

Endangered Language Documentation Programme, Remeh Weribisi ma Hatohobei, ma HOPE ha fiteh fangan ifiri hatoyerin meka Ramari Hatohobei

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October 2013 - October 2014

Project Update March 2015

The last of three month-long research trips to Palau under the small grant awarded by the Endangered Languages Documentation Programme, took place in October 2014.

The goal of this project was to provide a resource base of well-documented Tobian language use. This resource base, intended for the use of the Tobian community now and in the future as well as for use by linguists, consists of video records of people speaking the language in various contexts and covering various topics.

This final research trip was very productive. While in Palau, we met with the Governor, the Delegate, and other elected officials of Hatohobei State to discuss the status of this project. We made 15 additional video recordings; gave two presentations and several demonstrations of the proposed Tobian-English dictionary. We also collected many additional words and phrases.

Over the course of the project year, we worked with and recorded 31 Tobian speakers, more than 50 percent of the adult speakers of the language living in Koror. We made videos of stories, songs, prayers, a poem, histories, meetings, and Bible readings. We recorded discussions of fishing techniques, taro gardening, basket making, medicines and sickness, and other topics.

In March 2015 we deposited with the Endangered Languages Archive at SOAS, University of London over 600 files and 225 gigabytes of data:

- 77 videos (this includes several that were given to us of meetings and dancing)

- Two illustrated and bound children's stories in Tobian and English
- One illustrated and bound children's story presented as a coloring book

Over the next few months we will add to this deposit additional videos, photographs and recordings which we have made over the last 40 years.

We will also add to the deposit resources developed to provide the underpinnings of a Tobian-English dictionary. These resources include over 2000 words, many with audio clips of Tobian speakers pronouncing them, and illustrations, and references to more complete material.

In March we plan to hand this resource over to the community for further development, maintenance, and distribution.

Throughout the project year HOPE, our host organization, provided invaluable support services to us.