Mangarevan - A Shifting Language

Ena Manuireva

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Te Ara Poutama

Abstract

This thesis has been undertaken in order to identify causes and consequences of the phenomenon of language shift and attempt to provide means to minimise its impacts. The Mangarevan language has been exposed to other language influences since the mid-19th century - as a result of the colonial experience. Consequently French, and to a lesser degree Tahitian, have had an impact on the vitality of the Mangarevan language. This is demonstrated by the use of borrowed words, transliterations and more significantly on language loss amongst the young generation. In addition the French nuclear testing in the mid-20th century led to mass migration of the native population from Mangareva to Tahiti. As a consequence of depopulation, the majority of the younger (<30years) Mangarevans now speak French as their first language. Interestingly and depressingly, French is perceived by Mangarevans as a high status language. This phenomenon is the catalyst for language shift and in particular the issue of intergenerational language transmission. Reversal language shift will involve collaboration and commitment, a process imperative for the language to survive.

Integral to this process is promoting and valuing Mangarevan language amongst the native population. The fieldwork explored the attitudes of Mangarevan people towards the language and the culture. All of the participants are residents of Mangareva and most have lived on the island all their lives. The findings from the fieldwork suggest that the Mangarevan community's endeavour to contain language shift is not without challenges. However, it is anticipated that the research findings will help inform the strategic direction for language shift reversal initiatives and thereby stem the erosion of our native language. The dream is for future generations to inherit a stable and safe language, *e atoga* (a treasure).

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Attestation of Authorship

"I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning".

Ena Manuireva

17/12/2014

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*Maro'i nui kia kotou te u no Magareva mo to kotou tururaga
mai me te 'akaroa ki aku me te nei epuepuraga i ruga i to
tatou reo Magareva.*

My first acknowledgement is to the participants that have made this work possible. They gave their time, kindness and above all they shared their native language freely and openly. Through them I reconnected with and spoke my Mangarevan language, which for a long time stayed unused. No words can express my gratitude. *Ena kotou ua.*

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Chapter One: Introduction

Mangareva is an island geographically isolated and linguistically, the Mangarevan language is not much spoken outside its own borders unlike other regional languages that can be heard in the streets of the main administrative island Tahiti. There is a tiny spread of Mangarevans settled on the administrative island but their number doesn't compare to the likes of Marquesan, Australs, Tuamotu or Tahitian residents indeed. In this linguistically influenced setting, the Mangarevan language is impacted by Tahitian but more importantly it is assimilated by the French language, probably more than the other regional dialects. According to Laval (1968) Mangarevans were sent to Tahiti to help build the first cathedral on the island under the supervision of the Catholic missionaries in the capital Pape'ete. This is a fact that is not acknowledged by the Tahitian population. However it is probably during that time that Tahitians started to hear the Mangarevan language which would have sounded like a language that didn't belong to the Polynesian language family group.

As a Mangarevan-born, this disparaging attitude by the Tahitians towards my language became the catalyst for my involvement and keen interest in Mangarevan as a language. In the process I have had the opportunity to rediscover my native language which has been a challenge as it emerges as language that is shifting and in a real danger of disappearing. Therefore the objective of this work is exploring those challenges and advocating ways to resolve them. The vision is that my native language, originating from Mangareva will be revitalised and flourish as a living language.

The literature search indicates that the Mangarevan language shift as a research topic has never been undertaken. This presents a unique opportunity to address this

problem. Like any other minority languages, the loss of Mangarevan would significantly affect the populations who believe that culture and identity are expressed and become alive primarily through language. My own experience as a native speaker and my worldview of Mangarevan culture will inform and frame the research, emphasizing the effects of language loss and how emulating other revitalisation programmes have inspired me in my attempt to revitalise my own language.

1.1 Why do this research?

The background of this research is set against my recent visits to Mangareva where amongst the younger generations, I noticed the child-bearing generation not using the native language between themselves and neither transmitting it to their children. Instead French is the language most spoken at home amongst the child-bearing generation. It has also been apparent to me that the older generation (grandparents) has started to use French in their daily lives instead of Mangarevan when discussing with the younger generation. Evidence of vocabulary or lexical borrowings from French is broad and the influx of French language in Mangareva can be traced back to the arrival of the first French Catholic missionaries in 1834. However, the impact of language borrowing evidences became more noticeable some 50 years ago with the second wave of French migration through the implementation of the nuclear testing programme CEP (Centre of Experimentation in the Pacific) in the southeast parts of French Polynesia during the late1960s.

Awareness of the present situation of language shift in Mangareva following the language contact during many decades, will prompt the researcher to determine micro strategies in relation to language management and language policies that will at best slow down the Mangarevan language from falling victim to the hegemony of the two dominant languages: French and Tahitian (Mawyer, 2008; Rutter, 2006).

As a result the Mangarevan language shift concern could be remedied by the identification of the reasons and factors whether endogenous or exogenous that begot the above situation. This investigation will help in the application of specific remedial actions for the revitalisation of the Mangarevan language thus preventing it from moving into the next stages of dormant and finally extinct language.

An up-to-date sociolinguistic description of the state of the Mangarevan language at the present time will be the priority and this will be achieved through undertaking a data collection project. Using questionnaires and qualitative type interviews with selected segments of the local population, and whenever possible observation of group or personal use of the language seems to be the most appropriate approach. It will provide substantial material on the current sociolinguistic state of Mangarevan.

This research will draw on the researcher's own experience of the Mangarevan language and culture supplemented by his understanding and knowledge of the Māori and Hawaiian revitalisation programme which have been instrumental in providing proven strategies for reversing language shift. Language revitalisation initiatives witnessed in other Polynesian languages will inform the project in terms of proven strategies that will strengthen the Mangarevan reversing language shift.

1.2   The Researcher

In was in June 1968 that as a baby I left the island of Mangareva on a seven-day boat trip towards Tahiti. The family migration was caused by the palpable fear of the Mangarevan population about the damaging effects of nuclear testing on Moruroa, another island in French Polynesia that is only 400 kilometres from Mangareva.   It was also the propensity of the trade winds to blow clouds of dangerous atomic particle fallouts towards the mountains of Mangareva that hastened the departure. This event was foreseen by my father who as a pearl diver, feared the lagoon contamination. He had also witnessed unusual symptoms of nausea and sickness by his pregnant wife

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during her third pregnancy. The very first nuclear test was carried out in Moruroa in July 1966 (Barrillot and Le Caill, 2011). Without waiting for the second test in August 1968 and in their resilience, my family undertook this forced voyage staying with the extended family as newly migrants to Tahiti. My family managed to secure a family land in Taunoa, one of the suburbs of Pape'ete the capital of Tahiti. I grew up in Taunoa and spoke three languages: French only at school and with my mother and siblings at home, Mangarevan exclusively with my father and Tahitian with my friends. Being exposed to those different languages has certainly inspired my love of languages and I now speak five languages.

The linguistic influences and in particular the Mangarevan language strand has stayed latent until I undertook this project. This has rejuvenated my passion for the language and forced me to maintain my written and oral competency in my native language. The process has been a difficult one resurrecting the language from memory and relying on books but most importantly on my father's stories. So clearly the inspiration for this project was the yearning to return to the language that I shared with my late father as a child. Although I have spent much of my adult life away from Mangareva I have never severed my ties with my native island and regularly return to the land of my ancestors. This has been made easier as my parents returned to the island in 2000. These ancestral ties have been reinforced with the reconnection to the language in Aotearoa New Zealand. Mangarevan patients are occasionally sent here to undertake treatment not available in Tahiti. I will approach this thesis as a Mangarevan who believes that he is culturally bound to his island, language and culture.

1.3 Organisation of the thesis

Chapter One: Introduction

Contextualises the project within a personal framework and explains the motivation for choosing my native language as the subject of this thesis. It was important to me to explain that the inspiration came from my father who, through his stories told and taught me to love the language. I became so protective of the Mangarevan language that when I learnt that in Tahiti it was not considered to have much status, I was exasperated but resolute to helping my language. Since that time the language has steadily declined and that has motivated me to work towards revitalising the language of my ancestors.

Chapter Two: Mangareva my Island

This chapter will geographically locate the archipelago of Mangareva and provide an overview of its mythology, history, population and recount the culture clash with Europeans. This chapter also explores the origins of the Mangarevan language by looking at cognate words that the researcher feels are related to three other Polynesian languages. They are the Marquesan, the Tahitian and the Māori languages.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

The next part will try to deal with the broad literature regarding language shift by discerning some of its initial causes namely language contact and understanding it. As a derivative of language contact, this section will approach one of the issues explicitly; that of endangered languages. This involves as well considering language dearth, language policies and language planning as some of the platforms that could help in avoiding language death.

Chapter Four: Methodology

This chapter will outline the research paradigm along with the underlining of the theoretical framework. The relationship between the breadfruit and the language is used metaphorically as a comparison between various interchanging and complementary spheres that both elements share. The breadfruit analogy provides a framework for the research methodology. The methodology will be defined as a recursive approach in understanding the current state of the Mangarevan language. The final section of this chapter will be about the author's approach to the interview and the interview questions. The interview questions are included because they offer insights into the project.

Chapter Five: Analysis and Findings

Chapter five is focussed on the analysis process and will deal with themes ranging from language use in various situations and the duality of language/culture to language hierarchical power and importance of language maintenance and concluding with the impact of religion on language. This section will also look at some avenues for language shift reversal compiled from the interviews such as the traditional emphasis on the practice of language at home along with the help of new technologies.

Chapter Six: Conclusion and Recommendations

This final chapter will collect together all the findings outlining the principal issues that the Mangarevan language is facing based on this study. There will be propositions in terms of how a brighter future can be given to the Mangarevan language from the point of view of the participants. In addition the author will make his own recommendations as to how the revitalisation of his native language could be carried out based on his own views and observations. The author will also close up the chapter with what he intends to give back to his community as his gift to revitalising the Mangarevan language.

Chapter Two: Magareva[1] toku kaiga: Mangareva[2] my Island

2.1   Location

2.1.1   _Geography and climate_

Figure 1: Map of the Mangareva Archipelago
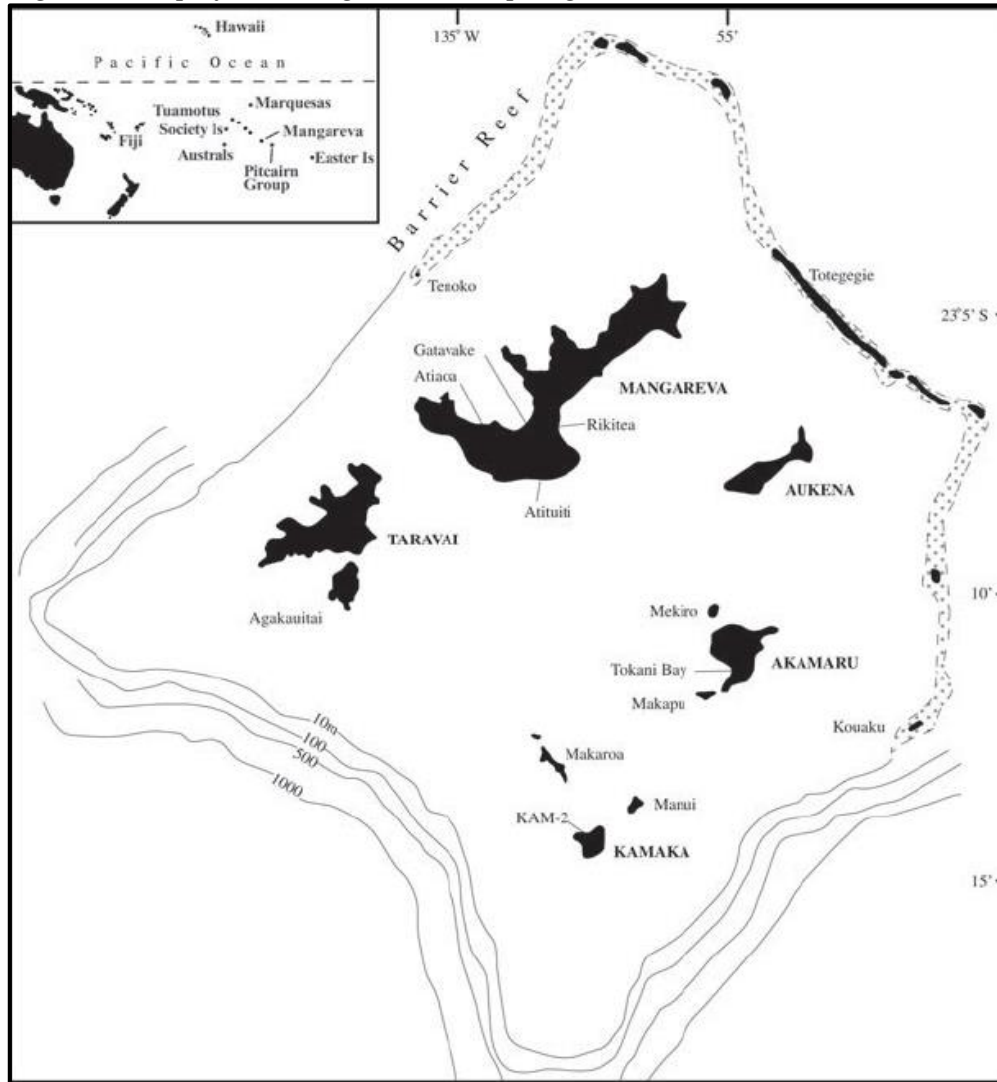
(Anderson, Conte, Kirch & Weisler, 2003, p.120)

Mangareva (the "floating/moving mountain") or the Gambier Islands to Europeans, is the most south-eastern archipelago of French Polynesia. It was also known as Peard Island and is the last mountainous island before reaching Rapa Nui (Easter Island). Mangareva's sheer geographical isolation is extreme. It is situated in the south-east at about 1600 kilometres from Tahiti the administrative capital of French Polynesia; 3000

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[1] Local orthography
[2] European orthography

kilometres from Rapa Nui; 5040 kilometres from New Zealand and 5300 kilometres from Hawai'i. Its geographic coordinates are $23^0 06'34''$ S and $134^0 57'57''$ W (Lesson, 1844). It takes over four hours to travel from Tahiti to Mangareva on domestic flight and four days by direct commercial boat.

As well as being the name of the archipelago with a 65-kilometre barrier reef belt at times discontinued, Mangareva is also the name of the largest island surrounded by three other main scarcely inhabited mountainous islands (Akamaru, Aukena, Taravai) and various islets and atolls (Kamaka, Agakauitai, Makapu). There are three known passages to enter the lagoon of Mangareva. The Southwest pass between Agakauitai and Makaroa was used by Beechey and is the most dangerous due to the winds blowing from North to Southeast. The second is the West pass between Taravai and Mangareva. The Southeast is the safest used by Dr Lesson and is situated between Kamaka and Makapu (Lesson, 1844).

Mangareva has a large lagoon of 15 miles in diameter, containing reefs, fish and shellfish for consumption with careful guidance from the local people's knowledge. The cooler temperatures and the higher nutrient planktons of the lagoon of Mangareva, benefit the culture of pearl as the first and main economy of the island: those ideal water conditions allow pearl oysters to mature faster in Mangareva than anywhere else in French Polynesia.

The island is approximately 8 kilometres long and 18 square kilometres wide. It comprises about 56% of the archipelago's total land area and it takes four and a half hours to walk around the island. The highest peak of Mangareva is *Auorotini* (the

diadem of the thousand pieces) to the locals (or Mount Duff) standing at 441 metres high. The high central ridge runs the length of the island from southeast to northwest.

In terms of land area, Mangareva is also the smallest archipelago with 40km^2 compared to others that have a land area ranging from 1600km^2 for the Society Islands to 150km^2 for the Australs Islands (IEOM, 2014).

Rikitea with its very first Catholic cathedral in French Polynesia dating from 1848 is considered as the main village of Mangareva. The cathedral was built under the direction of the catholic missionaries Fathers Laval and Caret who first arrived in August 1834 on board the Spanish ship *Peruviana*. According to Laval (1968) fishing and agriculture were the main resources sufficient enough for the subsistence of the local population.

2.1.2 *Mythology*

Similar to the whole of the Pacific region, Mangarevans were polytheists with specific assigned priests (*taura/ta'ua*) acting as mediators between the gods and the people. We know very little about the cosmogony however, 'Mangarevans like other Polynesian societies before the arrival of Christianity had a plethora of gods without beginning (*etua 'akamata kore*)' (Buck 1938, p.418). They were endogenous gods divided into major and lesser rankings. Tagaroa was considered as the highest *etua* (god) of all, the creator of all things and it is not rare to find him at the top of the hierarchy of gods here in Mangareva or in other islands of the Polynesian triangle. Buck (1938) posits that the mythological period was supposedly led by Atu-motua (Paternal God) followed by Atu-moana (God of the Sea) and Tagaroa-mea (Tagaroa of All). The migratory period towards Mangareva seemed to have been initiated by Tagaroa-hurupapa (Tagaroa the oven builder) and he was considered to be human because he is the progenitor of the

royal lineage of thirty-three kings with the last one Te Maputeoa (Gregoire II) who died in 1857.

To the Mangarevans, Tu was the most important god, the eldest of the eight children of the union between Tagaroa and Haumea. He was also the god of the breadfruit. Other functional gods were Rogo god of agriculture; Oge as the god of famine and fish; Maui is considered as a semi-god; Tiki is the very first man created by Tagaroa and Tāne is only considered as a fisherman according to the local narratives.

The attributes of some of the major gods such as Tu and Tāne differ in other Polynesian cosmologies. In Hawaii, New Zealand or central Polynesia Tu was considered as the god of war (Marck, 1996) whereas Tāne (-Mahuta) is the god of forestry and birds in New Zealand. However the local myth of Maui fishing islands seems to follow the same discourse as Aotearoa and Hawaii. Today the genesis of the creation brought by the teaching of Christianity appears to be the account favoured by the majority of the Mangarevan population. The main religion in Mangareva is Catholicism as the first archipelago converted by the catholic missionaries.

2.1.3   *History*

The remote archipelago of Mangareva's claim to fame could possibly be that its nearest neighbours on Pitcairn Island situated at 400 kilometres southeast, are the descendants of the mutineers of the Bounty. They were sent to Tahiti in 1789 to collect breadfruit plants but fled Tahiti and the British court martial expedition after the mutiny to seek refuge on the island (Breadfruit, 2000).

In terms of migrations and settlements some researchers have posited that 'Situated at the extreme southeast margin of French Polynesia, Mangareva occupies a key positon in

the prehistoric colonisation and settlement histories of southeastern Polynesia᾿ (Anderson, Conte, Kirch and Weisler, 2003, p.119). According to the Mangarevan traditional history, the genesis of the ancestors who first arrived in Mangareva, Marck (1996) describes them as common people (most likely to be fishermen) elevated to the status of semi-gods originating from the Marquesas presumably for extraordinary deeds that they performed. Buck (1938) believes that the quest for the aetiology of the deification of such mortals is a sterile exercise, because the origin of this Polynesian credence is a-temporal and resides in the myths and legends passed down from generations to generations.

There is no definite statement based on the native narratives collected by Buck (1938) to corroborate the origin of the very first inhabitants who permanently settled in Mangareva. However, local narratives of seafarers suggest that they originated from the Cook Islands and the Marquesas Islands. According to Green (1966) and Sinoto (1983), the settlement period was around 700-800 AD and connections to the Marquesas Islands were established by important visitors such as Miru and Moa; Tupa and his brother Noe. Their provenance points towards Hiva, which is recognised in today's cartography as an island belonging to the Marquesas archipelago. In addition, the native history credits Tupa with the introduction of breadfruit, the coconut tree and other trees, the worship of the principal god Tu and the building of maraes among other deeds. It is said that Tupa returned back to Hiva.

The Cook Islands link originates with the arrival of Te Tupua from Rarotonga and is also embedded into the traditional history of Mangareva. Buck (1938) tells us that Te Tupua emigrated from Rarotonga to Mangareva after losing a battle with one of the chiefs named Epopo. When Te Tupua arrived in Mangareva he was accompanied by his

sister Hua. This latter married a local man Nono while her brother decided to return to Rarotonga.

2.1.4 *Population*

Figure 2: Repartition of Population per Archipelago
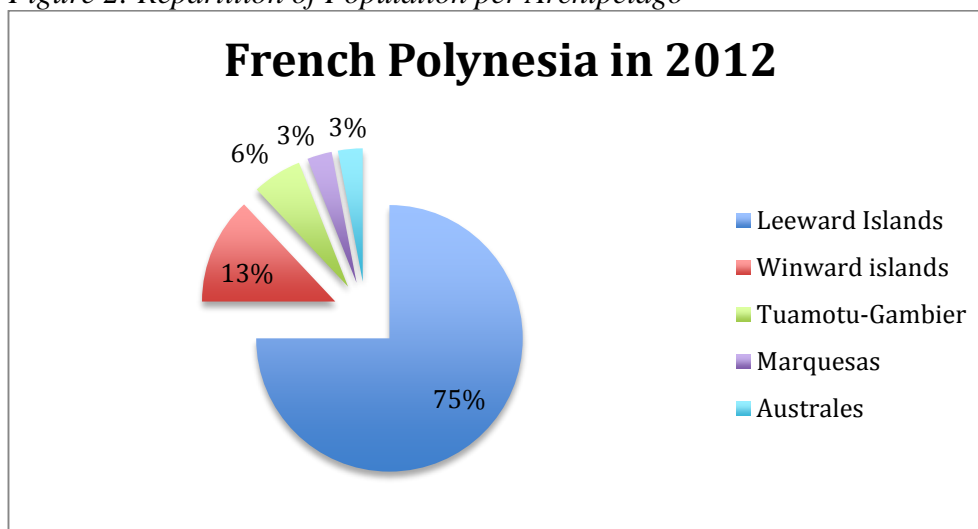
(IEOM 2014, p.29)

The repartition of the population illustrated by the above pie chart indicates that three out of four people live on Tahiti (Leeward Islands) and that Tahitian speakers outnumber all the other indigenous speakers. Within French Polynesia, there are six regional languages with the largest group of 124,000 Tahitian speakers[3] (Lewis, 2009). Smaller regional populations include Tuamotu-Gambier (16,000) Australs (8,000), Marquesan North (3,400) and South (2,100). The Chinese community speaks Haka or Cantonese and French is the official language of French Polynesia.

The amalgamation of the Tuamotu-Gambier as representing one archipelago is an interesting case in terms of speakers of the regional languages. It represents 6% of French Polynesia's total population (268,000) equating to approximately 16,000 people. The latest figure must be considered carefully since the merger between the Tuamotu and the Gambier Islands is asymmetrical with regards to population repartitions. The

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[3] It is always difficult to design the matrices that define what a speaker of a language is.

fusion was done firstly for their geographical closeness despite their distinct culture and language differences but above all for political reasons such as electorate partitions. However since the last general elections of May 2013, Tuamotu and Gambier have been recognised as different archipelagos with the number of permanent residents in Mangareva totalling approximately 1,400[4] while the diaspora of ethnic Mangarevan throughout French Polynesia reaches over 1,600 people. According to the census data jointly released by the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) and the Institute of Statistics of French Polynesia (ISPF) in 2012, the Mangarevan population only represents 0.6 per cent of the total population of French Polynesia. Contrary to the other archipelagos, Mangareva has registered a 0.2 % population decrease since 2007 as well as being the smallest inhabited archipelago in French Polynesia (IEOM, 2014).

2.1.5 *The culture clash*

It is the initial contact with Europeans that had had a detrimental impact on the natives' oral tradition. The oral tradition of declaiming people's genealogy played a central part in memorising Mangarevans' and Polynesians' identities. Reciting one's descent is to keep alive myths, legends, traditions and songs. Native history is a chronological account of the ruling chiefs with records of their wives, wars and struggles to power and the natives would relate their genealogical lineage to their rulers' one. Buck (1938) writes that only the ruling family in Rikitea pursued this chronological narrative whereas the other chiefly families,

> [They] neglected to transmit their pedigrees by the usual oral instruction or even bothered to record them in writing after that knowledge was acquired by the missionaries (p.15).

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[4] Laval (1968, p. 515) tells us that the population in 1834 was well over 2000 and has fallen to 1300 due mainly to diseases brought in by Europeans.

As a consequence the present generation cannot trace back their ancestors' lineage and the role of the *rogorogo* (native history and genealogy reciters) irresistibly went into disuse and finally disappeared. It is said that the arrival of the missionaries in 1834 hastened the demise of those experts of genealogy. However one has to admit that the compelling lack of interest from the chiefly families in assuring this genealogical continuity, despite the availability of writing materials, did indeed leave only one and unique historical narrative, that of the ruling dynasty.

The loss of this ancestral form of speech has converted other forms of speech such as songs and poems as one of the most consulted remaining linguistical legacies of the Mangarevan cultural capital. It is for that reason that, once the genealogical experts have passed away or the historical narratives died away, the *reo* Mangareva was transferred down to the next generation through songs and chants (myths, legends and traditions) because according to Buck (1938)[5] people were fond of singing.

In terms of the 'discovery' of Mangareva, Buck (1938) credits it to Captain James Wilson in 1797. However Smith (1918) argues that Captain Wilson couldn't have been the discoverer of Mangareva if there were people there in the first place and his part was to merely report the existence of the group of islands to Europe. Wilson didn't stop on Mangareva due to manifest hostility of the natives armed with stones and spears but he named the main mountain *Mount Duff* and the group of islands *Gambier Islands*, honouring an admiral who had countenanced the equipment of the ship. Nowadays both names have persisted throughout French Polynesia. The notion of discovering an unmapped land seems to have been a persistent habit amongst European navigators especially during the 17th and 18th centuries when the race to extend empires and the search for that elusive *Terra Australis Incognita* were at their highest (Kirk, 2012;

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[5] Roosman also concurred that local chants were the sources used by many authors and researchers to develop extensive literature.

Howe, 1999; Hooper, 2006). One should acknowledge the importance of naming places or landmarks for Europeans as a mode for claiming ownership of what they perceived as uncharted territories, an act that I have called "passive appropriation" that usually foretells the premises for colonisation.

Following Captain Wilson was Captain Beechey in 1825 on board the *Blossom*. He made a survey of the group and just as Wilson did by naming islands to honour maritime celebrated heroes, Beechey named the islands by his officers' names, ignoring the existence of the native names: Mangareva became Peard Island; Taravai, Belcher; Akamaru, Wainwright; and Aukena, Esson and the whole archipelago, *The Forgotten Islands* (Lesson, 1844). This is yet again another instance of passive appropriation. Smith (1918) adds the following: "One cannot help condemning this ignoring of names given by the original discoverers in which our sailors have somewhat distinguished themselves" (p. 116). Lesson (1844) has commented as well about Beechey using and abusing sailors' customs in christening islands and islets with illustrious English names without enquiring before the natives about their original given names. Beechey met the Mangarevans whom he found wild, thievish savages and once again this first encounter was tainted by the theft of a dog on board the ship and the use of guns to scare the locals. Beechey offers us some sketchy descriptions of the physiognomy of the Mangarevans and their raft-canoe as illustrated by the below plate.

Figure 3: Mangareva raft-canoe.
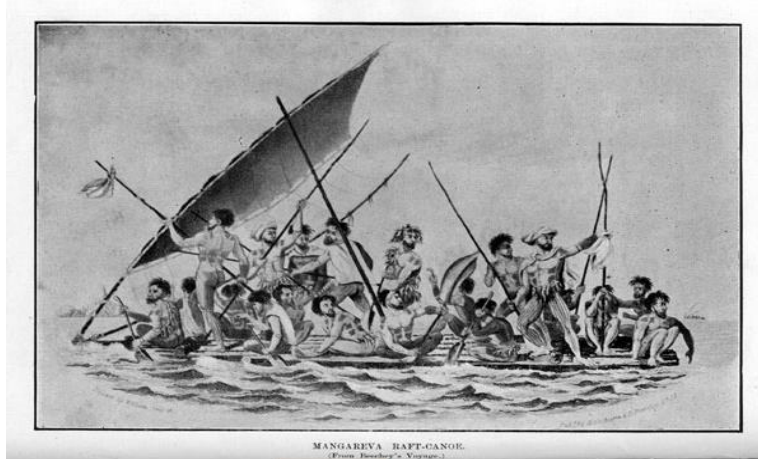
Smith (1918) meanwhile gives us the following account:

> They had no other weapons but long poles and were quite naked, with the exception of a banana leaf cut into strips and tied about their loins, and one or two persons who wore white turbans. Tattooing was extensively used…much like that of the Marquesas islanders (p. 117).

The next visitor was the Belgian merchant Moerenhout in 1834 who for several years cruised the Eastern Pacific looking for trading opportunities. He found the inhabitants much changed since Beechey's last visit and he ascribed this amelioration to the relationships struck with traders who made many voyages from Tahiti in search of pearls in the extensive lagoon of Mangareva. He described them positively as of Polynesian race that extends from Tonga to Easter Island and New Zealand to Sandwich Islands (Hawaii). Moerenhout believed that the language spoken approached that of the people of Rapa, Raivavae and Tupuai in the Australs Islands.

As described in the below map, there is an exhaustive list of languages spoken within and outside the Polynesian Triangle.

Figure 4: The Polynesian Triangle and Languages

POLYNESIAN LANGUAGES:

				OTHER:
1 Niuean	7 Pileni	13 Kapingamarangi	19 Tahitian	25 Fijian
2 Tongan	8 Anutan	14 Nukuoro	20 Mangaia	
3 East Uvean	9 Tikopian	15 Easter Island	21 Rarotongan	
4 Samoan	10 Mele-Fila	16 Mangarevan	22 Tuamotuan	
5 East Futunan	11 Sikaiana	17 Marquesan	23 Rapa	
6 Rennellese	12 Luangiua	18 Hawaiian	24 Maori	
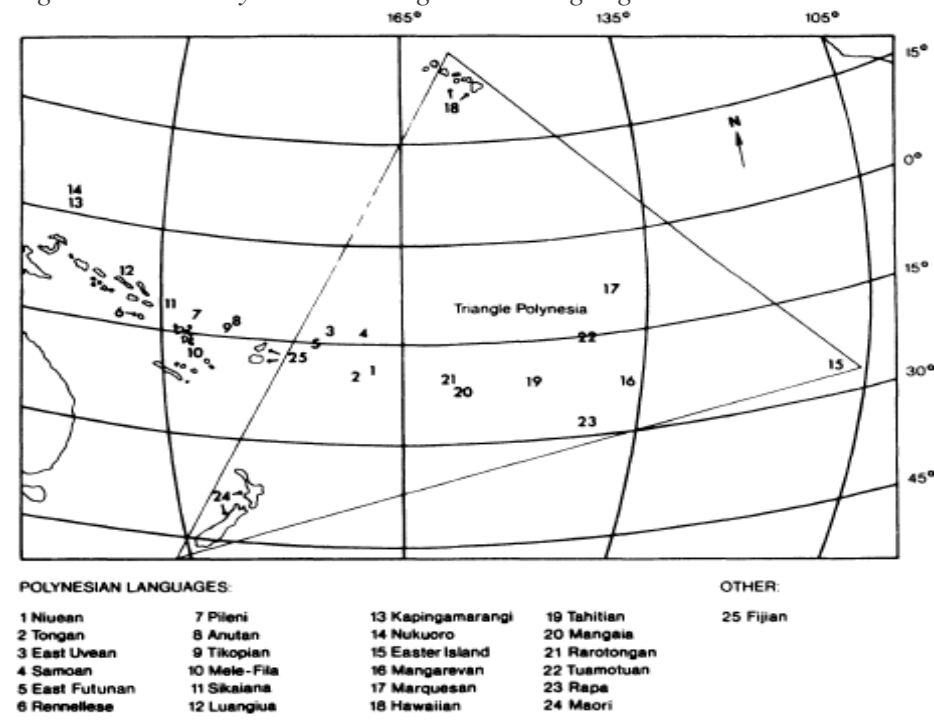
(Brown, 1982, p.216)

When the next navigator French commander Dumont d'Urville approached the shores of Mangareva in 1838 on board the *Astrolabe* accompanied by the *Zélée*, a good deal of contact with the outside world had been established. There is an assumption that the work of the French catholic missionaries Laval and Caret since 1834 has somewhat laid the ground for the pacification of the natives. Dumont d'Urville contrary to his predecessors always adhered to local typonyms whenever he could obtain them. He suggested that the language spoken was more like that of New Zealand than any other of the islands (Smith, 1918).

The last person to have left records of his encounter with the Mangarevans was Dr Lesson (1844), who visited the island on board the *Pylade* in 1840. He was a chief medical officer of the French establishments in Oceania. He suggested that Mangarevan could be related to the Marquesan language based on the full body tattoos that adorned

the native Mangarevans and on the customs and language sounds of Mangarevan. Lesson (1844) cites:

> Je crois qu'il existe une grande connexion entre la race établie sur les Marquises et celle qui vit sur les îles Gambier…Si nous comparons leur analogie physique, leurs moeurs, leur religion primitive, nous serons portés à reconnaître que les Mangaréviens sont une jeune colonie de Marquisiens. Les deux peuples descendent du rameau océanien pur[6](p.111).

It is not unreasonable to surmise that the initial contact followed by many more still depicts the aggressive behaviour of the Mangarevans towards the white Europeans, a behaviour that remained constant when the first catholic missionaries arrived but that changed following the baptism of the last king Te Maputeoa in 1838.

2.1.6   *A 'pure' Polynesian language*

There is a paucity of literary legacy for the most South Eastern Polynesian islands but especially Mangareva. The notable exceptions are Emory's (1963) and Smith's (1918) seminal works, a collection of journals and archives gathered from the middle of the 19th century. These works (Kirch, 1992) while few and far between have greatly assisted in attempting to position the Mangarevan language in the family tree of Polynesian languages. Some of the historical narratives from Smith (1918) and Fisher (2001) have provided key linguistic insights into the Mangarevan language. The work "*Essai de Grammaire de la Langue des Iles Gambier ou Mangareva*" published at Braine-le-Comte, in France in 1908, has proved to be the most comprehensive and descriptive account. It includes grammar, dialogues and dictionary on the Mangarevan language. The publication of this book was largely the work of Fr. Janeau whose primary source was the original manuscript of Fr. Laval who stayed in Mangareva until 1871 before being sent to Tahiti where he died in 1880.

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[6] "I believe there is a strong connection between the race settled in the Marquesas and the one living on the Gambier Islands... If we compare their physical analogy, their customs, their primitive religion, we will be bound to recognise that Mangarevans are a young Marquesan colony. Both peoples come from a pure oceanic strand".

Buck (1938) recognises that this material deserves credit for its contribution to linguistics and acknowledges that this dialect resembles that of the Tuamotus (a range of atolls at the northeast of Mangareva where Paumotu is spoken), Cook Islands and New Zealand Māori. All of these languages retain the *k* and the *ng* consonantal sounds. The Mangarevan language has 5 vowels (a, e, i, o, u) and 9 consonants (h, k, m, n, g (ng), p, r (l), t and v). The modern Mangarevan alphabet evidently derived from the Occidental model, displays some discrepancies in the appearance of the "*h*" sound, which the French missionaries believed to be a weak or silent *h* instead of a glottal sound represented by an inverted comma ('). The indigenous Mangarevan has no "h" or "f" inferring that it is a Tahitian borrowing and suggests that the lexicographer had a prior knowledge of or was influenced by Tahitian orthography. Other discrepancies also appear in the use of the inverted comma of glottal sound as substitute for *f*, *k*, *ng* and *v* in many occurrences:

Table 1: Cognate words between Mangarevan and Tahitian.

ENGLISH	MANGAREVAN	TAHITIAN
Woman	'A'ine /Ve'ine	Vahine
French	'Arani	Farani
Gambier Islands	Magareva	Ma'areva
To show	'Akakite	Fa'a'ite

A second Mangarevan dictionary although less comprehensive than Father V. F. Janeau's one, was published in 1899 and collected by Tregear who in all probability borrowed Laval's dictionary to compile a Mangarevan-English dictionary. In the introduction to this glossary the author acknowledges:

> The interesting matter to the linguist and anthropologist in the following dictionary is that it is a pure Polynesian language. Generally the inhabitants of the Paumotu Archipelago speak a dialect containing some element foreign to the Polynesian tongue; but in Mangareva the speech is nearly identical with the Māori of New Zealand, thousands of miles distant to the westward (Tregear, 2009, Preface).

According to Buck (1938) Tregear also acknowledges the purity of these languages in a letter to Sir James Hector in 1895, the then Chairman of the Board of Governors of the New Zealand Institute. The Mangarevan vocabulary was gathered half a century ago, before English and French words corrupted the native dialect. Today the language remains intact and impervious to adopted *Pākehā* [foreign] words.

The first European 'discoverers' of the Mangareva islands have described the language and attempted to compare it to other Polynesian languages. These comparisons were based on phonology, ethnology, linguistic similarities and anthropology and archaeology findings. Beechey (1831) and Lesson (1844) have mentioned affinities between Mangareva and Marquesas, also supported by Green (1966) who based his conclusions on archaeological findings that confirmed interaction between the two archipelagos.

The theory that New Zealand Māori as the closest language to Mangareva was also supported by the French commander Dumont D'Urville who according to Smith (1918) based his observations on the similarities encountered in both vocabularies.

Table 2: Cognate words between Mangarevan and Māori

ENGLISH	MANGAREVAN (researcher)	MANGAREVAN Peter Buck	MĀORI
White European/Foreign	Papa'a/Popa'a	Pakeha	Pākehā
New	'Ou	Hou	Hou
Lament, cry	Koa	Pihenga	Pihe
Grace/say grace	Karatia	Karatia	Karakia
Genealogy	Ivi kaiga	'Akapapa	Whakapapa
Community centre, place of entertainment	'Are Topere	'Are Tepere	Whare Tapere
To lay	Tokoto	Tokoto	Takoto
Cold	Makariri	Makariri	Makariri

Elder	Komatua	Komatua	Kaumātua
Tomorrow	Apopo	Apopo	Āpōpō

The arrival in 1834 of an unidentified native of New Zealand who acted as an interpreter for the French missionaries provided compelling evidence that supported the Māori/ Mangarevan language connection. Buck (1938) hinted that the references of the legend of Te Ika-a-Maui that became included in the native history of the birth of Mangareva could be credited to the Māori[7] interpreter, which perhaps reinforces the closeness of both languages. There are two other significant linguistic connections with Mangareva; Rapa Nui (Easter Island) and an Australs group (located to the north-west of Mangareva). The merchant Moerenhout observed close similarities between these languages. Thomson (1891) provides an historic account that could explain the Rapa Nui and Mangarevan language connection. In 1878 the Catholic mission station on the island of Rapa Nui was abandoned and about 300 people followed the missionaries to Mangareva.

The last linguistic influence that needs to be acknowledged is the Cook Islands connection. It is likely that the arrival of Tupua and his sister Hua from Rarotonga as one of the first visitors to Mangareva initiated contact between Mangareva and the Cooks. Although this does not provide irrefutable evidence of inter-language influence, nowadays Māori New Zealand and Cook Islands are the closest languages that the native Mangarevans are most likely to understand. This genealogical account of the linguistic impacts that the Mangarevan language has absorbed seems to suggest that Mangareva was an area of great confluence for inter-island migrations and exchanges. This is compounded by the theory that Mangarevan could have been the first settlers of

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[7] The legend of the birth of Mangareva was attributed to the legendary human/semi-god Maui who used a piece of one of his ears to fish out Mangareva while on a fishing expedition with his brothers. The Maori version shows Maui on a fishing expedion with his brothers but without their knowledge until this latter fished out Te Ika-a-Maui (the North Island).

Rapa Nui (Green, 1998, 2000). The impact of Mangareva has had on her closest neighbouring islands is difficult to refute.

However there is conclusive evidence (ethnological, archaeological and linguistic) that identifies the Marquesas Islands as the dispersal centre in East Polynesia (Green, 1966; Sinoto, 1983; Anderson; 2003; Hooper; 2006). Buck (1938) bases his hypothesis and assumptions on his comparative studies between the Mangarevan ethnology, language and horticulture with those of the Marquesas. Furthermore, *Havaiki* in the Mangarevan traditions seems to point to the Marquesas and not to Tahiti (Society Islands). There are other areas of comparison, and in particular some of the close variations of Mangarevan language regarding horticultural terminology that adds further credence to Buck's conclusions. However, it was the arrival of the important visitor Tupa in 1330 AD from the Marquesas that revolutionised the horticulture of Mangareva. He introduced cultivable plants, including breadfruit and banana trees that could only grow on mountainous terrains (Marquesas or Society Islands). Those plants' names from the Marquesas underwent local name changes before they were spread to all of Mangareva.

Table 3: Cognate words between Mangarevan and Marquesan

ENGLISH	MANGAREVA	MARQUESAN
Breadfruit	Mei	Mei
Candlenut	Rama	'Ama
Coconut	Ere'i	E'ehi
Paper mulberry	Ute (eute)	Ute

Those local changes meant that the *r* sound was dropped from their dialect. Buck's assertions are based on the fact that it is more probable that a sound disappears than for Mangarevans to possibly be able to convert the above plants' names by adding an *r* sound. However he noted that Marquesans dropped the *r* sound from their dialect just like the Mangarevans dropped the *h* sound from theirs. The dropping of the *h* sound suggests that it might have been the various contact between Rarotonga and Mangareva

that ended the use of the *h* sound. However it could also have been a possibility that the dropping of the *h* occurred independently in Mangareva as it did in Rarotonga.

Buck (1938) maintains that it is widely accepted that Mangarevan is an offshoot of central Polynesian culture that found its route to Mangareva by way of the Marquesas. Furthermore, his discussions with the natives of Mangareva refer to Hiva and Ruapou which are two islands from the Marquesas archipelago (Hiva Oa and Ua Pou). This is indicative of an ancient knowledge of the Marquesas supported by cultural affinities. However Mangarevan culture still remains different from Western Polynesia culture (mainly Samoa and Tonga) in its mythology, religion and records of legendary heroes and the Marquesas must be considered as the secondary centre of distribution after the Society Islands.

2.1.7 *Retracing the first Mangarevans*

Scientists (Emory & Sinoto, 1969; Green & Kelly, 1970; Green & Weisler, 2000; Anderson et al. 2003; Conte & Kirch, 2004) approach chronological research as a multi-discipline enterprise where ethnological data sit beside archaeological findings. This multidisciplinary approach aligns linguistic information with archaeological, sociology, and economics to provide supporting evidence in retracing the first settlers of Mangareva. The early accounts of Mangarevan settlement relied heavily on the observation of early missionaries, navigators or seafarers (Beechey, 1831; Lesson, 1844; Laval, 1868; Delbos, 2011) who ventured into her waters. Buck's concurs and argues that the observations of European settlers are unreliable because:

> much of the ethnological data concerning native races has been derived from the writings of people who had no training in the importance of accurate details. Sailors, travellers, traders and missionaries were the first to come in contact with the native races of the Pacific (1926, p.182)

In addition the problem is complicated by the Eurocentric approach. The observation of Mangarevan lifeway is essentially from a European perspective. Presenting native data through the lens of a western worldview is likely to be a misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the native reality. Notwithstanding, a scientific approach that is by scholars who are trained in the scientific method has its merits. However, it would be negligent to ignore the traditional knowledge of *tangata Mangareva* (first Mangarevan settlers). Therefore a multidisciplinary approach to early settlement in Mangareva must include Mangarevan knowledge if it is to be credible. In regards to early settlement of Mangareva the consensus amongst the native population supports the Marquesan connection. In this respect scientific theory and native knowledge are in agreement.

In terms of ground-breaking scientific discoveries, Green would stand out as a multidisciplinary and accomplished scientist, probably one of the most influential figures in the field of Oceanic prehistory. Dubbed the "linguistic archaeologist" by Pawley (2010), Green was amongst the first to work on the sequencing of Polynesian settlements through the identification of the Lapita cultural complex (Green, 1973); the investigation of the evolution of Polynesian languages and the settlement patterns in Oceania (Green, 1966). On the subject of Green's works related to the Mangareva archipelago, he spent half a year in 1959 in Mangareva where he used modern techniques to investigate the archaeology of that group of islands. His conclusions were that findings from excavations including harpoon heads and burial customs indicate a strong relationship with the Marquesas Islands (Sinoto, 1983). Those findings have allowed him to maintain once more that Mangareva was probably first settled circa 700-800 A.D. He also ascertained that, based on linguistics and archaeological evidence, the peripheral islands of Pitcairn, Henderson and Easter Island, were conclusively peopled by Mangarevans (Green, 2000).

Emory's contribution to the linguistic subgroupings within Polynesia with his seminal works on classification of the Polynesian languages is mentioned. As a good linguist who accompanied Buck to Mangareva he was valuable. Although his works were in their infancy and sometimes questioned by his peers in terms of the robustness of his conclusions, his literary legacy on Mangareva was of a great benefit to Buck (1938).

In terms of local scholars, the Mangarevan *rogorogo*[8] were the most revered because dedicated to the king's genealogy. They recited two genealogical lines: the senior line and the junior line. The senior line is made up of 33 generations if one generation is said to equate approximately 25 years, starting from the last Mangarevan king Te Maputeoa or Gregorio II (Buck, p.96). The very first kings were of mythological forms but maybe and as suggested in other Polynesian genealogies, those forms were only the very first chiefs who were deified. It's only during the colonisation period of Mangareva (1250 AD) that provides some kind of concrete genealogy of Mangareva's kings (Buck, p.15).

In the matter of kingship, one of the distinctive features that have drawn researchers' attention was the development of Mangarevan society which appeared completely set apart from anywhere else in East Polynesia. Lesson (1844), Laval (1968) and more especially Buck (1938), have ascertained that the social hierarchy is highly stratified. It is made up of the aristocracy *togo'iti* (nobles) and the *'urumanu* (commoners). The 'urumanu represented the majority of the population and most were farmers or fishermen.

Mangareva became a united kingdom under the 25rd king Apeiti when the district of Rikitea defeated the warlord from Taku, Tupou (Buck, 1938; p.46). Before the king's reign the *togo'iti* were land and sea owners who would lend some of their estates to the

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[8] The rogorogo were of noble birth and only of highest descent. They were a group of intellectuals, experts in genealogy. They were responsible for the sacred chants on the day of important festivals. Their gods were Tu (god of War) and Te Agiagi.

'urumanu for exploitation. In exchange, the *'urumanu* would swear allegiance to their landlords and be under their protection. In deference, farmers would offer their very first crop to the owners along with the most sacred seafood (octopus and turtle) thereby highlighting the social hierarchy status quo. The political structure was mainly maintained by war hence the importance and ever-present state of warfare for the Mangarevan noble class.

Conte and Kirch (2004, p.56) stated, "Mangareva appears as a small stratified society but with parallels to open societies in which socio-political statuses are fluid and often non hereditary". There were as many chiefs as there were strong and powerful men in each island and within the districts of the main island of Mangareva. This particularity of the Mangareva society might to some extent shed some light on the constant state of warfare between tribes and faction chiefs eager to prove themselves as worthy rulers of the peoples of the main island. While social structure was upheld by allegiance and political power by war, the economics was provided through the farming of lands and the most important plant the breadfruit. As *kai a te oge* (food of the famished/during famine) or a *kaikai 'akariki* (royal food), the *mei* was the main staple diet on the island. Big holes dug in the ground were used for baking or storing breadfruit in times of famine.

Additionally, the unearthed findings such as artefacts, objects, relics provide information about the circumstances and contexts of Mangareva forefathers' migrations and settlements (Green, 1998 & 2000; Anderson & al. 2003; Conte & Kirch, 2004). However, it is still amongst the local narratives of the natives that the precursors' names and titles are being passed on through oral tradition (Buck, 1938, p.15). Mangareva played a key role in the expansion of Polynesians, as already mentioned they are reputed to be the first settlers of Rapa Nui, the south-eastern corner and most remote

island of the Polynesian triangle. Mangareva in turn is situated at the extreme southeast of French Polynesia and occupies a key position in the prehistoric colonisation as reaffirmed by Anderson et al. (2003): 'In short, Mangareva is likely to yield information critical to answering some long-standing question of eastern Polynesian prehistory, including issues in the chronology of colonisation and the nature of regional interaction spheres (p.119).'

It is apparent that Mangareva culture and language intersects with that of Polynesia and offers some distinguishing features. Of most interest is the correlation between the language of Mangareva and New Zealand Māori. It is all the more remarkable given the geographical distance between the two places. The influences on Mangarevan language and culture, such as first contact with Europeans have also shaped the evolution of Mangarevan society. The most significant outcome of European influence is arguably, the Mangarevan language shift. The next chapter is a literature review which is a comprehensive overview using Mangarevan language shift as the main theme. This provides the context for the study and will also present an idea of the challenges that a language shift reversal will entail.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

The literature review provides a broad context which facilitates the understanding of how communities once monolingual in their native tongue, are now predominantly monolingual in the majority language(s) (May 2001; Gal 1979; Grenoble & Whaley, 2006; Hinton & Hale, 2001; Thomason, 2001). In addition one of the main purposes of this literature review will be to help understand the effect of language shift. By extension it will provide recognised patterns that would explain the current state of language shift that the Mangarevan language has gone through since its initial contact with the first European explorers.

The colonisation of the Mangarevan language and its speakers didn't start with a similarly crusade like movement led by the fathers of the Catholic Picpus congregation. It rather started some decades earlier when Captain Wilson in 1797 decided to name *Magareva* and *Auorotini* respectively Gambier Islands and Mount Duff, a practice perpetuated by following navigators thereafter. In the previous chapter the act of naming places without recognising the native toponyms was criticised by Smith (1918) and Lesson (1844). I have dubbed this act 'passive appropriation' where naming places encounters no physical resistance but illustrates the power of words, the power of language. This act of name appropriation by the Europeans is simply dismissive of the fundamental cultural concept of place or person naming system in Polynesia (Lindstrom, 1985). The naming of a place or a person is a sacred act as it relates directly to the historical past of the site or the genealogy of the person.

The local narrative gives the full name of Auorotini as *maga no te utu akairoga i tapu'ia* which translates as 'the mountain of the sacred symbols'. This clause takes all its significance when one knows that only future kings were taken to the peak of the

mountain for a temporary while to stay away from the population maintaining therefore their status of sacredness. This narrative is supported by Buck (1938) who calls *Auorotini*[9] the royal mountain nursery: 'on arrival at the summit the child and his personal attendants occupied the houses erected and became enveloped by a strict *tapu'* (p. 115).

This definition is only a part of the convoluted meaning of *Auorotini* ascribed by our ancestors because it is linked to the cultural heritage of the indigenous people whereas the name endorsed by the Europeans is purely coincidental. The full rendition of this sacred place in Mangarevan language carries much more cultural references than the name of a foreign seafarer, albeit famous to Europeans. Unfortunately the nature of English as an imperialist language at the time, wants the coined name to be most remembered due to the power of history and international language. Consequently the impact of the one-name fallacy only (Harlow, 2005) made Mount Duff the only name known for the highest peak of Mangareva to the younger population's linguistic and cultural heritage.

The road for colonisation is usually paved by the work of evangelisation by missionaries in Oceania and this was the case with the first French Catholic missionaries (Kirk, 2012) who convinced the king Te Ma-Puteoa to demand the French protectorate in 1844 (Laval, 1968). The missionaries were cautious of the influx of Europeans' undesirable life styles and customs along with their impact on the population of Mangareva. The missionaries have endlessly recalled to the highest courts in France that the kingdom of Mangareva as a protectorate, governs itself by its own customs and laws. It is easy to guess that the aforementioned courts didn't validate the request. It left Mangareva without protection from external influences and therefore making the church

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[9] The original quote sees Buck himself using *Mount Duff* instead of Auorotini.

as their last protector (Laval, 1968, p. xcix) and according to Kirk (2012) leaving the way for an autocratic theocracy.

The conversion to Christianity signalled the shift in the language from Mangarevan to French. The intentional or unintentional language shift (Crystal, 2000) made by parents to adopt a more prestigious language for their children (French, Tahitian, or both) to the detriment of their own, is again a behavioural locus observed worldwide (Baker, 2006) causing the problematic situation of inter-generational transmission of language (Fishman, 1991). The so-called economic prosperity (Fishman, 1968) that such a language shift would create will undoubtedly accelerate the passage from endangered to nearly extinct language (Kincade, 1991). Related to the aforementioned issue is the strong feeling of shame among the natives of the worthlessness of Mangarevan compared to the added value that French or Tahitian provide (Tetahiatupa, 2007; 2004).

In addition the impact of the French assimilation programme across the whole of French Polynesia territories has greatly damaged the natives' language practice and therefore triggered cultural, social and economic changes (Regnault, 1997, 2003). It was particularly noticed among the military satellite islands such as Mangareva, Hao, Moruroa and Fangataufa.

Language contact (Thomason, 2001) has in many ways facilitated the obsolescence of minority languages (Dorian, 1989) and Mangarevan will prove to be as good (or bad) an example as any other. This work will indeed inquire about the reasons why linguistically related groups manifest significantly different rates of language obsolescence (Grenoble et al., 1998).

The corollary is to explore strategies and policies in an attempt to reverse the effects of this phenomenon. In the case of the Mangarevan language, French (to a much higher

degree than Tahitian) is the dominant language toward which the language shift has tended. Fishman's (1991) theoretical framework will prominently feature as account for the occurrence of language shift. In this context it is imperative that a discussion is undertaken on the ramifications of language contact when majority linguistic societies collide with minority linguistic communities. This covers specifically language contact and its consequences such as language shift, language endangerment, language planning and policies and ultimately language death (Crystal, 2000; Bell, 2013; Hickey, 2012). The second part details societal transformation the Mangarevan community has absorbed since that critical contact, especially in terms of socio-linguistic alterations. The impact is the perceptible changes in the way the language is spoken inter-generationally. The native language is almost exclusively spoken by the aging Mangarevan population and is used in all of the different social contexts. They only communicate in broken French with the younger generation whose Mangarevan language is scarce and restricted to church services and school at best.

3.1   Language contact

Language contact is a difficult concept to define because the literature and most of the definitions talk about the process of language contact in relation to their impact and outcomes. The following excerpts demonstrate the complexity of defining language contact. 'Languages come into contact when people come into contact. Language contact mainly occurs as a result of mobility through which speakers of one language encounter speakers of another" (Bell 2013; p.47). In contrast Thomason (2001) describes language contact in its simplest definition as 'the use of more than one language in the same place at the same time' (p.1). Muysken (2012) provides yet another perspective:

> The lives of people who speak a language influence its very nature
> and properties in many ways. Often these people also speak other

languages, and then these languages may exert an influence on it as
well. This influence we call language contact (p. 265).

These quotes are related to the consequences and effects of language contact such as
speakers having to choose between which language/s to use and when to use them. As
Bell (2013) argues, languages become socially stratified in relation to one another
(diglossia) and language shift and language maintenance appear; minority languages are
threatened with the possibility of loss (attrition and death); new languages are created
(pidgin and creoles), and languages or varieties are intertwined in the same discourse
(code switching or code mixing).

Ostler (2011) provides another perspective and states that 'the cause of language shift is
clear: it can only result from language contact, although it is by no means necessary that
language contact will always give rise to language shift' (p.320). Ostler develops a
model of the process that depicts three traditional channels of language contact leading
to language shift: migration (speech community moving to a new location), infiltration
(speakers deciding to settle in another community) or diffusion (speakers of a language
somehow cause others to pick it up)[10].

O'Shannessy (2011) acknowledges in concurrence with Ostler's model that:

Languages and language varieties become endangered because their
speakers are in contact with a group whose language or variety has, or
is gaining, greater social, political and economic prestige in the local
or wider arena (p. 78).

However, her argument is more explicit and identifies the main structures of society that
are usually affected when a group becomes dominant through language contact. Those
structures are the social, economic and political spheres. O'Shannessy (2011)
emphasises the underlying causes of language contact as inherently social.

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[10] The latter channel of this "trichotomy" will be discussed in much more details in the case of Mangarevan language
noticeably framed in the ideology of French colonisation through diffusion.

Notwithstanding, O'Shannessy agrees that Ostler's three traditional channels (migration, infiltration and diffusion) are critical to language contact. O'Shannessy also adds military occupation (or colonisation) and increased mobility of speakers as other indicators of language contact. However she clearly agrees with Ostler's earlier observation that language shift is not necessarily the final outcome:

> The outcomes of language contact can be language maintenance, language shift or language creation. The outcomes are all results of mechanism commonly found in situations of language contact, but do not always lead to the extreme results of language shift or creation (p.79).

In some ways Williams (2012) concurs with Ostler's channel of diffusion. According to the latter, 'when languages are in contact they tend to present competition. For competition to arise between two languages, two conditions are necessary: a common space and the symbolic stakes of the competition' (p. 180). What can be inferred from this?

Firstly, that territorial acquisition whether referred to as physical layout or linguistically assimilated domains, has already taken place and secondly stemming from the term 'competition', dominance and power struggle for majority language status is firmly suggested. It is interesting to notice that terminologies such as dominance, power and competition are recurrent elements in language contact situations. This has been extensively debated by Phillipson (2011) for whom in imperial and colonial contexts, dominant groups express their power in three ways: colonisation of the *bodies* of the minority groups (slavery and labour exploitation); colonisation of *territories and natural resources* and colonisation of the *mind* (colonised peoples internalising the values of the dominant power).

Laponce (1987) lists a few propositions of what tends to happen when languages come into contact:

Languages tend to form homogenous spatial groupings; languages tend either to specialize their functions or to stratify; the stratification and specialisation of languages is determined by the socially dominant group; the social dominance of a language is a function of the number of its speakers and the political and social stratification of the linguistic groups in contact (p. 266).

In retrospect, one can strongly argue that Laponce's propositions hint that the dominance of a majority language has already taken place and that the search of improvements for linguistically influenced groups' conflict, is what is being pursued. This process is known as language policy and language planning.

As Fishman (1991) says 'language shift is often a slow and cumulative process' (p.40) and it appears therefore to be the critical point when a language has entered the course towards threatened language status. It is in need of a revitalisation plan that could be attained through language documentation, language maintenance, language planning or through a radical strategy that Fishman calls *reversing language shift* (RLS).

Before looking at language shift it seems appropriate that we first attempt to understand why the study of language contact situations is worth undertaking.

3.1.1   Understanding language contact

Winford (2013) tells us that it was probably with Weinreich's pioneering book in 1953 that priority was given to studying and understanding language contact. Winford quotes Weinreich stating that it is only 'in a broad psychological and sociocultural setting that language contact can be best understood' (p.363). The study of language contact has to take into account the linguistically internal facts and descriptions of the communities in which two or more languages were spoken. He saw the goals of language contact studies as being able 'to predict typical forms of interference from the sociolinguistic description of a bilingual community and a structural description of its languages' (p.363). Weinreich says that language contact must be studied at both the macro and the micro levels. He therefore argues that there are non-structural factors that operate on the

societal (macro level) and the individual (micro level) dimensions. We must also recognise that the relationship between the social and the linguistic has also been a topic of study by the founding theorist of sociolinguistics Dell Hymes (Bell, 2013).

We have acknowledged earlier that language contact situations infer language(s) power, dominance and competition as recalled by Williams and Phillipson (Spolsky, 2012), where the weaker ones will gradually fall into the state of endangerment. But it must be reminded that some of the negative consequences of language contact might largely be due to societies' attitude and behaviour towards languages competing and pressures of various types (Bradley and Bradley, 2002; Romaine, 2006; Fishman, 1991). When language shift has taken place it could either lead to language or dialect death (Nettle & Romaine, 2000; Janse & Tol, 2003) or it could result in some kind of language(s) stability especially in terms of language diglossia (Fergusson, 1959) where two languages exist together in a relatively stable arrangement through different uses attached to each language.

Various grids have been suggested to measure the vitality or the threatened state of a language and we will see that in the grids retained, the stages or levels of language endangerment are displayed with exhaustive or partial definitions. The grids assess the relative strength of regional or minority language in competition with another more dominant language or languages for survival. The tables would only have value as far as the minority language group or society wishes to reverse the language shift and loss, and take action to "protect" the language through concrete policies (Ricento, 2006).

The most common model of measurement is Fishman's (1991) Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS). The famous model allows the researcher to measure how disruptive the process of intergenerational transmission has become and

this framework will therefore help to analyse the health of any language and indicates to the language planners where the focus of their efforts should be. There are eight stages that are to be read from the most endangered language (stage 8) to the least endangered (stage 1) and *X*ish representing the native language and *Y*ish the language shifted to.

Figure 5: GIDS (Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale)

Stage 8	Most vestigial Xish users are socially isolated and need to be reassembled and taught to demographically un-concentrated adults
Stage 7	Most Xish users are a socially integrated and ethnographically active population but are beyond child-bearing age
Stage 6	Informal intergenerational oralcy transmission and demographically concentration and institutional reinforcement attainment
Stage 5	Xish literacy at home, school and community
Stage 4	Xish in lower education that meets the requirements of compulsory education laws
Stage 3	Use of Xish in the lower work sphere (outside Xish community) involving interaction between Xmen and Ymen
Stage 2	Xish only in both lower governmental services and mass media
Stage 1	Some use of Xish in higher level educational, occupational and media efforts (but without the safety provided by political independence)

(Fishman, 1991[11])

The UNESCO's language and vitality endangerment framework establishes six degrees of vitality based on nine factors and the most salient is intergenerational language transmission.

Figure 6: The framework from the UNESCO organisation

Degree of endangerment	Intergenerational Language Transmission
Safe	Language is spoken by all generations; intergenerational transmission is uninterrupted
Vulnerable	Most children speak the language, but it may be restricted to certain domains (e.g., home)
Definitely endangered	Children no longer learn the language as mother tongue in the home
Severely endangered	Language is spoken by grandparents and older generations; while the parent generation may understand it, they do not speak it to children or among themselves
Critically endangered	The youngest speakers are grandparents and older, and they speak the language partially and infrequently
Extinct	There are no speakers left

(Lewis, 2009, p.20)

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[11] Retrieved from http://www.endangered-languages.com/whatis.php

Figure 7: EGIDS (Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale)

Level	Label	Description
0	International	The language is widely used between nations in trade, knowledge exchange, and international policy.
1	National	The language is used in education, work, mass media, and government at the national level.
2	Provincial	The language is used in education, work, mass media, and government within major administrative subdivisions of a nation.
3	Wider Communication	The language is used in work and mass media without official status to transcend language differences across a region.
4	Educational	The language is in vigorous use, with standardization and literature being sustained through a widespread system of institutionally supported education.
5	Developing	The language is in vigorous use, with literature in a standardized form being used by some though this is not yet widespread or sustainable.
6a	Vigorous	The language is used for face-to-face communication by all generations and the situation is sustainable.
6b	Threatened	The language is used for face-to-face communication within all generations, but it is losing users.
7	Shifting	The child-bearing generation can use the language among themselves, but it is not being transmitted to children.
8a	Moribund	The only remaining active users of the language are members of the grandparent generation and older.
8b	Nearly Extinct	The only remaining users of the language are members of the grandparent generation or older who have little opportunity to use the language.
9	Dormant	The language serves as a reminder of heritage identity for an ethnic community, but no one has more than symbolic proficiency.
10	Extinct	The language is no longer used and no one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language.

Retrieved from http://www.ethnologue.com/about/language-status

To understand better the EGIDS, it might be easier to assess the levels of endangerment of a language if one groups the factors that lead to language shift in 3 categories: the nature of the speaker base; domains of use; and both internal and external support for or pressures against using the language (Austin & Sallabank, 2011).

Another useful tool was the list of nine criteria compiled by a UNESCO ad hoc group in 2003. The purpose was to examine the disruption or vitality effect of a language, the

three main factors were: the numbers of speakers across generations and throughout population; how and where the language is used; the value of the language by its speakers and the material that has been produced about a language (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006). In relation to the Mangarevan language health, indicators from the GIDS and EGIDS grids seem to locate it at stage 7 or as shifting whereas the UNESCO table indicates the Mangarevan language as severely endangered[12].

Other possibilities of disappearance because of language contact could be due to the language not being documented and therefore speakers don't leave any language legacy to the next generations. Natural disasters or people succumbing to human induced events such as warfare or foreign diseases brought in by the intruders can also be regarded as precipitating language death (Thomason, 2001). Overt repression and cultural/political/economic dominance also count as other language disappearance factors (Austin & Sallybank, 2011). In some cases, language contact is consciously avoided and the preservationists would seek to maintain the *status quo* rather than develop the language. They are concerned that any change and not just language change, will damage the chances of their language surviving. Such a group is thus traditionalist, anti-modern in outlook. The language is therefore being preserved within the established boundaries of the community (Baker, 2006).

In this latest case the Pennsylvania German language spoken by the Amish community in the United States of America is of particular relevance. However, particularly among the non-sectarian Pennsylvania Germans, the language is dying. Huffines (1991) stated

> For non-sectarians the frequent switching almost paradoxically protects their Pennsylvania German from innovations based on English while at the same time it increasingly contributes to the disuse and death of Pennsylvania German (p.136).

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[12] This is an evaluation that is well corroborated by the participants, through the data collected during my fieldwork research.

One can therefore see that language contact generally instigates changes that have different outcomes upon the recipient hosts.

3.1.2 *Language shift: causes and consequences*

Language shift refers to the process whereby a speech community switches to another language. Language loss or language shift involves a situation where speech communities witness the gradual displacement of one language by another in their lives (Dorian, 1981). When a linguistic community ceases to use its original language, language death is said to occur (Shin, 2013). Language shift cannot occur without language contact, human interaction between speakers, that is the essential prerequisite. "In a sense all languages are contact languages: language is the ultimate human tool used to establish and to maintain contact between people" (Bakker & Matras, 2013).

When an indigenous group finds it-self to be the minority in a country governed by speakers of a different language, language shift can either be voluntary or involuntary especially for immigrant minorities (Hinton et al., 2001).

As already alluded to, the extreme consequence of language contact is language shift and if no intervention strategy is implemented, it usually leads to the disappearance of the endangered vernacular, subjugated by the dominant language. This happens when the speakers of the minority language (ml) shift to the majority language (ML). The below formula copied from Fishman (1991) illustrates perfectly the trend where *X* is the language undergoing shift and *Y* the language replacing *X* and the process of shift can be represented in the following display:

Figure 8: The 3-bilingual steps of language shift

$$X \longrightarrow Xy \longrightarrow XY \longrightarrow xY \longrightarrow Y$$

Through three bilingual stages, mono-lingualism in X has turned into monolingualism in Y and this is the typical process of language shift. In other terms the bilingualism period is characterised as a gradual shift from indigenous language dominance (Xy) to equal competence in both language (XY) to majority language dominance (Yx) resulting eventually to loss or death of the indigenous language (Y).

García (2011) uses a similar formula in what she calls the subtractive model where minority language speakers (L1) especially through mainstream education, are encouraged to abandon their native language to adopt the dominant language (L2).

Figure 9: Language assimilation

$$L1 + L2 - L1 \longrightarrow L2$$

According to Freeman (1998) there have been instances where the United States of America has been the worst example of monolingualism practice. Sending indigenous children to boarding schools effectively cut off from their parents and communities contact, resulted in subtracting them from bilingualism (one of the reasons that led to the death of many indigenous languages death throughout the world): an effect called language attrition. This case scenario is close to linguistic annihilation. Fishman (1989) and Hornberger (1991) have also approached language contact effects from a social perspective by including the contextual characteristics (social background of actors) and structural characteristics (situation and discourse types).

3.1.3 *Endangered Languages*

What is an endangered language? For Dorian (1980) there are three symptoms: fewer speakers, fewer domains of use and structural simplification. Krauss (1992) gives us three categories of languages in his comparison of languages to endangered biological species: moribund (no longer being learned as mother tongue by children); endangered

(language still being learned by children but will disappear during the coming century if the present situation persists) and safe (languages with official state support and very large numbers of speakers). Fishman (1991) uses his eight-stage intergenerational disruption scale.

Why care about linguistic diversity since languages have always disappeared through human history?

A cursory glance at the number of languages remains very approximate but there are around 6,500[13] living languages in the world today (Krauss, 1992; Grimes, 2000; Wurm, 2001; Austin et al., 2001; Mesthrie, 2011; Batibo, 2005) with Asia holding a third of the world languages (33%), Africa (30%) and Pacific countries (19%) being the biggest holders. Europe and America North and South hold respectively 3%, 4% and 11%.

Figure 10: *The proportion of languages in each continent of the world*
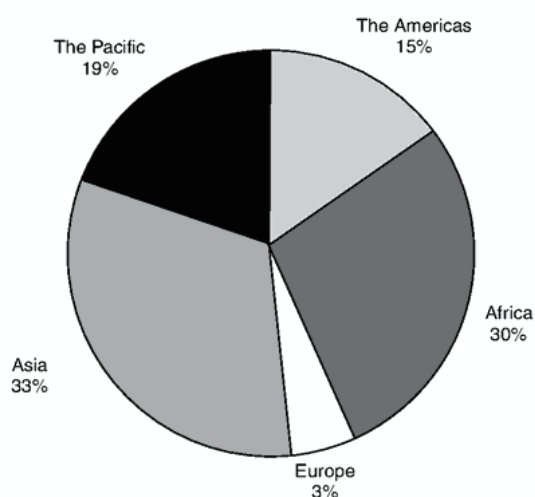
 (Austin et al., 2011; p.5)

The above figures visibly illustrate that the former colonies still share the greatest number of languages variety except Europe as the least linguistically diverse continent.

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[13] There are still issues regarding how languages are counted and what qualifies as endangered languages.

According to Powles (2006, p.62) what gives weight to the issues of linguistics and culture in the Pacific are the following figures of language diversity: 832 in Papua New Guinea; 226 in Melanesia; 20 in Micronesia and 38 in Polynesia.

Krauss (1992), estimates that within the next 100 years 20% to 50% would die or become close to dying while Wurm (2001) thinks that 50% of the world's languages are endangered. Krauss (1992) also adds: 'It is a realistic possibility that 90% of mankind's languages will become extinct or doomed to extinction by 2100'. Why such an ominous statement?

Krauss (1992) contends that 50% of the world's languages are no longer being reproduced among children so 50% could die in the next 100 years if no conservation measures are in place and an additional 40% are threatened or endangered. Economic, social and political change is one such threat. Such threat can be found in countries where there are a large number of languages and where centralisation, economic and social development will take priority over language survival. Nine countries have more than 200 languages (Australia, Brazil, Cameroon, India, Indonesia, Mexico Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea and Zaire). Those countries account for more than half of the world's languages. Assimilation, urbanisation, centralization, uniformity and economic pressures will make futures generations prefer majority languages.

If 90% of the world's languages are vulnerable, language planning measures to maintain linguistic and cultural diversity are urgently required (Grenoble et al., 1998) as is the ecology of languages (Mulhlhausler, 2001).

Crystal (2000) suggests that there are five basic arguments why retaining language is necessary: diversity, identity, receptacles of history, human capital theory and the dimension of language interest itself.

It is somewhat accepted that ecological diversity is vital to allow growth and varieties. The concept of an ecosystem is that all living organisms survive and prosper through a network of complex and delicate relationships (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Damaging one of the elements in the ecosystem will result in unforeseen consequences for the whole of the system. Nettle et al., (2000) argue that cultural diversity and biological diversity are inseparable.

> Evolution depends on genetic diversity. It should be noted that the genetic analogy can take us only so far: there is no case for a Darwinian perspective, in which we note dispassionately the survival of the linguistic fittest, because the factors which cause the death of languages are, in principle, very largely under human control
> (Jones et al., 1993).

Where biodiversity and rich ecosystems exist, so will linguistic and cultural diversity. Evolution has been aided by genetic diversity, with species genetically adapting in order to survive in different environments. Diversity contains the potential for adaptation and uniformity can endanger a species by providing inflexibility and inadaptability. Our success on this planet has been due to an ability to adapt to different kinds of environment over thousands of years (atmospheric as well as cultural). Such ability is born out of diversity (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000).

Identity concerns the shared characteristics of members of a group, community or region; it helps provide the security and status of a shared existence. Identity is expressed via many forms but language is almost always present in identity formation and identity display. Language is an index, symbol and a marker of identity; languages provide a link to a personalized past, a means to reach the archive of knowledge, ideas and beliefs from the past. 'Every language is a museum, a monument to every culture it has been vehicle to' (Nettle et al., 2000, p.14). The range, richness and wealth of cultures, homelands and histories are lost. This limits the choice of pasts to preserve,

and the value of life past and present. It is analogous to humanity losing one of its whole libraries built over years.

Lastly, Crystal (2000) argues that language itself is important, each language having different sounds, grammar and vocabulary that reveal something different about linguistic organisation and structure. The more languages there are to study, the more our understanding about the beauty of language grows: each language has its own unique features.

3.1.4 *Language Death*

Is language loss or death an inevitable part of the cycle of social and linguistic growth? In this case one puts the responsibilities of the loss or death of a language down to the failure on its part, or its speakers, to compete adequately in the world of languages where only the fittest can and should survive (Ladefoged, 1992; Nettle and al., 2000). However academics (Fishman 1991; Hale and al. 1992; Grenoble et al., 1998; Nettle et al., 2000) strongly object to the mechanical inevitability and outcome of cause and effect. There are internal as well as external factors that influence and impact the fate of a language. The fact that the children do not acquire the language any longer is often singled out as the most important factor contributing to language death (Fishman 1991).

In a nutshell 'a language is said to be dead when no one speaks it any more' (Crystal, 2000) and examples of last speakers are numerous (Baker, 2005). This statement clearly stresses that the heart of a language is represented by its native speakers and in general the direct cause of language death is that at some point the native speakers stopped using it as their means of communication. Stopping to use a language is not always done as a conscious act but the demands of a dominant society and language have a lot

to do with the cessation of use of an endangered language (Hinton & al., 2001). Reversing the situation demands that native speakers use the language again.

Several scholars (Kincade, 1991; Krauss, 1992; Wurm, 2001) have somewhat made predictions through determining criteria for endangerment and developing models, for language decline and death. Kincade (1991) has considered the transmission to and the acquisition by younger speakers of the language; Krauss (1992) has classified a language as 'safe' if more than 100,000 speakers speak it; Eisenlohr (2004) and Moriarty (2011) argue the importance for young people to be concerned about and engaged in keeping their endangered language 'strong'.

However the safety in numbers approach suggested by Krauss (1992) doesn't alone ensure language preservation. According to Nettle et al. (2000) a language status and contributing attitudes affected by factors such as socio-historical events, can determine the language path toward survival or extinction. It is often the combination of these factors, an "intricate matrix of variables" (Grenoble et al., 1998), which provides the right conditions for its preservation or death.

Other powerful factors in language maintenance, shift and death are attitudes, feelings and beliefs towards the vernaculars especially in view of the disappearance of many smaller languages, those with relatively small speaker populations (Nettle et al., 2000). In this tone, Fishman (1971) underlines the inevitable construct of language from speakers' assessments and behaviour:

> Language is not merely a carrier of content whether latent or manifest. Language itself is content, a referent for loyalties and animosities, an indicator of social statuses and personal relationships, a marker of situations and topics as well as of the societal goals and the large-scale value-laden arenas of interaction that typify every speech community (p.1).

Grenoble et al. (1998) state that 'subjective attitudes of a speech community towards its own and other languages are paramount for predicting language shift'. We can virtually

always trace language death to the pattern of political, military and economic takeover (Hinton & al., 2001; Osler, 2011; O'Shannessy, 2011).

This concept can be applied to the situation in Mangareva where the decline in the language is inextricably linked to the colonial experience.

3.1.5 *Language Policies*

According to Baker, 'the solution to avoiding language death involves language policy-making, with interventions to stem the decline of a language and is also termed language revitalization' (2006, p.48). Some majority languages, particularly English, have expanded considerably during the last century whereas minority languages in danger of extinction necessitate extra care and protection. A free language economy will mean the extinction of many languages so language planning is essential to avoid such trends (Cooper, 1989).

A language policy-maker is only concerned for majority languages and protecting rare and minority languages are considered expensive and unnecessary. Standardisation of one variety of language would therefore be the main preoccupation. The case of politicians advocating monolingualism as preferable to bilingualism was perfectly illustrated by President Reagan's speech in 1981 (Freeman, 1998). The preference is for the assimilation of the minority language communities into a more standardized and uniform language world.

It is important to note variations in attitude to the language environment. Williams (1991) sums up differing 'environmental' attitudes to the survival and spread of minority languages. The evolutionist camp would follow Darwin's idea of the survival of the fittest where only languages that are strong will survive. The weaker languages will either have to adapt themselves to their environment or die. The biological

evolutionary metaphor assumes that language loss is about survival of the fittest: if a language fails to adapt to the modern world, it deserves to die. A different way of expressing this is in terms of a free, *laissez-faire* language economy or the *do nothing* attitude (Romaine, 2008). Languages must survive on their own merits without the support of language planning.

The evolutionary viewpoint has some detractors. Firstly the survival of the fittest is too simplistic a view of evolution and it only underlines the negative side of evolution: killing, exploitation and suppression. Secondly, political and economic policies are human made reasons that decide which languages live and which dies. Language shift (in terms of numbers of speakers and uses) occurs through deliberate decisions that directly or indirectly affect languages and reflects economic, political, cultural, social and technological change. It is therefore possible to trace back what factors are at the origin of language shift (Ostler, 2011; Hinton& al., 2001). Baker (2006) states that 'social and political factors are at work in language loss, and not just 'evolution'. Power, prejudice, discrimination, marginalization and subordination are some of the causes of language decline and death' (p.48). May (2001) posits that language loss is thus not 'evolutionary' but determined by politicians, policy-makers and people. Thirdly evolutionists who argue for an economic, cost-benefit approach to languages, with the domination of a few majority languages for international communication, hold a narrow view of the function of languages.

Lastly, those who support an evolutionary perspective on languages will typically support the spread of majority languages and the replacement of minority languages. Those who advocate monolingualism often feel that their particular cultures and perspectives are the only legitimate varieties – all others are inferior and less worth

preserving. A more positive view of evolution is interdependence rather than constant competition. Cooperation for mutually beneficial outcomes can be just as possible as exploitation (Williams, 1991).

Other approaches are the conservationist and the preservationist where language planning must care and cherish minority languages, revitalizing and invigorating. Conservationists would argue that threatened languages should receive special status in heartland regions (or on reservations). We have already discussed at the beginning of this chapter the preservationist approach. If the world's languages are to be retained, then immediate interventions and impactive strategies are needed via language planning.

3.1.6   *Language Planning*

Language planning has become an important field as multilingual or multidialectal communities are aware of the socio-political nature of language choices. There is a consensus as to what language planning involves and 'it is the deliberate efforts to influence the behaviour of others with respect to the acquisition, structure or functional allocation of their language codes' (Cooper, 1989; Jones & Singh, 2005). This definition suggests that choices will be made and therefore language behaviour will reflect some specific ideological directions.

Such language planning involves three lines of attack: status planning (raising the status of the language within society across as many institutions as possible), corpus planning (modernizing terminology, standardising of grammar and spelling) and acquisition planning (creating language spread by increasing the number of speakers and uses by for example, interventions with parents, language learning in school, adult language classes, literacy) in Baker (2006).

The base of language planning is acquisition planning. The inter-generational transmission of a language (parent(s) passing their language(s) onto their children) and language learning in bilingual education is an essential but insufficient foundation for language survival and maintenance (Baker, 2003).

Status planning is extra-linguistic and therefore tends to be found in a variety of policies: political movement seeking recognition or official status for a language (both minority languages like Māori and Welsh, and majority languages like English in the US), as well as religious and nationalist movements seeking revitalisation of a language such as Hebrew in Israel. Status planning is political by nature, attempting to gain more recognition, functions and capacity for the language and is undertaken mainly by politicians and administrators.

Status planning doesn't always guarantee language maintenance. To influence language change, status planning has to affect everyday usage in the home and street, family and work relationships, and not just official usage. Thus opportunity planning for daily use of the minority language is essential. Also people's choices about the language may be governed by their perception of the 'market', and be neither easily influenced nor rational (as is supposed by rational intervention in language planning).

Corpus planning is a field where linguists are commonly involved in and it is a typical part of language planning where languages are precarious and when they are resurgent. A common process for all languages, majority and minority, is to modernize vocabulary. Science and information communications technology (ICT) are just two examples where standardised terminology is created and spread. An alternative is the increasing use of 'loan words' (e.g. Spanglish where English words are used in Spanish). Schools, books and magazines, the internet, television and radio all help to

standardize a language, hence new concepts need an agreed term. The Catalans, Basques, Welsh and Irish are examples of countries that formally engaged in corpus planning through centrally funded and coordinated initiatives. Another example is France that, since the establishment of the Académie Française tried to maintain the purity of French and halt the influence of English (Baker & Jones, 1998).

Listening to the language variety of a person evokes social stereotypes and expectations, colouring the behaviour of the listener toward the speaker. Thus when corpus planning is about purity and normalization, there is a danger that linguistic policy becomes political, with power and status going to those with the purity of language (Spolsky, 1998).

Acquisition planning is particularly concerned with language reproduction in the family and language production at school. In all minority languages, there are families who use the majority language with their children. In Wales, where both parents are Welsh speaking, 8% of the parents speak English not Welsh to their children. If this occurs across successive generations, the language will rapidly decline. All minority languages need a supply line, and if families fail to reproduce such languages in children, bilingual education has to attempt to make up the shortfall (Baker, 2006).

Parents may believe that there are economic, employment or educational advantages of speaking a majority language (e.g. English) to their children and not minority language. Or that majority language has such a high prestige in the neighbourhood that parents feel that minority language has scars. Such attitudes can have an immediate effect on the fate of a language. A lack of family language reproduction is a principal and direct cause of language shift. In this scenario, a minority language can die within two or three generations unless bilingual education can produce language speakers who then find

everyday purposes (e.g. economic, social, religious) for that language. Language acquisition planning is therefore partly about encouraging parents to raise their children bilingually.

It is possible to plan for the status, corpus and acquisition of a language and yet not affect the daily language usage of ordinary people. Language planning has to impact on individual language life. Languages decline when speakers drop in number and their daily usage diminishes. Planning also needs to empower local communities directly, enabling everyday language life to be enacted through a minority language (Baker, 2006). Opportunities for the youth to use their minority language is particularly crucial as they are the next generation of parents and hence the fate of a minority language partly rests on these shoulders.

3.1.7   Conclusion

The threat of extinction that Mangarevan and many other neighbouring or worldwide minority languages are subject to, will certainly become a reality in the next century (Grenoble et al., 1998; Nettle et al., 2000; Powles, 2006). Many endogenous as well as exogenous factors, might have contributed to this language attrition that will be discussed and analysed in this thesis. But it is true that the paucity of a literary legacy for the most South Eastern French Polynesia islands is in contrast with the rich source material of the three apexes of the Polynesian triangle (Rapa Nui, Hawaii and Aotearoa). Sadly the wealth of early literature has not translated into language sustainability for many of these peoples and native languages right across the Pacific are endangered. The development of language planning could reverse the trend (Grenoble et al., 1998; Fishman, 1991, 2001). This would impact positively not only on Mangarevan language but on many other languages of the Pacific.

Chapter Four: Methodology

4.1   Chapter outline

The aim of this study is to examine the situation of language shift and recommend language reversal shift avenues. Therefore this chapter will describe and provide the basis for the theoretical framework chosen for this analysis. This section will also present the research instruments used and the way the data analysis was carried out. It is necessary in this section to incorporate the ethical issues and the role of the researcher both in the ethnographic context as a whole and in this specific research.

4.1.1   Research paradigms

It is recognised that there are commonly two classifications under which community language studies fall: quantitative and qualitative.

In general the major purpose of the quantitative research is to make valid and objective descriptions on phenomena in a controlled environment. Researchers seek to understand phenomena by examining the interrelationship among and between variables in a controlled setting. In this classification the research tools might include surveys, questionnaires, interviews, inventories or check lists to name but a few (Taylor, 2010).

The qualitative approach operates in a natural setting and therefore the method is less fixed; it seeks to understand and interpret more local meanings and sometimes produces knowledge that contributes to more general understandings. It is interpretive and descriptive; it tends to seek patterns but accommodates and explores difference and divergence within data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Qualitative approaches might contain participant observations, interviews or case studies among others.

4.1.2   *Theoretical framework*

The theoretical framework is embedded in Mangarevan traditional knowledge which is appropriate given that the subject is the revitalisation of Mangarevan language. This approach is given credence from both indigenous and non-indigenous intellectuals (Hiroa 1926; Scott 1991; Gegeo 2001; Nugi wa Thiong'o 1994). This research also clearly falls under the ambit of insider research which causes some challenges in terms of the researcher's *'akapapa* (genealogical) links with all of the research participants. While subjectivity in insider research dominates the insider/outsider debate, there is compelling evidence (Kanuha 2000; Sherif 2001; Malone, 2003) that supports this methodological approach. They argue that insider research has the potential to engage community and extrapolate depth of meaning. This depth of meaning is also articulated in the philosophical infrastructure or approach of this study and in light of the latter, the qualitative approach has been preferred for this study.

Like many other Polynesian languages, Mangarevan is a language closely linked to its environment (fauna and flora) in particular to some of the tropical plants and trees which roles were well defined in the cultural tradition. Those tree-plants sometimes carried the *mana* (power) and *tapu* (interdiction) signs (Buck, 1938) allocated by the powers of mythical deities and passed down through generations of kings and rulers. The commentary on the breadfruit adds another dimension to the revitalisation of the reo Mangareva as parallels can be drawn between the breadfruit and the Mangarevan language.

4.1.3   *Mei and Mangarevan language: their relationship*

The breadfruit (*mei*) is a metaphor that epitomises the struggle to sustain the Mangarevan language. As a metaphor the *mei* captures the history, colonial experience and revitalisation intent (in terms of the language, beliefs and practices) associated with the Mangarevan

reversal language shift which is the envisaged outcome of this study. The *mei* will be used as an analogy to describe the tight relationship between the breadfruit and the Mangarevan language.

Figure 11: Correlations between the Mangarevan language and the breadfruit
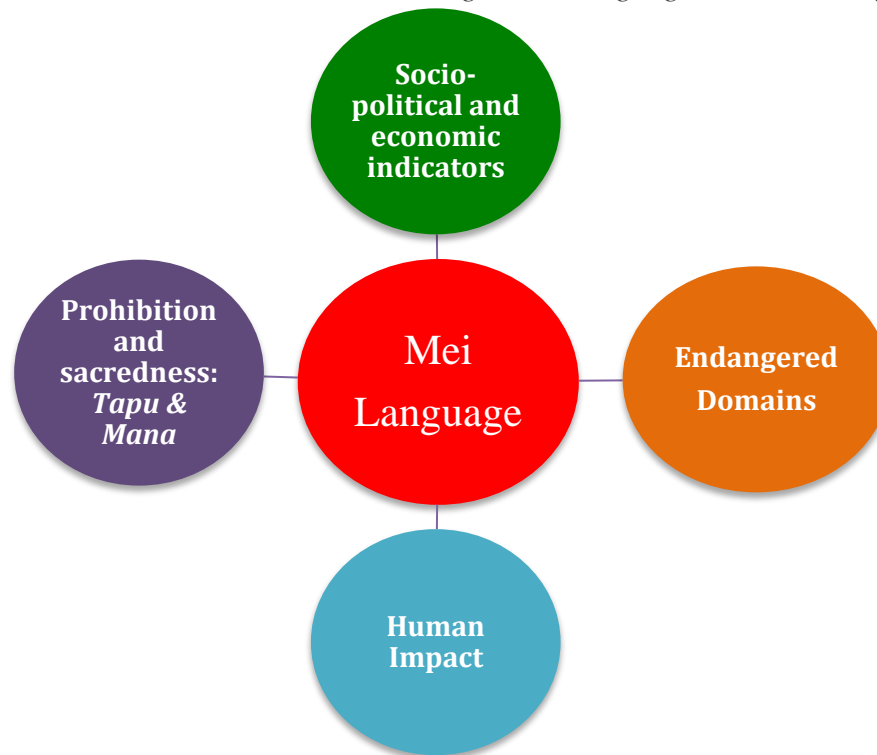
This sphere of socio-political and economic indicators is associated with the social organisation framed around pre-established hierarchy, propped up by the political and economic powers.

In times of war, plantations of breadfruit trees were the first to be destroyed by the victors to stamp their power and the vanquished nobles as well as their commoners were either killed, used as slaves or exiled. The breadfruit was also used as a sign of *rau'i* (restriction) to allow regeneration of fish stock for example or as a sign of *tapu* (interdiction). An example would be if a branch of breadfruit were planted in specific areas of the lagoon that would signal a no fishing zone. The breadfruit has therefore become the most important commodity in Mangarevan society. The hierarchal society status quo was also maintained and strengthened by the allocation of lands for war champions who have outperformed during battles. Victors were given lands to plant

breadfruit trees and they were known as *pakaroa* (victory in war). They were notably noble and aristocrats and would reward themselves with the lands of the vanquished to plant breadfruit trees (Buck, 1938, p.147).

The sphere of sacredness of the breadfruit with *mana* (power) *and tapu* was allocated by proxy. According to Buck (1938), Mangarevans would hold a unique ceremony spread over a number of days dedicated to the auspicious breadfruit crops. The ritual would take place on one of the most important *marae* (open-air worship site) on the island. The high priests would sanction the ceremony and invoked the intervention of the gods during the ritual. The nobles and wealthy would be in charge of bringing food from their estates for the offerings and distributions to be made on the *marae*. No quarrel will take place between fishermen lest the turtle disappear and the nets had no power, and they were supposed to catch as many male turtles as possible to be offered during the official opening. The disrespect of the *mana* and *tapu* of the breadfruit as a forbidden fruit was also punishable by death.

The sphere of human impact is strongly linked to the sacredness of the breadfruit. For example women menstruating weren't allowed to pick the breadfruit, whereas women pregnant for the first time were welcome to do so as well as men. These rituals were undertaken to ensure the next year's breadfruit crops. The Mangarevans have elevated the breadfruit to the rank of most significant food.

The sphere of endangered domains relates to the revitalisation of the language and carries the traditions and knowledge of the culture. There are few living Mangarevans who hold this knowledge. In May 2014, I discussed the traditional knowledge associated with the *mei* with one of a *matakao* (person of knowledge). It is apparent

from that conversation that language shift reversal needs to take into account the knowledge that each word carries. For example '*mei-'apuku*' in the context of the *mei* is not simply a generic word. It has historical dual-significance as a form of calendar system marker where the harvest of one *mei* coincides and is interconnected to that of other crops.

In this instance the suffix *'apuku* added to *mei* relates to the *mei* of the very first crop of the year along with the fish '*apuku* that comes to full maturity at the same time hence the name *mei-'apuku.* There are four annual harvests of *mei.* In the first harvest (*mei-apuku*) in January, Mangarevans would acknowledge the coming of the first and best crop of the year. The other suffixes to *mei* (-*puakaka'o*, -*tuavera* and -*koporo*), would also indicate months of the year and new crops coming to season. In the past when the language was thriving there were many varieties of *mei*, but today Mangarevans can commonly only name four types of *mei* (private communication with C. Mamatui 23 May 2014).

There is an extensive terminology use reserved to the *mei* only and many homonyms describe derivatives from the *mei* that have influenced the language. As an example, exploring the association between the calendar seasons and how this is related to the lifecycle of the *mei.* There are parallels between this process and the concept of intergenerational language transmission developed in the study. We will also see that terms used in both the native language and the breadfruit are homonymous.

Mei as well as meaning breadfruit, is also an adverb of place such as *mei e'a mai koe*? where are you from?; *tau* means year but it is also a type of breadfruit; *ma* is the fermented white breadfruit reserved to the nobles but it is also the prefix to acknowledge the first-born of a family. Many kings of Mangareva carried that prefix *ma*

such as the last king called *Te Ma-Teoa* (the first born of the Teoa family); *'iva* as well

as being the best type of breadfruit is also related to the land of origins.

The mei/language shift nexus is summarized in the following table

Table 4: Nexus Mei/Language

Category for comparison	Mei	Mangarevan language
Socio-economic status indicator	*Ma-* better fermented white breadfruit for aristocracy	*kaikai 'akariki (food of the king)*
	Puga- Inferior fermented white *breadfruit* for commoners	*kaikai a te oge (food of the famished)*
Seasonal crops	Naming of the four yearly crops	*Mei-'apuku (January crop);* *Mei-puakaka'o (April crop);* *Mei-tuavera (June crop);* *Mei-koporo (November crop)*
Reward	Allocation of land for *mei* plantations	*Pakaroa (victory in war)*
Extensive Terminology	Description of *mei* and preparation of fermented *mei*	*ma; tau; 'iva (description)* *kouri; kukurutu; kurutara (fermented mei)*
Sacredness of *mei* picking	Men only to pick *mei* and no menstruating women but pregnant women for the first time were allowed;	*rapa'ou*
	Specific ceremony on *marae* for *mei* only	*gogoro nui*
Different counting system	*Mei as* the most important vegetable plant is counted in pair like fish	*Takau; rau; mano; makiu…* *Tagau ta'i; tagau rua* *(counting by unit or by pair)*

4.1.4 *Research Methods*

This methodology will be guided by this quintessential Polynesian citation: "E a'a to

koe reo? Mei 'ea mai to koe reo? E ao ana to koe reo ki 'ea?" (What is your language?

Where does it come from? Where is it going?). This quote encompasses the present,

the past and the future. In this context the recursive approach will be to explore the

language at this present moment through interviews and questionnaires.

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The present status will be assessed through the fieldwork which consists mainly of interviewing, observing and questioning the participants.

Once the status of the language is assessed, the next step will be to resurrect the past and by questioning the past: *Mei 'ea mai to koe reo*? (Where is your language from?), the present situation of language shift can be better understood. Therefore it is the historical linguistics and to some extent the sociolinguistics aspect that will confirm the present situation of Mangarevan language. This step will be undertaken through consulting manuscripts, archives that are usually held by institutions such as church, national libraries and museums.

The final step will be to answer the question *E ao ana to koe reo ki 'ea*, (Where is the language going?) what is its future? How can Mangarevan language survive? What revitalisation programs can be designed to curb Mangarevan language shift? This is where means and solutions such as the creation or completion of a grammar/lexicon, an up to date dictionary and grammar…need to be found in order to perpetuate the language. It is about Mangarevan language recovery and rehabilitation but most importantly about creating a better linguistic environment/ecosystem for Mangarevan to develop and grow and ultimately asserts its existence as a language able to confidently survive.

Figure 12: Methodology diagram and Recursive approach

PRESENT
E a'a? What is?
Interviews,
Questionnaires,
Observations

PAST
Mei 'ea mai?
Where from?
Archives,
Manucripts…

FUTURE
Ki 'ea? Where to?
Solutions,
Revitalisation programme

Mangarevan Language

Recursive approach
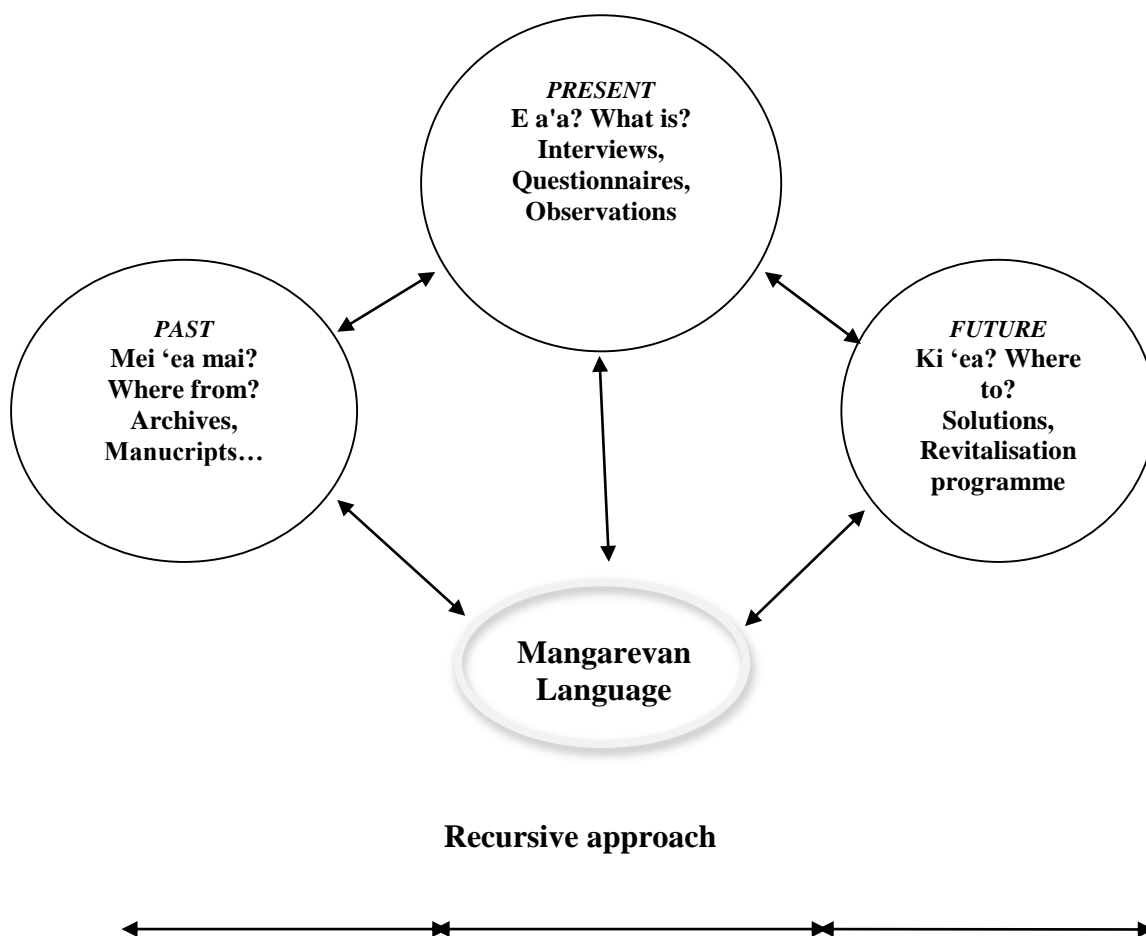
This qualitative research component will be articulated around the above three main interconnected steps that are embedded and informed by the Mangarevan worldview. The *mei* motif is reflected in the design of the questionnaire which explores the experience of language shift with the uncertain future of the *mei*.

This project will be based on gathering qualitative data, similar to a language survey where the focus will be on the general health of the endangered language. This survey carried out for data collection will be analogous to the work that the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) has adopted. The assessment therefore include collection of questionnaires and individual interviews and observations.

Integral to the methodology is the search for the historical context of Mangarevan words. Participants will be asked to describe any historical knowledge/associations with Mangarevan vocabulary in all the interviews. The Mangarevan theoretical and philosophical framework is the approach that informs the research design.

4.1.5   *Data Processing*

The analysis of the data collected will help to define the different levels of shift/endangerment of the studied language and the types of intervention that are urgently needed to be applied. The levels of endangerment will be assessed according to the three grids mentioned above.

A qualitative research method using semi-standardized (Berg, 1998) or semi-structured (Orcher, 2005) interviews will be used to gather data. In-depth face-to-face interviews will be carried out as primary source of data collection using audio or video formats. There are three main reasons for using this methodological approach.

1. The implementation of predetermined specific topics and questions will be asked to each interviewee in a systematic and consistent order. Although at times there will be the freedom to digress, the researcher will be in permanent control of the discussion so that the samples collected are focussed on the motives of Mangarevan language shift;

2. This method enables the interviewer to probe beyond the answers given by the set of standardized and prepared questions.

3. This approach would be less rigid and the rapport between interviewer and interviewee should be fluid and allow the interviewer to tailor the questions from the cues received from the interviewee.

The questions will be open ended with minimal interference from the interviewer. The interviews will be treated as 'extended conversations' (Rubin & Rubin, 2005) and semi

structured in nature and flexible in an attempt to allow more communication (Davidson & Tolich, 1998). The interviewees will be given the choice to respond during the interviews either in Mangarevan, French or Tahitian. The individual or collective interviews will be conducted in the respect of anonymity and confidentiality and in communicative terms that they find easy to understand or are familiar with.

In some cases, follow up interviews will be arranged in order to either clarify or extent points. Recorded interviews will be supported with written field notes. Each interview will be transcribed by the researcher and then encoded, stored and managed within Nvivo whenever possible.

4.1.6   Data Analysis

Contextual traditional knowledge in which words are embedded in this data collection exercise and the information will be analysed per themes. This thematic approach will be used to analyse the data. This approach is the most appropriate in managing the data from the interviews. The procedures for data analysis will be conducted according to the recommendations of Richards (2009) and Davidson & Tolich (1999).

•   Generate categories using the proposed questions as guidelines

•   Collate and analyse by identifying themes, links and patterns – this includes looking for similarities and differences

•   Writing the report – highlight and discuss emerging themes and patterns.

The final stage will be exploring the development of a language shift reversal strategy for the Mangarevan language based on the findings.

4.2   Research components

4.2.1   Pre-selection process

The participants were obtained through the snowball sampling method which Tolich et al. (1999) described as making contact to initial participants who generate a network of other potential participants that have a relationship with the research topic. Some of the interviewees were contacted through e-mail, telephone and internet communication (Skype software) beforehand, while others were suggested to me by acquaintances living on the island. Confirmation to participate was reiterated by the researcher *in situ* from all participants including those only contacted during the fieldwork period. 14 interviews are scheduled for fieldwork in 2014.

4.2.2   Participant selection

This fieldwork was undertaken in Rikitea. The target groups are regarded as Mangarevan language advocates. All the participants were given a *Participant Information Sheet* informing them about the project and the written consent was obtained before the interviews took place.

The demographics of the participants was divided in age range, gender, language uses and employment status.

Age range

Age range	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	Total
Participants	1	2	2	2	3	4	14

The participants were all adults with ages ranging from 38 to 86 years old. Fifty percent represents a section born in the early and late 1930s, which at a later stage of the interview analysis proved to be valuable in terms of their knowledge of Mangarevan cultural heritage.

Participants' language uses

All of the interviewees are residents of Mangareva and all but one speaks Mangarevan. There are other languages in use on the island and it is not surprising to see bilingualism or multilingualism as the norm however the three main ones are Mangarevan, French and Tahitian.
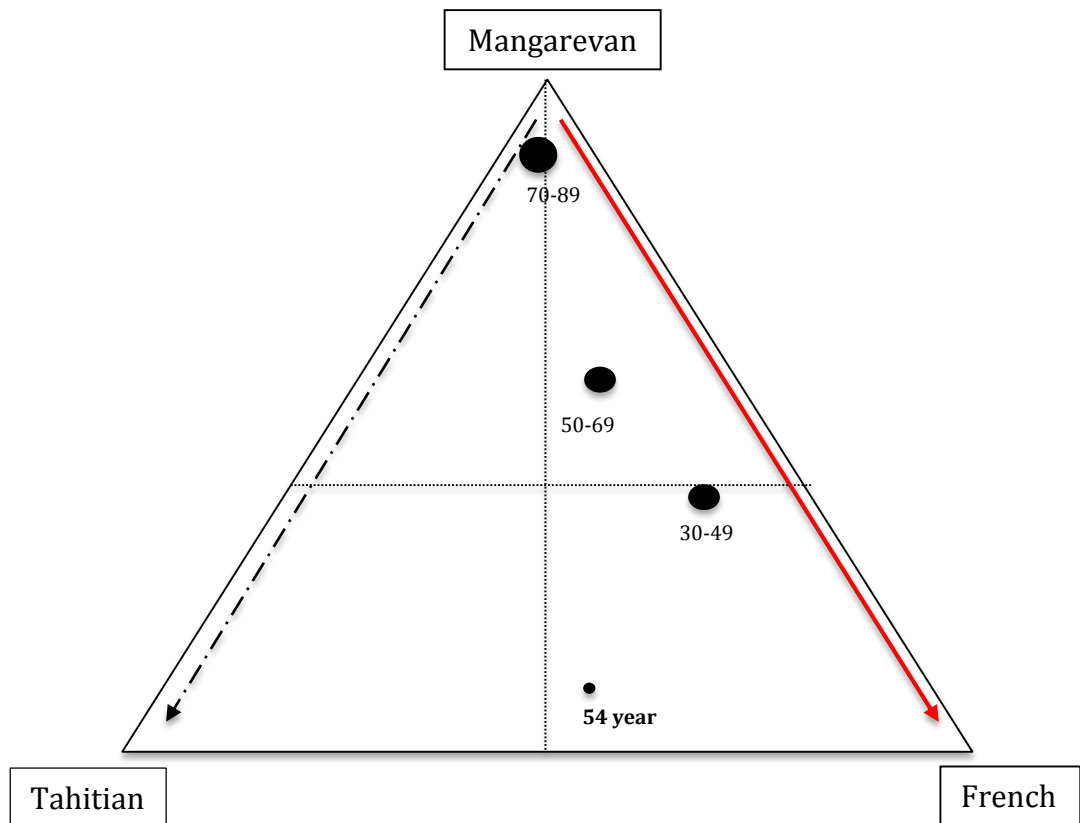
The complexity of the languages used on the island is reflected in the above triangular graph where participants, although most are Mangarevan native speakers, can also speak other languages. The most interesting part is when we look at the age range of the participants. The shift in language use is visible as the age of the participants drops.

The first combined age range (70 to 89 years) counting 7 participants, is found much closer to the top of the Mangarevan apex where participants speak Mangarevan only but can understand Tahitian. The combined age range (50 to 69 years) counting 3 participants, is located off the centre. Participants still speak Mangarevan as their first

language but they can speak and understand French better than Tahitian. The last combined age range (30 to 49 years) counting 3 participants, is situated on the right hand side of the triangle indicating a preference toward the use of French. In other words, they speak Mangarevan but speak more French than Tahitian. The lone figure (54 year) represents the one participant who speaks French first and Tahitian but not Mangarevan.

The trend underlined by the red arrow, clearly shows a movement toward the right indicating language shift from Mangarevan to French. On the other side the dashed arrow from the Mangarevan apex to the Tahitian corner doesn't show any language shift tendency toward the Tahitian language. If one was to follow the current trend based on the participants' trend, one could foresee the younger generation being located closer to the French angle of the triangle. This linguistic complexity is also highlighted further down in section **4.3** about the participants' backgrounds.

Gender

Gender	Female	Male	**Total**
Participants	5	9	**14**

Of the fourteen participants five are women and nine are men. The high percentage of nine men was mainly due to the fact that most of the men were retired and had time to spare for this research.

Employment Status

Employment	Education	Retired or (semi-retired)	**Total**
Participants	5	9	**14**

It is noted that out of the five participants involved in education, four are females and one is a male youth worker in vocational education. The nine retired (or semi-retired)

people are very active workers in the promotion and documentation of Mangareva language and culture as a matter of interest as opposed to a full time paid employment.

The synoptic assessment would acknowledge that all the participants fulfilled the requirements to take part in this project. They are involved or have been involved with Mangareva language; have a good knowledge of the Mangarevan historical narratives and culture; or are concerned with the main topic of this research which is the factors that led to language shift and the quest for means of reversing language shift.

One of the last significant points to notice regarding this panel of participants is that all the women had non-Mangarevan husband or partner; and five out of nine men had wife or partner from outside Mangareva. This information will later account for the impact of outside influences on the Mangarevan socio-ethnographic dimension.

Some participants wanted to recite a prayer before an interview as this is a reflection of the spiritual dimension that is prevalent in Polynesian society. All but one of the participants are practising Catholics. I was also keen to offer the participants to close the interview by asking them what last comments they would like to make. This invitation at the end of the interview has triggered some useful unanticipated data (Braun & Clarke, p.81).

4.2.3   *The interviewer: the issues*

Research in the field is problematic. Creswell, (2007) identifies the main issue as hierarchical relationships with asymmetrical power distribution between interviewer and interviewees. In outsider researcher situations, the imbalance power distribution is obvious. Here the researcher is considered 'as the knower and the native as knowable, simple, able to be fully comprehended' (Russel & Rodriguez, 1998, p.16). This

situation favours the researcher as the subject and the participant as the object: this clearly is a relic of a colonial past.

It is argued that researchers are for the most part 'outsiders' alienated from the community being studied apart from sojourns known as fieldwork. There is considerable debate amongst social scientists (Barnes, 1963) in regards to the advantages and disadvantages of 'outsider' or participant observer research as opposed to 'insider' researchers undertaking fieldwork. The argument for proponents of 'outsider' research is based on the assumption that social enquiry, as a science, must be objective. This objectivity enables 'outsider' researchers to better comprehend the subjective interpretations of the members of the society under investigation.

There is equally as much debate over the merits of 'insider' researchers who by definition are members, rather than 'outsiders' of the community or organization where fieldwork is undertaken. The premise for advocating 'insider' research appears to be simply a matter of reliability in terms of the information. The arguments against 'insider' research, focus on the fact that the information cannot be regarded as reliable because it is subjective. The reasoning follows that because the 'insider' enculturated in the traditions, beliefs and values that inform their practices of their own communities, objective analysis or even reflection is virtually impossible. The reality is that research, whether 'insider' or 'outsider', is rarely value free. The 'outsider' social scientist is as enculturated with their own cultural beliefs and values as any 'insider'. This phenomenon is known as ethnocentrism, although a more explicit term, Eurocentricity may be used to describe the perceived research bias of Europeans studying ethnic minorities, as described in chapter two. The term 'Eurocentricity' is loaded with connotations of racial superiority, which had its genesis in eighteenth century west-European expansionism.

Another context of skewed power relationship is simply put down to gender difference where researcher and participant of opposite sex tend to generate this type of power imbalance. In the fieldwork for this research there were five female participants.

The issues about the researcher's own subjectivity is also put under scrutiny. In what is known as reflexivity Pillow (2003) says:

> "the focus requires the researcher to be critically conscious through personal accounting of how the researcher's self-location (across for example, gender, race, class, sexuality, ethnicity, nationality), position, and interests influence all stages of the research process"(p.168).

Anderson (1989) says that the relationship of the researcher to the data involves a dialectical process consisting of the researcher's constructs; the informants' common sense constructs; the research data, the researcher ideological biased, and the structural and historical forces that shaped the social construction under study.

4.3   The participants

Interviewee #1:

Participant #1 is 38, born in Mangareva and is the youngest of the participants and brought up by her grandparents on the island of Taravai. Her partner is from Tahiti and is a fisherman: they have two young daughters. She has taught Mangarevan language for two years and 2014 is to be her last year of teaching at school. She teaches Mangarevan language for two and a half hours a week and she speaks Mangarevan, French and Tahitian. She completed the compulsory teacher-training certificate in Tahiti. Her first language is French, then Mangarevan and Tahitian.

Interviewee #2:

Participant #2 is 40, born in Mangareva and was also brought up by her grandparents. She was the previous language teacher at the local primary school for seven years. She lives with a French partner, former military and they have a teenage daughter. She travels to Tahiti to look after her daughter's secondary education but comes back to

Mangareva every school holidays. She also completed her teacher training certificate in Tahiti. Her first language is Mangarevan then French and Tahitian.

Interviewee #3:

Participant #3 is aged 85, born in Mangareva; he has worked as a fisherman and has 8 children. He knows Mangarevan culture very well and speaks Mangarevan first and Tahitian but can hardly speak French. In his retirement he collects shells and stones from the beach.

Interviewee #4:

Participant #4 is aged 63, born in Mangareva and has been a housewife with six children. She is married to a Tahitian, is involved with the Catholic Church activities and is very interested in the maintenance of the Mangarevan language. Her first language is Mangarevan and she speaks Tahitian and French. She has been involved in leading cultural songs and dances groups during festivals throughout French Polynesia but is also interested with the origins of her native language.

Interviewee #5:

Participant #5 is 64, born in Mangareva and has had different employments locally or with the French military administration. He is married to a Tahitian woman and has six children. He is also very much involved with the documentation of the Mangarevan language. He speaks Mangarevan first and then Tahitian.

Interviewee #6:

Participant #6 is 82, born in Mangareva and was married to a Tahitian woman and has seven children. He is retired but has worked as a nurse in Tahiti before returning to

Mangareva for the last 10 years. He is also very active in the documentation of the Mangarevan language. He speaks Mangarevan and then French and Tahitian.

Interviewee #7:

Participant #7 is 59 and born in Mangareva. He is semi-retired as an electrician with the French military and married to a Marquesan woman and has four children and a grandchild living with them. He speaks Mangarevan first, French, Tahitian, Marquesan and Paumotu. He is also involved with the local administration regarding the organisation of mini cultural festivals.

Interviewee #8:

Participant #8 is 86, born in Mangareva. He is retired and is the oldest of the participants. He has worked with the French military all over the Pacific French territories (New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna). In his youth he was involved with cultural festivities and events as a dancer. He had no children of his own but has adopted 6 children and speaks Mangarevan first then Tahitian. His late partner was Mangarevan.

Interviewee #9:

Participant #9 is 73, born in Mangareva and has worked as the first Mangarevan language teacher at the local school. As the first language teacher, is married to a military personnel with two children and speaks Mangarevan, French and Tahitian. As a carer of an old French man is very much involved with language documentation and also with the Catholic Church activities.

Interviewee #10:

Participant #10 is 81, born in Tahiti but spent all his life in Mangareva. A farmer, he married a local woman and has six children. He is involved with documentation and maintenance of the Mangarevan language. He speaks Mangarevan and Tahitian.

Interviewee #11:

Participant #11 is 77, born in Mangareva and was a former fisherman and has been the main cantor at the cathedral for 40 years. He is married to a Mangarevan woman and has 10 children. He is also involved in Mangarevan language documentation. He speaks Mangarevan only but can speak Tahitian.

Interviewee #12:

Participant #12 is 54, born in Tahiti. She has worked in education for 34 years and is the current school headmistress and the most qualified person in terms of educational achievement. She is married to a Tahitian and has three children. She speaks French first then Tahitian and some Mangarevan.

Interviewee #13:

Participant #13 is 41, born in Mangareva and is a youth teacher at the vocational high school in Rikitea. He is single and like his mother, he is very much involved with the church activities and leads a cultural dance and song group for the annual festival throughout French Polynesia. He speaks Mangarevan first, then French and Tahitian.

Interviewee #14:

Participant #14 is 85, born in Mangareva, married to a Mangarevan woman and had six children. He hasn't had a stable employment history but along with participant #8, he

was involved in cultural festivities and events, and had been the leader of a group of dancers. He speaks Mangareva first and Tahitian.

4.3.1   Interview questions

The interviews playing an essential part of this thesis for the collection and the analysis of data, therefore the semi-standardized format (Berg, 1998) was to allow fluency of speech throughout the discussions. They were means to explore understanding and perception from the participants' viewpoint with their linguistic and historical richness.

To provide information regarding the main assertion of Mangarevan as a language shifting and the search for means to reversing language shift, the elicitations were more focussed on the *what* than the *why* questions. The questions were prompted by the researcher's initial observation of no intergenerational transmission process of the Mangarevan language from childbearing generation to the next generation and the older generation's propensity to using French. The seven questions to incite discussions were as follows:

1. *E a'a te reo ta koe e varaga ana a utu ra ua*. (What language do you speak mostly in your daily life?)

2. *E a'a to koe 'uru kia varaga'ia te reo Ta'iti i Magareva nei*. (What is your attitude toward Tahitian language being spoken in Mangareva?)

3. *E a'a to koe 'uru kia varaga'ia te reo Arani i Magareva nei*. (What is your attitude to French language being spoken in Mangareva?)

4. *No te a'a e atoga nui te reo Mangareva.* (Why is Mangarevan language important to you?)

5. *E a'a to koe makararaga kia tuku'ia te reo Magareva i te 'are tukuga.* (What do you think of Mangarevan being taught in school?)

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6. *Makara koe ko te varagaraga ta'aga te tumu o te reo Magareva.* (Is the purpose of language just to communicate?)

7. *Pe 'ea/I 'ea koe e kite ai te ta'i āato na roto i te pouga Magareva me te reo Mangareva.* (How do you think Mangarevan culture relates to the language?)

Chapter Five: Analysis and Findings

As a prelude to the discussion of the findings it is important to contextualise this within the actual fieldwork. It transpired that the issues relating to insider research presented a unique and positive setting for the interviews. The power relations which have the potential to eschew the research process were resolved in a typical Mangarevan way. In Mangarevan culture the use of titles (*papa, mémé, mama*) before their first name can mitigate an imbalance in power relationships. Those interviewed who are known to the researcher through *ivi kaiga* (relationships) responded accordingly with: 'pepe' (baby); 'a teiti nei' (my son); 'me pera koe te ninore' (you were that small). These were female participants.

Older male participants would either use my name or use my parents' names thereby identifying a familial relationships with terms such as: '*to koe papa kakore atu ai*' (your dad, he was the man), '*to koe mama, a'a'a*" (your mum, what a woman!); '*toku tugane to koe parrain*' (my brother your godfather). These terms (of endearment) certainly account for the warmth and closeness of island relationships and community life. The four participants of the same generation use proper names of address however job title usually precedes their names – even in the interview process. Retired teacher participant #2 was still referred to as *'are tukuretera'* (school teacher).

During all of the interviews the language as an inherited *tiatoga* (treasure) has become an inclusive matter with the use of personal pronouns *taua* or *tatou*. They could be translated in English as 'our' but it would only be an acceptable translation. In Mangarevan like in Polynesian languages, the use of those inclusive pronouns is an invitation to enter the intimate world of the interviewee, to be a part of and share their concerns.

It is apparent from the fieldwork that, despite the gloom evidence of the Mangarevan language struggling and striving to survive amongst the young generation, the expectation is that their native language will subsist.

5.1   Fieldwork Findings

Responses from the participants to the questions regarding this situation of language shift have vindicated the researcher's observation and numerous causes for the present condition of language shift have also been put forward including means to slow down or halt such a trend. Re-examining the assumed role of education as pivotal in terms of language policy and language planning has triggered interesting reactions amongst participants. As well as exposing the linguistic current within which the Mangarevan language is operating, it became crucial for the remaining questions to acknowledge the ties that permeate within the duality of Mangarevan language-culture. During the interviews, exchanges have leaned toward the importance of the Mangarevan language and have frequently turned to the role of religion as both disadvantageous and beneficial to the Mangarevan language.

Using a thematic approach five definitive themes emerged from the data:

- Language use in situations;
- Language and Culture;
- Language and power;
- Language maintenance;
- Impact of religion on language.

5.1.1   *Language use in situations*

Information about the participants' backgrounds gives insights into their interaction in regard to language choice; language and social position; and language and influence.

The axiological order about what languages participants use most might help to establish their position regarding reversing the language shift.

It is apparent from responses that language use varies depending on the location reflecting clear use of social registers as the following sections demonstrate.

- <u>Language use in the home</u>

The common thread that emerges from all the interviewees is that Mangarevan language must be spoken at home first between parents themselves and with their children. This echoes Fishman's (1991) assertion that promoting the speaking of a language in the home is the most effective way of saving it. This statement was endorsed by all the participants and was strongly felt across all the generation groups aforementioned. All acknowledged home as the very place where Mangarevan must be spoken all the time. Mangarevan is their mother tongue, the language that they were born in and inherited from their parents. To the older generation, it is what they know and value most and there appears to be no compromise or trade-off as illustrated by the following statements:

> The first language that I speak is the language of my home, Mangarevan. **Participant 8**.
>
> We don't compromise at home, I don't agree, I only feel right when I speak Mangarevan, the language I grew up in. **Participant 14**.
>
> Since I was born, Mangarevan is of course the language that I speak everyday...I can hear them (children) speaking French only, I scold them saying: when you come home, you must speak your Mangarevan! **Participant 11.**
>
> The language I speak every day at home is of course Mangarevan. **Participant 10.**
>
> As I told you at home when people come to visit me, I speak Mangarevan **Participant 6.**
>
> Everywhere I only speak Mangarevan when I meet people. **Participant 3.**
>
> First of all when we grew up, Mangarevan was the only language for us at home... it is inside the family that you learn the native language. **Participant 13.**

Although all the participants agree that Mangarevan language must be the one used at home, participants #4 and #9 seem to romanticise about the language. It is their love for the Mangarevan language that creates a yearning to speak the language with their families. They sincerely want to believe that the native language is being used throughout the island. Both participants have been involved with Mangarevan language teaching and cultural maintenance. They were valuable participants as they both speak Mangarevan at home. In their practice intergenerational language transmission appears to be stable and attained:

> When my children come to visit me, we only speak Mangarevan especially with the grandchildren, they love it. **Participant 9**.

There is however some scepticism about the responses of participant #9 regarding the vitality and practice of Mangarevan language given his personal circumstances. It is patently obvious that employment for participant 9 necessitates the use of French. And while Mangarevan is the preferred language with the grandchildren, the language use is restricted due to the fact that the latter live in Tahiti.

Participant #4 is sad that her grandchildren are not able to converse in Mangarevan, and as such they are not part of the intergenerational language transmission and it aggrieves her that they are not exposed to the language at home:

> I speak Mangarevan to my grandchildren; you must know it hurts my entrails when I see their language disappearing. What we are yearning for now, is for Mangarevan to be spoken, that language must not be forgotten.

This case is very pertinent in terms of three generations somehow cohabiting on the same island but unable to maintain the intergenerational language transmission. The assumption of imparting the native language to her grandchildren as a granted process seems to be much more challenging for her. However she finds some comfort at home when conversing in Mangarevan with her children and her Tahitian husband. In her case the intergenerational language transmission is not carried over and one of the reasons

could be her lack of proximity with her grandchildren. The experience of participant #4 with her grandchildren is a typical reminder that sometimes only one or two generations suffice to lose one's language according to Fishman (1968) and Holmes (2001).

The cases of participant #1 and #2 can be described as a success as far as the intergenerational language exchange with the older generation is concerned: both language teachers have been raised by their respective grandparents in the native language. This has ensured the dimension of linguistic proximity that was lacking in the case of participant #4. Participants #1 and #2 are forever in debt for their upbringing in the native language. However their experiences are very different and although Mangarevan is now taught at school, to both home still remains the place where Mangarevan should be spoken based on their childhood experience.

> I am grateful to them both [parents] for letting me grow up by the side of my grandparents so that today I can speak Mangarevan. **Participant 1**

> You must know while growing up as a child at home with my paternal grandparents, my grandfather would always speak Mangarevan to us but it's the old grandmother who would sometimes fancy speaking to us in French, a very bad French indeed! **Participant 2**

Participant #1's relationship with her grandparents has only been in the Mangarevan language and the linguistic and cultural knowledge imparted has allowed her to become a teacher of Mangarevan language. She has learned French at school and Mangarevan was the language at home with her grandparents, her parents having migrated to Tahiti for work.

Participant #2's relationship with her grandparents, especially with her grandmother who spoke bad French seemed to have helped her towards accepting French as another language of communication and as another culture to explore. She has learned French at school and speaks French only to her partner. To her daughter, she speaks French and Mangarevan.

Both language teachers have been very honest with the language they primarily speak at home but only participant #2 has overtly expressed her worries about the Mangarevan language disappearing:

> My heart hurts when I hear that our language will disappear in the years to come, our language might not be talked anymore.

Participant #1 in her own words sounded ashamed to tell me that French is their first language at home and that she is struggling to speak Mangarevan to her daughters:

> First of all at home and I am not going to lie to you Ena, it's French. Maybe I am not making enough effort to talk to my daughters in Mangarevan.

The feeling of shame is not only related to the dichotomy of being a Mangarevan language teacher and using French at home but also to her inability to teach Mangarevan to her daughters. Along with French, participant #2 uses Mangarevan as much as she can with her daughter at home but although she speaks French with her partner, the Mangarevan surges back and becomes ostensible especially when she expresses emotions such as anger towards her partner:

> Because my partner is French I speak French to him but you must know that sometimes the Mangarevan is never far behind (chuckles).

Participant #2 seems to fall in the same idealistic notion that she regularly speaks Mangarevan to her daughter at home as she pointed out in her interview. However her efforts are somewhat counteracted by the resurgence of an extensive use of French by her daughter instead of Mangarevan.

For participants #1 and #2, Mangarevan language starts at home because they reminisce the safe environment of their childhood spent with their grandparents speaking Mangarevan. In their cases the intergenerational exchange from grandparents to grandchildren was a successful story. Today the absence of the older generation partially explains some of the reasons why participant #1 is struggling to teach her daughters Mangarevan instead of French only at home.

As for participant #2 her efforts to speak Mangarevan with her daughter are being hampered by the time she spends in Tahiti for her daughter's secondary school education. French and Tahitian are the main languages in Tahiti.

As two fervent advocates of the Mangarevan language, I have no doubt that both at the institutional level are excellent language teachers but at the personal level, they struggle to pass on the native language to their children.

There is a common ground between both participants and that is the family dynamics. There are two generations at play for both (parents and children) and the interactions are bilateral but to some extent it is a situation that seems to be lacking a third entity represented by the grandparents who in Polynesian society, play the role of adoptive parents. The grandparents are usually the ones who look after their *makupuna* (grandchildren) when parents are absent, an experience that I have certainly lived through. This non-existence of the third entity seems to instigate the main problem of intergenerational language transmission that both families are going through.

Participant #12 is a noteworthy participant who despite only speaking French at home, supports the use of the native language at home as the natural preference for every single Mangarevan. She says:

> First I find it odd, we are after all in Mangareva and one should speak Mangarevan. Someone who loves his/her country must make an effort to learn the native language.

She supports the use of the native language at home not only due to the fact that school is now teaching Mangarevan but also in her employment at school, she genuinely has a vested interest in learning Mangarevan when meeting school children' parents. She sees home as the natural place to speak Mangarevan but she is also relying on home language practice to consolidate and complement the school language teaching. She stands out as a native language supporter with other participants for whom the *'akaroa*

(love) and the *'akaora* (revitalisation) of the Mangarevan language are signs of being Mangarevan, along with the practice of the language as illustrated by the below extracts.

> There is this strong desire in me to revitalise our language by speaking it so people know that we are Mangarevans. If I take you as an example, you have a pale skin and if you didn't speak Mangarevan how would I know if you are Mangarevan? I would think you are a foreigner. **Participant 9**.

> Maybe our Mangarevan language will get revived through the work you are doing. **Participant 6**.

> To the people who love their language, it will not be forgotten. **Participant 4.**

> We are children born in Mangareva, and that you love your language and this is the language of all the Mangarevans. **Participant 2**.

This supportive movement for the practice of the native language stands at odds with some of the excerpts expressed by the participants for whom Mangarevans seem to be resigned to the situation of language shift. The due course of a minority language leads towards language death in the worst case:

> I don't make a big deal about it because I understand a bit what they [grandchildren] tell me in French and I can reply back. They do understand some of it [Mangarevan]. **Participant 3**.

> I am telling you there is not a single family here that speaks Mangarevan only from dawn to dusk in Mangareva. **Participant 2**.

> Maybe it won't die and that's good. I say that if it doesn't die, it will become a poor language if we use external words all the time, it won't be as rich in lexical terms. **Participant 2.**

> How can I tell you this? I personally don't judge what language is being used these days. **Participant 9**.

In this first section it is reasonable to infer that the overall assessment of the Mangarevan language use at home is revealing of a language that is mostly used between the older generations themselves or with their direct children. Although efforts seemed to be made towards intergenerational language transmission across all generations within the family nucleus, the overall assessment of the interviews reveals great difficulties in practice. All tend to point to the language education at school as the other platform for language maintenance.

- <u>Language use in the school</u>

It is appropriate to give a background on how the teaching of Mangarevan came into existence in mainstream primary education and also about the legitimacy of regional language education.

According to participant #9 it was in 1997 through the personal initiative of the late French headmaster, a good second language speaker of the native language, that the beginning of Mangarevan was unofficially introduced at school. As a part-time teacher already employed by the school, participant #9 was asked to teach Mangarevan across all ages and in all the subjects available at school. He carried on teaching for the next ten years and was replaced by participant #2 who taught for four years. Participant #1 is the present teacher and her contract in teaching Mangarevan presumably ends in August 2014. All teachers of regional languages had to be reminded that due to the public and lay nature of French school education system implemented in French Polynesia, regional languages teaching cannot include any religious implications and have to stay within the values promoted by the French Republic.

The legitimacy of regional language is engraved in the French Constitution (1958, Art 7-1): "Regional languages are part of France's heritage". In terms of the education curriculum in primary and secondary schools, it is a competency that belongs to the government of French Polynesia, which usually means Tahiti (Mawyer, 2006).
According to the Department of Primary School Teaching (DEP, 2012), primary schools in each archipelago should provide two hours and a half to five hours weekly of native language teaching by qualified language teachers who have successfully obtained their teaching qualification. Teachers can be natives of the island where they are dispatched to teach or come from any other islands throughout French Polynesia. There

is a concern amongst native Mangarevan teachers that qualified teachers from outside Mangareva would need more training to learn the native language. They don't seem to be as well-equipped as they should be when it comes to speaking the language with the right pronunciation. All classes are taught native language from 2 years old to 11 years old. Mangareva is the only archipelago not provided with education at secondary level and the teaching of Mangarevan in mainstream stops for all children at the end of their primary school. To pursue their education, they would need to travel to Tahiti or to one of the bigger islands where secondary education is available in French only.

In a nutshell this is the situation of regional language teaching and it's apparent that the directives are devised by the central government in Tahiti from where finances are allocated to education all across French Polynesia.

In relation to the teaching of regional language at school, the main school of thought advocates school as a good platform to teach and learn Mangarevan so that our children do not forget their native language despite some shortcomings when practicing it at home:

> These days families are very strong in speaking French at home. I think it's a good thing that there is this Mangarevan language class at school to teach Mangarevan. **Participant 5**.

However what the older generation mainly remembered was not only the obligation to speak French but rather, the interdiction of speaking Mangarevan in the late 1940s within the school ground along with the consequences of disobedience. In the words of participant #11 talking about the types of punishment admonished at school, were the lei of *paka ioro* (skin of rotten mother of pearl beast); the after school detention and weeding out the school playing ground:

> Those caught speaking Mangarevan were taken to the school playground to pull weeds out during recreational time. As soon as you were heard speaking Mangarevan, the rotten mother pearl beast skin went straight around your neck and you were the last pupil to be sent home after school.

Participant #4 has also been on the receiving end of those punishments:

> You must know in our school days you must not be heard speaking
> Mangarevan otherwise you would be punished.

The punitive practice was still carried out when I was a 10-year-old pupil in primary school in Tahiti. The punishments were more physical such as kneeling down on rough surface; being hit with wooden ruler or smacked. Fortunately corporal punishment is a practice that doesn't exist anymore. These instances were the noticeable signs of pupils caught out speaking their native language at school and to the physical harm was added public embarrassment in front of your peers. This practice was applied all across French Polynesia so that French language could be better learnt.

There is certainly an interpretation that can be anticipated with regard to the psychology of the older generation who associates home as the safe haven where Mangarevan can be practised without the fear of reprimand. On the other hand, school for them is the place where shame was publicly displayed and therefore for the Mangarevan language not to be practiced. The physical scolding carried out by local teachers for using the native language at school, has also been for participant #8, the main reason to abandon school education:

> I was very angry with the teacher because it wasn't a gentle dressing-down at
> all, that's when I left school for good.

It is fair to say that the harsh punishment for speaking Mangarevan at school was perhaps endured most by the older generation. It would be reasonable as well to posit that the interdiction put upon them to speak their native language and the ensued reprimands at school for breaking the rule have psychologically marked the older generation. To some degree some of them suggested the same use of force to be put upon today's parents and children to maintain their language. Some old interviewees have hinted some aspects of the prescriptive and at times coercive use of the Mangarevan language at home:

> The parents must force themselves to speak Mangarevan to their children at home. **Participant 8**

> We mustn't force the Mangarevan onto the children but the parents must speak all the time and then it will be easier for the children to learn. **Participant 3.**

It is a legitimate statement to forestall that participant #8 wasn't alone to feel such harsh treatment but that other school children of that time would have experienced the same punishment such as participants #10 and #3. They respectively commented upon the use of punishment at school as a means to force them to learn French. The below extracts give indications about when the interdiction to speak Mangarevan at school started to be much more driven:

> In was at the end of the 60s that the interdiction to speak Mangarevan at school was carried out.

> We have been forced to learn French and punishment was handed over when we were caught speaking Mangarevan. They used to make us learn and speak French.

Participant #3's self-explanatory comment acknowledges that French was to become the main language spoken at school and this by any means possible.

The response made by participant #10 must be put into the specific context of the French language stronger reappearance in the late 1960s in Mangareva, a point touched upon when the matter of the nuclear testing program in French Polynesia was discussed. For participant #10 the arrival of the military personnel on the island has considerably impacted the Mangarevan language. It was in particular the volume of the French military stepping on the wharf of Rikitea or on the tarmac of the airport Totegegie[14]. The airport was mainly built for logistical purpose (Barillot & Le Caill, 2011) aiming at bringing material for the construction of bunkers (military anti-nuclear concrete shelters) and a blockhaus (light shelters for the populations) and to receive military

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[14] One of the interviewees told me this native name was brought back to life when the airport was built in 1966 Totegegie is better known as Tekau. The difficulty for the French to pronounce the two successive nasal sounds *ng* has the name pronounced with the French accent by the majority of the population.

contingent and civil servants onto Mangareva. This sudden escalation of French presence in Mangareva has undoubtedly urged the school and its teachers to promote the French language even more at school and prohibit the use of the native language. The reinstatement of the use of Mangarevan language in education some years later has surprised participant #10:

> At that time, I know it was enforced not to speak Mangarevan once you entered the school ground, you mustn't speak Mangarevan anymore...And now they want you to speak your language at school. I don't understand anymore.

Most of the older participants as well as voicing their concerns regarding chastisements and reprimands, have also expressed their worries about the family nucleus originally considered as a safe harbour for the native language maintenance. Now it has become dominated by the use of French language as confirmed respectively by participant #6 and participant #5:

> It seems that their language at home and the one they use most is French, nearly, no not nearly, but in all the family homes now.

> There are families today who strongly speak French at home, when you speak Mangarevan to them, they speak very little of it, they are very much into French.

Although these extracts move the language topic outside the remits of the school, their statements are indicative of the apparent rapidity of assimilation of the French language inside and outside family homes. However this language assimilation process appears not to provide linguistic benefits to the speakers aspiring to a bilingual standard. The general evaluation by the majority of the interviewees in terms of bilingual advantages is not favourable. The linguistic performances that are being noticed are a bad French and Tahitian, outcome compounded by an even worse Mangarevan practice at home. According to my interviewees, children and young parents are mixing languages and are incapable of stringing sentences together without borrowing words or clauses from French or Tahitian.

Participants #2, #4, #6 and #7 give good examples of the language mix:

To translate: it's seven o'clock? They answer in Tahitian "hora hitu" instead of in Mangarevan "koroio ko 'itu". For the number ten, they say "ahuru" (TAH) instead of "e ta'i rogo'uru" (MGV). **Participant 2**.

We have taken Mangarevan and French words and mixed them up. There is no one here who speaks French properly and there is no one who can speak one single language without mixing it. That's not right is it? **Participant 2**.

At the infirmary...people are speaking French mixed with Mangarevan and Tahitian words. **Participant 4**.

Sometimes it's Mangarevan mixed with Tahitian and French words, that's what I have noticed these days, the difficulty for Mangarevans to speak the Mangarevan language. **Participant 6.**

Like the kids that one can hear sometimes saying: "va chercher le (FR) paraku (MGV)": go and get the rake! **Participant 7**.

Although the overall outlook of the language use at school and outside indicates the hegemony of French amongst the younger generations, former teacher participant #9 underlines that the children are very keen to speak and listen to Mangarevan during its allocated language teaching time.

The children love listening to stories in their native tongue especially when they are legends**. Participant 9**.

This extract of children being enthused with listening to local tales in their native language certainly evidence their love and interest for their language at that age. Nevertheless, it's probably the ubiquitous nature of French institutions concentrated within close distance to one another that encourages the use of French and to some degree discourages children and young parents alike from speaking their mother tongue.

- Language use in French institutions

These post-colonial institutions are laden with sociolinguistic messages that make them worth examining in order to account for the hegemony of French and Tahitian languages and witness the effects of erosion of the Mangarevan language.

One of the interesting points is the geographical layout of those buildings on the island: there are separated within a 150-metre circumference. In this grid, the town hall and the

post office are the furthest points and the infirmary and the police station are located off the centre. One can easily assume that the concentration of French representations has already territorially put the stamp of French language dominance in that specific area. This dominance is well reflected by the language used in those institutions and although the participants are striving to use the native language as much as they can, as expected the French language is already well established within that grid.

The participants agree that at the town hall the dominating factor is the language that the clerk uses first when dealing with the requests. It is well known that working in those institutions, French is the main language and therefore to fill up those positions a sufficient command of French is the main requirement. As for the older generation unable to speak French, they are usually accompanied by their grandchildren to speak on their behalf.

> At the town hall, if the person dealing with the business I am going for understands Mangarevan, then I will speak Mangarevan otherwise I will speak French of course. **Participant 2**.
>
> If the people at the town hall are Mangarevans, I ask for what I need in Mangarevan but they always ask me what it means in French. **Participant 4.**
>
> They [the town hall] start talking so you just use the language they use first but it's a mixed language. **Participant 6**.
>
> When I go to the town hall my daughter comes with me to translate into French what I say. **Participant 8**.

The dominance of French at the town hall is mainly in terms of administrative requests or documents that can only be obtained if you know the word in French. However when the mayor is available, the language choice changes completely and discussions are more animated and fluent in Mangarevan. One must add that all the information about administrative operation is given either in French or translated into the dominant regional language (Tahitian) to the local population. There is therefore an unfair

advantage given to the Tahitian language in terms of the exposure of Mangarevan language: no information is displayed yet in Mangarevan at the town hall.

If it is an administrative operation, the French language is the norm, but if it is a more personal matter, the Mangarevan language takes primacy. We can say that at the personal level the Mangarevan language is very much the first to be used by the participants whereas at the administrative level the French is dominant.

Another interesting place where languages are at play is the infirmary where the concentration of people is conducive to the use of all the languages and dialects available on the island (French, Mangarevan, Tahitian, Paumotu, Australs and Marquesan). Despite the availability of those six languages and dialects amongst the population, it is undeniable that the speech mixing of French, Tahitian and Mangarevan is omnipresent. As it was the case at the town hall, here the medical personnel *in situ* dictate the language to be used and information for patients are displayed in French and Tahitian:

> At the infirmary it's French because the medical personnel only speaks French...the information put against the wall is in French and Tahitian so the patients would try to read them and get used to those information written in those languages. **Participant 2**.

> We can hear the older generation speaking French at the town hall, the infirmary, the post office...in all those French institutions**. Participant 13**.

> At the infirmary it's in French. I understand some French words and I can somehow reply but when it's in Tahitian I can easily reply**. Participant 3**.

> At the infirmary, Tahitians work there so you speak Tahitian, if it's French, you of course have to speak French**. Participant 4.**

> When you go to see the nurses, whom are you going to speak Mangarevan to? Those nurses are from Tahiti and what language do they speak? French of course. **Participant 7**.

These extracts are illustrations of the difficulty for the Mangarevan language to compete against French and Tahitian due to the ingrained nature of those institutions and the linguistic competences of their workforce. In this context participant #9 rightly highlighted the difficulty of communication between the older generation unable to

describe their ailment in a language that is foreign to them and the medical personnel not able to understand them:

> Because I see that the nurses want to understand the old patients but speaking French and Tahitian don't help when the patients can only speak Mangarevan, hence the difficulties in communication.

This uneven language competition (Williams, 2012; Phillipson, 2011) wasn't as significant in past years according to participant #4 who assured me that nurses of that time used to be able to speak a good Mangarevan and interact with the older generation:

> I must tell you that some of the old French and Tahitian nurses some years ago, used to speak Mangarevan with a very good accent. These days the young people born here don't have the right accent.

These words from participant #4 are a reminder that medical professionals used to stay on the island where they were affected for a long sojourn giving them time to learn the language and dialect of the population. Nowadays, it is fair to say that in the case of the infirmary, recruitment for healthcare workers such as nurses takes place in the administrative capital Tahiti through regional contest. However doctors are usually recruited from France due to the shortage of local medical professionals outside of Tahiti. Doctors and nurses are dispatched all over the region for a short amount of time before being redeployed in other parts of the region. It is therefore evident that continuous regional migrations of specialised health professionals would deny them a better learning and understanding of the local language. One must also acknowledge that living on an island or atoll isolated from the many social activities that can be provided by the big metropolis of Tahiti, is not always an attractive proposition for professional workforce. At the time of my fieldwork, Mangareva had only one local mobile nurse and two Tahitian stationary nurses at the infirmary: there are no doctors on the island.

The local police station epitomises the French institution by excellence where its physical presence is symbolized by the national flag and its representative, the *gendarme* (policeman) in his white or blue uniform speaking a perfect French.

It is at the post office that I have witnessed a very interesting sociolinguistic interaction. All the participants told me that French is the language that is used there because the workers speak French and are not very efficient with Mangarevan. Although some years ago the post office was run by the present mayor and as a Mangarevan born, the languages used was Mangarevan first then French. As was the case at the town hall and the infirmary, all the information was displayed in French and some in Tahitian. Although there is a very small sign that says touraki/kume [15] (open/close) in Mangarevan, it might indicate that the post office is the only place where some sign in the native language is allowed or that some kind of language maintenance project was started.

A case of code switching occurred while waiting in the reception area, when discussions between many old people were flowing in Mangarevan. The turning point was the appearance of the younger generation coming for some errands at the post office. Their presence at the reception area triggered suddenly the use of French from the older generation: a typical case of the progress and effect of language shift. This speech phenomenon prompted me to question the participants regarding the reasons for such a code switching and here are some of the interpretations.

> I think because the older generation are afraid that the young wouldn't understand what is being talked about in Mangarevan. Don't forget, this young generation hasn't grown up in the Mangarevan language but in the French language. **Participant 2**.

> You know the youth are already in difficulties in speaking their native language. Now to speak to them you have to change your language into the one that they understand and the majority of the time it's French or Tahitian. **Participant 6.**

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[15] Participant #2 reminds me that *touraki* should be written *turaki* and that the sign has been there for at least 5 years.

> Here older people would usually use their native language to speak to one another but when the young are involved, it is very difficult for the latter to understand because they are not used to Mangarevan. We use Mangarevan so that they can learn it but even that is too difficult for them. **Participant 7**.

> I think nowadays the old people don't want the youth to struggle to understand so they make it easy for them to quickly understand by speaking in French. **Participant 1.**

> I think they want to show off that they are able to speak French, a very bad French. They might feel ashamed as well of speaking Mangarevan maybe. **Participant 13.**

The underpinning commonality that can be gathered from these extracts for the code switch seems to suggest the generous intention to make it easier for the youth to get involved into the discussions, despite the older generation's poor French. It might also reflect the willingness for the older generation to "show off" their linguistic abilities albeit erroneous in a situation of people congregating.

It might just be the simple fact that the post office like all the other institutions is where French is the majority language with economic benefits as reminded by participants #6 and #5:

> France is a powerful nation and they do already know that their language is spoken here and you can't speak your language here anymore but French. **Participant 6.**

> It's true without this French language you can't find a job, you can't make any business. **Participant 5**.

It is clear from these extracts that French institutions reflect power and dominance territorially and socio-linguistically. The permanence of French in everyday life whether through oral, written or visual texts, makes it difficult for the native language to compete against. It is also extremely arduous to claw back some ground lost due to the broadcasting net of the French language ramifications, a view shared by participant #1:

> I think the arrival on those new foreign establishments might have been the reasons for the slow erosion of our culture.

Even though, an interesting account by participant #9 seems to disagree with participant #1's earlier assertion:

> I am thinking they [the French military] didn't disturb our language; it's ourselves who decided to follow the French language. The French language didn't make our Mangarevan language a mixed language.

The background of participant #9 might be able to enlighten his views regarding the French language not responsible for the language mix phenomenon. As a former teacher he has experienced the arrival of the French military and has married one but he also knows the Mangarevan language very well since he taught it for nearly ten years. His statement can only be understood as a call for Mangarevans to be responsible for the use of their language and accountable for language mixing.

One would hope that the church usually associated with the use of the native language is one of the domains spared by the dominance of French and Tahitian, where a good proportion of Mangarevan language use is still alive and displayed.

- Language use in church

> When you go to church, the first language you hear is French and then comes Mangarevan but we could say a mixed Mangarevan language of Tahitian, French and Mangarevan. **Participant 7**.

> When you go to church for the service, I am not a churchgoer myself because I don't hear those Mangarevan songs and hymns instead, you hear Tahitian or French ones. **Participant 6.**

> You know my heart bleeds when I go to church on Sundays. Don't we have any songs in Mangarevan instead of the French and Tahitian ones? **Participant 2.**

> At church we don't sing in Mangarevan anymore and I think the guilt rests on our elders. **Participant 13.**

Unfortunately the above extracts are mostly criticisms when talking about language(s) used around this specific domain in Mangareva nowadays. Those declarations coming from each end of the generations' bridge confirm that the religion domain seems to be losing its status. It is not considered anymore as one of the last strongholds in terms of helping maintain the native language. It is noticeable that each participant has an explanation as to how and why we have reached this worrying situation.

For participant #6 the church has gradually lost its grip on the Mangarevan language since the teaching of the catechism has been done in French or Tahitian, when originally taught in Mangarevan in his childhood. The loss of the native language is a peril that is threatening the whole population.

Participant #7 calls upon the work of colonisation achieved by the first catholic priests through the evangelisation of the souls using French. Their mission was twofold: to spread the Catholic faith throughout the archipelago but also to account for the race for the greater expansion in Oceania of the French Empire pitted against the British Empire through Christianisation:

> They (catholic missionaries) will come to Oceania so that peoples here are under the French administration. **Participant 7**.

This is an insightful opinion that explains the dominance of the French language and places the loss of the Mangarevan language in the domain of the church today, to events occurred in the past.

Participant #13 clearly puts the responsibility on the older generation for not passing on the Mangarevan hymns and songs to the next generation. But he also lays the blame on the lack of commitment from the population in a revitalisation process of those old native songs through rehearsing.

Participant #2 is denouncing the use of foreign (mainly French and Tahitian) songs and hymns at church when Mangarevan versions already exist[16].

There have also been a lot of remarks regarding the nomadic aspect of ecclesiastic provision, as priests are not settling in one parish anymore but have to cater for many parishes throughout French Polynesia. In this situation they are not able to learn the liturgy in the native language and therefore celebrate the mass in French or Tahitian.

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[16] Participant #2 tells me that the French and Tahitian hymns are translations of the Mangarevan ones but I couldn't validate her assumptions.

They (catholic missionaries) will come to Oceania so that peoples here are under the French administration. **Participant 7**.

Although the church's grip on the native language is loosening, the participants rally to recognise the Mangarevan used at church in the liturgy as the pure Mangarevan that should be spoken by everyone because first recorded and written by the catholic missionaries.

In this section of languages used in situations, we have recognised firm indications of the pervasive presence and predominant hegemony of the French language in all the settings selected. A language hegemony that we will delve into deeper by looking at the impact those languages have on the Mangarevan identity and to some degree on its culture.

5.1.2   Language and culture

The grid EGIDS elaborated by Ethnologue summarises the extinct stage of a language as "no longer in use and no one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language", the emphasis is clearly put on identity and language. This suggests that the separation of those two components forecasts the disappearance of a major aspect of one's culture. The literature also tells us that cultural identity and traditions are largely but not exclusively, conveyed and displayed by the means of language.

Claims and demonstrations for Mangarevan cultural identity through language constantly filtered through the interviews and as the below quotes show, many of the respondents single out language as the most important marker of identity. It is also the language that gives the community its identity and according to Cameron in Ricento (2006, p. 70), "language is one of the things that constitutes my identity as a particular kind of subject".

For example legends and myths need something to disseminate them-selves and that comes through language otherwise how can you know about your cultural heritage? **Participant 7.**

This Mangarevan language has many strands that make it important: it describes our culture and traditions, the history of our land... **Participant 5**.

To be Mangarevan for me is to be a part of your culture, to own your culture, speak your language, share your language but also talk about your island, your history... **Participant 12.**

Because you must know, the child who hasn't got a language, a history, a culture and a land: that child will die. **Participant 13.**

In my opinion, language and culture go and work hand in hand. Culture cannot go alone without the language and vice versa: they are one. The language cannot be exported outside without the culture and the culture cannot be known without the language. **Participant 2**.

I think the Mangarevan language is a part of the Mangarevan culture, and I think that Mangarevan culture relates to Mangarevan language by the stories, the myths and legends, the artefacts. **Participant 1**.

These statements encompass the interactions that exist between language and culture, complementing one another. Language symbolizes the status of the culture and it partly creates culture; the uniqueness of a culture is projected by its language, its traditions and its customs; to transmit and enact the culture through language is to share the island's history and customs, its wisdom and ideas, its mode of greetings (Baker, 2006): culture is the repository of language. There is harmony between language and culture because they would have grown together and as stated by participant #2, they go and work hand in hand.

As participant #7 commented, the language is the vehicle that diffuses the culture inside and outside its geographical borders and knows it best; participants #5 and #12 see the language as having a multipurpose role which ultimately converges towards disseminating and sharing one's culture.

For participant #13 language is compared to an agent for culture and history, it is the breath of life for humans without which any living organism dies. As a leader of a group

of cultural dancers, participant #13 is perhaps the most suitable herald for the Mangarevan culture. As he travels to Tahiti, the main cultural festival centre to promote the Mangarevan culture through dances, displaying its emotive and cognitive features. However he admits that he has encountered other Mangarevans at times who would prefer to be recognized as Tahitians instead of Mangarevans certainly due to the status of Tahitian culture considered as richer with a worldwide recognition. Mangarevan culture seems to be only associated with its alleged cannibalistic and savage past, a fact of history that still pervades people's memory within French Polynesia. However it remains a sweeping generalization for a practice that might have appeared in times of famine but contested (Lesson, 1844; Mawyer, 2008).

The interesting frequency of terms such as *history of the island, land, place names, legends...* from my interviews epitomize what Mangarevan culture is. The historical meanings and relationships of those terms to the Mangarevans are what some of my participants want the younger generation to be inculcated with. Participant #6 for example has highlighted the deficiencies of the children's instruction in terms of cultural knowledge they receive as he uses the school ground as an example. Here is what he has to say:

> I think the children first of all must know where they stand in relation to places and locations on the island: their names, their fame, their legends and myths... This is the very first thing that the children must know and learn about where they stand on this island so they become real Mangarevans. Do the children know that they are at school at Marau Tagaroa and its significance?

Participant #6 is using the historical knowledge approach in the hope that the younger generation would rediscover their standing as the future of Mangareva, in their relationship with landmarks and places on the island. It is through the means of legends and myths that they become aware of the significance of being Mangarevans. According

to the latter the children don't know those geographical landmarks or part of their collective memory, because they haven't been talked about at school or at home.

Participant #7 also converges towards a similar viewpoint about knowing one's own culture in order to find one's own place in society. Having and knowing the local legends, stories and myths enrich our language.

> The legend of Toapere[17] for Mangarevans like us will serve as a resonance to the outside world. Through those legends our language has become more significant.

It is true that the growing use of French language in the family circle (a dominant foreign and not well spoken language) makes it difficult for local narratives such as legends and myths to emerge except at school. Participant #9 also underlines the lack of dialogue and posits that children and parents alike have active lives and they haven't got time for ordinary talk:

> The child has very little time when they go home it's already dark, you see what is missing is this dialogue, there is no more and I nearly want to say that the parents are avoiding this dialogue.

A fair assumption is that participants #6, #7 and #9 put the emphasis on informing or teaching the children about their cultural past but also to make time for dialogue in the family home. Language is the vehicle to give this cultural knowledge to the young generation who will be identified as a specific community that knows its history.

The other approach adopted by participant #2 is to accentuate the inseparability of language and culture:

> The means to talk about culture is language without language the culture cannot be shown, we would just stay mute and not talk. Language is the most important means for the culture: without the language the culture would not be known.

This statement defines language and culture as the two sides of the same coin. While the previous respondents had given priority to teaching the children about their future role

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[17] Toapere is a seeress who prophesized the arrival of the first French missionaries.

in society through the knowledge of their culture, the priority for participant #2 is the use of the language. It is the pragmatic side of the cultural capital left to us by our ancestors that is for participant #2 the most important. This pragmatic heritage is embedded for example in the medicinal virtues of some plants; in the children games that were played by our ancestors; in recognizing poisonous or safe species of fish for consumption... but all this practical knowledge must be stamped with the seal of permanence by writing it all down:

> Well we will start with speaking and the next level is the codification of the writing, we can't just stay on the speaking part of the language because it will be lost tomorrow. I would like to give an example: what about the traditional medicines that our ancestors were taught how to prepare? Where are those recipes now? Why didn't we write them down?

Participant #2 is adamant that language transfers culture to people but in her mind this cultural knowledge must not be left as an oral legacy because there are no records preserved by the ancestors about this practical knowledge. A written legacy is necessary for the future generations and for the language and culture to survive. Mangarevan identity is linked to the practice of the language and of its cultural knowledge.

In this section we have seen different ways by which participants approach the dual components language/culture and it's acknowledged that language is the main vehicle to convey cultures, but what part of culture should take priority is being strongly argued by the interviewees. Should the priority be philosophical knowledge or pragmatic knowledge?

The participants indeed wished the teaching of the cultural knowledge to be done in Mangarevan. However it would be fair to say that Mangarevan language attrition and obsolescence (decreased fluency, loss of functions in the language, forgotten vocabulary and expressions...) would probably leave the way for French to be the medium for

teaching cultural knowledge to the next young generation, leading us to the topic of language power.

5.1.3 Language hierarchical power

This thesis has described the pervasive and hegemonic character of the French language in the Mangarevan society. It has also identified Tahitian as the vernacular that the older generation can speak and use as lingua franca when in Tahiti. For the old generation French is not a language that they master. These two languages have embedded themselves into the Mangarevan society by appropriating many of the domains that once belonged to the remits of the native language. The dominant presence of the French language in Mangarevans' everyday lives has been perceived as the sign of power as alluded to by participant #9:

> They [Mangarevans] think the French language is up there whereas the
> Mangarevan is down here, the language of humility. All Mangarevans want
> to speak French because it's the language of power.

French language power is a recurrent topic amongst the participants particularly regarding education issues both at micro level (language teaching curriculum, educational material, class sizes...) and at macro level (directives and policies from the local government in Tahiti, financial allowances, teachers' payroll...). At both levels official documents for educational strategies are delivered in French or Tahitian to the other archipelagos despite effort to promote the teaching of regional languages officially effective since 2007 (IEOM, 2014). Those documents are also accessible to the public on the government websites but mostly in French.

According to participant #13, translating those documents is costly and the paucity of Mangarevan vocabulary along with the shortage of Mangarevan scholars to translate technical terms, are not helping in slowing down the hegemony of French and Tahitian:

> You know it is not an easy job to translate those documents because they
> have to be done in Tahiti in terms of printing and it's costing a lot...and the
> people reading them are Tahitians anyway, so...

The respondents are aware of the external factors affecting the teaching of their native language and the issues of an education system that is not suitable for the school children. A weekly teaching of two and a half hours of native language against thirty-two hours of French teaching is not favourable in terms of language maintenance. This creates not only insufficient time in language practice but also instils an unequal power relationship detrimental to the native language and their speakers:

> It's the whole education system that is wrong. Here we teach the Mangarevan language until 11 years old and after that nothing: there is no continuity. **Participant 2.**

> There are eight hours at school a day and over seven hours are in French; the rest is in Mangarevan, do you think it's enough? **Participant 6.**

The issue of lack of "continuity" raised by participant #2 is a matter that will affect the children' future education. The effort invested into helping them acquire the basics of their native language is worthless even if they pursue their education into secondary school because their education will be given in French only.

Figures from the IEOM (p. 121) annual report, also states that the number of primary school children has steadily declined with a 2.1% decrease in 2013 compared to the previous year. What is more worrying is the percentage of students' failings in higher education with 55% of students abandoning their studies in their first year at university. According to the interviewees working in the education sector there are two of the main causes of this failure. It is due firstly to the difficulty that the children and students have in mastering the French language[18] and secondly, the baccalaureate diploma gives a far too easy and automatic entry to university.

The participants are also wishing for arrangements to be put in place to deliver recognized certificates or diplomas in the Mangarevan language and not just let the Tahitian language benefit from such a measure at the university.

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[18] The IEOM doesn't provide us with statistics of student failures by ethnicity but it is highly probable that students of Tahitian and outer archipelago backgrounds would feature prominently in those statistics.

There are no diplomas or certificates in the Mangarevan language but only in French. I asked for more hours to teach Mangarevan language and it wasn't allowed because there is an agenda to teach French first. **Participant 9**.

The big issue is that there are no degrees or university studies in Mangarevan language, but in Tahitian yes there are. **Participant 3**.

I could do some higher education studies about my own Mangarevan language but there are no university courses or funding. **Participant 1.**

The primacy given to French language and on a lesser scale to Tahitian language has considerably increased their remit of influence within the family homes themselves. In terms of audio-visual media, all is aired in French with some local news in Tahitian; all the foreign international movies are dubbed in French; documentaries about other archipelagos are broadcast or subtitled in French. Radio broadcasting is predominantly in French despite supplementary channels in Tahitian and as some of the participants were saying:

The Mangarevan world is governed by the French language. It is a French administration but in Tahiti a lot of work has been done only for the Tahitian language. **Participant 2**.

What can I say? This is a French administration, a French authority but we shouldn't speak French to replace or make our language disappear. **Participant 1**.

This is a French administration and we are required to abide by its rule. **Participant 11**.

If the mayor could increase the hours of Mangarevan language teaching at school that would be a good thing but I guess the education system depends on the French administration[19]. **Participant 10**.

It's also observed that the local primary school has acquired technological devices in order to offer school children access to the internet and digital learning: all their i-pads are configured in French. It is not uncommon to meet young children on the main road carrying new technological devices with themselves as normal accessories.

This ever-present feature of the French language power over the native language cannot be separated from the empirical remains of colonisation (former military bunkers and

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[19] Education in primary and secondary schools is a competence of the local government. The university is an independent institution.

shelters disseminated on the island). Terms such as *French authority*, *French administration* are readily used by the participants accustomed to such a dominant presence. The Mangarevan population could be declared as one of the peoples where colonisation operating in three ways has taken place (Phillipson, 2011). The majority of the participants belong to the era of the French nuclear testing programme and it is interesting to note that some of the fiercest criticisms are not only directed to the French administration but also to the Catholic mission:

> How can the missionaries who arrived here 180 years ago and this new administration are now two of the largest landowners in Mangareva? I would put evangelisation and colonisation in the same basket! You know I have served in the French army and at that time you were forced to fight for your motherland France. Today I say my mind has been cheated because France who claimed to be our mother now is discarding us. **Participant 7.**

> When the army came to Mangareva, they also spread and expanded the French language around and Mangarevan people would live at their side for work reasons and start speaking and learning French. So this is how the French language has settled strongly in Mangareva but when they came what did they bring with them? We only know now that death was included in their coming and that is of course the biggest problem here. What good have they done to get rid of what they have left here? **Participant 4**.

> Even we didn't speak French that much before the military personnel came here, of course we heard some but now even the old people are speaking French. We used to only hear French but since the arrival of the military personnel, the youth of that time started to be much more French speakers. **Participant 10**.

There are arguably some residues of protest amongst the participants regarding the overall benefits accumulated by the French both in their geo-political ambitions and their spiritual teachings towards the Mangarevan community: the use of the French language has certainly helped in gathering those advantages.

5.1.4   Importance of language maintenance

Measured on the vitality and endangerment grids[20] as a language severely endangered, it is purposely urgent to determine what means would be most appropriate to recommend in order to reverse the trend of language shift. One of the most pressing matters

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[20] Ethnologue, UNESCO and Fishman's GIDS seem to be in agreement regarding the vitality and endangerment level of the Mangarevan language but the figures given by the first two organizations of Mangarevan speakers do raise questions as to how those numbers were obtained: UNESCO (2000) 300; Ethnologue (2011) 600.

suggested by the participants was initially the creation of a Mangarevan language academy. This institution will be the overall reference in terms of codification or standardisation of the language; of reviewing old or creating new vocabulary and lexical; in terms of good syntax and grammar; of correct spelling and orthography; correct pronunciation... there is an array of tasks incumbent to the new academy expert members:

> Maybe we should create an academy for language here to teach and learn Mangarevan like they have in Tahiti. Maybe people who are experts in Mangarevan language and understand it should run it. **Participant 8.**

> Now what are we seeing in Tahiti? Tahitian language has been informally standardised with the creation of the Tahitian language academy that includes experts of the Tahitian language, and now it is very easy to learn because they have that group of experts to impart guidance on how to speak good Tahitian. What about us? We haven't got anyone here. Our *tupuna* (ancestors) and parents have gone and they have taken our language away with them. I agree about the creation of a Mangarevan academy.
> **Participant 7**.

> I think we should set up an academy for the Mangarevan language and I have asked different people involved with the Mangarevan language about this idea so we can be in line with the Marquesan, the Tahitian and the Australs academies. **Participant 12**.

> In Tahiti they have the news in Tahitian through television, they have the Tahitian language academy, there is a lot of work that is being done to maintain and establish the Tahitian language. Here in Mangareva, there is nothing like that. **Participant 2**.

However some of the same participants have also hinted some difficulties that arise especially when dealing with Mangarevan language experts whether residing on the island or in Tahiti. Each person has a particular approach to standardisation of the language and attempting to reach a collective agreement seems to be the main challenge. The participants said that there are different schools of orthography depending on whether you keep the original writing system from the missionaries; the one from the native priest or the writing system from one of the experts in Mangareva culture. Questions of competencies are also being raised amongst the local population regarding identifying people with exceptional knowledge about the language and culture in order to warranty and legitimise their position as experts:

> Father *X*[21] has his own writing system; participant #11 relies on the Gospels and *Y* the expert in local culture, provides the school with her way of teaching Mangarevan. **Participant 7**.

> It seems to me that the writing system that the native priest has developed is the right one because he has reviewed and studied all those old books to develop his orthography. **Participant 3**.

> The first French missionaries that came, I think they did a good job here because if they didn't come to Mangareva, there wouldn't be any writing system here. They started to write down our culture at that time**. Participant 9**.

> You see when I came back here to teach Mangarevan, the orthography was always a matter of dispute between my brother and I because there is no standardisation of the orthography, and we haven't got a standardised writing of the Mangarevan language. **Participant 2**

> Participant #1 must know not only how to teach the language but also what is linked to the language and that is the most difficult part of Mangarevan culture. Who is going to corroborate with what she says about the Mangarevan language or the culture? **Participant 7**

This controversy of multiple writing systems appears as a reminder that the Tahitian academy also faces many more schools of different writings that challenge its academic orthography. In the light of those challenges some of the participants have admitted how the apparent simple task of creating an academy based on the Tahitian model may demand more work into its creation than previously anticipated. Participant #2 even admitted that problems would still persist:

> I don't think that the creation of a Mangarevan language academy will make a difference because there will always be different views and we'll never reach an agreement on the codification and standardisation of the language.

Another avenue that was proposed was the return of the Mangarevan language into the teaching of catechism. This is a particular request made by the older generation for whom catechism was their way of learning Mangarevan as children. Now all the catechism is done in French due essentially to a lack of good enough adults who can teach and remember the old liturgical terms.

> When we were kids, we used to go to school to learn French, and go to the catechism to learn Mangarevan and I think that was the most important teaching that we have received: the catechism in Mangarevan. Now the catechism is in French: they have abandoned the Mangarevan teaching. This is the main reason why we are now forgetting our language. **Participant 6.**

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21 X and Y used to protect identity

> I think we can go back to those all days and there are a lot people who can help to bring back the old spoken Mangarevan. **Participant 14.**

> It is the real Mangarevan that used to be taught through catechism at church with the prayer and hymn books all in Mangarevan. **Participant 8**.

> The only way that would help Mangarevan to survive is through its connection to Church otherwise there'll be no one. **Participant 12.**

During my fieldwork, I heard long litanies of memorised prayers and hymns chanted or recited by the old generation when I attended vespers service. They were the only ones who would recite liturgical passages by hearts in Mangarevan reaffirming how successful catechism in the native vernacular has been for them. It is certainly an option as a language maintenance strategy if collective work is achieved amongst the older generation as sources of liturgical information.

Already established within the remit of the school's curriculum activities, two kinds of language competitions have been targeted as ways to revitalise the Mangarevan language: the *tiporoporo* (oratory skills) and the *spelling bee*[22] competitions.

The oratory skills exercise is a regional competition taking place on the main island of Tahiti, initiated several years ago by the Ministry of Education where school children are judged on their knowledge of the native language and culture.

The spelling bee is strictly local based and although this competition is mainly used to improve children's French spelling skills, some of the interviewees from the education sector have suggested extending the format to the Mangarevan language. There has been a lot of interest shown by the population while I was attending a spelling bee competition:

> We do have some part of responsibility in terms of sharing the Mangarevan knowledge that we have received from our parents and I have started to encourage our children to speak Mangarevan through the *tiporoporo* that takes place every year in the whole of French Polynesia. **Participant 13**.

> Some nights ago we organised some events under the format of spelling bee competition between children as to improve spelling and reading skills. I suggested that in the first place we would do all in French. But now I think it's also time to do it in Mangarevan and I put the idea in front of the teachers. **Participant 12**.

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[22] This is a competition where contestants are asked to spell a broad selection of words.

Although the spelling bee competition seemed to be welcome by the participants, there are still discussions amongst participants about how linguistically efficient the *tiporoporo* is. Their concern is based on the pupils' lack of understanding of the words they utter and the level of correct pronunciation of sentences that the older generation cannot understand. The pupils are mechanically repeating what they were taught without clearly understanding and that is the main complaint made:

> Now we also send our kids for the *tiporoporo* competition. I am telling you this is such an annoying business because there are words in those speeches that are not right for the kids. Of course you know there are some good things such as the fact that when you hear the pupil speech, you can tell the kid was taught at school on why use this and that word, but in terms of pronunciation of the words it's bad. **Participant 4**.

> What they are doing to help children with their Mangarevan with the "*tiporoporo*" (speech competition), I don't know what that means and where it comes from**. Participant 14**.

> The word *tiporoporo* is not a word I agree with and I don't think it's a Mangarevan word anyway**. Participant 6**.

> During the festival of speech competitions here in Mangareva, one of the old ladies came to me and asked me: do you understand what is being said? I said some of it. She replied: I don't understand any of it! And she is a Mangarevan speaker born here! **Participant 2**

It is clear that the above-mentioned means for language shift reversal have not met the satisfaction of a lot of the participants but one of the ideas put forward by one participant was regarding the installation of a local radio station on the island: this could become the most effective means for the language revitalisation.

> I think if there were a local radio for the children to listen to, it would be another way of communication. When you listen to the radio you would know what is being talked about. I listen to the Tahitian radio because it's the only one existing. Now we also have Mangarevan people talking on Tahitian radio such as *Y* who speaks in Mangarevan. She also speaks on television and she used to be a teacher. **Participant 8**.

Some of the questions that would undoubtedly arise would be regarding the extensive or minimal control that the government of French Polynesia could exert as allocation for broadcasting frequencies is one of its competences. It would also be interesting to find out in terms of financing this initiative whether the government would be willing to

offer their backing to the smallest language community to the detriment of other bigger regional communities.

5.1.5   Impact of religion on Language

From the onset the question of religion was evidently going to play a big part during the interviews since Mangareva, although the very first archipelago converted to Catholicism by the French missionaries, these latter were preceded by the arrival of the Anglican missionaries (Laval, 1968, p. 14). Therefore Mangareva was influenced by both faiths: Anglican and Catholic and now around 90% of the population is catholic.

To one of the tentative questions regarding their feeling towards the French language being spoken in Mangareva, the responses from the participants was to recall Toapere's prophecy:

> "*Ena te Etua tika ka tāu, e kore taua e kite, e ka'u toro roa, e vavae momoi. E mate koe, e mate au, e kore taua e kite, na Matua e mau io*[23]".

The fulfilment of this prophecy was to play in the favour of the French missionaries who arrived on the Tokani beach of the island of Akamaru, the very beach where Toapere made her prophecy. All but one of the participants knew those utterances by heart maybe demonstrating that religion is well anchored in their memory.

There is a natural correlation between the French language and the arrival of the catholic faith, a new religion that has tamed the Mangarevan people as one of the participants said, but it is also a religion that has isolated the Mangarevan language:

> You know this French language has tamed our island. **Participant 5.**

> French started to be spoken with the very first priests when they arrived here and Laval and Caret were both the first European catholic priests. **Participant 2**.

> The French language came to us through the very first Catholic missionaries Laval and Caret and it has slowly pushed our native language to the side by banning the *marae*, the *tiki* (statues), the dances… all the pagan representations. **Participant 1**.

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[23] "The righteous God will land, we won't see him, he wears long sleeves with webbed feet. You will die, I will die, we won't see it but Matua (the young king's guardian) will accept him"

The work that was subsequently done by the missionaries as part of their ministry on the island has received mixed reception amongst the participants. This topic has been controversial with different camps emerging regarding the impact that religion has had on the native language.

Sympathisers count in their ranks participants #3; #4; #6; #8; #9; #10; #11 and #14 for whom the religion has put an end to the endemic wars between factions with the message of peace and forgiveness. Some have also forgiven the actions of the missionaries in destroying some of Mangarevan pagan cultural representations because it was for the good of the population[24]. This group is made up of the older generation and therefore might explain their belief of the positive impact that religion has had on their lives as confirmed by some of these extracts:

> If they got rid of the marae, the statues...they did so according to their title as missionaries. **Participant 9**.

> Those missionaries as well as bringing French have also learned Mangarevan and produced Mangarevan grammar and lexical books. They are the ones who have left us a written native language**. Participant 4**.

> I think the first missionaries did a good job in getting rid of the heathen objects and practices to worship only one God. They brought good things here for the population. I don't agree with what is being said about the missionaries; about the fact that the Mangarevan language was lost because they brought French here to replace our native language. **Participant 8.**

> Those people have given us the Mangarevan dictionary, the prayers book, the Gospel had been translated in our Mangarevan language, and all this is thanks to them**. Participant 6**.

> The Mangarevan language has changed since the first missionaries wrote it down. **Participant 14**.

The other group is made up of participants who hold the missionaries partly responsible for some of the poor state of the Mangarevan language and culture. They also think that some of the catholic institutions built in Mangareva such as the seminary and the convent weren't such good incentives to engage the population in keeping in touch with

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[24] Some of the assumptions made by the participants are not accurate such as the missionaries ending wars due to the fact that in 1834, Mangareva was already a kingdom before the reign of king Te Ma-Puteoa and therefore inter-district wars had ceased. Disputes were rather between chiefs for or against the missionaries.

their Mangarevan culture. This group is not favourable about the church being or having been too involved in peoples' lives through past and present initiatives:

> The question of the religion impacting the children education is very much present. Sometimes I set a meeting with the parents for the good of their children, I can wait here two hours after the meeting time and still parents don't turn up. When I go to see them, I am told that they had their community prayer! **Participant 12.**

> Today when we look at what the Mission has done here not everything is good, there are good and bad things but they only want to talk about the good things and forget the bad ones. **Participant 7**.

> So first came the two missionaries who start establishing the French language here, then the nuns followed with the convent in Rouru and the seminary in Aukena. All this was followed by the installation of the CEP who stayed at the airport for how many years I don't know. **Participant 2**.

Religion has largely dominated the Mangarevan landscape as acknowledged by the previous extracts but there are also questions from the participants regarding the lack of volition among the Mangarevans themselves to reinstate or restore cultural heritage:

> I know that when the two French missionaries arrived here changes have happened but now why don't the population of Mangareva try to resurrect the past by looking after the *marae*, cleaning them up, maintaining them for example? **Participant 10.**

During my fieldwork I have noticed how the Catholic faith has indeed invaded the lives of the population through the unending liturgical services and masses reaching at times three times a day (lauds, daily mass and vespers) at the cathedral. I met many children, parents and old people on their way to the services who would invite me to join them at church. The lack of youngsters in those weekly events is redressed by the number of teenagers and youngsters belonging to the choir on the Sunday's main service.

One of the sad events was the death of an old lady but the large portion of the Catholic community that attended her wake and burial demonstrates how much religion is still well attached in the lives of the community. Maybe this ostensible parade of piety has spurred participant #12 to say:

> Too much religion kills religion as for me I don't go to church anymore because I find some of the things hypocritical. I have the impression that they go to church to spy on who was there and who wasn't.

A statement that maybe reflects the lack of young parents at church, who might feel the same way as participant # 12 and who instead attend church by proxy by sending their children accompanied by the grandparents.

Whatever the position adopted by the participants towards religion, the fact of the matter remains that the stronghold of religion although weakened is still present.

Chapter Six: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1   Chapter summary

Throughout this thesis the main concern has always been to get a broader picture of the vitality or the endangerment level of the Mangarevan language. Relying solely on the available literature wouldn't have given an accurate picture of the challenges that my native language is facing. Gathering data to be used as a platform to build some sort of strategy to reverse the Mangarevan language fate, was to be the only option.

The choice of an ethnographic approach for this qualitative research has been the most appropriate option to take. I am part of the Mangarevan diaspora and my experience of my own ethnicity has taught me that Mangarevans are very sociable and welcoming people. They would engage fully in discussions that relate to their history, myths but they have become more involved when language and culture are at stake. An enjoyment to participate was reflected by the willingness of the participants to take part and by the high number of them hoping to be interviewed.

Outsourcing my participants through the snowball sampling method and using my own social networks has been very beneficial since it has provided me with various advantages. I have interviewed participants of both genders and from various backgrounds. The three-generation divide has given me a broader synoptic view from each generation. The topic of language revitalisation had a good overall base of experts and trustful participants, specially the older generation rich in cultural knowledge.

It was because of my position as a member of the community that the participants have given me so much data to work with and their trust has been an incentive for me to carry on working for the Mangarevan language not to disappear.

In this last section I will firstly put together all the findings from this project before making some projections as to the direction the language is heading based on the participants' interventions. Secondly I will offer recommendations as to how the Mangarevan community could rectify difficult issues that have arisen from this study. Lastly I will offer my views on how this project has influenced my personal life.

6.1.1   The current health of the Mangarevan language

From the research contained in the thesis, it is difficult to be optimistic about the future of the language unless some serious intervention strategy is implemented. The data collected from the participants speak for themselves: the health of the Mangarevan language is not good. The risk of disappearing if nothing is done is real and all should be done to contain the eroding work predominantly done by the French language. What the participants have constantly argued about is the lack of spoken Mangarevan amongst the children and younger generation. For the participants a language that is not spoken is the front-runner of a language that will die in some generations to come.

The situation of the older generation continuing to disappear without leaving their book of knowledge for the younger generation to learn from, could be a wake-up call for all, to take adequate steps to save their severely endangered language. The literature review has described what a severely endangered language or a shifting language looks like and the Mangarevan language is showing these signs. The literature has also provided some strategies that would help in reversing the language shift situation. Although at times some of the indicators from the literature didn't always concur with the reality on the grounds especially in terms of Mangarevan speakers, the description of the Mangarevan language as severely endangered remains fairly accurate.

The lack of use of Mangarevan language especially between the old generation and the younger generation is the main concern. The substitution of Mangarevan language by the use of a bad French language in every aspect of the population's lives has triggered the shifting language process. To some extent, the researcher has taken an active role as a participant to prepare this vigorous research project based on reliable data to highlight the unenviable future of his native language. Having located where the Mangarevan language situates itself today based on the sources at hand, it would be equally important to look back at the different propositions made by the participants in their attempt to distort the dire future of their language.

6.1.2   The future of Mangarevan language

The participants themselves along with the whole community are aware of the grim future that their native language is facing and they do not deny it. They have lived through and have fully understood that when a majority language takes over a minority language, this latter loses its importance and thus tends to disappear.

This encouraging sentence addressed to me by participant #2 to persevere with this project, contrasts with the sombre tone of the rest of her speech:

> You must persevere in your work for our language not to die but to live and this is my wish. However I am sure that I won't be alive neither will you, to see our language disappear. The language will disappear because our people, our descendants do not consider that working on the language is of any significance. Maybe it won't die and that's good. I say that if it doesn't die, it will become a poor language if we use external words all the time, it won't be as rich in lexical terms.

This extract summarises perfectly the gloomy future that my participants anticipate for their language. Nevertheless they hold onto the propositions that they have formulated despite apparent issues that need attention. Those propositions have a recursive as well as forward-looking approach:

- a Mangarevan language academy that will be recognised as the authority for all aspects of language use;

- a return to teaching catechism in Mangarevan;

- a bigger emphasis on language competitions since language is primarily a spoken tool and;

- a local audio broadcasting station that would transmit in the native language only.

These propositions are in themselves reasonable means to try to redress the current situation of their language. These proposals not only belong to the realm of real feasibility but they do not present major issues in terms of implementing them as long as the entire community is committed to supporting its language.

Legitimate claims were also made by some respondents especially in terms of language maintenance at the institutional level, relating to the unfair advantage given to a dominant regional language to the detriment of other regional languages. Allocating nationally recognised higher education titles for the use of Tahitian language and ignoring peripheral languages, is not considered fair by some of the participants. This is an advantage assigned due to geo-political location and demographic statistics that seems unfair in a unitary political system such as French Polynesia. The future of the Mangarevan language would certainly seem much brighter if it could benefit from this recognition since it will enjoy all the advantages that the Tahitian language is benefitting today and not least of all, the financial influx.

6.2   Recommendations

This thesis wasn't comprehensive and had limitations in its scope at different levels. Some of those many issues that could have been discussed were the relationship of teenagers with their native language. Information regarding the teenagers' position in the revitalisation of their native language hasn't been looked into, especially when they are considered as the future Mangarevan speakers.

Other aspects that could also have been discussed were the impact of other regional languages on Mangarevan as there are four other regional languages spoken on the island. The extreme insularity of Mangareva could also have become a main chapter asking whether isolation always means protection…All those offshoot suggestions could have found a legitimate platform in this section.

The recommendations given here are not exhaustive and they are only the results of observations made during the fieldwork with the participants and the community at large.

6.2.1 *A community marked by colonisation*

The researcher believes that the colonisation of the minds (Phillipson, 2011) is decidedly the most influential issue that explains the community reluctance to think and act for it-self. Mangareva more than any other island in the region, has sustained a long history of colonisation and the community seems comfortable to remain under this long-lasting colonising spell. There is no doubt that the Mangarevan community has been and still is on the receiving end of a prolonged and painful colonisation programme as we have extensively developed throughout this thesis. The ideology of colonisation and its ramifications have permanently left their prints on many aspects of Mangarevan society. The community is still absorbing the consequences, be it with their endangered natural environment on land and sea or in this case, with their severely endangered native language.

Semiotic plays an important role in Polynesian culture and Mangareva is no exception insofar as the influence of signs and symbols are concerned. Our ancestors knew how certain symbols were enshrined in *mana* and *tapu* and they would reciprocate with fear and reverence. Today different shrouded symbols ostensibly display the concept of colonialist dominance such as the French national flag; the French representatives with

their flawless uniforms and the French language. The Mangarevans are unconsciously reciprocating the same reverence and awe that their ancestors have shown before them. I believe it is this attitude towards higher power that is stopping my community from being freed from this enclosed frame.

The researcher has shared in this thesis many instances where participants talked about their island as being run or owned by the French authority, as a normal state of affairs. It is this frame of mind that is holding them back from taking ownership of their future. The researcher believes that the community would be much more aware of its own existence if it could detach itself from this comfortable state of perceived apathy and stand up for it-self. This is not a call for a full-scale political independence but one for the independence of the mind that would break away from those invisible shackles of colonialism and produce tomorrow's leaders. The community can only survive and thrive if its members are actively working together as a united front towards their goals.

6.2.2   *A community based approach*

The language belongs to the community, it belongs to where it is spoken most, and therefore individual language revitalisation foray is not the approach to adopt: it is a matter for the whole community to challenge. This remark comes from the indecisiveness and wrangling that sometimes took place during impromptu discussions. The researcher has observed the community not wanting to take ownership of the language as an insular possession but relying on outsider experts (though native speakers) living in Tahiti to show leadership. This ensues arguments and disputes as to which direction one ought to go in terms of language revitalisation programme. A schism amongst members of the community because of different paths led by Mangarevan language experts is very likely to be damaging for the future of the language.

A community-based approach that includes representatives from school, church, sport clubs and annual festival organisation would offer many advantages:

- a shared sense of responsibility and deeper commitment to an issue that is close to their heart;

- a broad range of information providers: church manuscripts; family archives; school material;

- a source of information and reference at hand from the older generation;

- a good technological support for language planning;

As it stands those small groups are working on their own without any joint consultation, which further down the line creates distortions in terms of where language revitalisation should start. By bringing those small ensembles together a much better vision of the targets and objectives to achieve will develop and the direction to take will emerge from within the community as the very first concerned.

The community is also and foremost made up of different generations and that is what the thesis has lacked in its scope, the involvement of the younger generation as the future speakers of the Mangarevan language. It has mostly been an organisational issue from the part of the researcher for not reaching out sufficiently enough to that section of the community as the one that will ultimately decides on the fate of their language. Despite impromptu meetings and dialogues with the younger generation, they have largely been side lined and bringing them back into the community fold would certainly inject new blood in a native language that needs it so urgently.

6.3   Final words

This thesis has taken me through a difficult journey especially as reality of the level of endangerment of my native language became more apparent. The research process reinforced my concerns and highlighted the fact that the Mangarevan language needs urgent language shift reversal strategies if it is to survive. This intervention strategy must address intergenerational language transmission.

The comparison between the status of the Mangarevan language and the breadfruit is a poignant reminder of the fragility of the language. The *mei*, as the most important fruit on the island is rooted and bound to the land. Similarly, the Mangarevan language is culturally bound to its speakers. The breadfruit and the Mangarevan language share the same fate, they will both be there for years to come only if people take care of the breadfruit trees; only if people continue to speak the language. Without the care required for both to survive, they will disappear and with them an endemic part of the Mangarevan culture.

The revitalisation of the language and this project specifically has provided the impetus and motivation to become actively involved the revitalisation of the language. This thesis has helped me identify the main issues so that I can carry on working towards finding solutions to maintain my native language alive.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Participant information sheet

Participant Information Sheet/
'Akamaramaramaranga kaka mo te tangata uiuiia

Te rā tenei kaka akamaramaramaraga i aga ia/Date Information Sheet Produced:
20 August 2013

Te ingoa no amenei ketuketuranga/Project Title
Mangareva e reo tauiui ana: te utu tumu, te utu aga oti me te utu atoga tau.
Mangarevan language shift: causes, consequences and intentions

Tangata ko taku e inoi/Number of Participants
14
Tutaki uiraga/An Invitation

> "Maro'i kia koe mo to koe akatikaraga ki a epuepu oki au ki a
> varaga nei. Maro'i ua mo to koe aoraga mai ki amenei
> tutakiraga mo tāua. Ko Ena Manuireva toku ingoa, e aga ana oki
> au ki amenei ketuketuraga ki runga ki to taua reo Mangareva,
> kia ketu ia te ta'i ravega kia kore te reo Mangareva kia 'ava ia."

Ko Ena Manuireva toku ingoa, anau ia vau ki Mangareva nei me e 'akaaretoa au ki
te 'akaora akaou ki to taua reo. E 'akaaga ana vau ki amenei ketuketuranga mo te
puni te ta'i papie 'akakiteraga ki te 'aretukuga teitei o AUT. E uiraga tenei kia tomo
mai koe ki roto i teni ketuketuranga ko te nana ki a mau turu ko tei 'akavaravara
nei te takao Mangareva a mau ra katoa. E tagi au e varaka e 'aa te tangata
Mangarevan e makara ana ki runga ki te reo me te ata o te reo Mangareva ki a ao
ka puta mai ai.
My name is Ena Manuireva and as you know I am Mangarevan and I am committed
to the survival of our language. I am also using the research to complete a doctoral
qualification at AUT University.
This is an invitation for you to participate in a research that explores the reasons
why Mangarevan language is not used as much in everyday life. I want to find out
what Mangarevans think about the language and what impact it will play for the
future.

E nana hohonu a ketuketuranga nei, pe ea te reo Mangareva me 'akaeva porotu ia
me 'akaora akaou ia mo a mau toromiki no a ao ka puta mai ai. E makaraia e ata a
ketuketuranga nei pe 'ea te reo Mangareva me te vavaraka pouga e 'akamau ki
roto ki te oraranga, ka 'akamaukikia tona 'akaoraranga.
The research will explore how Mangarevan language can be best protected and
revived for future generations. It is hoped that the research will influence the way
Mangarevan language and traditional knowledge is incorporated into everyday life
to ensure its survival.

Me tika kia kite koe, e utuakore ta koe apairanga me e porotu ta koe me 'akatei atu ki a taime katoa imua ki te 'epuepuranga tiatoga.

You need to know that your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time prior to the completion of data collection.

E 'aa te tumu no a ketuketuranga nei? What is the purpose of this research?

Te tumu no amenei ketuketuranga mo te varaka pe ea te reo Mangareva me 'akaeva porotu ia me 'akaora akaou mo a mau toromiki no a ao ka puta mai ai.

The purpose of the research is to find out how our native language Mangarevan can be protected and revived for future generations.

Pe'ea vau i maitiia me no te 'aa koe i 'akatutakiia no tenei ketuketuranga? How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

Ku uiia ka ao mai koe ki amenei tukuga no te mea e Mangareva koeme kua mau marie kia koe te takao me te pouga Mangareva.

You were invited to participate in this study because you are Mangarevan and have a good grasp of the Mangarevan language and culture.

E 'aa te aga e tupu i roto a ketuketuranga nei? What will happen in this research?

E 'akaagaia te mau kiteraga mo te 'akaturu te mau 'akaaretoaraga mo te 'akapapu kia riro oki te reo Mangareva e reo ki te ao ka puta mai. E rave ua ia a mau kiteraga mo taku 'akakiteraga kite 'aretukuga teitei.

The findings from the research will be used to support efforts to make sure that the Mangarevan language is a language of the future. The research will also be used in my doctoral thesis.

E 'aa te mau aga vevenakore me te mau riria? What are the discomforts and risks?

Kakore tai a aga vevenakore nei kakore ta'i a aga riria, amenei ra, e oatu a ketuketuranga ki te tangata Mangareva

There is no discomfort or risks rather the research gives hope to Mangarevans in relation to the wellbeing of the language so is more likely to enhance your sense of wellbeing. However, should you experience any stress discussing matters that relate to the language you may leave the interview at any time.

E 'aa te utu 'akaporoturaga? What are the benefits?

E 'akaora akaoua tenei ketuketuranga ki to tatou reo Mangareva. Mea iti te materia i 'akaataia ki runga i te roe Mangareva. E oatu a ketuketuranga nei te ta'i 'akamaramaramaraga no Mangareva ta'aga mea oki na te tangata noti no konei e aotu nei.

This research will work towards saving our native language. There is very little published material on the Mangarevan language. This research will produce information that is unique to Mangareva because the people themselves are providing it.

Pe'ea toku turaga me 'akaevaia? How will my privacy be protected?

No te rikiriki o na punui e akaaretoa au ki te kimi te ta'I ravega kia kore kotou me kite ia. Ku akaaretoa kia kore koe me ka kiteia ki roto I amenei uiuiraga. Ka rave ua ia a mau kiteraga mo taku 'akakiteraga kite 'aretukuga teitei. E 'akaora akaoua tenei ketuketuranga ki to tatou reo Mangareva. Mea iti te materia i 'akaataia ki runga i te roe Mangareva. E oatu a ketuketuranga nei te ta'i 'akamaramaramaraga no Mangareva ta'aga mea oki na te tangata noti no konei e aotu nei. Ku uiia ka ao mai

koe ki amenei tukuga no te mea e Mangareva koeme kua mau marie kia koe te takao me te pouga Mangareva.

Because the community is so small we can only provide assurance of limited confidentiality. However every effort will be made to try to ensure that you are not easily identified in the report or thesis. Also, the attached Consent Form asks all participants to respect the confidentiality and privacy of all other participants. You will not be named and a number code will be used instead in any reports including the thesis. Please note that Mangareva and Mangarevan language is clearly identified in the study.

Pe'ea au me 'akakite toku tagi ki te 'akaturu tenei ketuketuranga? How do I agree to participate in this research?

E 'akaoti au ki te 'akatika rau imua ki te 'akamataraga o te uiuiraga.
By completing the Consent Form before the interview takes place.

E 'akatau ia mai ki aku te mau kiteranaga o tenei ketuketuraga? Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

'Akaoti anake te ketuketuraga, e poro ia koe ki te ao mai kite ta'i varagaraga ki roto ki te 'Are punui o Mangareva. E aotu ua ia te ta'i rau 'akamatauranga ki runga ki te mau kiteranga o tenei ketuketuranga. *When the study is complete you will be invited to a presentation in Mangareva at the Town Hall. You will also receive a copy of a brief of the research finding.*

E 'aa te aga me tika kia agaia pea e uiuiraga taku ki runga a ketuketuranga? What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Te ta'i aga riria i runga te 'uru o tenei ketuketuraga, ko poro na mua kia. *Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the*

Project Supervisor, Dr Hinematau Mc Neill, hmcneill@aut.ac.nz, (00-64) 921-9999, ext 6097.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEC,

Dr Kate O'Conner, 921 9999 ext 6038. kate.oconner@aut.ac.nz

Ko wai taku e poro no te ta'i 'akamaramaramaraga ou ki runga a ketuketuranga? Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Ena Manuireva and Dr Hinematau McNeill

Researcher Contact Details:

Ena Manuireva, emanuire@aut.ac.nz, (00-64) 921-9999, ext 6634

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

hmcneill@aut.ac.nz, (00-64) 921-9999, ext 6097

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *type the date final ethics approval was granted*, **AUTEC Reference number** *11/77*.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire

Questionnaire/Uiuiraga

In-depth Interviews / Uiuiraga 'aka'o'onu

1) *E 'aa te reo ta koe e varaga ana a mau ma'ana katoa?*
   What language do you speak mostly in your daily life?

2) *E 'aa to koe 'uru kia varaga ia te reo Ta'iti i Mangareva nei?*
   What is your attitude toward Tahitian language being spoken in Mangareva?

3) *E 'aa to koe 'uru kia varaga ia te reo Arani i Mangareva nei?*
   What your attitude to French language being spoken in Mangareva?

4) *No te 'aa e verega nui te reo Mangareva?*
   Why is Mangarevan language important to you?

5) *E 'aa to koe makararaga kia tuku ia te reo Mangareva ki te 'are tukuretera?*
   What do you think of Mangarevan being taught in school?

6) *Makara koe ko te varagaraga te tumu no te reo Mangareva?*
   Is the purpose of language just to communicate?

7) *Pe e'a / I 'ea koe me kite ai te ta'i āato na roto ki te pouga Mangareva me te reo Mangareva?*
   How do you think Mangarevan culture relates to the language?

Appendix 3: Consent Form

Consent Form (Adults) /'Akatika kaka (Tangata motua)

Project title/Te ingoa o tenei ketuketuranga: Mangarevan language shift / Mangareva e reo tauiui ana.

Project Supervisor/ Ragatira 'akakite: *Dr Hinematau McNeill*
Researcher/Tangata ketuketu: *Ena Manuireva*

○ *I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 20 August 2013.* Kua 'akatino me 'akarogo au te 'akamaramarama oatuia mai ki runga i te ra o te 'akamaramamaranga kaka mo te tangata uiuiia.

○ *I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.* Porotu taku me ui te ta'i uiraga me oatuia mai te mau paono.

○ *I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.* Ku kite au me 'akataia teta'i nota me te vau ua teta'i epuepuranga me te 'uriraga reo.

○ *I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.* Ku kite au, e porotu taku me tei atu imua ki te epuepuranga tiatonga ma te kore au e 'akavevenakore ia*.*

○ *If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.* Kia au vau ki va'o, ku kite au e akatauia te mau 'akamaramarama mei te mau ripene, te mau kaka 'akata me te mau tiatoga katoa ki runga a aga nei.

○ *I agree to take part in this research.* E tagi ana au me 'akata'i a ketuketuranga nei*.*

○ *I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one*). E tagi au te ta'i kaka no a ketuketuranga nei (ka ma'iti te ta'i paono)*: E/Yes*○ *Kore/No*○

Participant's signature/ Tangata uiui'ia:

Participant's name/ Te ingoa o te tangata uiui'ia:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate)/ Pe 'ea me poro te tangata uiui'ia:

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………………………………………………………………………………………

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on type the date on which the final approval was granted AUTEC Reference number type the AUTEC reference number

Appendix 4: Letter of support

Letter of support

Mrs LABBEYI RICHETON Monique,
Mayor of the municipality of Gambier

Sir,

I am following up from your e-mail and our meeting last December during which you have kindly explained the research work that you are undertaking in the setting of a fieldwork suggested by Auckland University of Technology.

This initiative about our beautiful Mangarevan language has drawn my attention and can only enrich its knowledge, its protection and its promotion within our community as well as outside our own borders.

I also suggest that the Mangarevan population and especially our youth could be involved in this project and that our community may benefit from the outcomes of your fieldwork.

By reiterating once more my encouragement, please acknowledge Sir, my highest esteem.

<u>Monique RICHETON</u>