

Topical Report

1. Linguistics

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Received 16 April 1962

The linguistic sessions of the Tenth Pacific Science Congress, held in Honolulu from 21 August to 6 September 1961, were well attended; and those present report an increased interest in the field of linguistics. The following resolutions were approved and adopted at the closing Plenary Session of the Congress:

Current research on Austronesian and Papuan languages is inadequate for scientific needs, and some of them face imminent extinction unless prompt action is taken. Though estimates place the number of languages in the area close to a thousand, approximately a fourth or a fifth of the total for the entire world, only a few of the world's small group of linguists have worked in the Oceanic area. As prehistoric population movements in Oceania have been a major interest of this Congress, and as linguistic information constitutes a principal line of evidence toward the reconstruction of population movements, large-scale expansion of both descriptive and comparative linguistic studies is essential to the efficient exploitation of linguistic evidence.

RESOLVED that all possible steps be taken to expand research on Pacific languages.

Further linguistic surveys in Southeast Asia are needed.

RESOLVED that every possible assistance and encouragement be given to institutions of the new nations of Southeast Asia wishing to make linguistic surveys of their peoples.

A number of linguists interested in the languages of the Pacific Islands and neighbouring areas held a series of discussions at the Tenth Pacific Science Congress how to keep themselves informed of each other's work and finally decided to produce a bibliographical publication to be called *Oceanic Linguistics* whose primary purpose is to provide up-to-date information on research in progress, recently completed, or recently published anywhere in the world. Dr George W. Grace will be the editor, advised and assisted by an Editorial Board consisting of: J. C. Anceaux, Netherlands; Bruce Biggs, New Zealand; A. Capell, Australia; James C. Dean, Papua and New Guinea; Isidore Dyen, U.S.A.; S. H. Elbert, U.S.A.; André Haudricourt, France; Hans Kähler, Germany; Ernest W. Lee, Vietnam; Cecilio Lopez, Philippines; George B. Milner, England; E. M. Uhlenbeck, Netherlands; and Stephen Wurm, Australia. *Oceanic Linguistics* will appear three times a year beginning April 1962. Each issue will have a review article on the state of research in a given Oceanic linguistic field and the rest will be devoted to references to Oceanic linguistic work of every description. This periodical will include material on Malayo-Polynesian (Austronesian), Papuan, and Australian languages.

Beginning in 1961, the *International Journal of American Linguistics* carries a section entitled 'Abstracts and Translations'. This section has a translation of

Shiro Hattori's article, 'A glottochronological study on three Okinawan dialects'; abstracts from publications on Palæo-Siberian languages by Dean Stoddard Worth; and abstracts from Japanese publications by Hauro Aoki. It is also planned to include in the section coverage on Oceania.

In Polynesia, Ralph Gardner White is working on a Tahitian descriptive grammar and on Hakka Chinese as spoken in Tahiti. Byooz is doing work on Rarotongan; and a student of Bruce Biggs is doing work on a descriptive grammar of Samoan.

André Haudricourt is working on a Cham dialect which he recorded in Phnom Penh a year ago. Miss Martel of the École Française d'Extrême-Orient is engaged in a village survey near Siemreap, and her study is expected to give detailed information on technical Cambodian. G. Coedès, Bernard P. Groslier, and Claude Jacques are working on the latest epigraphical discoveries in Cambodia. They have made new discoveries on the Sanskrit literary sources in Khmer inscriptions.

At the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur, Professor R. B. LePage, with the assistance of Dr George S. Waldo, is starting some basic linguistic teaching and research. Dr Waldo is supervising a promising student in Indian Studies who is making a survey of lexical features in a Tamil-speaking community.

In Vietnam, members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics have begun studies in the Bru, Muong, Pokoh, Roglai, and Tho languages. Other members are continuing their research on Bahnar, Cham, Chrau, Mnông, Stiêng, and White Thai. Comparative studies are being made of Vietnamese and Muong, of Tho and White Thai, and of Roglai and Rade. Richard Phillips of the Christian and Missionary Alliance has been doing a comparative study of Hre and Bahnar.

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