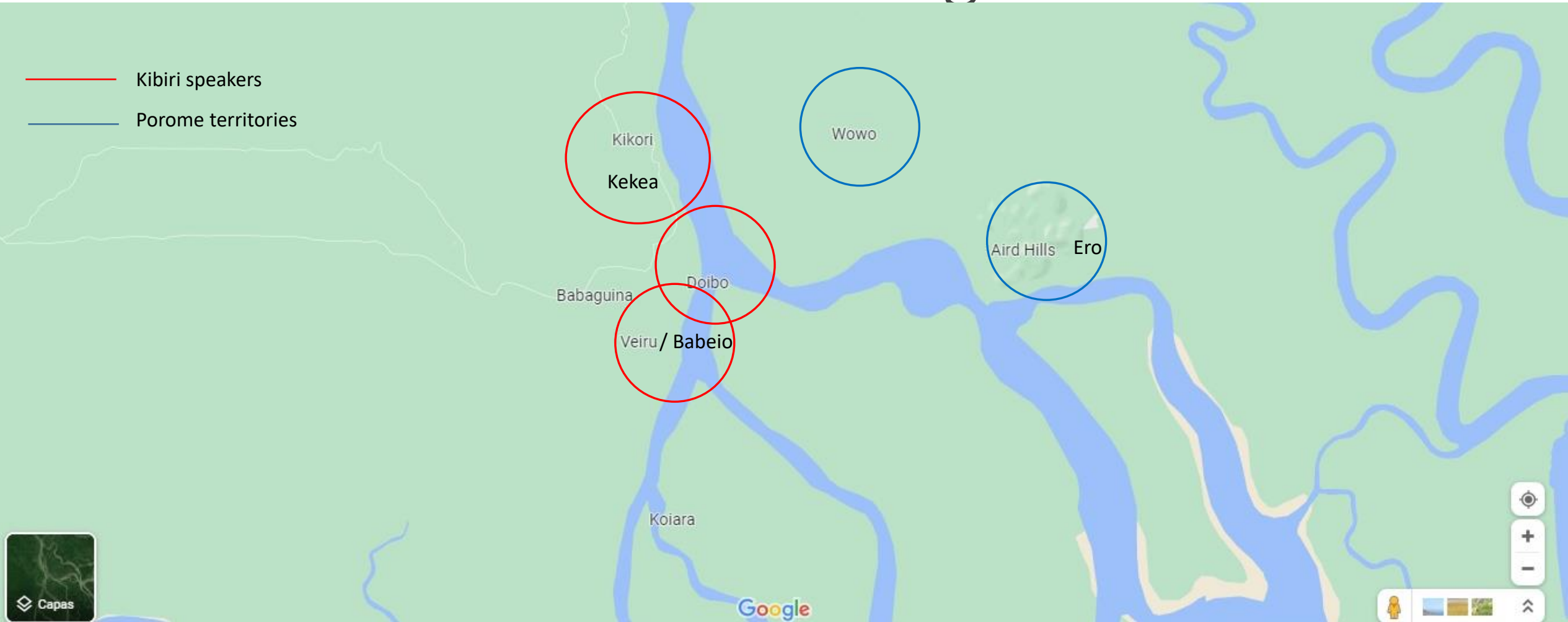
	Porome	Kibiri	Gloss
	/kigimi ^{HHH} /	/ki:mi ^{HH} /	‘Head’
	/pagai ^{HH} /	/pai ^H /	‘Forehead, face’
	/kagapu ^{HHL} /	/ka:pui ^{HH} /	‘Leg, foot’
	/vigi ^{HH} /	/vi: ^{LH} /	‘Paddle’
	/nei ^{LH} /	/dei ^{LH} /	‘Rain’

Introduction to Kibiri: Geogr. Situation



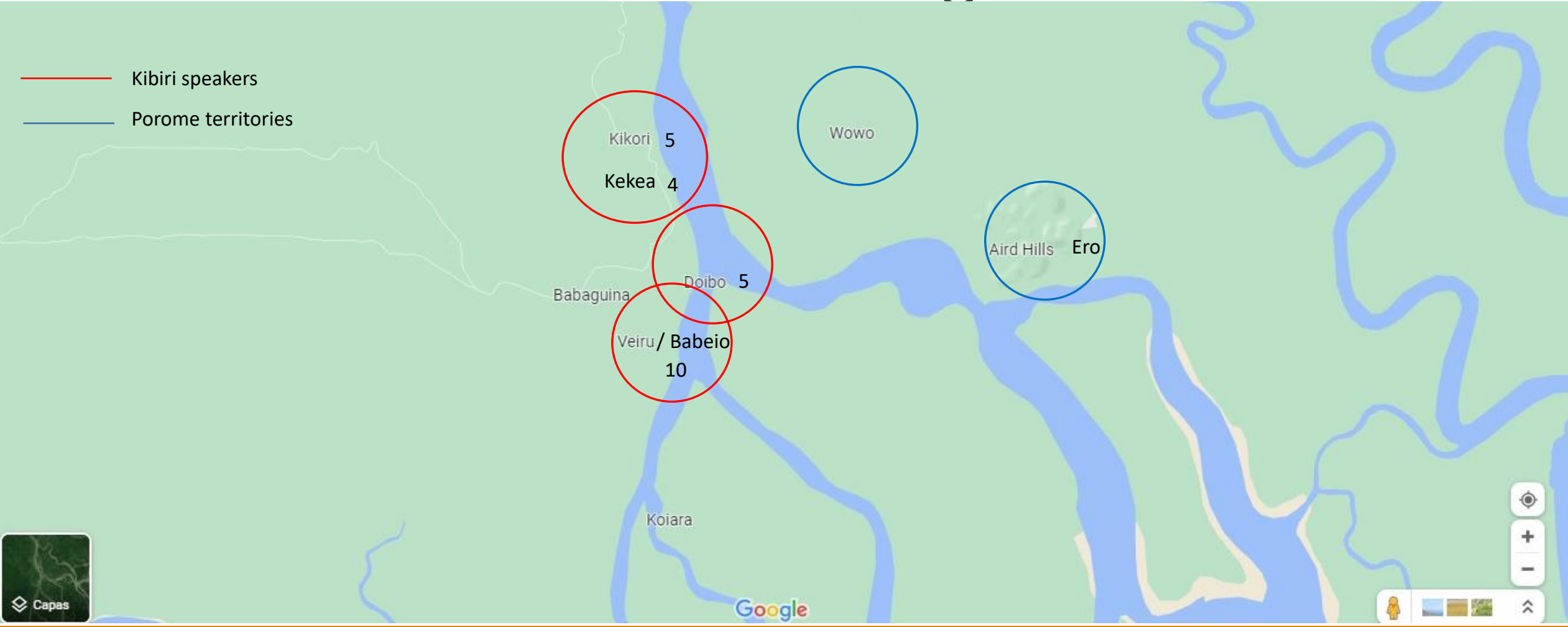
Introduction to Kibiri: Geogr. Situation

- Kibiri speakers
- Porome territories



Introduction to Kibiri: Geogr. Situation

- Kibiri speakers
- Porome territories



Introduction to Kibiri: Sociolinguistic facts

- Tribe members: approx. 300
- Hiri Motu (HM)
 - Household.
 - Social interactions.
 - Church (CS with English)
 - Tribal meetings
- Generation of children (30 – 50) : A few Kbr phrases within HM speech.

(1) (bateri tere) pou-are!

WHITE MAN COME-IPFV

‘The white man is coming!’

(2) i wai=ba

SAGO.ABST NEG=DECL

‘There is no sago (in the house)’

Introduction to Kibiri: Sociolinguistic facts

- Tribe members: approx. 300
- Hiri Motu (HM)
 - Household.
 - Social interactions.
 - Church (CS with English)
 - Tribal meetings
- Generation of children (30 – 50) : **Specific Kbr NPs** within **HM** speech.

(3) Moses **ia** **ura** **di** **uburo**
MOSES **3SG** **LIKE** **COCONUT.ABST** **WATER.CSTR**
'Moses likes coconut water' (Observed)

Introduction to Kibiri: Sociolinguistic facts

- Contact with **Kerewo** (Kiwai): lexicon borrowing

(4) **epato** kabiro

EAR BIG

‘(My) ears are big’ (< [hɛpatɔ])

(5) opoi **gido**-da do-me pi-me

TODAY **SONG**-DEF.SG AUX-NON3.HODFUT/FFUT AUX-1SG

‘I am going to sing it’ (< [gidɔ])

(6) amo **koati**-abo kakaniawo **totonai** pe-me pi-me

1SG **JOB**-DEF.PL MANY **FOR (HM)** GO-NON3.HODFUT/FFUT AUX-1SG

‘I am going to go for these jobs’ (< [kɔvaʔati])

Introduction to Kibiri: Sociolinguistic facts

- Cessation of transmission in the community: 1960's, 1970's (?)
- Low socialization among speakers: HM, Kbr sometimes.
- As L2: Non-Kibiri partner (Kerewo, Porome).
- Household: Kibiri + Kerewo grandparents
- **Kbr is an unheard and rather unspoken language, even by fluent speakers.**

Introduction to Kibiri: Sociolinguistic facts

- Reasons for language loss:
 - Intermarriage with non-Kibiri: 1950's or 1960's.
 - NCD missionaries speaking HM with then Kibiri kids. Ban to use Kibiri (?)
 - Kibiri household: Non-Kibiri parent's language took over interactions, a few exceptions.

Expanded Graded Intergenerational Distruption Scale (EGIDS, Lewis and Simons 2010)

8a Moribund or 8b Nearly Extinct

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Intransitives statives, Participant number of S



(7) Myriam da=ba e-a
MYRIAM 3SG=EMPH LIE.S.SG-3.PRS
'Myriam is lying (on the floor)'



(8) Mi buai da=ba teri-a
DAUGHTER.ABST TWO 3SG=EMPH LIE.S.PL-3.PRS
'(My daughters) are lying on the floor'

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number

Intransitives statives, Participant number of S



(9) Mi ewa da=ba **ete-a**
DAUGHTER.ABST BIG 3SG=EMPH **STAND.S.SG-3.PRS**
'(My) big daughter is standing'



(10) Miryam Umo aboi=ba **uri-a**
MYRIAM UMO 3D=EMPH **STAND.S.PL-3.PRS**
'Myriam and Umo are both standing'

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Intransitives statives, Participant number of S



(11) Ukukuro da=ba **tete**-a
ROPE.ABST 3SG=EMPH? **HANG.S.SG**-3.PRS
'The rope is hanging'

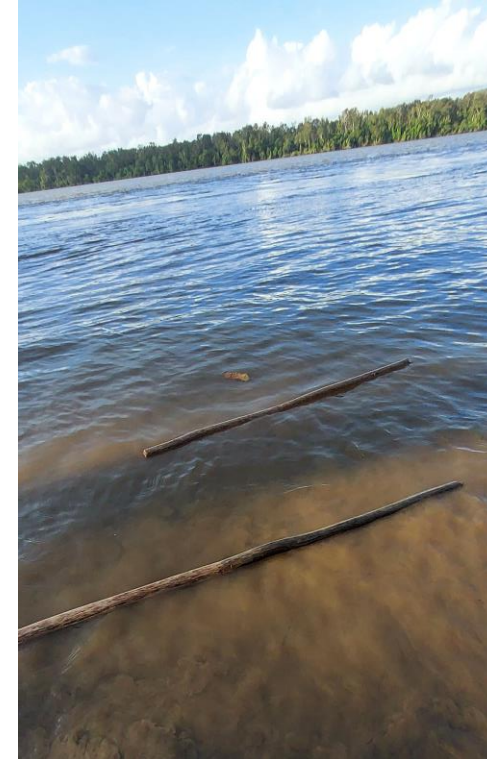


(12) Ukukuro buai da=ba **kaiw**-a
ROPE.ABST TWO 3SG=EMPH **HANG.S.PL**-3.PRS
'The two ropes are hanging'

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Intransitives statives, Participant number of S



- (13) Kubi kere da=ba ubi-neika **bai-a**
STICK.ABST PART 3SG=EMPH WATER.ABST-IN **FLOAT.S.SG-3.PRS**
'The stick is floating in the water'



- (14) Kubi kere buai ubi-neika **ba~bai-are**
STICK.ABST PART TWO WATER.ASBT-IN **S.PL~FLOAT -IPFV**
'The two sticks are floating in the water'

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Intransitives statives, Participant number of S



(15) borimi **iti~timaro**-a koribi-neika
BIG.FLY **S.PL~SIT**-3.PRS FISH.ABST-IN
'The big flies are sitting on the fish'

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Intransitives statives, Participant number of S



(15) borimi **iti~timaro**-a koribi-neika
BIG.FLY **S.PL~SIT**-3.PRS FISH.ABST-IN
'The big flies are sitting on the fish'

(16) borimi wawa **itimaro**-a koribi-neika
BIG.FLY ONE **SIT.S.SG**-3.PRS FISH.ABST-IN
'The big fly is sitting on the fish'

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Intransitives dynamics, Event number



- (17) Myriam da=ba **paruo**-bu
MYRIAM 3SG=EMPH **JUMP.SG**-3.HODPST
'Myriam jumped (once)'



- (18) Myriam da=ba **pa~paru**-a
MYRIAM 3SG=EMPH **PL~JUMP**-3.PRS
'Myriam jumps (many times)'

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Intransitives dynamics, Event or Participant?



**A: 2 p. jumping
once 1x1**



**B: 2 p. jumping
once same time**



**C: 2 p. jumping
many times 1x1**



**D: 2 p. jumping
many times same time**

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Intransitives dynamics, Event or Participant?



pa~paru-a

**A: 2 p. jumping
once 1x1**



pa~paru-a

**B: 2 p. jumping
once same time**



pa~paru-a

**C: 2 p. jumping
many times 1x1**



pa~paru-a

**D: 2 p. jumping
many times same time**

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Intransitives dynamics, Event or Participant?

- **A: 2 once 1x1: Event number = multiple jumpings as a whole**
- **B: 2 once ST: Participant number = No repetition of jumping**
- **C: 2 Many times 1x1 = Event number = internal repetition of jumping**
- **D: 2 Many times ST = Event number = internal repetition of jumping**

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Intransitives dynamics, Event or Participant?

- **A: 2 once 1x1: Event number = multiple jumpings as a whole**
- **B: 2 once ST: Participant number = No repetition of jumping**
- **C: 2 Many times 1x1 = Event number = internal repetition of jumping**
- **D: 2 Many times ST = Event number = internal repetition of jumping**

- **Analysis 1:** EN if 1 Participant, PN if > 1 participant = obliteration of EN 'Many people!'
- **Analysis 2:** No EN at all, only PN = Similar to Intransitive statives' partial reduplication. NO explanation for (17) and (18): Myriam's jumping.

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Intransitives dynamics, Event or Participant?

- **A: 2 once 1x1: Event number = multiple jumpings as a whole**
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- **C: 2 Many times 1x1 = Event number = internal repetition of jumping**
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- **Analysis 1:** EN if 1 Participant, PN if > 1 participant = obliteration of EN 'Many people!'
- **Analysis 2:** No EN at all, only PN = Similar to Intransitive statives' partial reduplication. NO explanation for (17) and (18): Myriam's jumping.

- Potential confusion due to partial reduplication in EN and PN. Cognitive considerations.

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Intransitives dynamics, Participant number of S

- *-sto suffix: Participant number*

(19) kubi okoire-ra-bu

TREE.ABST FALL-PRF-3

'The tree has fallen'

(20) kubi-abo okoire-**sto**-ra-bu

TREE.ABST-DEF.PL FALL-S.PL-PRF-3

'The trees have fallen'

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Transitives, Participant number of 0



- (21) moi-da=nei kubi kere **mairi**-are
MAN-DEF.SG=AGT TREE.ABST PART **CARRY.O.SG**-IPFV
'The man is carrying one log'



- (22) moi-da=nei kubi kere **ma~mairi**-are
MAN-DEF.SG=AGT TREE.ASBT PART **O.PL~CARRY**-IPFV
'The man is carrying many logs'

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Transitives, Event + Participant of O

(23) Karera etere-mi=nei kubi kere **kevo**-are
KID SMALL-DIM=AGT TREE.ABST PART **BREAK.SG**-IPFV
'The small kid is breaking **one stick once**'

(24) Karera etere-mi=nei kubi kere **ke~kevo**-are
KID SMALL-DIM=AGT TREE.ABST PART **PL~BREAK**-IPFV
'The small kid is breaking **one stick many times**'

(25) Karera etere-mi=nei kubi kere buakei **kevo-sto**-are
KID SMALL-DIM=AGT TREE PART TWO **BREAK.SG-O.PL**-IPFV
'The small kid is breaking **two sticks once**'

(26) Karera etere-mi=nei kubi kere buakei **ke~kevo-sto**-are
KID SMALL-DIM=AGT TREE.ABST PART TWO **PL~BREAK-O.PL**-IPFV
'The kid is breaking **two sticks many times**'

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Transitives, Event + Participant of O

(23) Karera etere-mi=nei kubi kere **kevo**-are
KID SMALL-DIM=AGT TREE.ABST PART **BREAK.SG**-IPFV
'The small kid is breaking **one stick once**'

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'The small kid is breaking **one stick many times**'

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KID SMALL-DIM=AGT TREE PART TWO **BREAK.SG-O.PL**-IPFV
'The small kid is breaking **two sticks once**'

UNATTESTED

(26) Karera etere-mi=nei kubi kere buakei **ke~kevo-sto**-are
KID SMALL-DIM=AGT TREE.ABST PART TWO **PL~BREAK-O.PL**-IPFV
'The kid is breaking **two sticks many times**'

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Transitives, Event + Participant of O

(23) Karera etere-mi=nei kubi kere **kevo**-are
KID SMALL-DIM=AGT TREE.ABST PART **BREAK.SG**-IPFV
'The small kid is breaking **one stick once**'

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'The small kid is breaking **two sticks once**'

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KID SMALL-DIM=AGT TREE.ABST PART TWO **PL~BREAK-O.PL**-IPFV
'The kid is breaking **two sticks many times**'

UNATTESTED

A diagram consisting of a central box labeled 'UNATTESTED' with three arrows pointing left towards the verb forms in examples (23), (24), and (26). The arrows originate from the right side of the 'UNATTESTED' box and point to the red-colored verb forms: 'kevo-are' in (23), 'ke~kevo-are' in (24), and 'ke~kevo-sto-are' in (26).

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Transitives, Event + Participant of O

(23) Karera etere-mi=nei kubi kere **kevo**-are
KID SMALL-DIM=AGT TREE.ABST PART **BREAK.SG**-IPFV
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'The small kid is breaking **two sticks once**'

(26) Karera etere-mi=nei kubi kere buakei **ke~kevo-sto**-are
KID SMALL-DIM=AGT TREE.ABST PART TWO **PL~BREAK-O.PL**-IPFV
'The kid is breaking **two sticks many times**'

No marking of O.PL
EN > PN
What matters is EN

No marking of O.PL
EN = PN
If many times = many sticks

UNATTESTED

Marking of O.PL
PN = EN
If many sticks = many times

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number Transitives, Event number

(27) karera etere-mi=nei kubi-da kere karakara=nei **potere**-a
KID SMALL-DIM=AGT TREE.ABST-DEF.SG PART KNIFE.AST=INST **CUT.SG**-3.PRS
'The small kid cuts **one stick once** with the knife'

(28) karera etere-mi=nei kubi-da kere karakara=nei **wavi** do-a
KID SMALL-DIM=AGT TREE.ABST-DEF.SG PART KNIFE.AST=INST **CUT.PL** AUX-3.PRS
'The small kid cuts **one stick many times** with the knife'

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number

	Participant			Event
	S	O	Recipient	
Intr. Statives	St.Alt / Part. Red.			
Intr. Dynamics	Suffix <i>-sto</i>			Part. Red.
Transitives		Suffix <i>-sto</i> / Part. Red.		Part. Red. / St.Alt
Ditransitives		?	Part.Red.	?

Introduction to Kibiri: Verbal number

	Participant			Event
	S	O	Recipient	
Intr. Statives	St.Alt / Part. Red.			
Intr. Dynamics	Suffix <i>-sto</i>			Part. Red.
Transitives		Suffix <i>-sto</i> / Part. Red.		Part. Red. / St.Alt
Ditransitives		?	Part.Red.	?

Conclusions

- Interaction of PN and EN, simultaneously or one implying the other
- Ergative behaviour (Corbett 2000)
- St. Alt. : S (Intr. Statives) and EN
- Part. Red.: S (Intr. Statives); O/R/EN (Ditransitives); EN (Intr.Actives, Transitives) = Difficult distinction
- Parameters: 1x1 and ATST help to disambiguate

Signs of language and culture death

- **Forgetfulness of words, or delayed response:**

- *Arawi dara* 'song' > *gido* (Kerewo), *ane* (HM)
- *Kawabu* 'bottle' > *botoro*
- *Arori* 'clay pot' > *konteina*
- Animal species' names > Hyperonyms remain

- **Abandonment of cultural practices**

- Rain-bringing/chasing procedures: "cutting the clouds"; bamboo stick burning, etc.
- Mating beliefs: "talking to the house"
- Spells, Kundu-making, songs, legends.

Signs of language and culture death

- **Language practices:**

- *Obo!* 'Water!' (Kerewo), to chase dogs;
- Goodbye '*Kamaubo!*' (Adults) / *Tata!* (Babies) (Kerewo)

- **Preserved:**

- Botanical lexicon
- Abandoned villages' ancestral names
- Linguistic competence

Linguistic ideologies of and about Kibiri

- *“We Kibiri do not have a name”* (Pastor)
- *“We make ourselves out to be Kerewo, so we obtain benefits from LLG”* (Pastor)
- *“I do not feel anything because my language is not spoken”* (Eramiri Nauku)
- *“We don’t remember songs, dances, not even my father would know them”* (Eramiri Nauku)
- *“Many languages have been translated: Porome, Kope, Rumu, we were the only ones (left)”*

Linguistic ideologies of and about Kibiri

- *“The Kibiri are a tiny tribe...”* (Kikori magistrate)
- *“Those Kibiri speak Motu all the time!”* (Ara Maibu, Porome)
- *“The Kibiri do not have a language”* (Constable Wendy Dik, Porome)
- *“They (the Kibiri) are not Kibiri, they are Motuans”* (Wendy Dik)
- *“The Kibiri speak Motu”* (Amahi Morigi, Kope)

Linguistic ideologies of and about Kibiri

- Awareness of the language dying status.
- Speakers: no efforts to use it with family.
- Children: Want to learn it?
- Identification with Kibiri, subtle identification with Kerewo
- Dissociation between group identity and language
- Language work attitude: Indifference or lack of commitment.
 - Really committed: 3 speakers

Is Kibiri dead? (Tsunoda 2005)

Definitions of language death	Yes/no	
Cessation of development	?	
Cessation of transmission in the community as a whole	Yes	} Social death
Disuse of the language in the community as a whole	Yes	
Cessation of transmission in all families	Yes	
Disuse in all families	Yes	
Death of native/fluent speakers	No	} Linguistic competence
Rememberers	No	
L2 speakers	No	
Fluency by researchers	Yes	
Records	No	
Substratum (lexicon)	Yes?	

Social death and documentation

- **Kibiri as a linguistic system is alive, its social function is dead.**
 - Poor knowledge of swearing,
 - Child – adult conversation
 - Lexical creation strategies
 - Male/female/child speech
 - Speech registers
- **Negative impact:**
 - Diversity in the corpus
 - Knowledge of linguistic social practices
- Less varied revitalization materials (single register, single dialect, etc.)

Perspectives of preservation: Archiving

- About 50 hours of video, audio
 - Transcribed (remotely and on-site) with speakers
 - Translation into HM and English
 - Annotations
 - Metadata
 - Imbalance on type of genres
- PANGLOSS archive (LACITO CNRS, France)
- Expected by 2025

Perspectives of revitalization (Tsunoda 2005)

- Kibiri's social death: lack of use and transmission. Advanced transmission disruption.
- **Revitalization programme:** Language restoration
 - **Aims:** *“Restore [Kibiri] to such a state that it is spoken, by a reasonable number of people, reasonably fluently, ~~and in a reasonably intact form~~”*(ibid: 171)
 - **Problems:**
 - Distribution of the speakers
 - Number of speakers
 - Dialects and standardization
 - **Attitude and behaviour towards language and language revitalization**

Perspectives of revitalization (Tsunoda 2005)

- Kibiri's social death: lack of use and transmission. Advanced transmission disruption.
- **Revitalization programme:** Language restoration
 - **Methods:**
 - Master-apprentice
 - Multimedia

Conclusion

- Kibiri exhibits interesting grammatical phenomena for linguists.
- Its linguistic system is preserved in the fluent speakers.
- Its social function is dead.
 - This has affected language practices and lexicon, so far.
- Dissociation between language and tribal identity.
- Lack of true interest in language work.
- Documentation and archiving are possible

Conclusion

- In the case of moribund languages
 - Documentation is urgent
 - With as many fluent speakers as possible (+ variation)
 - With rememberers
 - With L2 speakers in specific situations
 - In the current state of the language.

Conclusion

- Revitalization programmes would be negatively affected by the language attitude of fluent speakers
 - How to change the language attitude among speakers? Can we (linguists)?
- In socially dead languages:
 - If programme is successful, new speakers would create new social functions: a revival of the social function.
- A socially revived language:
 - Introduction of grammatical changes.



Kitouri tree seed held by Auna Aumiri, the youngest Kibiri speaker, 39.

Thank you!

Amo dororiba

moises.velasquez-perez@Sorbonne-nouvelle.fr

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