THE EMERGING STORYWRITER:

A study of linguistic and meta-linguistic phenomena in the writing of Cèmuhi, a Melanesian Language of New Caledonia

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Abstract

This PhD thesis is an analysis of the representation of the Kanak voice in the practice and product of writing in Cèmuhi, an Austronesian language of New Caledonia. It investigates how Cèmuhi language and culture have been represented in a variety of works and texts that were produced in Cèmuhi as a result of practices that are ideologically motivated. In order to do so, I adopt both a diachronic and a synchronic approach. I first give a critical historical overview of the various interest groups that were involved in the codification of the Cèmuhi language, which can be traced along three subsequent stages or movements of writing: the first stage begins in the middle of the 19th century, when the Marist priests started to translate religious works into the Cèmuhi language. They were followed by visits of French ethnographers (e.g. Alban Bensa and André Haudricourt) and linguists (e.g. Jean-Claude Rivierre) who developed grammars, dictionaries, and ethnographies, based on the practice of transcribing oral stories. The third stage is that of Cèmuhi texts written by an emerging indigenous writer, Suzanne Poinine, who is one of the few Cèmuhi speakers and, in fact, Kanak in general, who has used the medium of writing in her mother tongue. An analysis of her writing practice and the different text genres and textual artefacts that she has produced over more than 40 years form the centre-piece of this thesis and are subjected to a social and historical analysis of both linguistic and meta-linguistic phenomena.

Author's Declaration

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

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Maarten Lecompte   Date: 27 July, 2018

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"É tii ni nyêbi, ni cihêdée, é bitèhi hê pwö tié ni jèkulè hê pwopwaalé"

[I write songs, legends, I translate stories from the language Tié into French]

Suzanne Poinine

Chapter 1:

Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

The emerging writing practices in some of the world's endangered languages have traditionally received little attention. In the Boasian tradition of descriptive linguistics, for instance, linguists mainly relied on speech data for their grammatical analysis, but also on theories current in anthropology, with a particular focus on the 'exotic' oral cultures. The collection of oral practices is also one of the hallmarks of language documentation or *documentary linguistics*, a linguistic enterprise that emerged in the 1990s in response to a growing awareness that many of the smaller languages of the world are endangered or threatened with extinction (Crystal, 2000; Dorian, 1989; Grinevald, 2003; Hale et al., 1992; Himmelman, 1998; Fishman, 1991; Nettle and Romaine, 2000; Wurm, 2003). As one of the core tasks of language documentation is the preservation of endangered (often poorly documented) languages through the recording (video and audio) of speech practices in the communities where these languages are spoken, the emerging writing practices of speakers of some of these endangered languages are often overlooked.

This thesis aims to show the richness and value of Kanak writing practices. It will do so by focusing on the practice and product of the writing of an emerging Kanak[1] storywriter,

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[1] The term 'Kanak' refers to the indigenous Melanesian people of New Caledonia.

Suzanne Poinine. Suzanne is one of the few people in her community (the village of Tiwaé), and in fact among Kanak, who is able to write in her mother tongue, Cèmuhi.

Cèmuhi is one of the 28 languages spoken in New Caledonia, of which many of them are considered 'endangered'. I will present Poinine's writing against the historical background of over 150 years of codification of the Cèmuhi language by outsiders who used ideologically imbued practices such as translation and transcription to produce textual products in the language. French Marist missionaries, for instance, were the first to write down the language and translate religious texts as part of their Christian mission in the middle of the 19th century. These initial steps to write down the language were followed by the scientific endeavours of French linguists and ethnographers who visited the region from the 1940s, with the aim of scientifically describing the language and culture of the Cèmuhi people.

As these powerful groups have left their mark through the production of grammars, dictionaries, ethnographies and religious texts in the language, one is compelled to ask whether, and how, the methodological choices and practices employed by these groups have had an impact on the textual representations of their language and their culture. One may also want to know to what extent the voice of the Cèmuhi speakers themselves has been represented, altered, or silenced by outsiders, as a result of these practices. In order to answer these questions, I will provide a social and historical analysis of linguistic (themes) and meta-linguistic phenomena in the different text genres that Poinine has produced over a period of more than 40 years. I will do this against the background of texts and products that were generated by outsiders.

The impetus for this study is derived both, from my previous interest and research in the topic of grammar writing from a native speaker's perspective conducted during my Masters studies[2], and from my familiarity with the Cèmuhi language and its speakers, among whom I lived and worked as a field linguist with SIL International from 2004 until 2008.

1.2 Cèmuhi language and its history of codification

Cèmuhi is classified as a Central-Eastern Oceanic Austronesian language (Grimes, 1996; Lynch et al., 2002). Grammatically, it resembles the languages on the northern half of the main island of New Caledonia (Rivierre, 1980) and is closely related to its neighbouring language, Paicî, both of which have been characterised by Haudricourt (1968) as tonal languages.
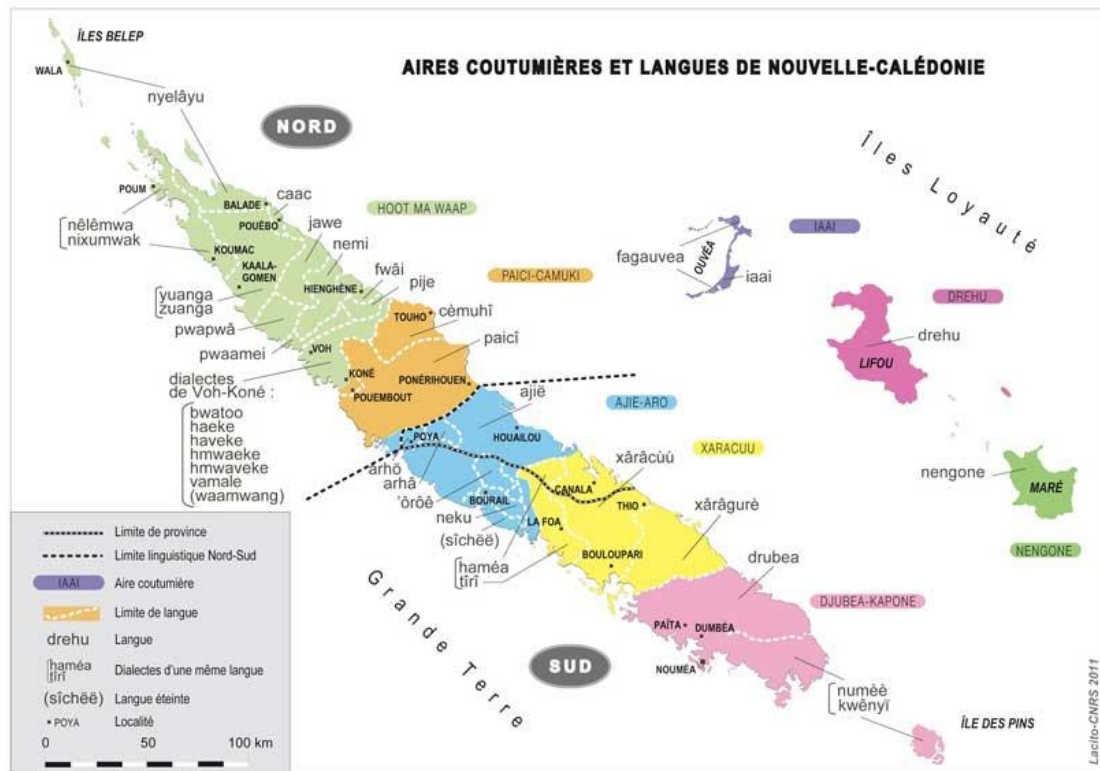
Figure 1*: Map representing the languages of New Caledonia*

(LACITO-CNRS 2011)

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[2] Masters of Linguistics in Language Endangerment Studies at Monash University, 2009.

Currently, the language is spoken by approximately 2500 people living in sixteen villages on the north-eastern coast of the island. Nine villages are situated along the coast, while other villages are found inland. The language variety spoken along the coast – also referred to by native speakers as *Pwö Cèmun* – is often considered by the locals as less pure than the variety spoken in the inland valleys, which is known as *Pwö Cié* or *Tié,* which is also the variety spoken in the village of Tiwaé, where Suzanne Poinine lives. From a linguistic perspective, the differences between the two varieties, however, are limited to some lexical terms and a few phonological features.

The 150-year history of writing Cèmuhi can be traced along three stages or movements of writing. The first endeavours of codification of the Cèmuhi language took place during the second half of the 19th century by the Marist priests. Marist priests arrived in 1843 to set up a mission post in Balade, the place where James Cook had made landfall in 1774. Nearly a decade after their arrival in Balade, the Marists received a visit from what they described as "des naturels de Tuo" (Morignat, 1996, p. 6) or the natives of Touho, a Cèmuhi settlement about 100km south of Balade. As the Cèmuhi from Touho were at war with a rival Cèmuhi clan further south in Tiwaka, they requested the protection of the Marist priests. The priests were willing to grant this request but not before some Cèmuhi speakers would first spend some time in Balade to teach their language to the priests (Morignat 1995, p. 6). Not long after, Father Jean Vigouroux and Father Benoît Forestier were sent to the region to set up the Marists' second missionary post on the main island and the first in the Cèmuhi region, namely in Touho in 1853, followed by the second post in Wagap in 1855. In the earliest works of the Marist, the language has also been referred to as *la langue de Touho* [the language of Touho] or *la langue de Wagap* (the language of Wagap].

While the Marists were known to speak the Cèmuhi language well, they were not so much interested in providing a thorough phonological or grammatical description of the language. Instead, they were more interested in building relationships and learning the language. Language learning and gaining linguistic insight into the Cèmuhi language were prerequisites for building relationships and for evangelising the Cèmuhi people who, together with the people of Balade, were among the first Catholic converts (Lambert, 1900, p. 84). Apart from their translations of Catholic works, such as the Catechism and hymns, their intentions can also be gleaned from the content of the non-religious works they produced, such as a grammar sketch and a French-Cèmuhi word list. Father Colomb's volume, *La tribu de Wagap, Nouvelle-Calédonie, ses mœurs et sa langue d'après les notes d'une missionnaire mariste (Paris, 1890)*, for instance, contains, not only notes on grammar, but also a list of common conversational phrases, common greetings, and a sample of customary speeches addressed to the chiefs. These works underline the Marists' preoccupation with being able to communicate with the people, rather than making any linguistic claims.

The second stage in the codification of the Cèmuhi language starts in the middle of the 20th century, when French ethnographers and linguists visited New Caledonia to study Kanak cultures and languages. While some work had been done by Protestant missionary, Maurice Leenhardt, in the first half of the 20th century, the bulk of the work on Cèmuhi was conducted by André Haudricourt, Alban Bensa, and Jean-Claude Rivierre. The efforts of Bensa and Rivierre, in particular, resulted in the production of three major canonical works: an ethnography called *Les Chemins de l'alliance* ['The pathways of kinship'](1982) by Bensa and Rivierre. This work provides a detailed description of the social and political structure of Cèmuhi society and an analysis of several legends in the vernacular. In addition we have a

Cèmuhi-French dictionary (1994), and a phonology and grammar of Cèmuhi (1980), both written by Rivierre. In the introduction to his major grammar, Rivierre writes that one of the main aims of his visits to the Cèmuhi people was to collect a corpus of oral literature[3]. It is on the basis of this corpus that, as he puts it, "une esquisse grammaticale" (1980, p. 16) or grammar sketch was drafted in 1971.

1.3 Suzanne Poinine: the emerging storywriter

The third stage in the process of codification of the Cèmuhi language comprises texts that were produced by emerging Kanak writer, Suzanne Poinine, who is one of the few Cèmuhi speakers able to write confidently in Cèmuhi. Poinine lives in Tiwaé, a remote Protestant village tucked away in the mountain ranges that hug New Caledonia's north-east coast. Her village has been the scene of many visits in the past of both missionaries and linguists. A historical account entitled, *The arrival of the first missionaries in Touho,* by Rivierre, sheds light on how the Protestant missionaries from the London Missionary Society settled in the region. A discussion of the account is beyond the scope of this thesis.

From the 1960s onwards, Tiwaé was also visited by Haudricourt, Bensa, and Rivierre who conducted research into the Cèmuhi language and culture. It was with the help of Rivierre's Cèmuhi grammar and dictionary that Suzanne Poinine taught herself to read and write in her mother tongue, gaining a certain degree of linguistic authority in the community. This made her the first mother tongue teacher in the *Écoles Populaires Kanak*[4] in her village

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[3]An audio corpus of Rivierre's earlier work on Cèmuhi and other Kanak languages can be accessed on the website of the Laboratoire de Langues et Civilisations à Tradition Orale (LACITO). Website: http://lacito.vjf.cnrs.fr/ALC/Languages/Cemuhi_popup.htm (Accessed November 2017)

[4] The Écoles Populaires Kanak (or the popular Kanak schools) was a grassroots movement that rejected French education in favour of instructing Kanak languages in local village schools, often with the help of parents (Small 1996).

and later she became a translator of Christian hymns and parts of the Bible. Poinine also represented her language during a writing festival, *Su Fè Tara,* which was organised for the first time by the *Académie des Langues Kanak (ADCK)*[5] in 2013. This *concours d'écriture*, which sought to promote Kanak languages, as well as encouraging young and old Kanak people to express themselves in writing their mother tongue, resulted in the publication of some of Poinine's *petites histoires* [short stories] in *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes*[6], New Caledonia's main daily, in 2015.

Poinine's repertoire mainly consists of word lists, sentences, short stories, legends and a personal narrative, all of which I collected during two field trips in 2014 and 2015. Her writing can be characterised as 'grassroots writing' or 'grassroots literacy', which has been described by Blommaert (2004, 2008a, 2013a; see also Fabian, 1990) as a form of 'non-élite' writing that presents some of the following characteristics: heterographic spelling and punctuation, visual or graphic features, lack of available co-text or corpus in the language, and traces of *distant* (or what I call 'emerging') genres, which Blommaert (2008a) describes as genres to which the writer had little exposure and which have been assembled from borrowed materials or "distant sources" (p. 7). Other characteristics include the presence of oral features and borrowed textual practices, which, in Poinine's case, pertain to the use of translation and the linguistic practice of interlinear gloss in some of her texts.

Important to note is that Poinine developed her own style, partly by choice, but also because she had no prior reading or exposure to other genres in the language. Her texts represent some of the first visible traces of a language written by a Cèmuhi speaker. Her

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[5] The ADCK, an initiative of the Northern Province of New Caledonia, was established in 2007 with the aim to promote the use of Kanak languages in schools.
[6] Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes, January 23th, 2015, p. 9.

writings are therefore interesting even though they come with several constraints, as will be discussed in this thesis (see Chapter 6). As a culture innovator, Poinine carries the burden of testing the waters of new grammatical forms, expressions, genres, and styles, which might eventually emerge through a process of tenacious writing and without the support of a "common stock of language we share with others" (Bazerman and Prior, 2004, p. 83).

1.4 Aims, methods and findings of the study

The diachronic and synchronic analysis of these three phases in this thesis aims to provide a comprehensive perspective on voice in Cèmuhi texts. I will discuss how Cèmuhi language and Cèmuhi culture has been represented in the diverse textual products that were produced by outsiders who, driven by their own religious or scientific agenda, employed ideologically imbued practices such as transcription and translation. These works form the background to a detailed analysis of Suzanne Poinine's product and practice of writing that will be subject to an analysis of linguistic (themes) and meta-linguistic phenomena. The following questions will be tackled:

- How were Cèmuhi language and Cèmuhi culture presented in older documents, as produced by missionaries, linguists, and ethnographers (Chapter 5)?

- What are some of the characteristics in Poinine's writing practice (meta-linguistic phenomena) (Chapter 6)?

- What are the salient themes in Poinine's texts (linguistic phenomena) (Chapter 7)?

- What are some of the voices through which Poinine has expressed herself in her writing (Chapter 8)?

In order to answer these questions, I will critically examine the practices of different stakeholders throughout the history of codification in the Cèmuhi language. This process will be presented in a linear fashion, starting with a discussion of the work of the Marists, followed by a description of the works produced by linguists and ethnographers. I will then argue that the works that resulted from the missionary and ethno-linguistic endeavour are on the same continuous line scale of what Fabian (1986) calls "descriptive appropriation"[7] (p. 83), as they both employ a wide range of discursive practices, or what Blommaert (2008b, p. 291) calls "ideologically structured textual practices" (p. 291). As such, these enabled them to exert some form of authority through the works they produced in the language.

The work of missionaries, however, has in general been subjected to strident post-colonial critique, which generally depicts them as co-exploiters of the colonial system. While the 'cultural damage' of their zeal has often been highlighted, the missionaries' contribution to linguistics is mainly overlooked or downplayed. Bloomfield (1935, p. 7), for instance, saw the work of missionaries as explorative but contributing little to the knowledge of these exotic languages. In addition, he warns, "these works can be used only with caution, for the authors, untrained in the recognition of foreign speech-sounds, could make no accurate record, and, knowing only the terminology of Latin grammar, distorted their exposition by fitting it into this frame." (p. 7).

Yet, the works produced through ethnographic research or descriptive linguistics are not value-free either. Ethnographic descriptions, grammars, and dictionaries effectively reflect – although not always tacitly – a certain perspective on knowledge-construction. Blommaert

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[7] Johannes Fabian (1986) introduced this term in his seminal work *Language and Colonial Power. The appropriation of Swahili in the Former Belgian Congo. 1880-1938,* to refer to the process in which missionaries and administrators exerted their authority over Swahili in the former Belgian Congo.

(2008b), for instance, describes the *esquisse grammaticale* as a 'fixed' and a "mature, highly professionalised, technical genre of language description" (p. 296), which, not only flags the professional linguist's competence, but also the existence of a language. He explains that, as a standard of an 'unwritten' language is created in the shape of a canonical handbook, such as an ethnography, grammar or dictionary, a written, artefactualised image or object of a language is born. The emergence of a dictionary or a grammar sketch as an artefact also means that, as Blommaert (2008b, p. 293) puts it, the language becomes part of the professional discourse and can then be pinpointed on language maps or included in catalogues or reference works, such as the *Ethnologue* or the French equivalent *Langues du Monde*, which effectively makes Rivierre's grammar sketch "the birth certificate of the [Cèmuhi] language" (Blommaert, 2008b, p. 305).

In his work, *Linguistique et Colonialisme*, the French linguist, Louis-Jean Calvet (1974) pointed out that the study of language, including descriptive linguistics, implies a certain epistemological position on the language communities under study. In addition, Errington (2008) sees linguistics as part of the colonial endeavour. He notes that grammars, dictionaries, or word lists, etc. are the result of "work that made languages into objects of knowledge, so that their speakers could be made subjects of power" (p. 3). In the context of New Caledonia, Douglas (1994, p. 170) notes that anthropologists, such as Alban Bensa and Catholic priest Jean Guiart, as employees of the French state, "were tacitly involved in colonialism", further adding that both were engaged in an "acrimonious debate[8]" about concept and methods.

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[8] In a critical pamphlet addressing Bensa's ethnographic method among the Cèmuhi and neighbouring Paicî language, Guiart (2006) warns that the first rule to respect in Oceania, where the social dynamics are often ruled by hierarchy and secular prestige, is to never receive information from the masters of this information or as he puts it "la règle première à respecter, partout en océanie, est de ne jamais recevoir d'informations que de la part de ceux qui sont les maîtres de cette information" (p. 8).

This critical historical overview of the works and methods used by outsiders will be followed by an analysis of Poinine's writing practice. I will first trace certain meta-linguistic phenomena in her writing practice, such as the concept of heterography, organisational features in some of the texts, linguistic awareness, oral features, and emerging literary features and genres. The second part of the analysis comprises a discussion of themes (or linguistic phenomena) in the different text genres. Where appropriate, comparisons will be made with similar themes that emerged in some of the works that were produced by outsiders by means of translation and transcription. This two-pronged approach is aimed to come to a comprehensive analysis of voice, for which I will mainly draw on the work of Jan Blommaert who argues for 'an ethnography of voice', which has received particular attention in his work the *Sociolinguistics of Globalisation* (2010). He describes how a discourse analysis of voice is an investigation in "the way in which people manage to make themselves understood or fail to do so" (p. 4). While he notes that this kind of writing comes with certain constraints, especially when these texts move from the periphery to the power centres of the world where different norms and values reign, my aim is to focus on the potential and opportunities that may arise when an emerging storywriter such as Suzanne Poinine is taking the opportunity to express her own unique voice through writing, without the help of intermediary practices. It is hoped that these unique pieces of ordinary writing or *écritures ordinaires* (Lyons, 2013) in one of the lesser spoken languages of the world, as presented in this study, may give further rise to new insights for those who are interested in the historical processes of language codification and in the expressive potential of a language that is still on the road towards stable codification.

1.5 Overview of chapters

The outline of this thesis is as follows:

Chapter 2 details the broader background and impetus to this thesis. It provides a discussion of language documentation, which needs to be seen as a linguistic symptom of a global process of 'indigenisation', as a result of geo-political changes in the 1990s.

Chapter 3 is an overview of the literature on the divide between orality and writing and the power issues that are involved in writing, along with the expression of voice in text.

Chapter 4 discusses how data was gathered and the choices that informed the representation of findings in this thesis, including a short overview of the methodology and theoretical framework, as well as my own role as a researcher.

Chapter 5 gives a historical overview of the different stakeholders involved in the codification of the Cèmuhi language during the last 150 years, beginning with a description of the works produced by the Catholic Marist priests, followed by those developed by ethnographer, Alban Bensa, and linguists, André Haudricourt and Jean-Claude Rivierre.

Chapter 6 traces a number of meta-linguistic phenomena that emerged from the different text genres. I will be mainly looking at the concept of heterography, text organisation, oral features, linguistic awareness, and emerging literary features or genres.

Chapter 7 forms the core of this thesis, namely an analysis of linguistic or thematic phenomena in the texts and textual artefacts written by Suzanne Poinine.

Chapter 8 provides concluding remarks to some of the research questions, such as the extent to which the Kanak voice has been represented in Cèmuhi in the past by outsiders. I also discuss some of the voices through which Poinine has expressed herself. This chapter also contains a discussion of the limitations of the thesis, with directions for future research.

Chapter 2:

Documenting Endangered Languages

2.1 Introduction

Over the last few decades, the interest in endangered languages in the world has become the subject of many reflections in both scholarly and mainstream publications. The awareness of language endangerment and language loss has particularly come to the fore through the works of Crystal (2000), Dorian (1989), Fishman (1991), and Nettle and Romaine (2000). Research on endangered languages has also become the hallmark of language documentation or documentary linguistics, a new subfield of linguistics that emerged in the 1990s. The main aim of this enterprise is to document endangered languages for future generations, as it is generally believed that language loss entails both the loss of linguistic diversity and the traditional knowledge that these languages hold.[9]

In this chapter, I will first define the field of language documentation. I will then give a summary of critical evaluations that have been made in recent years of the often-essentialising discourse on language endangerment (e.g. Blommaert, 2010; Costa, 2013; Duchêne and Heller, 2007; De Swaan, 2004; Fast, 2007; Hill, 2002; Mufwene, 2002 and 2008). In order to shed light on the ideological underpinnings of the discourse on language endangerment, I will argue that the interest in language endangerment needs to be understood in the context of a global process of 'indigenisation', which emerged in the wake of specific socio-political events in the early 1990s, also marked as the starting point of the Age of Globalisation

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[9] See for instance Mufwene (2008, p. 245), who advances the aforementioned losses as the two most prominent concerns among language rights advocates.

(Rosenau, 2004). This process of indigenisation runs parallel to the growing global awareness of the environment and this is not by coincidence. It will therefore be illuminating to uncover the similarities between the discourse on 'linguistic diversity' and 'biodiversity', which both make productive use of the ecological metaphor (Fill and Mühlhäusler, 2001) or what I see as the imposition of a rather fatalistic '*cherish or perish*' paradigm. In this paradigm, speakers of endangered languages are often presented with the grim picture that giving up their language is equal to giving up their traditional knowledge. Working in such a paradigm has detrimental effects on the methodologies of language documentation. I will demonstrate these effects through a more focused discussion of the emergence of the new concept of 'Traditional Knowledge' or 'Indigenous Knowledge' as a separate category from 'western' or 'Scientific Knowledge'. The portrayal of indigenous culture and languages as a category that needs special linguistic consideration has resulted in a new form of intervention and control from outsiders. An example of this is the transfer of traditional knowledge into the World Wide Web, where it is firmly tied up with distinctive legal access, and copyrights and obligations, of which the consequences are yet to become clear, not least by the speakers of these languages themselves.

2.2 Language documentation: a new linguistic enterprise

Language documentation, also known as 'documentary linguistics', emerged in the early 1990s as a response to Krauss' (Hale et al., 1992) dire prediction that over half to ninety per cent of the world's languages will become severely endangered or extinct by the end of this century (see also Crystal, 2000; Wurm, 2003; Grinevald, 2003). Since the publication of Krauss' seminal paper on the safeguarding of linguistic diversity in 1992, linguists have become

increasingly involved in language documentation projects, with the aim of recording and archiving language data and cultural practices of endangered languages.

The core of this new field of linguistic enquiry is constituted by a comprehensive corpus of primary data, which include audio or video recordings of natural speech events, as well as meta-data about the place, time, and location where the communication took place. These data are then annotated, structured, and electronically archived and made accessible to linguists, the speech community, and government agencies for the purpose of language analysis, the production of educational materials, or language planning efforts (Gippert *et al.;* 2006, Himmelmann, 1998; Thieberger and Barwick, 2012; Woodbury, 2003).

Professional interests in the science of languages such as descriptive linguistics, linguistic typology or cognitive anthropology are quite understandably the key motivations of language documentation (Himmelmann, 2006; Grenoble and Furbee, 2010) and this has certainly fostered the science of language typology and classification. Nevertheless, it is important to critically evaluate the rhetoric that linguists and endangered language advocates have used to draw a rather dramatic picture of the 'vanishing voices' of the world (e.g. Crystal, 2000; Nettle & Romaine, 2000).

In recent years, critical voices have been raised against the discourse and ideology of the language endangerment movement, which, as several scholars have argued, is often framed as an 'essentialising' rhetoric that undividedly links language to identity and which allows linguists to justify intervention in places where languages are endangered (Duchêne and Heller, 2007; Hill, 2002; Mufwene, 2002 and 2008). Fast (2007) refers to the "moral incoherence" in the rhetoric of documentary linguists who have developed "an interventionist stance that superficially resembles the rhetoric of missionary linguist counterparts, despite

many academics' continuing uneasiness about missionary methods and motives" (p. 64). The interventionist approach is often justified by the common practice of outlining languages as dots on a 'scale of endangerment' generated by various tools (e.g. UNESCO's 'Language Vitality and Endangerment'-index[10] or Fishman's 1991 Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale). The increased use of these tools has reduced endangered languages to common exchange values for which 'grant-seeking' documentary linguists have to compete (Dobrin *et al.*, 2007). This technique of presenting alarming statistics about the number of languages that will disappear in the future has been referred to as the practice of 'enumeration' (Hill, 2002). Blommaert (cited in Moore et al., 2010) further clarifies this strategy of 'counting languages' in the context of language endangerment, observing that it is based upon some critical assumptions, such as the notion of native speaker, language, and the domains in which languages are spoken. He explains that evaluating language vitality is based upon the assumption that "the ideal speaker of an endangered language is someone who effectively uses a 'pure' form of the language in such-and-such a domain (or even better, across all domains)" (p. 17). These 'purist' language ideologies, however, may also lead to quasi-Orwellian excesses. For example, in their aim to 'protect' the Kaurna language (an Australian Aboriginal language) from misuse or abuse, a website hosted by the University of Adelaide requests its visitors to give their consent to not use the language disrespectfully or improperly[11] before they are able to access language data.

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[10] UNESCO's 'Language Vitality and Endangerment' (VLE) index is a tool intended to determine the degree of language vitality/endangerment, based on nine criteria.

[11] The full statement reads: "The language and culture is the property of the Kaurna community. Users of this site are urged to use the language with respect. This means making every effort to get the pronunciation, spelling, and grammar right. Kaurna people reserve the right to monitor the use of the language in public" (website accessed January 2015, http://www.adelaide.edu.au/kwp/).

The notion of the idealised 'native speaker', who has unrestricted access to all resources of the language, including writing, is particularly complex in the context of endangered languages. In his discussion on the concept of the native speaker, Davies (2003, p. 153) refers to the paradox of the African 'négritude' writers such as Caribbean writer and poet, Aimé Césaire, who successfully integrated into French civilisation – not least through writing in French – while at the same time expressing anguish of having lost something more profound than just his mother tongue. Davies (2003, p. 152) decribes this as the paradox of people between two worlds. In order to re-define their identity, minority people are left no other choice than to use the language of the majority in order to be heard. This paradox can be observed in New Caledonia, where Kanak writers such as Dewey Gorodey use the French language in an attempt to re-create a sense of 'Kanakitude'.[12] Despite being a fervent advocate for the introduction of Kanak culture and languages in the educational system and the media, this renowned female Kanak writer and former vice-president of the government of New Caledonia, writes her novels in the major language of French instead of her mother tongue, Paicî. She nevertheless considers herself as belonging to the first generation of Kanak writers (Rano, 2008)[13]. While Gorodey's language choice may be perceived as a contradiction or even a form of self-inflicted weakness,[14] it can also be seen as her way to reach a larger audience. By reclaiming or reframing the rights that were formerly denied on the basis of

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[12] Aimé Césaire's 'négritude' seems to have been the inspiration for this term as early as 1969 when Kanak students, studying in Paris, protested against French colonisation during the so-called Kanak Awakening (Chappell 2013).

[13] "C'est avant tout une littérature émergente. Nous sommes pratiquement la première génération d'écrivains Kanak/ [It is above all an emergent literature. We are practically the first generation of Kanak writers] » Déwé Gorodey's in 2003 novel *Le Vol de la parole* (cited in Rano, 2008, p. 115)

[14] In an anonymous comment on an article featuring 'Fans of Déwé Dorodey' (In *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* of 15th September 2010) a reader asks: "Goro écrit-ell [sic] en Français avec des gants ? Vu ce qu'ell[sic] pense de la France, de la langue Française et des Français, je [sic] demande… " [Does Goro[dey] write with gloves? Considering her opinion of France, the French language and the French, I wonder…]

colour, race or language[15], she is now allowing herself to act in pretty much the same way as modern researchers, who themselves, as De Swaan (2004, p. 568) unapologetically remarks, use one or more major languages in order to maximise their potential readership in order to advance their careers.

The ideological notion of the 'ideal language' is particularly problematic in the context of an increasingly diversified and multicultural world. Blommaert (2013b) argues that the communicative practices in real life reflect, "the stability enshrined in the traditional concept of 'language'" (p. 47). Indeed, the notion of a pure or fixed language seems to be less of a preoccupation for an emerging writer such as Suzanne Poinine, whose heterograhic and often-innovative style suggests that the Cèmuhi language is far from 'fixed' or 'stable', at least on paper. The perception that a 'language' needs to be saved also explains why 'contact-languages', such as Pidgin and Creole, are notoriously absent in the debate on language endangerment. Mufwene (2008) explains this selectivity to a myopic perception of colonisation that genetic linguists have on these contact-languages.

The assumption here is that these languages do not fit into the traditional notion of 'language' due to their mixed or hybrid characteristics. Garrett (2006) explains this perceived marginality of 'contact-languages' to their "shallow history" (p. 178) as corrupted versions of European languages to which they are necessarily related, which makes it harder to categorise them as real languages or to assign them to "distinctive group identities" (Garrett, 2012, p.

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[15] I refer to Governor Nouet's letter to the Minister of the Marine and Colonies calling for the Native Code to be applied in New Caledonia (in Speedy 2013, p.74). He writes: "When the Kanak can speak, read and write French, I will be more inclined to facilitate his access to naturalisation and grant him the most extensive rights. At the moment, he is absolutely incapable of fulfilling them, unlike the Arab and the Annamite, he does not even have a common language or writing system through which we can enter into dialogue with him… We cannot reasonably be expected to grant political rights to a people who are so undeveloped" (Nouméa, 15 November 1886). Fonds ministériels, Série géographique NCL//45, Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence.

148). This selective approach may also be the reason why the topic of 'endangered languages' is often exclusively raised in reference to the smaller languages that are spoken in the world and/or to languages that have in one way or another been subjugated to colonial rule (see Mufwene, 2008, p. 206). The unintended outcome is that people who do not fit in the proto-typical 'indigenous' category because of the hybridised speakers' identity of these contact language, tend to become unnoticed. Sellwood and Angelo (2013) give an example of this with regard to the 'invisibility' of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contact-languages and their speakers in the sphere of educational discourse[16].

2.3 Discourses of indigenisation in the 1990s

In light of these critical voices, I will now consider the broader context of endangered languages-research. The similarities in the discourse used in both academic and non-academic publications, and the emergence of a plethora of blogs, NGOs, and grassroots organisations dedicated to this issue, raises the question as to why the cross pollination between these two networks has been so profound in this particular subfield of linguistic enquiry and how it has come about. As such, what are the underlying forces that drive global awareness for endangered languages? In addition, why has the topic of language endangerment become so popular, in particular, since the 1990s?

In their book, *Discourses of Endangerment: Ideology and Interest in the Defence of Languages*, Alexandre Duchêne and Monica Heller (2007) have raised similar questions about the timing of "the sudden mass waves of enthusiasm for the language endangerment

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[16] Referring to the document *Our Land Our Languages,* they make the observation that statements about indigenous languages, such as "Indigenous languages keep people connected to culture and this strengthens feelings of pride and self-worth" (HOR, 2012, p. 8) are not inclusive of the creoles spoken by Indigenous Australians (Sellwood and Angelo, 2013, p. 261).

discourse" (p. 2). They see the emergence of this discourse as the result of a 'moral panic' over the decline of all kinds of diversity that needs to be managed. Several factors suggest that the global interest for endangered languages is not solely focused on linguistics, a field that has always been strongly influenced by socio-cultural and ethico-political values and therefore prone to ideological biases, as Koerner (1999) remarks. In an attempt to shed light on the ideological motivations and origins of the discourse of language endangerment, and its impact on the methodologies and outcomes of language documentation, we will need to approach this new linguistic endeavour, and its underlying discourse, from a discursive-historical viewpoint. So what is the epistemic framework that could be applied to analysing this sudden mushrooming of 'endangered languages?'

First, at the time when Krauss published his dire prediction of the fate of endangered languages, in the journal, *Language*, the world had already witnessed some important socio-political changes, such as the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1989 and the increase of mass-migration from poorer or war-torn countries to the richer regions in the world. These events, according to Friedman (1994, p. 233), also coincided with – or indeed triggered – a global process of 'indigenisation' or 'ethnification', when a worldwide recognition of the rights of indigenous people vis-à-vis languages began to emerge. In addition, symbolic events such as the commemoration of 500 years of the Discovery of the Americas in 1989 were the catalysts for the emergence of indigenous movements in Latin America (Costa, 2013, p. 319).

Many of these movements received institutionalised support, both at the local level, such as through the signing of The Native American Language Act[17] in 1990 by President

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[17] The Native American Language Act recognises that the American Languages were vital to the Native American Language.

George Bush (Linn, 2002, p. 106), and more globally by the United Nations, in an effort to raise awareness of the need to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage of humanity for future generations, as expressed in several UN documents[18]. The discourse on 'indigeneity' also appears to have emerged in different parts of the worlds. Hathaway (2012 and 2010), for instance, notes that an "indigenous space" (p. 106) was created as a politicised social category rather than a natural timeless category in the context of the emergence of 'indigeneity' in China. It was a concept considered irrelevant by both the government and ethnic groups until the 1990s and which enabled institutions, academia, and activists to discuss issues of social rights, often over the heads of these indigenous groups (Hathaway, 2012, p. 103).

Even though this worldwide 'Indigenous Awakening' could be explained as a counter-hegemonic act of deconstructing Western paradigms, in which the decline of the centre's model of identity goes hand in hand with (re)constructing of indigenous ones (Friedman, 1994, p. 239; Ortiz, 2009, p. 93), the emergence of indigenous movements appears to be, in essence, a pre-occupation with identity-questions, or a means of finding out where one fits in the course of events in a globalising world (Rosenau, 2004, p. 4). Friedman (1994) explains that this process of repositioning identity in the global system is marked by a multiplicity of opposing forces, which are reflected in a continuum of positions or identity strategies, ranging between the local and the global, between fragmentation and cosmopolitanisation, and between the Self and the Other.

Language documentation thus needs to be seen as a linguistic symptom of a global process of 'indigenisation', as a result of geo-political changes in the 1990s. The sketched

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[18] The United Nations first declared 1993 as 'the year of indigenous people', followed by the Declarations on Cultural Diversity in 2001 and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007.

historical context forms the background that underpins this particular field of linguistic research and places the discourse, used by scholars and advocates for the preservation of language, in a broader epistemic framework, characterised by an amalgam of discourses pertaining to 'indigeneity', 'endangerment', and 'diversity'.

2.4 Ecological metaphors in the language endangerment discourse

The attractiveness for the discourse of endangered languages and cultures among the public was further enhanced through the productive use of metaphorical language which, as Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 156) note, can be a powerful tool to create social realities, by highlighting certain aspects of our experience, while hiding others, giving those in power a licence to intervene on their terms. The link between language and environment is not new. It can be traced back to the time when American linguists started to describe Native American languages in the Whorfian[19] tradition of languages as repositories of knowledge (e.g. Linell, 2005, p. 167). It is also reflected in Sapir's paper on 'Language and Environment' (Sapir, 1949) and in the 'ecology of language' paradigm, made by Einar Haugen in 1972, which has now become a highly productive ecological metaphor where inferences are being made to the fate of biological species.

Perley (2012, p. 135) observed that the discourse on language endangerment is often accompanied with descriptors such as 'tragedy', 'death', and 'extinction'. This 'rhetoric of crisis', in which the problem of 'endangered languages' is often couched, is borrowed from a period when there was also growing concern for human impact on the extinction of species and thus on the world's biodiversity, as stated in the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in

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[19] In the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, each language represents a particular worldview (see May, 2001, p. 133).

1992 for instance. In drawing parallels between biodiversity and linguistic or cultural diversity, linguistic reflections, such as in David's Crystal book on language death, have also found their way to the wider public. The connection between language and ecology is also made in the work of Skutnabb-Kangas on biolinguistic diversity (2003) or in Peter Mühlhäusler's (1990, 1996) reflections on Ecolinguistics, in which language is seen as a living organism. In defining languages as 'verbal botanies', Nettle and Romaine (2000, p. 69) indiscriminately align the fate of the greatest biological diversity – often to be found in areas inhabited by indigenous people – with the fate of the people themselves, effectively categorising people in much the same vein as endangered 'biological species' that need active protection.

The use of the ecological metaphor has been criticised by Kibbee (2003), claiming that ecolinguists have chosen it for "its political content rather than its scientific content" (p. 52). It appears that the ecological metaphor is often used in order to justify action that will result in sustained linguistic diversity, with the apparent concomitant expectations that upholding the linguistic rights of minority peoples within the nation state will also provide a better representation of the interests of such minority groups (May, 2001, p. 7). Ecolinguists, Alwin Fill and Peter Mühlhäusler (2001), admit that the current use of the ecological metaphor is not purely about linguistics, but about the moral obligation of linguists becoming advocates for linguistic diversity.

Promoting linguistic diversity using ecological terms has also resulted in the subtle imposition of what I would refer to as a '*cherish or perish'* paradigm, in which linguists and language advocates lead indigenous people to believe that giving up their language is synonymous to giving up their cultural identity or traditional knowledge or that language loss is even detrimental to their survival as a group. Despite the fact that many indigenous people

groups continue to struggle to cross the socio-economic gap, they are now urged not to take the leap to modern western capitalism, as this would be similar to 'linguistic suicide' or 'ethnic masquerading', metaphorically speaking. Mufwene (2002, 2008, 2015) refutes this logic because it disregards the fact that language death or attrition are often the result of adaptive responses of speakers to changing political and socio-economic conditions.

According to Hill (2002), the commonly used metaphors of 'cultures becoming a loss of humankind' and 'universal or common ownership' are, along with the already discussed practice of enumeration, in which alarming statistics are used to create a sense of urgency, the 'scene-setting' themes in the rhetoric of language endangerment advocacy. Hill explains that the theme of 'universal ownership' asserts that endangered languages belong to everyone in the world (p. 120), while the theme of 'hyperbolic valorisation' is reflected in the idea that endangered languages and their 'traditional knowledge' are 'timeless treasures' (p. 123) that, if lost, may jeopardise the world's future. It is interesting to note that the theme of common ownership or universal benefit has widespread applications.

The use of 'our common future' can also be found in the in New Caledonia's political arena. The theme of *Le destin commun* or 'common destiny' has become a productive metaphor in the independence debate in New Caledonia, as craftily defined in the Nouméa Agreements (1998): "The past was the time of colonisation. The present is the time of sharing, through the achievement of a new balance. The future must be the time of an identity, in a common destiny"[20] (Nouméa Agreement, 1998, par. 4). While this notion may make explicit

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[20] "Le passé a été le temps de la colonisation. Le présent est le temps du partage, par le rééquilibrage. L'avenir doit être le temps de l'identité, dans un destin commun." (Nouméa Agreement, 1998, par. 4). The informal English translation of the "Agreement on New Caledonia" was done by the Pacific Community translation services and can be found on http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/AILR/2002/17.html

"the benefits for all" from a French perspective, it could also be perceived as a tacit attempt to silence or manipulate the Kanak voice in the debate.

Some of the unintended consequences of the methodology of language documentation (see Dobrin *et al.,* 2007) is that that linguists increasingly find themselves ending up with languages becoming commodities, more particularly through the technologisation of archiving practices, and also through the current reification of traditional knowledge, which has been advanced as a separate category from scientific knowledge. The irony, however, is that 'Indigenous knowledge' encoded in these languages has effectively become annihilated through the practice of storing this knowledge in access-protected archives and repositories that are often administered by institutions outside the community.

2.5 Traditional knowledge versus scientific knowledge

The creation of a new category, with its underlying assumptions, has become particularly salient through the international use of a discourse of differentiation, as reflected in official documents and treaties of government and academic institutions (e.g. UNESCO, The World Bank 2004). In the literature, the term 'indigenous' has now become a universal concept that refers to the collectivity of indigenous people that display a set of characteristics, as set out by international institutions, and which distinguish them from non-indigenous people (Merlan, 2009, p. 303; see also the C169 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention[21]). By extension, the ICSU[22] (2002) publication defines 'traditional knowledge' as

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[21] The International Labor Organisation defines both the rights of indigenous people and membership conditions in this convention.
(See http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C169).
[22] This report was discussed and submitted during the World Conference on Science (WSC) in Budapest, Hungary in 1999, which was organised by UNESCO and the International Council for Science (ICSU) study group on Science and Traditional Knowledge. (See http://www.icsu.org/publications/reports-and-reviews/science-traditional-knowledge/Science-traditional-knowledge.pdf)

a cumulative body of knowledge, know-how, practices and representations maintained and developed by peoples with extended histories of interaction with the natural environment. These sophisticated sets of understandings, interpretations and meanings are seen as part of a cultural complex that encompasses language, naming and classification systems, resource use practices, ritual, spirituality and worldview (p. 3).

The ICSU-report (2002, p. 3) further explains the symbiotic relationship between indigenous people and the environment (e.g. plants, animals, the universe), to which they are connected by a network of social relations and obligations. Skutnabb-Kangas (2004) goes even further by claiming that indigenous people who have not been colonised are particularly important agents in the maintenance of biodiversity, not least because "[t]he knowledge they have when interacting with (the rest of) nature in non-degrading ways is part of what has been called 'Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)'" (p. 11).

Even though several attempts have been made to clarify what is actually meant by 'traditional knowledge' (and the misappropriation of it) and in what it exactly differs from scientific knowledge (e.g. Agrawal, 1995), some have argued that these definitions do not help to accommodate the conceptual weakness and contradictions in the 'reification' of traditional knowledge. In an insightful critique, Agrawal (1995, p. 418) identifies three major themes that presumably separate indigenous knowledge from scientific knowledge. First, there is a substantive difference in the subject matter and characteristics between traditional versus scientific knowledge. The premise is that indigenous knowledge is predominantly pertaining to activities that concern concrete daily life, while scientific knowledge is divorced from the concrete reality, as it aims at "a more analytical and abstract representation of the world" (p. 422). The second dimension that Agrawal (p. 423) identifies is methodological and

epistemological. He rejects the totalising idea that indigenous knowledge is a closed system, while scientific knowledge is open, systematic, objective, and analytical. He notes that the attitude of indigenous people in adopting old and rejecting new ideas is not different from those of scientists.

Finally, there is the theorisation positing that traditional knowledge "exists in close and organic harmony with the lives of the people who generated it", while scientific knowledge "thrives on abstract formulation and exists divorced from the lives of people" (p. 425). Agrawal rejects these differentiating dimensions as he sees them being at odds with the contradictory practice of using objective scientific methods in preserving and cataloguing this knowledge. By isolating the knowledge from the practice of everyday life through documentation and storage, Agrawal argues, indigenous knowledge theorists "undermine their own assertion about inseparability of indigenous from western knowledge" (p. 428).

The division of two knowledge systems – 'indigenous' or 'traditional knowledge'[23] versus 'scientific knowledge' – can therefore be seen as another example of what Austin calls our "deeply ingrained worship of tidy-looking dichotomies" (1962, p. 3). It resembles the other great dichotomies that the human race has been inclined to make and which has been the subject of many scholarly reflections in history, such as the divide between the oral and the written[24], as the next chapter will aim to show.

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[23] Throughout the text, I will employ the terms 'indigenous knowledge' and 'traditional knowledge' interchangeably and only use single quotes when deemed necessary, e.g. when referring to the concept in official reports or documents.

[24] I refer the reader to Plato's *Phaedro*, Derrida's *De la Grammatologie* (1967), as well as Goody's (2000) reflection on the difference between oral and written cultures, which will be discussed in more depth in chapter 2.

2.6 Conclusion: Towards a new approach

In response to the 'documentation only' approach, where only the 'code' is saved, Perley (2012, p.142) suggests focusing on the 'communicative practice' or the 'emergent vitalities' of members of the community creating new and unexpected vitalities by using the language in new domains. The study of emergent new literacies has also come into focus in Blommaert's *Sociolinguistics of Globalisation* (2010) and his studies on *grassroots writing* (2004, 2008a, 2013a). In this framework, he argues that language should not be treated as a bound and abstract concept, but as a perpetually mobile resource or practice, whose role and function is constantly changing in a globalised world. His work proposes a paradigmatic shift to move away from the study of 'languages' as bound and quantifiable entities, to an analysis of the practices and resources of its speakers in everyday life. This thesis aims to address this concern by presenting a study that focuses on the practice and product of an emerging writer in the Cèmuhi language.

Chapter 3:

Writing as the Expression of 'Voice'

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I argued that the language endangerment movement has cherished a picture of indigenous culture that is often portrayed as an 'oral' based society whose traditions need to be preserved through the common practice of transcribing, analysing, and translating oral data in language documentation projects[25]. It is reminiscent of a traditional anthropology that continues to feed into expectations that indigenous groups live "in oral-based societies rather than writing-based ones, regarding orality as a sign of authentic indigeneity" (Hathaway, 2012, p. 109). While many of the smaller languages have no fully developed orthographies, let alone a literary tradition (especially in the Pacific region), a considerable amount of *ex-situ* linguistic research is now being done on these languages, often resulting in the production of a grammar, a lexicon, and a corpus of interlinear texts in the Boasian[26] tradition.

As the focus is still very much on descriptive linguistics and more recently on language and cultural preservation, the emerging writing practices received only scant consideration within the field of language documentation, exceptions notwithstanding.[27] The lack of interest

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[25] A cursory examination of the projects listed on the website of the Hans Rausing Endangered Languages (School of Oriental and African Studies in London) reveals that many of the projects of the last 10 years have as goal to collect audio/video 'data', which form the basis for the development of grammar sketches and dictionaries.

[26] This three-fold format stems from descriptive work Franz Boas and others conducted on North American indigenous languages, maintaining a fairly strict separation between writing a grammatical description and writing about language and culture (Hill 2006, p. 615).

[27] For example, Valérie Guérin (2008) addresses the topic of "grassroots writing" in an endangered language of Vanuatu.

in the 'written' in the research on endangered languages could be explained by the assumption that writing is detrimental to the preservation of language and culture of societies who rely on memory (e.g. Mühlhäusler, 1990, 1996). The impact of literacy as having a 'corrosive force' undermining the traditional culture of Maori people has also been discussed by Ballantyne (2011, p. 236), in the context of the interpretation of Moorehead's (1966) 'fatal impact' thesis, "which imagined contact with whites as initiating the rapid and almost total destruction of Pacific cultures."

These viewpoints, however, contrast with the increasing interest in ethnographic research on the diverse literacy practices in different communities all over the world. A historical overview of the various approaches to the study of writing is offered by Barton and Papen (2010) who identified two strands in the research on writing: the first one is the 'Anthropology of Writing', which emerged in the francophone academic world, while 'New Literacies Studies' (NLS) started in the Anglophone world in the 1980s. According to Barton and Papen, both fields emerged in part as a response to research which assumed the consequences of literacy (and writing in particular)[28] on the cognitive development of the individual and the transformation of society. The correlation between writing and cognitive development was most notably stressed in the work of scholars such as Goody (1977, 1987, 2000), Ong (1982), McLuhan (1962), and Havelock (1963, 1982). The thesis postulated in their work came to be known as the 'literacy myth' (Graff, 1979), of which the most vivid critique came from the field of New Literacies Studies, which focuses on the diversity of literary

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[28] While literacy constitutes both writing and reading, I will mainly refer to the active form of literacy, which is 'writing' and to which most scholars in the debate have referred. Goody in particular has referred to writing rather than literacy in his later work.

practices in specific settings (e.g. Finnegan, Graff, Heath, Scribner and Cole, Street). It is on some of the aforementioned issues that this chapter will aim to shed light.

As this study aims to investigate the practice of writing in a language that is still in the process of stable codification, I will also show how the non-linear process of standardisation, from the selection of an orthography to the canonisation of text, is often the result of power struggles between different stakeholders. The final outcome of this process is the canonised 'text' as it emerges, the first visible trace of a language that has yet to become fully standardised.

The outline of this chapter is as follows. First, I will revisit the literature on the philosophical discussion on the dichotomy writing versus orality, followed by a closer look at New Literacies Studies, the Anglophone strand in the research on writing. I will then discuss the process of language standardisation and the power struggles that are involved during the different stages of selection, canonisation, and codification, as applied to a previously unwritten language. As this study is concerned with both the process, as well as the product of writing, the notion of the emerging 'text' will be explained, as will the precarious position of the emerging writer in ethnographic research on grassroots texts. Conclusive remarks will then be made in the last section, in which I will explore the concept of 'voice' as expressed in writing. This section will mainly build on insights from French culturalist, Michel de Certeau.

3.2 Oral versus writing: revisiting an old debate

The divide between writing and orality has its origin in a centuries old metaphysical debate that revolves around the question of whether 'writing' constitutes 'language'. Plato, for instance, was of the idea that 'writing' is a mere representation of speech and can therefore not be considered real 'language'. In the *Phaedrus*, Plato recounts, through Socrates, the

legend of the invention of alphabetic writing by Egyptian God Teuth, of which it was believed

that these "letters" would make the people wiser and improve their memories. Plato,

however, expressed great scepticism –paradoxically 'in writing'– towards this new invention,

as he believed that it would have a negative impact on the memory. While further reading

might reveal a more nuanced position of Plato towards 'writing'[29], his rejection of this new

invention gave rise to discussions on what would come to be known as the Great Divide

(Goody, 1977, p. 3) between orality and writing. The idea that speech ('logos' in Greek)

constituted or was closer to language or metaphysical 'truth' became the centrepiece of "a

logocentrism in which the inequality of binary oppositions (privileging one term to the

detriment of another) depends upon the representation of such inequality within discourse

(philosophical, literary, and so on)" (McQuillan, 2001, p. 10). This logocentrism was also

reflected in Chomsky's generative linguistics, in Bloomfield's (1933) descriptive linguistics, and

in Saussure's structuralism. Saussure (1959) saw language and its written form as two separate

systems of signs. The sole object of study of the internal system of language *(langue)* is the

spoken form (p*arole*)[30], and the reason for the written form is only to represent the spoken

form. The distinction Saussure made between *langue* and *parole* was later deconstructed by

Derrida in his major work, *De la Grammatologie* (1967)*,* in which he objects to Saussure's

phonocentrism[31].

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[29] When Socrates asks whether there is a more legitimate kind of speech or word than 'writing', Phaedrus' answer is that it is "[t]he word which is written with intelligence in the mind of the learner, which is able to defend itself and knows to whom it should speak, and before whom to be silent." [276a]].

[30] Saussure (1959) puts it "We simply cannot reduce language to sound." (p. 8).

[31] With regard to this binary, Derrida (1997, p. 43) writes: "This logocentrism, this epoch of the full speech, has always placed in parenthesis, *suspended*, and suppressed for essential reasons, all free reflection on the origin and status of writing [...] It is this logocentrism which, limiting the internal system of language in general by a bad abstraction, prevents Saussure and the majority of his successors from determining fully and explicitly that which is called "the integral and concrete object of linguistics".

It is beyond the scope of this study to revisit metaphysical reflections on the nature of language. Suffice to say, both Saussure's hierarchical dichotomy, as well as Derrida's reversal of it has been rejected by Jack Goody (2000, pp. 111-115)[32]. Goody proposes adding a third element in the equation, suggesting that writing may also have an influence on speech and the cognitive processes that are associated with it (Goody, 1977, pp. 76-77). A similar viewpoint is taken by the Prague school of linguistics, where Vachek (1989, p. 7) sees writing as "a system in its own right, adapted to fulfil its own specific functions", or in the Hallidayan approach (Halliday, 1985).

Langue (language)

Parole (speech)   Écriture (writing)
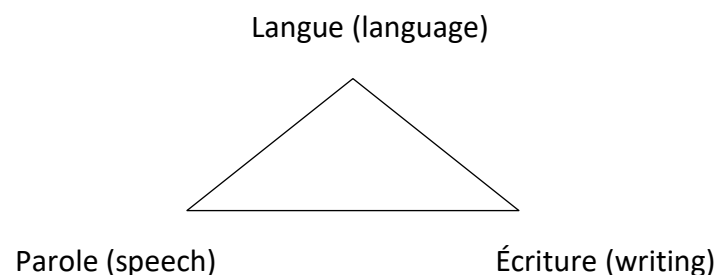
Figure 2: *Goody's triangular representation of the language system (1977, p. 77)*

The assumption that writing impacts the ordering of knowledge in the human mind and on the development of society was most prominently raised by Goody and Watt in their influential paper, *The consequences of literacy* (1963), while similar arguments were made by Havelock (1963, 1982), McLuhan (1962), and Ong (1982). The suggestion was made by Goody and Watt that the invention of writing had a major, if not determinate[33], effect on the development of

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[32] While Goody (2000, p. 112) accepts Derrida's deconstruction of Saussure's hierarchical distinction between the written and the spoken, he dismisses Derrida's attempt to reverse the hierarchy by introducing the term 'archi-écriture' (Eng. Archi-writing), which could best be described as the pre-condition to both speech and writing or to *language* tout court.

[33] While Goody does not assign literacy as a single cause (a single-factor theory) to development in cognitive reasoning, logic or the emergence of science, his argument in his earlier paper with Watt (1963, p. 321) and in *The domestication of the savage mind* (1977, pp. 2-3, 36) is often interpreted by his critiques as a strong form of 'technological determinism'.

society and human thought. Advances in technology and administration in ancient civilisations (Sumer, Egypt, China) would not have been possible without a writing system, even if the use of writing was restricted to a small segment of these societies.

The introduction of alphabetic writing in Greek society is often seen as the prime example of the transforming effects that literacy can have on a pre-literate society. Havelock (1963, 1982), in particular, discusses the transition from oral memory to literate society through the testimony of Plato, who lived in the midst of this revolutionary change. Helped by its acoustic efficiency, Havelock (1982, p. 88) argues that Greek alphabetic writing became a crucial factor in the emergence of new thought and ways of speaking about human life. The alphabet, Havelock writes, "was a weapon for arousing consciousness from its dream language and stimulating it to think abstractly" (1963, p. 209).

A similar stand is taken by Walter Ong in his book, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (1982), in which he argues that, while all thought, including that of primary oral cultures, is to some degree analytic, it is writing that allows for the sequential, abstract, and classificatory analysis of phenomena. Ong (1982 [2002]) states that "literacy opens possibilities to the word and to human existence unimaginable without writing" (p. 172). Discussing the origin of Greek literature, such as Homer, Powell (2002, p. 60) recognises that the structures of systems of writing do make certain kinds of thought possible, others impossible.

The effect of the alphabet and newer technologies such as the printing press was also discussed by Herbert Marshall McLuhan in *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of the Typographic man,* (1962, p. 8). With some foresight, McLuhan describes how these

technologies, as extended faculties of our senses, have become a single field of experience that has brought "the entire human family into a single global tribe"[34].

An equally nuanced position is taken by Olson (1994, see also Olson and Torrance, 1991 and 1996). Olson agrees that literacy has impacted on scientific development or consciousness, stressing that writing in itself does not develop new resources such as logical thinking but brings old resources – or language itself – into consciousness (Olson, 1994, pp. 35-36). Writing as a form of 'thinking' helps to uncover the known, that is grammatical awareness or knowledge that is already there in every culture. It is through writing that people become aware of grammatical concepts such as the notion of words and sentences that can be separated and categorised (Goody, 1977, p. 115; see also Halliday, 1985, p. 36, who notes that this conscious speculation about it marks the origin of linguistics).[35]

Joseph (1987, pp. 34-37) also discusses the effects of alphabetic writing on the conscious awareness of language: first, the alphabetic writing system triggers awareness of discrete sound units and also of linguistic change as writers codify often prescriptive value judgments into grammars and dictionaries, which then facilitate the acceptance of one linguistic variety of language among a diversity of 'alternatives' in the collective consciousness of a society. While Joseph's main focus is on the lasting impact of these written materials on the process of language standardisation (this will be discussed in more depth in Section 3.4), the material reality of the written languages also changes our sense of history. Goody (1977, p. 148 and 2000, p. 82), for instance, claims that the emergence of history was made possible

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[34] McLuhan is believed to be at the origin of the concept of 'global village' (Walkosz et al., 2008).

[35] In my own research, for instance, I observed that grammatical awareness is often triggered through literacy practices such as reading and discussing texts. The grammatical concepts of verbs or nouns was for the Cèmuhi speakers I worked with unknown until they started talking about it or after they had read a text in Cèmuhi.

through the advent of writing and the absence of it within oral culture due to a lack of means. While this may seem a rather bold claim, it cannot be denied that history is often 'made' and 'remade'. Oral cultures have often seen their histories supressed or merged in a wider historical framework during the archival process.

Guiart (1992, p. 3) gives a fine example of how, for the Loyalty Islands, a major historical event, such as a local civil war in the Losi district, Lifou island, which lasted four years (1847-51), had been largely supressed in the letters of administrators and missionaries of the London Missionary Society (LMS), allowing their less than heroic 'esbattements' to slip through the cracks of history.[36] A similar observation is made by Dousset-Leenhardt (2000, p. 18), who remarks that, while a major Kanak revolt against the colonising power in 1878 is still vivid in the Kanak mind, it has little or no traces in the archives of French history. She remarks that one can apparently show ethnographic interest in the Kanak people, but at the same time fail to distinguish their history from the history of the colonisers.[37]

Goody's (1977, p. 148) claim that there is no history without archives is also central to Michel de Certeau's *The Writing of History* (1988), in which he equates history to the very practice of writing itself (see also a discussion of de Certeau's work in Section 3.6). If that is indeed the case, then the power befalls not only on those who can write their own history, but also on those who have aimed to re-write the histories of colonised people in an often well-intended desire to put things right.

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[36] Guiart (1992, p. 3) mentions how an evangelical Samoan helper to the LMS "was fathering babies all over the place."

[37] Less than three pages can be found on the major Kanak revolt known as *l'insurrection de 1878* in bibliographies on New Caledonia, which leads Dousset-Leenhardt (2000, p. 18) to conclude that: "On veut bien leur porter un intéret "ethnologique", mais on ne distingue pass leur histoire de l'histoire de la colonisation."

3.3 New Literacies Studies: the alternative?

The causal link between writing and cognitive development was made much earlier in other fields (e.g. education, psychology), namely by Vygotsky[38] who argued that writing enhances abstract thought and metalinguistic awareness. However, it was the work of Havelock and McLuhan, but more so Goody and Watt, that caused the strongest reactions from theorists who both rejected the strong 'technological determinism' inferred from their work, as well as the assumed great divide between oral and literate cultures – between the 'civilised' and the 'primitive' mind, as for instance suggested through the 19th century reflections of Lévy-Bruehl's (1910) notion of primitive thought and Lévi-Strauss' theory of the Savage Mind (1966).[39] Even though Goody (1977, 2000) asserts that his aim was to explain the difference between literate and oral cultures, rather than to create a moral or hierarchical divide, his work is now most strongly associated with the so-called "literacy myth" (Graff, 1979). This myth assumes developmental and moral effects of literacy on society. Giving the example of the institutionalisation of mass education in the 19th century in several nations, Graff (1979, 2010) states that the literacy myth often represents reflections of the structures and ideologies of the authorities who implement educational systems in society.

In the 1980s, more work emerged which had been associated with the study of new literacies and which provided empirical data aimed at debunking the literacy myth. Among the most notable studies features Sylvia Scribner and Michael Cole's (1981) research in which

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[38] Vygotsky was in particular interested in the difference between the two modes of communication. Vygotsky (1986, p. 181) argues that: "The motives for writing are more abstract, more intellectualised, further removed from immediate needs. In written language, we are obliged to create the situation, to represent it to ourselves. This demands detachment from the actual situation."

[39] Goody explicitly distanced himself from traditional ethnocentric binaries. In his defense to some of the objections raised by Street and Finnegan, Goody (1977, pp. 51, 147) made clear that he did not propose "a single-factor theory", but recognises socio-cultural factors that are of equal importance in the development or transformation of society or individual cognitive processes.

investigate the cognitive effects of literacy among the Vai in Liberia. Gee (1996, p. 54) goes so far as to see in Scribner and Cole's work a ground-breaking counter example of Vygotsky's earlier claims that "literacy leads to higher order cognitive skills." The work of Heath (1983), Street (1984), and more importantly Finnegan's (1988) on oral literature of the Limba in Nigeria has also been widely acclaimed for purportedly having provided counter-examples that question the literacy hypothesis. In a revisited and updated version of her earlier work, however, Finnegan (2014) softened her critique of Goody's strong claims, by recognising the possible consequences of the use of writing, such as the accumulation and transmission of knowledge, economic development, or the creation of bureaucratic systems. She notes, however, that the strong ideas about the positive effects of literacy, are now also to be found in conventional wisdom about new forms of communication (e.g. social media, mobile texting), which has increasingly become the focus of recent research.

Building on the work of Finnegan, Brian Street (1984; see also 1995) sees in the formal devices of political oratory among the Mursi, who he describes rather surprisingly as "a technologically primitive people of Ethiopia" (p. 57), evidence that oral cultures can perform functions similar to those that Goody attributes to writing. Street (1984, 1995) aims to deconstruct the causal relationships between literacy and cognitive, social and scientific development as implied in the autonomous model. Street starts from the premise that literacy is not a neutral skill but is embedded in the social practices of everyday life. Based on cross-cultural comparison, he argues that advancing a single unified form of literacy, as reflected in different state education systems across the world, is often based on the ideological advancement of particular values to which the masses need to be subjugated.

Street's re-conceptualisation of literacy evoked an increased interest in the Anglophone world for ethnographic research on the variety of communicative practices in the world. This movement became known as "New Literacies Studies", which proposes a socio-cultural approach that is more sensitive to the local context in which diverse practices of writing are embedded. Focusing on the overlap or mix between these two modes of communication, Street (1988, p. 59) proposes a distinction be made between 'literacy events' or 'literacy practices', disclaiming the term 'literacy' as ideologically loaded (see also Street, 2003, 2006). Similarly, Barton (2007, p. 3) understands literacy as a set of social practices and resources that are particular to a specific community, at a specific point in history: these can be inferred from events that are mediated by written text. Drawing on examples from different parts in the world, Barber (2007, p. 29) situates the locally produced texts, which she does not exclusively link to written text, in the intermediate space or transitionary stage between the oral and the written. Taking the two as a "unified field of enquiry", she discusses how for instance colonised African people integrated writing as a way to mediate relations between the individual and the colonial state. She notes that, "the colonising powers used writing as a means of domination, both politically and culturally. But the colonised also seized upon literacy as a new weapon, resource and opportunity" (p. 181).

A similar pragmatic use of writing in a colonial context has been reported by Guiart (1992, p. 20). Referring to how young people on the island of Ouvéa (New Caledonia) use code language engraved in coconut trees to send messages to each other, he remarks that, "Melanesians have always made some use of the literacy techniques received at first from the LMS missionaries. They took easily to writing letters to each other, not always putting them in the white man's mail." The practice of engraving in trees is also reported elsewhere in New

Caledonia by Roselène Dousset-Leenhardt (2000, pp. 20, 108), daughter of missionary and ethnographer, Maurice Leenhardt. She notes that the *bambou gravés* or engraved bamboo, not only reveal unique "ethnographic" insights into the events and life that marked the pre-colonial period[40], but also provide us with a testimony from the viewpoint of the Kanak who started to make symbolic representations of what was unfolding from the moment alien ships arrived at their shores.

This pragmatic use not only counts for language. In a critique of the *Écoles Populaires Kanak* movement in the 1980s, Elie Poigoune (cited in Small, 1996, p.13), a founding leader of the New Caledonian independence party Palika, said that the French education system could not be completely dismissed, arguing that "it can also be, if we really want it to be, a formidable weapon which we can use against colonialism and to gain our liberation".[41]

While NLS has made a valuable contribution to account for different literacy practices in a particular local context, it has been noted that certain aspects of NLS have been under-theorised, such as the constraint of certain forms of writing or the fact that different forms of writing produce different outcomes. Brandt & Clinton (2002), for instance, argue that NLS has exaggerated the power of the context of local literacies, and underestimated the transcontextualised potential of literacy as an 'actor' in its own right. They point out that a localised practice can have globalising tendencies that are often accomplished "through the mediation of globalising technologies" (p. 347).

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[40] A thorough description of these engraved bamboos was done by Marguerite and Georges Lobsiger-Dellenbach under the impulse of Maurice Leenhardt from 1936 onwards. They believe that the practice of "ideographic writing" already existed before France took officially possession of New Caledonia in 1853 (Dousset-Leenhardt, 2000, p. 108).

[41] During an interview in the magazine *Kanak*, no. 128, 1988.

This globalising perspective of local literacies is addressed most critically by Blommaert in *Sociolinguistics of Globalisation* (2010). In this work 'mobility' and 'scaling' are the central theoretical concerns and Blommaert argues that the mobility of language events involves important shifts in function, structure, and meaning. Texts that moves along time and space have to accommodate the norms of the centre (which he calls 'upscaling') and will therefore change in meaning and function in a globalised world. He notes that this is particularly the case for texts written by ordinary people or writing performed by a 'non-élite' (for which Blommaert uses the term 'grassroots literacy', borrowed from Fabian's *History from Below,* 1990). Blommaert (2008a) gives an example[42] of how writing can be locally empowering but translocally disempowering, focusing, not only on the opportunities that grassroots literacy offers, but also on the constraints of it, especially when a text moves to a context where different rules and norms with regard to 'writing' exist and work against grassroots writings.

The empowering or disempowering effect of certain language events or practices can also be explained from a Hallidayan (1978) perspective. Discussing the impact of grammatical metaphor in societies on the discourse of science and technology, Martin (2013, pp. 34-35) argues that what counts, is not the channel or medium of communication, but the degree to which semiotic tools such as grammatical metaphor, genre, or register[43] are successfully deployed.

It has also been argued that the causal relationship between literacy and cognitive development cannot be completely rejected, therefore. Both Olson (1994) and Stephens (2000) question the mechanic distinction Scribner and Cole made between the variables of

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[42] Blommaert is referring to a case in which an African woman who after she is accused and arrested by Belgian police of shoplifting, writes her account of the events in the language of her choice, Lingala.

[43] Halliday (1978) describes the notion of register to "the fact that the language we speak or write varies according to the type of situation" (p. 32).

'education' and 'literacy'. Olson notes that much of our education is based upon literacy, while Stephens argues for a refinement of the concepts under discussion. Thus, a distinction needs to be made between the *consequences* and *potentialities* of writing, of which the cognitive implications of each will be different, but also between the process and the products of writing, of which access to it can only be achieved through writing. The process of writing itself, Stephens notes, requires some degree of metalinguistic awareness which would be harder to achieve without the "shaping of written text" (p. 18). It is useful to give an example here of a possible effect of writing. In her work, *Questions and politeness: Strategies in social interaction* (1978), Esther Goody gives the example of the device of questioning in oral mode. As writing involves a process of reflexivity, it is easier to separate the information function of questions from the command function. This separation and asking of questions, she argues, is less straightforward in societies who predominantly rely on oral modes of communication.[44]

As more and more cultures become interconnected through digital media in the proverbial global village, the central concern seems to be less with whether there is a divide between the oral and the written but more with the discrepancy between some of the claims made in the field of NLS (downplaying the cognitive effects of writing and valorisation of local writing practices) or language documentation (valorisation and reification of orality and traditional knowledge), and the importance (and prevalence) they attached, themselves, to the written mode of communication. In a critique of cultural relativists, Goody (2000, pp. 133-135) makes the remark that they would rarely give up the advantage of writing themselves, which leads him to ask why writing matters the way it does in the West. The fact that a

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[44] During my own research, for instance, I have observed that it is impolite in Cèmuhi culture to ask questions, particularly open-ended questions, such as "Why are you doing this?", as Kanak people seem to perceive questions as giving commands rather than as a device to elicit information.

centuries-old discussion on the orality versus writing divide has only been made possible in 'writing' seems to strengthen Goody's claim of the potentialities of writing to make abstraction, to accumulate knowledge, to foster criticalness and awareness of contradiction, and to claim 'ownership' of knowledge.

Indeed, what we know about political oratory of the Mursi culture or about the cognitive abilities of the Vai or about the many endangered language communities in the world is often only thanks to the mediated writing of the outsider analyst. The voice of many of these groups, however, has remained silenced or anonymous or is often altered during the process of 'dominant' writing.

Moreover, the universal capacity to construct knowledge by means of a tool - which, not only shapes and reshapes cultures, but also influences our perception of culture through the representation of it in a dominant or superior collective writing – demands for what Bourdieu calls "reflexivity" in social research in order to avoid "the effects of scholastic distortion" (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 50).

The product of this dominant writing is what Barton and Hamilton (1998) define as an institutionalised knowledge which is "imposed, dominated, negotiated" (p. 253), as opposite to vernacular knowledge, which is "self-generated, voluntary, creative". The impact of our dominant writing stands in contrast to the negligible impact of the 'hidden' or 'anonymous' writing of indigenous people themselves who rarely gain access to the dominant space, despite moral calls within the field of NLS that proper consideration should be given to the local writing practices of different cultures. It is clear that power is often unconsciously exerted over others through the effective use of a tool by a privileged writing 'elite'. As Martin (2013) already suggested, cultures that lack the abilities to deploy semiotic tools may become more

vulnerable to all types of control and dominance by cultures that wield these semiotic tools more effectively.

3.4 Codification and canonisation

For a written language to effectively fulfil its purpose of communicating information, it needs to be codified in an orthography that is acceptable to and agreed upon by most members of a society. In his work, *Eloquence and Power*, Joseph (1987, p. 43) discusses this cycle of standardisation from the viewpoint of the power that is involved and exerted by an elite of users of the standard language. The process of language standardisation, from its selection of an orthography to the propagation of canonical text, is therefore a lot more complicated than speakers of an established major language often take for granted. It is helpful here to draw on Einer Haugen (1972 [1966]), who introduced a model of standardisation in different stages: selection, codification, elaboration, and propagation.

Through all these stages, the standard language emerges as a result of a process of decisions and motivations, both politically and linguistically, and starts with the selection of a writing code or an orthography. The polished 'fixed' code, as we know from languages such as English or French, is the result of a long process of 'selection' and 'canonisation' that has gone through several stages of revisions that were often based on arbitrary decisions. The alphabet as a "purely arbitrary order of ABC" is, according to Goody (2000, p. 128), a supreme example of an arbitrary way of canonisation which involves selection by an elite – the priests for religious text or participants in high culture for secular text (Goody, 2000, p. 121).

Even though codification is "aimed at attaining minimal variation in form through setting down the prescribed language code in a written form" (Fairclough, 1989, p. 57), in reality we often see that different codes are in circulation, as different stake holders, interest

groups, or even different villages or church dominations want to push 'their orthography' as the proper one. As will be shown, with regard to the ongoing process of codification in some of the Kanak languages of New Caledonia, and more particularly the Cèmuhi language (see discussion in Chapter 5), these processes can often be historically traced in the context of Western expansion or colonialism, where explorers, missionaries, ethnographers, and linguists were the first to try to describe a language or dialect and to give their 'stamp of approval'. Speedy (2013), for instance, illustrates some of the tensions that can occur at the beginning stages of codification of a language. She discusses the impact of unedited letters of mission girls in Saint-Louis (New Caledonia) on the evolution of Tayo, a local creole, observing that some of the girls' letters escaped the censorship of the Marist Sisters who usually would make their girls rewrite the letters until they were without error. Those letters that escaped the censorship of the Marist Sisters showed structures that, according to Speedy, represent "a more direct style with errors and anomalies in spelling and grammar that reflect features present in Tayo and probably more accurately represent the French spoken by the Saint-Louis girls" (Speedy, 2013, p. 68; See also Ehrhart, 1993, pp. 59-60).

Another example is provided by De Vogelaer (cited in Bergs and Diewald, 2008). He exemplifies how certain linguistic features can be left out as part of power struggles. He remarks that, even when no real standard existed yet, certain linguistic phenomena, such as Subject Doubling in Dutch, were left out of written documents during the Middle Ages, except in parodies to be ridiculed by the elite at the time. These examples from different times and different places show that the many 'writing systems' as we know them are not the result of a smooth linear standardisation process, but rather a reflection of social and political group struggles in disguise, as Schneider (2003, p. 252) remarks. These struggles are particularly

present during the early stages of codification, where little or no printed form exists. The development of a corpus of semi-canonised text in a variety of similar looking 'codes' is part of the early stages of 'elaboration', during which choices are made of what will be published and what will not be published[45]. In the context of research on unwritten languages, especially those spoken in former colonies, the task of developing orthographies, and subsequently the publication of grammars and dictionaries in these codes, is often in the hands of linguists, ethnographers or missionaries.

According to Goody, "at the very broadest level the processes of canonisation is one whereby human action becomes institutionalised, authoritative, recognised and canonical." (2000, pp. 119-120). Goody discusses two dimensions of this process: first, there is the canonisation process, as involved in religious traditions, that is, the canonisation of religious text, which forbids the scribe "tampering with the text" (p. 120). In the broader sense, however, which I will focus on here, the canonisation of written text is "a deliberate process of selection." (p. 120). This selection is, as we have seen, a matter of power exerted by those who have not necessarily the 'authority' in the society (e.g. the male priesthood in the context of canonisation/selection of religious canon) but the 'knowledge and skills' to 'select'.

As a result, "what is selected may represent the interests of the selectors rather than the teaching of the Master or the interests of the whole community" (Goody, 2000, p. 121). A text that is, in a religious sense, 'canonical' in the strict sense can in the broader sense become 'non-canonical' or 'weeded out' by a higher authority, whether internal or external to the community. Another example is given by Chin (2008), who discusses the political and

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[45] Joseph (1987, p. 93) defines 'elaboration' as "the addition of structural or lexical elements to the synecdochic dialect, resulting from and necessary for its functioning in the domains appropriate to standard languages.".

ideological choices grammarians made in the 4th and 5th century. She argues that the collection of examples from old texts and the linguistic claims that were made upon these examples influenced the emergent canonicity of these older texts (*'mores veteres'*) from which the examples were drawn. These choices strengthened the authority of older writers by generalising specific examples or usages from the past as representative of the *mos veterum* ('custom of the ancients'). She notes that the decontextualised quotations of the "the so-called 'mores veteres' are inserted in "new narratives of readership and knowledgeability" (p. 32).

Even though on a much more limited scale, linguists describing endangered languages make in that sense similar ideological choices as for instance the Greek grammarians or missionary-linguists. Their choices equally affect the future 'canonicity' of the text, not only in the strictest sense, but also broadly. The choice of selection also impacts on the development of an orthography, in which the visiting linguist often puts his or her stamp on it, to the broader decision of what texts will be 'selected', 'recorded', and 'codified', which pertains to the stage of 'elaboration'.

The past and current practice of descriptive linguistics and language documentation can give a particular insight into the power of writing and the problematic nature of *ex situ* work of descriptive linguistics, which has, as one of its core tasks, writing the grammar and lexicon of the language. It is a task that is often done with the presumption that these works of elaboration will represent the concrete fruits of their advocacy for the linguistic rights of minority people, but which rarely takes notice of the fact that the grammars or linguistic analyses produced in minority languages are rarely used because they are either too technical or irrelevant for the majority of their audience. As such, the production of a grammar by a

native speaker of an endangered language could be perceived as an anachronism in the mind of linguists who see 'orality' as the default mode of communication in these communities.

The *ex-situ* work of recording oral stories could also be perceived as a negation of what Goody (2000, p. 143) sees as the capacity or intrinsic ability or potential that allow people to do things with words (in writing). Referring to many of the Indian languages that had been analysed by persons not from the community, Hymes (1996, pp. 80-81) quite rightly remarks that much of that vernacular knowledge lays by the outsider and that indigenous people have often not been given the chance to write in their language.

The production and propagation of grammars and dictionaries is, of course, something that existed long before the emergence of language documentation in its current form. The Boasian trio was prominent in American descriptive linguistics and resulted in technical descriptions of minority languages that were often only accessible to a select audience of specialists in the fields to which these descriptions were aimed at. What this 'academic exercise' highlights is that writing is a powerful act during all stages, from the inception of selecting the writing code and the simultaneous process of canonisation through text selection, to the ongoing work of elaboration and propagation as more text in the language becomes available.

3.5 An ethnography of emerging writing

Even though grassroots texts (and the knowledge encoded in them) have been increasingly promoted or revalorised in recent research, either as the visual support or representation of 'indigenous' or 'vernacular' knowledge in the field of language documentation or as the locally produced products of New Literacies, it has been suggested that the status of these texts are rather problematic, particularly as objects of ethnographic

methodologies (e.g., Blommaert, 2005). Various proposals have been made in the past for ethnographies that do more justice to the study of text, as well as to the practice of writing of ordinary people who are aiming to add their voice to the external voices (e.g. Basso's *The ethnography of writing* (1989), Hymes' *ethnography of communication* (1962, 1996); Barton and Hamilton (1998), Fabian (1986)). Blommaert (2014, 2008a), in particular, seems to have paid heed to these demands by proposing an ethnographic sociolinguistic analysis that involves a critical discourse analysis of voice, which stands for "the way in which people manage to make themselves understood or fail to do so" (p. 4).

Referring to Fabian's 're-oralisation' method in which the process of transition from oral to writing in Swahili is described, Blommaert sees grassroots texts as texts that have often been subject to some form of *reconstruction* in order to overcome some of the constraints, such as heterographic texts that move to localities with different expectations of 'textuality' (see Blommaert, 2008a, p. 10, 18). The reconstruction that takes place, particularly in ethnography, seems to suggest that form has become more important than the content that is being conveyed in these texts. In response to an abstract distinction between 'form' and 'content', Blommaert therefore suggests an ethnography of voice.

The question then is, is whether an ethnography of voice is sufficient for an emerging writer to, not only express 'voice', but to have his or her text accepted as an equally valid conveyor of knowledge or meaning. As 'literary' or 'scientific' interpretation is often exclusively reserved for text that is produced in the professional or academic environment, where scientific and vernacular knowledge has increasingly been differentiated, it is difficult

to imagine that grassroots texts will be able to move beyond the emblematic or symbolic nature it is currently assigned.[46]

As these "non-élite forms of writing" (Blommaert, 2008a, p. 7) are produced outside the center where theories of knowledge construction and interpretation are conceived, grassroots texts will at best be regarded as an exemplification of the *couleur locale* of its culture rather than an independent support of knowledge transfer *an sich*. While the message of grassroots texts is no longer being 'muted', it will most likely be 'tuned' to such an extent that the words in it will become our words, with the main difference being that "their words are always selected by us and contextualised in the text by our words" (Barton, 1998, p. 72).

Equally problematic is the position of the emerging writer being assigned the role of an 'anonymous' provider of data in ethnographic and linguistic research, both now and in the past. Using the example of native informants in the process of collection of 'exotic' data by the first missionaries in 19th century Africa, Van den Avenne (2012, p. 206) reports that the expression "de la bouche même des indigènes (From the mouth of the natives)" was often proffered as an argument to collect ethnographic or linguistic "exotic" data, which then prevented them "from giving the names of the 'natives' used as informants or from disclosing any sociolinguistic information about them" (p. 206). Van den Avenne rightly points out that the invisibility of the native speakers is still present today in the contemporary texts in descriptive linguistics, where informants are reduced to being mentioned in the acknowledgments only[47] (p. 211). A similar observation is made by Barton (2007), who writes

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[46] Discussing the difference between scientific knowledge and vernacular knowledge, Barton and Hamilton (1998) note that "what counts as useful and valid knowledge and expertise in the local area may be subject to different criteria from what counts in the professional or academic realm" (p. 244).

[47] This can of course also be explained by the stringent ethical rules that restrict researchers from disclosing the names of their research 'subjects', under the guise of protecting their privacy. As 'indigenous people' often remain unidentified, they are effectively excluded from expressing their 'voice' in the scholastic space.

that the locally produced texts in these cultures were well hidden in ethnographic monographs. While these 'data' gave insights into the beliefs and moral values of the people, rarely were these 'texts' considered as cultural practices, let alone seen as representing the particular 'voice' of the 'minority' writers.

Apart from the above-sketched constraints to text as an ethnographic object, and the position of grassroots writers in ethnographic research, there are additional challenges to those writers whose languages are not yet fully standardised. This is the case for emerging Kanak writer, Suzanne Poinine, whose texts written in her mother tongue, Cèmuhi, features at the centre of this study.

3.6 Writing as the expression of 'voice'

In his work, *Practice of Everyday Life*, French culturalist, de Certeau (1984) makes the observation that 'orality' has been changed over three or four centuries of 'Western fashioning' (p. 131). This Western fashioning is particularly evident in the use of what he dubs the "Archive[48] in our "scriptural economy". The central idea in de Certeau's work[49] is that the voice of the people, especially those that were subject to 19th century ethnographic descriptions, has been 'altered', 'transformed' by *a writing that conquers* by those who have used "the New World as if it were a blank, "savage' page on which Western desire will be written" (1988, pp. xxv-xxvi).

According to Highmore, "to map ethnology as it expands and mutates across the centuries from the 'discovery' of the New World to the present day" (2006, p.15)is the central

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[48] In de Certeau's *The Writing of History* (1988, p. 216), the 'Archive' is more broadly termed as 'writing' or an extension of writing.

[49] In this section, I also draw extensively on Ben Highmore's book, *Michel de Certeau, Analysing Culture* (2006).

project of de Certeau, for whom the 'ordinary' culture of the other is a culture that is ordered and normalised in the act of writing that is located elsewhere. This mutation is particularly notable in the current field of language documentation, where the 'vanishing voices' of endangered languages communities are now literally being recorded, transcribed, and archived in digital depositories for the purpose of language or cultural analysis (see Gippert *et al.,* 2006; Himmelmann, 1998; Thieberger and Barwick, 2012; Woodbury, 2003). De Certeau's "quest to look for lost and ghostly voices in our scriptural societies" (1988, p. 131) continues to resonate in contemporary digital archives, especially as the transcriptions of these voices are, to use Ben Highmore's words, "hedged in on all sides by authoritative commentary and expert interpretation – saturated by context" (p. 92).

The question remains whether the 'voice' expressed in these 'vanishing voices' is still there or are we left with the 'remainder' or the "presence of absences whose traces were everywhere" (1984, p. 21). The problem with the archival process is that it, as de Certeau suggests, "over-codes the materials that enter it" (Highmore, 2006, p. 88). De Certeau notes that, "in recording the lives of others, those non-elite lives, the archival operation inserts discursive 'knowledge' in place of a specific 'voice' (Highmore, 2006, p. 89). In other words, their 'voice' is a mere representation through the fractured lens of the outsider analyst.

The alternative offered by de Certeau to those whose lives end up in the inscriptions (and descriptions) of others is to investigate the 'ways of operating' (1988, p. xiv). His project thus entails how ordinary people 'make life', 'how they do things' through their daily practices, their 'savoir-faire' or 'know-how'(xv), using the picture of people walking in the city. They follow their own ways, make shortcuts to get to their destinations, ignoring the synoptic view of the city planners who draw the maps and grids of urban spaces and which limits them to a

reductive view of the city. With this image of the city, de Certeau is reiterating an idea that resembles Bourdieu's 'scholastic point of view'[50] (Bourdieu, 1990, 2000). One of the main theses in Bourdieu's work is that the *skholè* has the freedom to distance itself –'at leisure'– from the reality or practice in the social world. The social analyst has, through scholastic reasoning, the privilege of totalisation or objectification, which gives the analyst or researcher the capacity to adopt and to give a synoptic view of the totality and the unity of the relations, which is the condition for an adequate analysis (1980, p. 138).[51]

While both Bourdieu and de Certeau have discussed the impact of writing on the conception and the 'making of history' of the 'ordinary man', the practices of writing of this non-elite 'ordinary man' itself has received little or no attention. It is notable that Bourdieu only scantily refers to the impact of 'writing' on the scholarly tradition (e.g. 1998, 2000), a few references to Jack Goody[52] notwithstanding, but has also paid little attention to the practice of writing in the cultures he studied himself, which he presumably regretted.[53] Even though writing has become the preferred tool in our scientific endeavour to analyse culture, the emergent practice of writing of the ordinary people, such as Suzanne Poinine, has been mainly left unnoticed or suppressed by a field of research that is reluctant to look beyond the 'transfixed' picture of 'traditional culture'.

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[50] Bourdieu uses an expression that he borrowed from J.L Austin who first mentioned it in his posthumously published *Sense and Sensibilia* (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 380).

[51] "…ce qui assure à l'analyse le privilège de totalisation, c'est-à-dire la capacité de se donner la vue synoptique de la totalité et de l'unité des relations qui est la condition du déchiffrement adéquat. " (Bourdieu 1980, p. 138)

[52] In his major work *Le sens pratique* (1980) Bourdieu makes three references (pp. 24, 214-215, 223) to Jack Goody, in particular to Goody's La raison graphique (1979) which made Bourdieu realise that 'writing' ('la simple transciption écrite') both helps to access as well as destroy the logic of practice.

[53] Goodman & Silverstein (2009), for instance, note that "Bourdieu hardly broaches the impact of writing on Kabyle society" (p. 260) and that he regretted that he underestimated the influence of Kabyle poets in cultural practices.

Chapter 4:

Methodology and Research Procedure

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I outline the research procedure and process of data collection and I will reflect on some of the challenges I encountered during the different stages of my research. I will then give a description of the research methodology and conclude with a discussion of my role as a researcher.

4.2 Outline of research procedure and data collection

4.2.1 Ethical clearance and access to the community. Since I have lived and worked in the Cèmuhi region from 2004-2008, access to the community was fairly straightforward, as I was already adopted in the clan system and had been given a name[54] by the Cèmuhi clan that I lived with, with my family. My first contact with Suzanne Poinine dated from that time also, when she played a crucial role in introducing us to the chiefs and elders of different Cèmuhi villages and clans. It was clear from the beginning that Suzanne Poinine had a keen interest in writing in her language, not only as a way of preserving the language and its culture, but also as a way of experimenting with her language in writing. Despite my acquaintance with both Melanesian culture and the Cèmuhi people, it was still necessary for me to comply with the ethical standards and requirements, as outlined by academic institutions, in order to conduct research.

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[54] I was given the name 'Dui', which is a common name in Cèmuhi.

Ethical clearance[55] was obtained for conducting several field trips to a Melanesian village in New Caledonia. Prior to obtaining clearance, Macquarie University's human ethics committee needed evidence that the use of formal documents was not considered the culturally acceptable way to obtain consent in Melanesian culture. In order to find a balance between abiding by institutional demands and being sensitive to local customs, further clarification had to be given as to why I needed to get informed consent orally, rather than submitting written forms to the community. In Melanesian society, written 'contracts' are not necessarily binding and are often overruled by the spoken word during the customs ceremony, which is referred to by Kanak people as "faire la coutume" or "faire un geste" {'doing custom'). In *La parole de notre maison. Discours et cérémonies Kanak aujourd'hui (Nouvelle-Calédonie)*, Denis Monnerie (1993) describes *geste* as follows:

Ces *gestes*, selon l'expression du français Kanak, expriment que l'on arrive pas sur terre sans se présenter vis-à-vis de ses habitants, et aussi qu'une simple prise de contact ne suffit pas. Ils impliquent la nécessité d'arriver d'une manière formalisée, par un geste justement, à savoir une parole accompagnée de prestations signifiant que l'arrivant reconnaît l'existence d'une autorité sur le lieu où il vient, que l'on est toujours, en quelque sorte, l'accueilli d'un accueillant. (p.26)

[These *gestures*, according to the Kanak French expression, reveal that a person cannot simply enter a village without giving proper notice to its inhabitants, nor does one show up to say 'hello'. It involves the need for a formalised gesture, accompanied by a speech and a gift through which the visitor shows respect by recognising the authority of the visited, which makes him or her in a sense always 'the welcomed party' of the host.][56]

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[55] Ethical and scientific approval for this research was granted by Macquarie University on 3 June 2014 (Reference No.: 5201400402).
[56] My translation.

While this exchange of gifts and speeches is in itself not a guarantee that people will effectively participate or be willing to work with the visitor, it is the first and necessary step to engage with or to be able to start a conversation with the Kanak people.

Ideally, strong bonds and relationships need to be built first over a long period of time during which the relationship will be tested and reaffirmed on the basis of Melanesian reciprocity and respect. These two concepts can be expressed and need to be reaffirmed by the customary speeches every time the person arrives or leaves the village for a longer period of time. In order to seal the relationship, and to stake out the terms upon which the relationship is based, Kanak custom requires that the two parties exchange or present a piece of cloth (*le manou*) which contains a small monetary gift (or food items on the occasion of a bigger gathering or festivity) as a token of appreciation and respect, to the chief, elder or representative of the household, clan or village. In return, a member of the community gives a speech to welcome and thank the visitor for the respect shown.

4.2.2 Research site and data selection. During two different field trips conducted in 2014 and 2015, two kinds of data were collected. During the first field trip, original contemporary texts were collected in the Melanesian village of Tiwaé, where Suzanne Poinine lives. The data contain unedited, handwritten manuscripts of different text genres. During a second field trip, I also conducted archival research in the *Archives de Nouvelle-Calédonie* in Nouméa. The following resources from the 19th century, in relation to the earliest codification and practice of writing in Cèmuhi, were retrieved:

1. A proclamation of amnesty from the governor Saisset, published in *Le Moniteur* of December 4th, 1859, and translated in the Cèmuhi language by

Father Forestier. According to Rivierre (1994, p. 17), this is the first publication in the Cèmuhi language.

2. *Catéchisme de Vicariat Apostolique de la Nouvelle-Calédonie*, a Catholic catechism translated in the Cèmuhi language, first published in 1888 and revised in 1911 by the Marist Fathers, Vincent and Chalandon.

3. *La tribu de Wagap, Nouvelle-Calédonie, ses mœurs et sa langue d'après les notes d'une missionnaire mariste* (Paris, 1890), a compilation of translated hymns, conversation phrases, customary speeches, and a short grammar sketch of the Cèmuhi language by Father Antoine Colomb.

4. *Dictionnaire français-wagap-anglais et wagap-français par les missionnaires maristes*. A French-Cèmuhi-English dictionary, compiled by Father Antoine Colomb and published in 1891.

I also made use of the work of other Marists, such as excerpts from Mgr. Douarre journals, who was the first Vicor Apostolic in New Caledonia. His work, as well as letters from several Marist priests, contain several references to the Cèmuhi language and were useful to get a better understanding of the contextual world that preceded or was behind the first Cèmuhi texts.

Other resources that I analyse in this thesis are an oral transcription in Cèmuhi of *The arrival of the first missionaries in Wagap,* by Rivierre (1990) and Bensa's (1982) oral transcripts of marriage alliances. These stories lend themselves to a comparative analysis with the work of the Marists on the one hand, but also with Suzanne Poinine's writings or reflections about marriage customs on the other.

As the list below shows, the corpus of data contains texts that were produced through specific methods or approaches in a specific historical context. It includes work that emerged through the missionary induced practice of translating religious text, through the researcher's induced practice of transcribing oral stories and discursive practices, and texts that arose as a result of the act of writing of a Cèmuhi speaker. A closer look at the data below will also reveal that Suzanne Poinine's texts include different genres: from simple word lists, sentences to more cohesive short stories, songs, and legends.

Table 1*:*

List of data to be analysed

Position	People	Practice	Product		
Colonial/missionary era 1859-1910	(*Governor Saisset*)	Translation	-Pua a damé (letter of amnesty)		
	Marist priests		-Catechism -Hymns -Conversation -Discourses -Grammar sketch		
Ethno-linguistic era 1946-1990	Leenhardt	Transcription	-Camuki Wordlist (1946)		
	Haudricourt		-Phonological study (1963, Tiwaé)		
	Bensa		-Oral stories Marriage alliances		
	Rivierre		-The beginning of the Marist mission in Wagap		
Contemporary era 1980 until present	Kanak writer, Suzanne Poinine	Emerging writing (handwritten)	Word lists	Alphabetic	List A (letter M) List B (letter N)
				Topical	Plants Trees Taros
				Syllabic	T(v)
			Sentences	A-words Sentences I-XVIII Word + Sentence	
			Songs	Fête du manioc (Diverse songs)	

Position	People	Practice	Product		
			Legends	-Bèwééne -Cihe dé é majoo (Flying fox) -Cihedé bélè ubwö me bélè wahin (Big worm and small worm) -Cihedee ciibwii me ibwen (Rat and octopus)	
			Practices	daily	-A u (Yam) -Taawi (Taro field) -A èawomi (The Pandanus)
				custom	-Wéé toomwo a atèn (The married girl) -A jèkulè ko a tiu jahi (Story of the wedding dress) -Anebuha bwö abèélè tè èwa (Birth of a baby) -Adi (Kanak money)
			Personal story	-Pwö a céiu bènaamwên nâ cinu jong (When I was sick)	

4.2.3 Preliminary questionnaire. During the first field trip, a preliminary survey was conducted to gauge the feasibility of a writer's workshop in the village of Tiwaé. While the survey enjoyed only a limited response (9 people), the answers to the survey revealed that the respondents saw the value in writing their language, but often lacked confidence, as they assumed they would not be able to write according to the presumed orthographic norms of canonical works such as Rivierre's grammar and dictionary. The dilemma for speakers of Kanak languages today, however, is to choose between the major language, French, or their own mother tongue. One of the answers (in French) to the question "What does it mean for you 'to write'?", a Kanak person writes: "Pratiquer notre langue, avoir la fierté de notre identité

Kanak, montrer notre savoir-faire et noter capacité" [practising our language, to be proud of our Kanak identity, to show our 'know how' and our capacities. In fact, only Suzanne and her daughter responded to the questionnaire in the Cèmuhi language. Suzanne's answer to the same question in Cèmuhi is more straightforward: "É tè abèélè ne éni Tiwaé kè tè èânimung ko a pating, é tèko cihe hen nabwén" [I am born here in Tiwaé, and I love my language, I speak it every day.].

These two answers show the dilemma of many Kanak people, who on the one hand want to express their voice in their language, but on the other hand feel unable or inadequate to do so in their own mother tongue. While this limited enthusiasm for writing in the language may seem like a constraint, the fact that Suzanne has been writing all these years independently, and without the interference of a researcher, makes her texts all the more interesting. My absence during the writing process also meant that I could not influence the thematic choices, nor the writing style in Suzanne's writing. Nevertheless, the limited responses proved useful, as it gave a feel for what people think about writing in the language, or writing in general. The responses to the questionnaire are summarised in the table below (Answers to the first four questions are marked with 'C' for Cèmuhi and 'F' for French). Questions B5 and 8 required a Yes (Y) or No (N) response; the answers to the open questions (6, 7, 9) indicated whether the respondent has answered the question in Cèmuhi (Cèm) or French (Fr). Some of the answers to the open questions will be incorporated in Chapter 8. The full questionnaire can be found in the Appendix.

Table 2*:*

Summary of the answers to the questionnaire

	Name	Age	Place	A1	A2	A3	A4	B5	6	7	8	9
1	Dihan	24	Tiwaé	C	C	C/F	C/-	N	Fr	Fr	Y	Fr
2	Kolélé	25	Touho	C	C	C	C	N	-	Fr	N	Fr
3	Ruth P.	27	Touho	C	C/F	C	C/F-C/F	Y	Cèm	Fr	Y	Fr
4	Sandra P.	28	Tiwaé	C	C	C	C/F-C/F	N	Fr	Fr	Y	Fr
5	Dihan J.	39	Tiwaé	C	C	C	-/-	N	Fr	Cèm	Y	Cèm
6	Elisabeth P.	40	Touho	C	C/F	C	C/F-C/F	Y	Fr	Fr	Y	Fr
7	Dihan Léa	60	Touho	C	C/F	C	C	Y	-	Fr	Y	Fr
8	**Suzanne**	65	Tiwaé	Tié/C	C	C	C/F-C	Y/éa[57]	Cèm	Cèm	Y/éa	Cèm
9	Hénéke	72	Tiwaé	C	F	F	F-F	Y	Fr	Fr	N	Fr

4.2.4 Representation, categorisation and specific challenges of the data. Since we are dealing with a language in an orthography that is unstable and often used inconsistently by the same writer, the researcher is faced with considerable challenges. The same word is often spelled in different ways across different text genres, which made searches within the corpus often challenging. While there are tools and software that allow us to search the corpus by a so-called 'normaliser'[58], which allows us to also generate the variant forms, such software has not been used. The aim is to leave the text untouched, especially where it is deemed crucial for the understanding of certain practices or to discuss how the orthography has evolved over time. The aim is always to reduce editorial reconstruction by the researcher.

Not only do orthographic differences reflect the evolution of writing a language, but they can also give insight into the different skills, intentions, and practices of different people groups who used the language for different purposes (e.g. translation, transcription, and

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[57] Suzanne Poinine was the only person to give all the answers in Cèmuhi, including the yes-no questions, for which she gave the Cèmuhi translation 'éa' [yes]. She also indicated that her mother tongue (Question 1) is Tié-Cèmuhi.

[58] Text normalisation is the process by which written variants are assigned a single canonical form so that it can be easily stored and searched in a database.

writing). In cases where key terms are spelled differently by the Marists, Rivierre, or Suzanne Poinine, but where it is necessary to choose one form to facilitate the discussion (especially during the discussions of themes in Chapter 7), I will mainly adopt Rivierre's spelling (with some minor variations). It needs to be noted, however, that the use of a particular spelling does not reflect the author's preference for one orthography or the other, as it is ultimately up to the Cèmuhi community to decide on orthography issues.

4.3 Description of research methodology

The findings of both this diachronic and synchronic approach will then be tied back to provide a comprehensive analysis of voice for which the following research questions has been identified:

- How were the Cèmuhi language and its culture presented in older documents produced by missionaries, linguists, and ethnographers (Chapter 5)?

- What are some of the characteristics in Poinine's writing practice (meta-linguistic phenomena) (Chapter 6)?

- What are the salient themes in Poinine's texts (linguistic phenomena) (Chapter 7)?

- What are some of the voices through which Poinine has expressed herself in her writing (Chapter 8)?

Past and current writing practices and the textual products they yield can only be understood in the social and historical context in which these practices took place. If we ignore the historical context from which people are interpreting or enacting upon social reality, our view or engagement with texts from the present or the past will be skewed or limited. This research

will therefore adopt both a diachronic and synchronic approach in the analysis of Cèmuhi texts written by different people, in different time frames, using different methods.

The first part (Chapter 5) of my analysis will focus on how different actors in the past have left epistemological traces in the coding and writing of Cèmuhi through their methodological choices or what Blommaert calls "ideologically structured textual practices" (2008b, p. 291). As representatives of administrative, religious or academic institutions, different stakeholders such as missionaries, ethnographers, and linguists have, not only contributed to the codification, analysis, or writing of a language, but have done so in a particular manner and from a particular position in a specific historical context. Drawing on the work of Blommaert, who proposes "a historical ethnography of scientific practices" (Blommaert, 2013b, p. 6), I will first draw a picture of the different stakeholders who played a role in the codification, translation, and writing of Cèmuhi texts. The aim of this section is to sketch the historical context explaining how certain epistemological positions (and methodological choices) were taken by these representatives of three movements in the history of writing Cèmuhi.

The second part (Chapter 6 and 7) is an analysis of what I will describe as the linguistic and meta-linguistic phenomena in the product and practice of Suzanne Poinine's emerging writing. This study will be partly based on rich feature analysis, as proposed by Bazerman and Prior's, *What Writing Does and How It Does It: An Introduction to Analyzing Texts and Textual Practices* (2004). They treat text and the textual practice through which texts are created as an integrated field of study. A rich feature analysis is aimed at identifying features, or what I will henceforth call phenomena, which are significant in the context of a particular genre of writing. While such an analysis is typically used in academic discourse in student writing, I will

apply it to grassroots writing or grassroots text. In the same work, Ellen Barton notes that rich feature analysis is focused on linguistic features that "point to the relation between a text and its context" (2004, p. 67). In this study, however, the writing mainly occurs or is rooted[59] in what I call 'a context of orality', as the text written by Suzanne mainly emerged from within a culture with a rich oral tradition, hence the limited availability of co-text[60] or pre-text in the form of other work in the language.

This study will also draw on insights of *ethnography of grassroots text,* discussed in Blommaert's work. He notes that grassroots texts evokes an uneasiness among scholars, as these texts often do not fit into their concepts of textuality or normativity. In order to do more justice to these texts, Blommaert (2008a) argues that these texts need to be scrutinised for "formal features, the linguistic, stylistic and material resources that were used in them, and the various constraints that operate on this process" (p. 10).

Some of the meta-linguistic phenomena that will be discussed in the first part of this analysis (Chapter 6) are: heterography, text organisation or categorisation, linguistic awareness, orality, and emerging literary features and genres.

The concept of *heterography* will relate to how Suzanne Poinine had to work within the constraints of writing in an orthography that has not been formally fixed or accepted by the community. Her writing is essentially hetero-graphic instead of ortho-grahic, which entails a set of spelling conventions that are fixed or formalised.

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[59] Her writing is comparable to the writings of André Yav, which Fabian in *History from below* (1990) describes as "rooted in orality" (p. 2).

[60] Even though, the remark could be made that every act of writing is embedded in a wider social context or surrounded by co-text, the difference is that we are dealing here with a language with a very short writing history and that there are very little resources available in the Cèmuhi language.

Principles of text organisation will mainly look at some formal features of some of the text genres, more specifically the word lists written by Suzanne Poinine. The aim is to answer questions such as: What's in a word list? What do certain text types do and others not?

The concept of linguistic awareness has been widely discussed in the literature. This awareness is often closely linked to the intuitive devices of a native speaker, as will become clear in the discussion of some of the text's linguistic features that bear witness to Poinine's awareness of the phonological, morphological, and lexical structure of her language.

Tracing orality in grassroots texts will discuss oral features that can be found in texts that emerged at the interface of the oral and the written.

In the section, *tracing of emerging literary features and genres,* I will look at the emergence of certain literary features or style figures in the data, as well as at what could potentially become new genres as a result of Suzanne Poinine's experimenting with word play, rhyme, alliteration, etc.

The second part of the analysis (Chapter 7) will adopt an inductive text-based approach, by identifying themes and linguistic phenomena in the corpus of text and textual artefacts produced by Suzanne Poinine. Each theme emerging from the data will be assigned a three or four letter code.[61] Rather than providing a strict quantitative representation of the frequency of the themes (e.g. through the more formal analysis of word counts or similar themes), the themes will be discussed under nine main categories: Education and Learning, Division of labour and gender roles, Material culture and practices, Biology, Food and harvesting, Illness and adversity, Kanak beliefs and cultural practices, Christian and other contemporary themes and Tyé as a linguistic variety.

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[61] The full list with codes will be presented in the analysis chapter, chapter 7.

4.4 My own role in the research process

There is a growing awareness among researchers to examine their own role as researchers in the research process and to reflect upon one's own concerns and motivations for doing particular research. My research was motivated by my previous role as a field linguist under the auspices of SIL International.[62] In this capacity, I conducted field research which involved grammatical analysis of the Cèmuhi language, the production of written materials in Cèmuhi, as well as literacy initiatives such as orthography development, in close cooperation with the Cèmuhi community. As I lived and worked among the Cèmuhi people from 2004 to 2008, my engagement with the Cèmuhi people and my passive knowledge of the Cèmuhi language gave me also a rather unique insider's view. This insider knowledge was attained thanks to the fact that I was adopted in the Cèmuhi clan system, which allowed me to fully participate in village life. Nevertheless, it needs to be acknowledged that I will always remain an outsider, not least in my current role as a researcher who had the privilege to take a step back and to observe the culture and language that have been part of my personal history from a 'distant' academic space.

This 'theoretical posture' made Bourdieu (2000) conclude that science needs to accept the limitations of its interpretations, which requires a constant effort of 'reflexivity' which combines elements of "personal familiarity" (subjectivity) that is often considered loaded in social science, with "information gathered by the objective techniques of scientific enquiry" (Bourdieu, 1988, p. 3). My role as researcher can therefore be considered as both emic and etic. This double role has also placed me in a position of being both a contributor to, as well as

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[62] SIL International, formerly known as the Summer Institute of Linguistics, is a U.S. based Christian NGO which "serves language communities worldwide, building their capacity for sustainable language development, by means of research, translation, training and materials development", as stated on their website (www.sil.org).

an interpreter of, the history of writing the Cèmuhi language. My past experiences and limited contributions to the codification of the Cèmuhi language has also helped to gain a better understanding of the ideological underpinnings of the practices and products of other researchers, ethnographers, or missionaries. The interpretation and understanding of their epistemic and methodological choices are therefore highly informed by my own experiences, viewpoints, and epistemologies.

Chapter 5:

A Historical Overview of Writing Cèmuhi: Peoples, Perspectives and Practices

5.1 Introduction

When Captain James Cook made landfall on the far north-east coast of New Caledonia in 1774, he left this inscription in a tree near the beach of Balade:

"In the afternoon we made a trip to the shore, and on a tree near the watering-place, an inscription was cut, setting forth the ship's name, date, & c[ircumstances] as a memorial and proof that we were the first discoverers of this country" (Cook, 1808, p. 196).

Cook's act is symbolic of a world that exerts its power, not just through acts of administrative, political, or military power, but even more so through the act of writing. As French adventurers, missionaries and ethnographers visited New Caledonia, an image of Kanak culture gradually began to emerge in the documents and descriptions from the hand of these visitors. Also, more than 30 Kanak languages, until then only known by those who mastered them orally, would gradually become codified and labelled by linguists as 'languages'.

Before the arrival of the first Europeans, however, the Kanak people themselves relied on the spoken word and used rock art, incised bamboo, and other features in the landscape to mark significant events. Marist priest, Lambert (1900, pp. 66-67), for instance, testifies that: "Lorsque que les Missionnaires mirent pied à terre à Balade, en 1843, les indigènes leurs montrèrent des cocotiers qui avaient été plantés en souvenir du passage de Cook." [When the missionaries disembarked in Balade in 1843, the indigenous people showed them coconut

trees that were planted in memory of Cook's visit]. Another witness of James Cook's visit comes from the Kanak people themselves, via the intermediary interpretation of Dousset-Leenhardt (2000), who claim they may have codified Cook's visit in the so-called *bambou gravés* or the incised bamboo. These bamboos were first encountered in the 1860s in Wagap, Touho, the region where the Cèmuhi language is spoken (Burns, 2002, p. 2).

These pre-colonial Melanesian forms of communication, however, have gradually been superseded by the alphabetic script as Kanak society entered what de Certeau (1984) calls the "scriptural economy", wherein writing is understood as "the concrete activity that consists in constructing, on its own, blank space (*un espace propre*) – the page – a text that has power over the exteriority from which it has first been isolated" (p. 134). De Certeau's definition of writing is particularly relevant in the context of New Caledonia, where the collusion of *l'oralité* or *La Parole Kanak* on the one hand and writing on the other hand, has often been abrupt and conflictual. It is within de Certeau's theoretical definition of writing and with references to the different perspectives from which diverse Cèmuhi texts and products resulted that a critical historical overview of the process of codification of the Cèmuhi language is situated.

The process of codification can be traced along three subsequent stages or movements of writing through various context dependent practices. The first, explorative stage comprises the first endeavours of describing and translating into the Cèmuhi language by the Catholic Marist priests who arrived in New Caledonia in the middle of the 19th century. The second movement is by ethnographers (Leenhardt, Bensa) and a linguist (Rivierre) who visited the pacific island from the mid-20th century. Their ethno-linguistic work resulted in the production of ethnographies, grammars, and dictionaries. The third stage, as I will argue, provides a break from a process in which the written Cèmuhi language was shaped through practices

investigated by outsiders, to a practice that emerges from the locality and perspective of Kanak writer, Suzanne Poinine, one of the few Cèmuhi speakers who has used the medium of writing in her mother tongue for the last few decades, as will be discussed in the next two chapters.

5.2 The Marist missionaries

In 1853, ten years after the first Marist missionaries Bishop Guillaume Douarre and Fathers Philippe Viard and Pierre Rougeyron had disembarked from the vessel *Bucephalus*, the Marists in Balade and Puébo received a visit from a number of Cèmuhi people. *Les naturels de Tuo*, as Montrouzier (1860) described them, had come to Balade because of a request for missionaries. Pro-Vicor Rougeyron, in charge of the mission, was willing to grant their request under the condition that, as Montrouzier writes: "[Il fallait qu'] un certain nombre d'entre eux vinssent passer quelque temps à Balade, afin de s'instruire et d'apprendre leur langue aux pères qui leur étaient destinés" [a few of them would spend some time in Balade, so that they could teach the fathers they were about to receive, their language]" (p. 7). Initially, the choice fell on Father Montrouzier to study *la langue de Tuo*[63], but since Douarre, the Vicor Apostolic died shortly before the arrival of the Cèmuhi, Montrouzier, being the second oldest of the fathers, was asked to fill the gap that was left after Douarre's death (Morignat, 1996, p. 7). Instead, Father Jean Vigouroux and Father Benoît Forestier would be in charge to set up the Marists' second missionary post on the main island and the first in the Cèmuhi region, about 100km south of Balade. An oral recount in Cèmuhi of the arrival of the Marist priests in Touho

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[63] Morignat cites from G. Douarre's journal, 1848-1853, (aan 1.7) as follows: "Le p. Montrouzier fut d'abord charger d'étudier la langue de Tuo et de ceux qui étaient venus à Balade. [Father Montrouzier was initially appointed to study the language of Touho and of those who had come to Balade]." Cèmuhi has been variably referred to as *la langue de Wagap/la langue de Touho* (the language of Wagap/Touho) in older documents.

would later be collected by linguist, Jean-Claude Rivierre, in the 1960s (see below for a more detailed discussion of the significance of this story).

Even though Montrouzier writes that the priests were well received,[64] the presence of the missionaries among the people of Touho caused friction with the people of Tiwaka, another Cèmuhi clan living further south, bordering the Paicî-language group and with whom the Touho people had already clashed before. Working their way through the tensions of ongoing tribal warfare between the people of Touho and the Tiwakas, Father Montrouzier decided for Vigouroux and Forestier to split their ways. Forestier would stay in Touho while Father Vigouroux would live among the Wagap tribe in the hope to ease further tension and to avert further attacks of a clan, which was led by Apégu, the chief of Tiwaka, and described by Douarre as a great men-eater[65]. Father Vigouroux left Touho to set up another mission post in Wagap in 1854, one year after French counter admiral, Auguste Febvrier Despointes, officially took possession of New Caledonia on the 24th of September 1853.

5.2.1 Earliest references and works in Cèmuhi by the Marist. The first indirect reference to the Cèmuhi region (and language) is in the form of the story *Le chef de Touho* and published in Marist Father Lambert's ethnographic work *moeurs et superstititons des néo-calédoniens* (1900). This story was, according to Ozanne-Rivierre (1998), the first piece of Kanak oral literature ever to be collected, which was then translated into the Bélep variety of

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[64] In the Revue Algérienne et coloniale, Montrouzier (1860) writes: "…[les pères] partit pour Tuo;…furent très bien reçus et la mission s'établit sans aucune difficulté. " […[the fathers] left for Tuo ;…were very well received and the mission was founded without any further difficulties.]

[65] Morignat (1996) mentions how Mgr. Douarre tells a story about the Tiwaka chief, Apengu, who had gone on a cannibalistic rampage after a youth of Tuo had made a mockery of the scarred face of the chief of Tiwaka. "…le chef de Tinaka (Tiwaka), grand mangeur d'hommes et défiguré par un chancre affreux qui lui avait rongé le nez et la lèvre supérieure…" […the chief of Tiwaka, great men-eater and disfigured by a horrific ulcer that had cut his nose and upper lip…] (p. 6).

the Nyelayu[66] language by Lambert. Lambert (1900) includes the story in an appendix in the hope the reader might want to see: "un spécimen de la langue des indigènes qui font l'objet de notre étude" [a sample of the indigenous language that is object of our study" (p. 325). He remarks, however, that since it is: "un idiome voué à la mort, ainsi que tous les autres idiomes Néo-Calédoniens" [a language destined to die, just as all the other Neo-Caledonian languages] (p. 325), no effort was made to copy the orthography adopted by his missionary colleagues in their manuscripts and prayer books, but to simply remember the words: "en me rapprochant le plus possible de la prononciation française" [as close to the French pronunciation as possible] so that: "en lisant comme en lit un livre en français, on aura, à peu près, la façon de parlés des indigènes" [by reading as we would read a French book, we will more or less imitate the way indigenous people speak]. It is unfortunate that no written Cèmuhi version exists of this story, but it is very likely that the story was known and told in different languages throughout the island.

Apart from the other works in Cèmuhi produced by the Marists, there are only a few direct references to the language (under different names) to be found in early documents, such as in Ulysse de la Hautière's journal *Souvenirs de la Nouvelle Calédonie. Voyage sur la côte orientale (1869)[67]*. In a footnote, Hautière inserts a translation of the work 'judge' as "tahouti, en dialecte de Ti-Ouaka" [tahouti, in the dialect of Tiwaka] (p. 61). Hautière's reference to the Cèmuhi language is made in the context of a passage that talks about how four chiefs were judged and sentenced to death after a French regiment had arrived for a

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[66] Nyelayu, of which one variant is spoken near Balade and another on the island of Belep, was the first Kanak language to be written down (Ozanne-Rivierre, 1998). A list of a total of 41 words was compiled by Cook and Forster and would later be published by Haudricourt and Hollyman (1960).

[67] Ulysse de La Hautière (1869). *Souvenirs de la Nouvelle-Calédonie.Voyage sur la côte orientale, coup de main chez les kanacks, Pilou-pilou à Naniouni.*

punitive expedition against the villages and plantations of some rebellious tribes in the Wagap region.

Another reference to the language is found in *La Réforme Sociale (1884)*[68] in which *La langue de Wagap* is described by Perret as: "r*ude, gutturale, brève, rapide, à consonnances peu distinctes. Le nombre des mots est de trois mille environ*" (p. 550). [rude, glottal, brief, fast, with few distinctive consonants. The number of words is approximately 3000]. Finally, in an article that appeared in *Mémoires de l'Académie Nationale des Sciences, Arts et Belles-Lettres de Caen (1911)*[69], de Charencey gives a comparative overview of spatial deictic terms in Cèmuhi and Tikopia, a Polynesian language of the Solomon Islands

	WAGAP	TIKOPIA
EST	*Ombettan*	*Ton-he*
SUD	*Guahen* et « au midi », *Enguahen*	*Parapou*
OUEST	*Dabet* (et aussi : vent d'Ouest)	*Te raki, raki*
NORD	*Aduate, luetu* (et aussi : vent du Nord)	*Fagatiou*

Figure 3*: A lexical comparison of spatial terms between Wagap and Tikopia from M. Le comte de Charencey in 1911 (p. 114).*

The source of the Tikopia data came most likely from Father Montrouzier, who had been put in charge of helping other missionaries on this island that is part of the Solomon Islands (Montrouzier, 1860, p. 6).

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[68] V. Perret (1884). Les mœurs et les institutions des indigènes de la Nouvelle Calédonie. *La Réforme Sociale*
[69] Hyacinthe *le comte de Charencey, (1911). Les noms des points de l'espace chez les peuples Océaniens. Mémoires de l'Académie Nationale des Sciences, Arts et Belles-Lettres de Caen.*

5.2.2 Works of the Catholic faith. As soon as the priests were settled into the communities, they started their Christian missionary work, which included translating the catechism, prayers, and Catholic rituals. The practice of translating started after bishop Abila summoned all members of the vicariate in 1885 to a retreat in Saint-Louis, where the decision was taken to have the priests in their different posts translate the catechism in various vernacular languages (Morignat, 1996, p. 191). The mission of Saint-Louis, together with the mission of Conception, had been established three decades earlier, on land that was given by Commander Tessard to Father Rougeyron, who had settled around the bay of Boulari, south-west of the current capital Nouméa, together with people from Balade, Pouébo and Touho (Hautière, 1869, pp. 259-259, Lambert, 1900, p. 84). The Marist *reduction,* which served as a training centre for new converts, and home to the first Catholic *imprimerie* on the territory, would also become the breeding ground for a process of pidginisation and the subsequent emergence of Tayo, a French based creole, with Kanak languages Cèmuhi, Xaracuu, and Drubéa as substrates (see also Corne (1989), Ehrhart (1993), and Speedy (2014) for a discussion on the emergence of the Tayo Creole[70]).

In 1887, Father Roussel sent the first Cèmuhi version of the Catechism to bishop Abila in Saint-Louis and writes: "j'envoie le petit catéchisme traduit en langue de Wagap, afin qu'il soit examiné avant de l'enseigner, et imprimé si cela est possible" [I'll send you the small catechism in the Wagap language so that it can be checked first, and if possible printed as well] (Morignat, 1994, p. 191, quoting a letter from Roussel to Fraysse, dated December 17, 1887 –

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[70] Based on mainly socio-historical evidence, Speedy (2014) dismisses Chris Corne and Sabine Ehrhart's viewpoint that Tayo is "a purely endogenous Kanak creation" (p. 3), instead arguing for a far more complex story of pidginisation which also involved the input of Réunion creole in the emergence of Tayo, this as a result of immigrants of Réunion working as free or indentured labourers in the sugar cane plantations alongside the Melanesian population.

aan 413). Father Gautret, who arrived in Touho in 1874, is considered the translator of this version, while the revised version of 1911 is accredited to Father Vincent (Rivierre 1990, p. 16). Roussel himself, however, also played an important role in the translation of religious texts. Rivierre (1990, p. 19) notes that a manuscript of the hymns, dated 1868 and published in a slightly different orthography in Colomb's *La Tribu de Wagap*, are from Roussel's hand. The practice of translation was, as Roussel testifies in several letters, a hard and time-consuming task that often demanded the priests to be proficient in several languages. Roussel, for instance, notes that the Cèmuhi translation was used for a word-for-word translation of the catechism into the neighbouring Paicî language, adding that "comme il n'y a personne qui puisse en juger, je ne l'enverrai pas, à moins que Votre Grandeur ne la désire" [since no one can verify it, I won't send it, unless His Highness wishes otherwise] (Morignat, 1994, p. 191, Quoting a letter from Roussel to Fraysse, dated December 17, 1887 – aan 413).

In a letter dated 19 January 1888, bishop Abila responds to Roussel, with the request to add prayers, hymns, and devotional practices[71] to the Cèmuhi catechism. Soon after, Roussel delivers in a courier, "l'appendice au catéchisme en Tyamouki (Camuki)" [The appendix to the catechism in Tyamouki (Camuki)] and requests to have it printed as soon as possible so that he can start teaching it in the villages (Morignat, 1994, p. 192. quoting a letter from Roussel to Fraysse, dated November 15, 1888 – aan 420).

A first version of the *Catéchisme de Vicariat Apostolique de la Nouvelle-Calédonie*, in the Cèmuhi language, would eventually be published in 1888 and a revised version by Fathers Vincent and Chalandon would be reprinted in Saint-Louis in 1911. Lambert (1900, p. 66) later

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[71] The translation of the Catholic doctrine and its practices were presented in the format of 'Question and Answers'.

reports that a translation of the Catechism in 16 Kanak languages was sent to the world exposition of 1900 in Paris, making them available as colonial *curiosa* to the wider public.

5.2.3 'La Tribu de Wagap': an ethno-linguistic work. Because the main purpose of the Marists was to bring the Catholic doctrine to the people among whom they lived, their religious agenda forced them to gain insight in both language and culture. The extraction of linguistic and cultural knowledge often involved building relationships within the community and learning the local language. This required the priests to learn a new language all over again as they moved or were transferred from one mission to the other. With only their own auditory capacities to capture the language, "de la bouche des indigènes [from the mouth of the natives]", as Lambert (1900, p. 65) writes, their observations about Kanak customs and the linguistic realities remained incomplete at best. Lambert adds to this, the confusion and multiplicity of the Kanak languages, comparing the linguistic diversity as "Babel sortie des eaux [Babel emerging from the waters]" (p. 65). On top of that, the Marists did not have the training, skills, and tools that modern linguists have at their disposal, to describe the phonological and grammatical system of a language. Yet, this lack of tools and training was largely compensated by a practical knowledge of the language as a result of spending much longer periods of time in the culture than modern day linguists and ethnographers could ever dream of.

Despite the difficulties and the limitations the priests experienced, they did produce important ethno-linguistic works, especially in the Cèmuhi language. Rivierre (1990, p. 15) notes that, while the authors of the Catechism were well known, and the authorship of the dictionary and *La Tribu de Wagap* are assigned to Antoine Colomb, these works were most likely the result of the cumulative efforts of several missionaries who lived during that period in Touho and Wagap. No efforts were made, however, to keep the two genres separate from

each other. The Marist's missionary agenda is always prominently at the forefront in whatever non-religious work they produced, which is reflected in the often emotional and judgemental comments in many of their works. Lambert (1900), for instance, gives detailed descriptions of fishing practices among the Kanak people, but does hesitate to add that: "la pêche est accompagnée de nombreux actes de superstitions" [fishing is accompanied with many superstitious acts] (p. 211).

In the following sections, I will look at two of the major ethno-linguistic works produced by the Marists. First, I will discuss Father Antoine Colomb's *La Tribu de Wagap, Nouvelle-Calédonie, ses mœurs et sa langue d'après les notes d'une missionnaire mariste (Paris, 1890).* The work, coordinated by Colomb, contains three sections:

I. Notes on the culture and language (pp. 3-10)

II. Notes grammaticales relatives à la langue de Wagap (including sections on the alphabet, articles, pronouns, counting system, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, declension of personal pronouns, and the construction of phrases) (pp. 11-39)

III. Texts (including conversational phrases and questions, examples of discourse, prayers, the small catechism, and hymns (pp. 40-110)

The second work I will discuss is Colomb's *French-Tyamuhi dictionary*, published in 1891. I will conclude with a discussion of a third genre, a translation of a proclamation of amnesty of Governor Saisset, considered one of the earliest sources in the Cèmuhi language.

5.2.3.1 Notes on the culture and language. The first ten pages of *La Tribu de Wagap* testify that the Marists were well acquainted with Kanak culture. Father Colomb almost

seamlessly interchanges ethnographic and linguistic observations with moral judgements on the customs of the tribe of Wagap, which he describes as, not only the biggest on the island, but also the most cruel and fearsome, where cannibalism[72] is rampant. The main aim of these notes is to inform the reader why, how, and under which circumstances the missionaries do their missionary work in the region. The Christian worldview is thereby depicted in sharp contrast to the local practices of witchcraft and cannibalism. Colomb, however, does notice some similarities between his own Judaeo-Christian worldview and that of the Kanak. He observes analogies between Kanak and Jewish customs, such as circumcision, which was common practice among the Kanak people at that time, the separation of women during menstruation, the taboo rules between a brother and sister, certain marriage rules, and the obligation of a widow to live with the family of her defunct husband.

A considerable part is dedicated to the place of the elders and their role as storytellers in Kanak society. Though mostly incoherent and incredible, Colomb writes that they are often the only sources to discover the origins of these people. The elders' role as tellers of these stories and legends is highlighted in a summary of *The story of Wagap,* as told to the priest. This settlement story describes how the first ancestor of the Wagap came from the west coast by crossing the mountain range which runs from north to south of the island. He and his sons settled at the east coast near the mouth of the river *Amoa*, not far from where the Marists would later establish their mission. A common thread in these kind of stories is that the people who came from the west coast, found the land occupied by a now extinct people, which led

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[72] Lambert writes: "Au commencement de la Mission, les Naturels apportaient parfois en présents aux missionnaires des bras et des cuisses grillés ou bouillis et enveloppés dans des feuilles des bananiers, croyant leur faire un offrance vraiment royale. [At the start of the mission, the indigenous often brought as gifts to the missionaries, arms and thighs, grilled or cooked and wrapped in banana leaves, in the belief they offered them something really valuable]." (p. 3)

Colomb to ask the questions: "Cette première population, qu'était-elle? Et d'où venait-elle? On n'en sait absolument rien" [These first people, who were they? Where did they come from? We absolutely have no idea]. For Colomb, this story symbolises the evilness of Kanak life, its customs, the communal *dymbe* or *four Canaque* [the Kanak oven), but also the role and the place of women, especially with regard to the men and the chiefs in particular. The story gives further insight in how women had to behave when they saw a chief; as Colomb describes it: "Elles doivent aussitôt incliner la tête, en tournant le dos pour ne pas le regarder en face, et se laisser tomber à terre [they have to bow the head, avoiding eye contact by turning around and prostrating to the ground]." The fate of those who did not show respect, as the story testifies, was often sealed in a violent death.

Even though the *indigènes* are stereotypically depicted by Colomb as ferocious looking *démons*, he does notice some of the more positive qualities they seem to display, especially after they had become Christians. Once described as: "gangrenés par tous les vices qu'ils prennent au blancs" [infected by depraved practices they take out on the White], a Christian education would soon transform them from rebellious creatures into civilised human beings, who now know how to preserve food, wear clothes and, most importantly, show a different attitude towards the missionaries in particular. The chief of Wagap, Christianised as Manuel[73], received a special mention from Colomb in particular. It is thanks to Manuel, together with 300 to 400 of his warriors, that the missionaries in Touho were saved from attacks by the non-Christians tribes of the Wagap region. Manuel's allegiance to the fathers wins him the praise of Father Colomb who writes that: "Il a été l'homme de la Providence. Son nom mérite d'être

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[73] Manuel was also known at the time as chief Apengu or Apitéègen (Morignat, 1996, p. 15; Bensa and Rivierre, 1979; Douglas, 1996, p. 131; Person Yves, 1953, p. 40).

conservé" [he was sent by divine providence. His name deserves to be remembered]. It would be one of the rare instances in which an indigenous person was mentioned by name in the work of the Marists and, as Douglas (1996, p. 131) remarks, would leave his mark in the indigenous histories collected by Rivierre and Bensa.

5.2.3.2 Notes on the phonology and orthography. The construction of an orthography in a language that has never been written down is marred with challenges and obstacles, not least for 19th century missionaries who lacked the insights of modern linguistics. Unable to rely on modern technologies to catch the sound system of a language, it is understandable that Father Antoine Colomb's alphabet of the Cèmuhi language does not give a complete picture of the whole, sound inventory and prosodic structure of the Cèmuhi language in his grammar notes. The Marists' notes on the orthography of Cèmuhi therefore reads more like a pronunciation guide than a technical description of phonemes to be found in modern grammatical descriptions. Each sound is explained by comparing it with the nearest French equivalent sound and no clear distinction is made between the phonemic and phonetic representation of the sounds. Colomb's *Alphabet* consists of 6 vowels (a, e, i, o, u, ü), 2 semi-vowels (y, w), and 12 consonants (b, d, g, h, k, l, m, n, n, p, s, t). In a modern linguistic classification, this can be schematised in the following two charts:

Table 3*:*

Vowel inventory by A. Colomb

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i/u		ü
Mid	e [e] or [ɛ]		o
Open	a		

Table 4*:*

Consonant inventory by A. Colomb

	bilabial	dental	palatal	velar	glottal
Plosive	p b [mb]	t d		k g	
Nasal	m	n	ñ [ny]		
Fricative		s			h
lateral		l			

In contrast to Rivierre's grammar and dictionary, the palatal plosives [c] and [ɟ] are not mentioned in the Marists' consonant inventory. These sounds, which are represented by combining two letters, resulting in the grapheme *ty*, as in *Tyamuhi* (Cèmuhi) and *dy*, as in *dymbe* (oven), do not have phonemic status in Colomb's analysis. The difficulties the Marists had with this particular phoneme became apparent when we look at the evolution of how the sound was written in older documents. In one of the earliest documents, a translation of a proclamation of amnesty of Governor Saisset (see also discussion of *The letter of Jack* in 5.2.5.), Father Forestier uses the graphemes *di* and *ti* to denote these sounds. This notation would later be changed to *ty* and *dy* in a manuscript of hymns, dated 1868 (and published in 1890)

and attributed to Father Roussel who, as Rivierre (1990, p. 19) notes, played an important role in the translation of religious texts. Colomb then further tries to get a clearer grasp of the 'phoneme' *y,* which, as he explains: "s'emploie pour deux *i* [is used for two i's]". The confusion is complete when he gives two examples: "Ainsi *Tytili,* faire disparaître, effacer, se prononce à peu près comme en français *quiitili*, en faisant entendre cependant le t plutôt que q. *A dyakut*, histoire, se prononce à peu près *a neguia koute*, en trois syllabes, mais il faut, pour prononcer juste, avoir l'idée d'un *d*" [thus, *Tytili*, to disappear, is more or less pronounced as in French *quiitili*, by expressing the *t* rather than the *q*. *A dyakut*, story, is more or less pronounced *a neguia koute*, in three syllables, but, one has to have a *d* in mind in order to pronounce it correctly].

Colomb seems to struggle here with both a phonological and morphological feature. First, vowel length, such as in Rivierre's spelling of *Ciitili*, is a consistent phonemic feature but not one accounted for as such in Colomb's analysis. Secondly, a word such as *dyakut* can have two allomorphs, as shown in Rivierre's spelling, *jèkut ~ jèpulè*. In Rivierre's notation, every closed syllable (CVC) with final –t, can alternate with –lè (CVCV) (Rivierre, 1980, p.32). This may explain why Colomb heard three syllables, instead of the two in the word *dyakut*. The features that are more difficult to distinguish by the human ear, such as the opposition between short and long vowels and tone, were not accounted for by the Marists, and even if they may have been aware of it, they probably did not consider it as linguistically important, as Rivierre (1990, p. 15) suggests.

After a discussion of the pronunciation of all the consonants, such as the pre-nasal consonants *b* [mb] and *d* [nd], and the difficult to grasp nasal consonant *h*, which receives a lengthy explanation by Colomb, attention is then focused on the accents. The grave accent,

Colomb notes, plays the same role as in the French *è*, while the circumflex is supposed to render a syllable voiceless and nasalised, which is a dominant feature in Cèmuhi. The grave accent and the circumflex, however, are hardly used in the Marists' orthography. Only the Spanish tilde (ñ) is consistently used to denote the palatal nasal [ɲ], which is represented in Rivierre's orthography by the grapheme *ny.* The inconsistent use of accents, and the dismissal of tone, however, has rendered the orthography less cluttered and visually more attractive.

Table 5*:*

An overview of the orthography adopted by the Marists and Rivierre

Proclamation of Amnesty in Le Moniteur (1859), Forestier	Manuscript Hymns (1868), Roussel	La Tribu de Wagap (1890), Colomb	Dictionnaire Français-Wagap (1891), Colomb	Manuscript Français-Tyamuhi Vincent + annotations (Discovered in Touho Mission in 1950 by Jean Guiart)	Rivierre (1980)
a		**a**	a	a (ke, p. 415)	â/a-aa
b		b	b	b	b
-		-	-	-	bw
ti	(ty)	(ty)	(ty)	(ty) (discours p. 415) tyendihi (p 8)	c
d		d	d	d	d
é		e	e	e/é (p. 355)	é-éé
è				è (utye, p. 415)	è-èè
g		g	g	g	g
h		h	h	h	h
-		-	-	-	hw
i		i	i	i	î/i-ii
di	(dy)	(dj)	(dj)	(dj) (dis p. 415) nedje (p 12)	j

Proclamation of Amnesty in Le Moniteur (1859), Forestier	Manuscript Hymns (1868), Roussel	La Tribu de Wagap (1890), Colomb	Dictionnaire Français-Wagap (1891), Colomb	Manuscript Français-Tyamuhi Vincent + annotations (Discovered in Touho Mission in 1950 by Jean Guiart)	Rivierre (1980)
k		k	k	k (p. 355)	k
l		l	l	l	l
m		m	m	m	m
-	-	-	-	-	mw
n		n	n	n	n
ng	-	-	-	-	ng
?		ñ	ñ	ñ (discs p. 415), p.5	ny
o		o	o	o	o-oo
-		-	-	-	ö
p		p	p	p	p
-		-	-	-	pw
-		s (loan)	s (loan)	s (loan)	
t		t	t	t	t
u		û (p. 42)/ ü (p.61)		u	u/û
u		w		w	w
none		none		None	Tone

5.2.3.3 Notes on the grammar. Considering the missionary's ideal of translating the Scriptures in the Cèmuhi language, Colomb's *notes grammaticales* could be described as mainly pedagogical and communicative in nature. A review of Colomb's work in the Catholic bulletin *Les missions catholiques, l'oeuvre the la propagation de la foi (1892)*[74] puts it: "destiné à faire profiter les linguistes, aussi bien que les futurs missionnaires en Nouvelle-Calédonie, …"

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[74] Stanilas Lavarrière (1892). *Les missions catholiques, bulletin hebdomadaire de l'oeuvre the la propagation de la foi. Tome 24. Paris: Challamel.*

(p. 168) [aimed at helping linguists, as well as future missionaries in their work in New Caledonia].

Apart from an overview of the Alphabet (I. pp. 11-12), as discussed above, Colomb's n*otes grammaticales* includes a description of a variety of word classes or parts of speech (II-X, pp. 13-39):

II. Articles
III. Pronouns
      Personal pronouns
      Adjectives and demonstratives
      Vocative pronouns (interpellatifs)
      Relative pronouns
      Interrogatives
      Indefinite pronouns
      Possessive pronouns
 IV. Numbers (manière de compter)
      Cardinal numbers
      Ordinal numbers
      Adverbial use of ordinal numbers
      Seasons (époques)
V. Verbs
VI. Adverbs
VII. Prepositions
VIII. Conjunctions
IX. Declensions related to personal pronouns
      Substantifs
      Verbs
      Adjective
      Prepositions and adverbs
X. Construction of phrases

Starting with the Cèmuhi articles, for instance, Colomb only mentions the neutral articles *a* (sing) and *ni* (plural) and the personal feminine article *è*, but does not seem to have recognised its masculine counterpart, the article *pa*, even if he gives it some brief consideration under section III (Pronouns), where the common article *pa* is described as a syllable that is put in

front of certain words to express definiteness, as Colomb tries to capture the meaning in the two examples below:

pa abulip: cet homme, lui, bien lui [this man, him, really him]
pa Due: Dieu, lui, bien ce Dieu [God, him, really this God]

Colomb also recognises the process of nominalisation, but instead of discussing it under the more appropriate section of Verbs or Nouns, he treats it under the topic, Articles, confounding the article *a* with the homographic prefix *a-,* which is used in front of a verb or an adjective to render it into a noun, as shown in the example below:

pityani [to rescue]   >   a-pityani [rescuer]

It needs to be noted, however, that apart from Rivierre's 'norm' setting grammar and dictionary, no official orthographic convention has yet been adopted that sets the rules with regards to spelling, hyphenation, word breaks, etc.

Even though Colomb was aware of the complex pronominal paradigm affecting both determiners and pronouns, he seemed to have failed in explaining adequately the different uses of the pronominal declensions. His summary of the six pronominal paradigms (in sections III and IX, p. 29) only partially reflects the six paradigms or *modalités personnelles,* as explained in Rivierre (1980, p. 61, 1994, p. 34) who further fine-tuned a rich pronominal system that is determined by different types of predicates (simple vs. complex; stative vs, active, nominal, verbal, locative). Colomb often fails to give an adequate explanation for what is going on in the language. For instance, examples are given of the different possessive forms, which can

either be formed with an intermediate connector, as in *a tuume tong* [his joy],[75] or *a daame hong* [my chief][76] or via direct post position of the possessive ending to the noun, as in *a démung* [my shadow].[77] However, Colomb does not give an explanation for when the connectors, tè, hê, ko, ne[78] or ø (direct possession as in the example above) are to be used and concedes that: "Il ne nous est pas possible de donner les règles de ces terminaisons" (p. 20) [It is not possible for us to give the rules of these declensions]. Yet, as Rivierre (1980, p. 69, 155) explains, each of these connectors refer to a different reality. The connector *tè*, for instance, is used to indicate possession of alienable objects, (e.g., *a mwa tong* [my house], while the connector *he* is used for objects or realities that are considered inalienable in the culture (e.g. *a aiu hen* [her husband]).

Colomb also gives a fairly accurate picture of the numerical system, which is based on the number five, as is common in Pacific languages (Lynch, 1998 p. 246). In a short section on temporal expressions, he explains the use of the word *bwén* [night], which is used to express what people have done during the day or the day(s) before, as illustrated by examples such as, *nim bwénin* [in five days] or *bwén alo* [the day before yesterday]; Colomb concludes that: "Cette manière de compter par nuits venait sans doute de ce que, chez eux, les choses les plus importantes se faisaient la nuit" [This way of counting by nights is most likely to be explained by the fact that, in their culture, the most important things are done at night] (p. 23). A more accurate explanation, of course, is that it was common in Pacific cultures to divide the month based on the different phases of the moon (see Collocott, 1922 p. 168) on the Tongan 'nights'-based calendar system). Colomb concludes on a positive note by stating that contact with the

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[75] Contraction of tè + -ng, undergoing morphological change > tong
[76] Contraction of daame + hê + -ng, undergoing morphological change > daame hung
[77] Contraction of déme + -ng, undergoing morphological change > démong
[78] No examples are given, however, by Colomb with the connectors ko and ne.

Europeans has had a positive influence on the customs and language use of the Cèmuhi, noting that new words were introduced, with the language enriched by giving new meanings to old words.

The section on time and aspect expressions is, compared to Rivierre's extensive outline of all the possible combinations of the aspect-time modes, very brief and incomplete. Colomb restricts himself to giving a few examples of the most common time and aspect markers, such as *caa* (to indicate past tense), *tè, tè ko* (to indicate present tense) and *o* and *bo* (to indicate future tense), all of which are in post verbal position. He observes that the Cèmuhi mainly talk in the present, without using any time markers, claiming that the context easily gives an indication whether it concerns the present or the past. As far as a description of future tense is concerned, he states that the aspect markers *o* and *bo* are used indiscriminately, without explaining that the use of these markers depend on whether the speaker perceives an event or state as certain (*o*) or probable (*bo*). Colomb concludes his *notes grammaticale*s with a summary list of the most common adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions, without giving any examples of the use of these parts of speech in a sentence.

5.2.3.4 Texts. In his work, *Moers et Superstitions Néo-Calédoniens,* Marist priest, Lambert (1900) writes: "S'ils n'ont pas d'écrivains ils ont des orateurs véhéments, d'habiles et intéressants conteurs. S'ils not pas de poètes ils ont des chansonniers et des bardes qui sans être esclaves de la rime, savent donner la cadence à leurs chants (p. 64) [If they don't have writers, they do have passionate speakers, gifted and interesting storytellers. I they don't have poets, they do have songwriters and bards who, without being enslaved to rhyme, know how to bring rhythm in their songs]" Despite this wealth of oral literature, or what Lambert labelled as: "la litérature des illé[t]trés (*sic*)" or the literature of the illiterate, collecting traditional oral

stories was only secondary to the Marist's agenda. Apart from *Le chef de Touho,* of which no Cèmuhi version exists, the texts inserted by the Marist priests mainly reflect their pre-occupation with religion and education. *La Tribu de Wagap* includes a variety of genres, such as prayers, religious texts, as well as conversational phrases and speeches that are addressed to the priests.

At first sight, the conversational phrases or *conversations usuelles* in particular could have been considered a helpful tool for those who wanted to visit the region, as it includes greetings and questions that are also commonly used in a Western society. With regard to the questions listed by Colomb, however, it needs to be remarked that 'asking questions' is considered impolite in Kanak culture, with the exception of some commonly used conversation starters used by the Cèmuhi people, such as:

(1) Go a we? [Where are you going?]

(2) Go abe mu we? [Where do you come from?]

These expressions are different from phatic expressions such as in English or French, where the question 'where are you going?' is usually aimed at eliciting information about one's intended destination. The Cèmuhi examples, however, are formulaic expressions or idioms that are closely intertwined with the Melanesian clan or kinship relations. They reflect the underlying cultural value or importance Kanak people attach to being able to situate the person they encounter in relation to their kin. Knowing where one comes from or where one is going is a way of confirming or tracing the relationship or *lien*, as the Kanak used in French speech to refer to kinship relations, between the addressee and the addressed. So, the real underlying question is actually 'Are we allies or not?' 'Are we in any way related to each

other?', 'Are we from the same 'house'?, which is aimed at, as the title of Alban Bensa's major work[79] captures it aptly, tracing *Les Chemins de l'alliance* [the pathways of kinship].

The response, *e abu mu Tuo* [I come from Tuo], enables the questioner to, not only situate the person within the kin relationships, but to confirm or test the alliance between them. While the Kanak people now commonly use the French place names (e.g. Tuo or Touho), it was more common in the past to use the totemic name attached to each *mwa* or house (see also discussion of spatial reference below). A possible response would then have been *e abe mu a ale pahabu* [I come from 'there were the purple swamphen resides']. As is common in Kanak culture, each landmark and each house has a particular name and knowing that name also entails being aware of its boundaries, which, as Bensa (cited in Boulay et al., 1990) notes: "cadastrent en quelque sorte le pays entier et ces limites dans leur mémoire qui, en ces détails, paraît prodigieuse" [registers the whole land and its limits in their memory which, in its details, seems extraordinary] (p. 24).

It is doubtful, however, that Colomb understood the full meaning of the role of questions in Kanak society. It seems more plausible that the list was compiled with Western bias, especially because he also includes a considerable amount of questions or examples that are either taboo or very Eurocentric, as the following list will aim to show.

Colomb's disregard for culturally sensitive topics is illustrated in the following questions:

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[79] *Les Chemins de l'alliance*. *L'organisation sociale et ses représentations en Nouvelle-Calédonie (Région de Touho — aire linguistique cèmuhî)* (Bensa and Rivierre, 1982).

(3) Go aten? [Are you married?]

(4) Niile ni neam? [How many kids do you have?]

(5) Go pule we? [Where do you sleep?]

(6) Mewate[80]? [Why?]

He also includes questions that require a more analytic response, which are rather uncommon in Kanak culture, such as:

(7) Go temehi nile ni puadinem? [How many ears do you have?]

(8) E ko alihi atyede? [What do I see?]

(9) Time go ui a mehi ni uata? [Don't you eat meat?]

The anticipated response to question 9, in particular, shows again that many of these questions are most likely made-up, rather than those elicited or heard in a real situation.

(9b) E ui a meti ni uata he ni tan dati, kahe e netyu he vendredi be e Christiano [I eat meat every day, except on Fridays, as I am a Christian.]

Their position of authority is also reflected in the declarative example sentences expressing punishment or instigating fear, such as in:

(10) E bo pua uetyutem! [I will punish you!]

(11) Time utye uaego, e bo oke nakon! [You are not nice, I will be angry with you!]

---

[80] The 'Why?' question is rarely used in Cèmuhi. In fact, there is no real word for it. The more common word Waté (sometimes preceded with the interrogative 'konaa'), which means 'What?' used in more common questions that requires more concrete response, such as: Go wii waté? [What are you saying?], Pii waté kom? [What's your name?]. The more recent use, konaa waté? [Why?], which requires a more complex answer, is very uncommon in the language.

In the following sequence, a rather unusual question is followed by a response and two requests, which suggest the missionary's suspicion towards the Kanak, more particularly those who showed interest for the written word:

(12) Ade na go nendeuhi? [What are you hiding?]

E nedeuhi ate tiyu. [I hide a piece of paper/a letter.]

Uae hemego ahembui. [You have to show me.)

Go pua buali a im. [Stretch your arm.]

As mentioned above, it was not unusual among the more literate Kanak people to exchange written messages with each other. The benefits of sending messages among themselves or the use of the written word have already been mentioned before in the case of the Tayo girls and the exchange of cryptic message in trees in Lifou[81].

The suspicion of the Marists towards the Kanak people is also reflected in the following sequence of examples:

(13) E paka mangala a umiiim [Your nose is very red.]

E tete a tambe ko lubua namiim. [Your eyes are wet.]

Le piton bego pebune. [They say that you have stolen.]

A sequence of questions reflects how the Marists made an effort to learn to speak the language. Their elicitation sessions were aimed at getting some basic expression, such as:

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[81] Guiart (1992) notes that "Melanesians have always made some use of the literacy techniques received at first from the LMS [London Missionary Society] missionaries. They took easily to writing letters to each other, not always putting them in the white man's mail. The young people on Ouvea even invented a written coded language using numbers, which was adapted to their own ends by irregular couples, who exchanged love letters written with the point of a knife on the stems and leaves of coconut palm fronds." (p. 20).

(14) De abuanimihinentem hemego pie ali puoti? [What's the meaning of the word

 you just said?]

 Go pipityei. [Speak slowly.]

 Danin ali atyut? [What's the name of this wood?]

Example (15) shows that the terms of trade between missionary and the local Kanak people

were reciprocal and that there was no such thing as a free lunch.

 (15) Tidie a tabatem ka te tidie a nu. [If you don't have tabaco, there will be no

 coconut]

In addition, the priests were not afraid to put some moral pressure upon the local population

in order to get what they wanted. Vincent's handwritten manuscript of the French-Tyamuhi

dictionary includes some examples of common phrases and annotations on the use of statif

pronominals (e.g. –jo[82], -gawé], illustrated by the following common conversational phrases,

as shown at the bottom of image of the page below:

 Waé me gaé pati-o acè ikua: Bon que vous donner à moi quelques poissons
 [It is good that you me some fish.]

 Me waégamé nakong [mot à mot]: Que vous bons pour moi.

 [word for word]: [If you are good for me.]

 Ka o waédyo nakowé: et je serais bon pour vous.
 [and I will be good for you.]

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[82] The statif pronominals (e.g. -jo [-dyo in Vincent's orthograhy], -go, -nang, -ganye, -gamé, -gawé, -jèlé etc.),
are directly attached to statif predicates, such as *waé* [good]. Vincent's list, however, seem to confound them
with the very similar list of pronominals that are attached to objects (-o, -ko, -èng, -kanye, -kame, -kawé, -lé,
etc.).
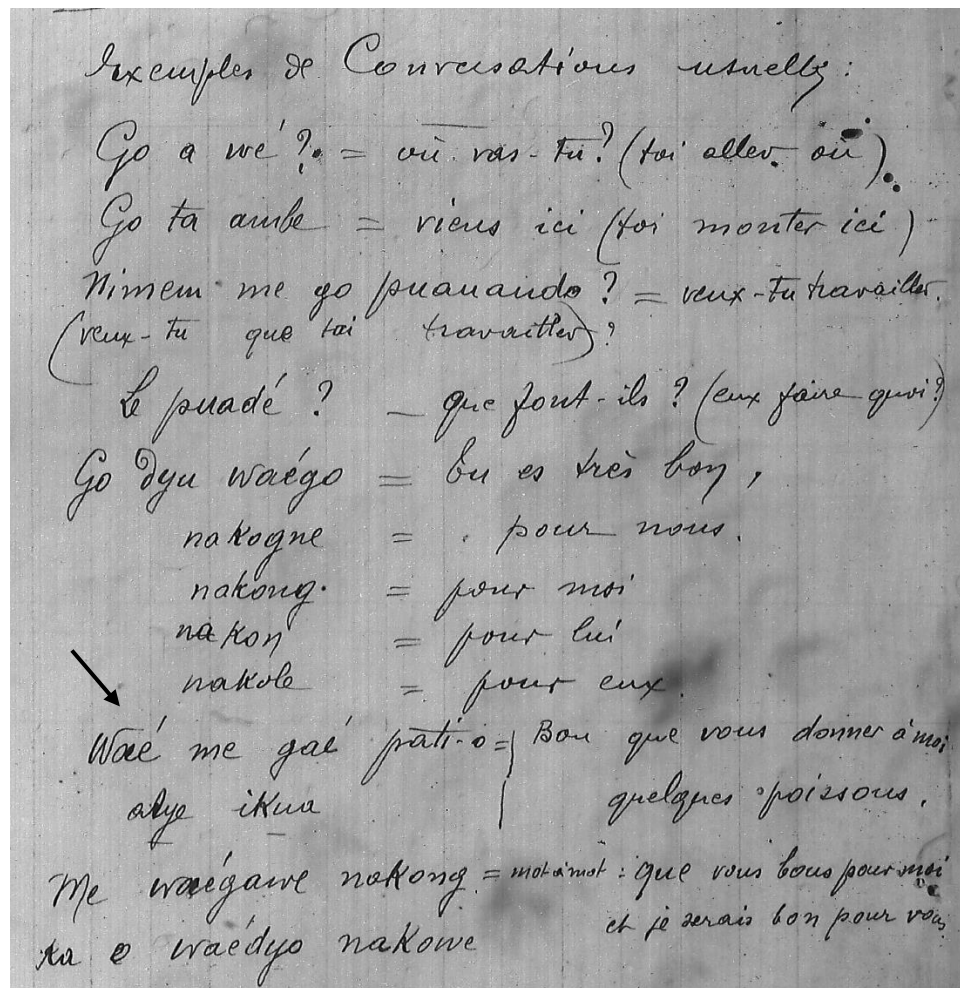
Figure 4*: Page of Vincent's handwritten manuscript of the French-Tyamuhi dictionary*

The conversations usuelles are followed by a section of texts consisting of translated speeches

that were addressed to the chiefs, elders, and missionary priests. These customary speeches,

usually at the occasion of a celebration or feast, were commonly accompanied by the

exchange of gifts. In total, four different speeches are included in Colomb's work:

Speech 1: For the occasion of the death of a chief

Speech 2: For the occasion of a feast

Speech 3: Presentation of gifts of food

Speech 4: Speech to a missionary

Colomb notes that these speeches are usually accompanied with the exchange of gifts. He explains how gifts such as yam, taro, etc. are presented by the visitors in an orderly fashion in front of the chiefs or hosts. After the ritualised gift exchange, one of the elders stands up to address the crowd and the visitor(s).

The speeches included by the Marists often reflect a generally positive assessment of the Kanak people towards the priests. The excerpt below, for instance, represents a speech addressed to a missionary during a celebration of Easter. In this particular speech, the Kanak people express their gratitude to the priests for bringing them the Word of God, for taking care of them, and for living among them.

Speech 4: Discours adressé à un missionnaire (p. 415)
[Speech addressed to a missionary]

Cèmuhi	French[83]
Père, game pedaba ni nando nelan. Game tambe tyeigo be game nimigo.	Père, nous apportons ces choses-là. Nous venons vers toi parce que notre pensée se porte sur toi.
Go nimigame go patigame ko a pati padue. Game mu ko a buenando nako a bue Paska. Game puaila…Ke, nako ni u, ka ni uaio, ka ni udia, ka ni ikua, ka ni epuen, ka ni dyuhin, ka ni da…	Tu penses à nous et tu nous apportes la Parole de Dieu. Nous assistons à la fête du jour de Pâques. Nous préparons le repas…(et) voilà des ignames, des taros, des cannes à sucre, des poissons, des nattes, des bananes et des lances…
Time utye shuan ni ninando. Be te dyu shuangame, ke….game patigo ko ni nando nelan. Kahe, te uae puanimem nakome, game nimigo kon. Game o tabemi a patim be te dyu a pati padue…Go puapuneteme ko a pati padue, game tenedego…	Nous n'avons pas beaucoup de vivres ; car nous sommes nombreux…Nous t'offrons toutes ces choses. Ton cœur est bon pour nous ; nous t'en remercions, nous écouterons bien ta parole, car elle est

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[83] See Section 6.4.3 for an English translation of some of these speeches.

Cèmuhi	French[83]
	vraiment la parole de Dieu. Tu nous enseignes la parole de Dieu, nous l'obéirons.
Te dyu uaeteme abuapemi-go. Game ni naem, go tyateme. Go tyle cilè game, game o mu pelem; be go patyateme.	Ta manière de faire nous plaît. Nous sommes tes enfants, tu es notre père. Tu as soin de nous, nous demeurerons avec toi car tu es notre père.
Game pe a pati padua bualihi, kahe time game nau lebua père tyeli game pe a pati padue kodyale, game nimile, game nim(ik)o, be go tyle-game, be go mu peleme…	Voilà déjà quelque temps que nous avons reçu la Parole de Dieu. Nous n'oublierons pas les prêtres qui nous l'ont apportée. Nous leur sommes reconnaissants. A toi aussi notre reconnaissance parce que tu prends soin de nous et tu demeures avec nous.
Game patigo ko ni nando nelan. Ke… uana.	Nous t'offrons en présent toutes ces choses-là. Oui, c'est cela. Voilà tout.

5.2.4 French-Tyamuhi dictionary. Another important work is the *Dictionnaire français-wagap-anglais et wagap-français par les missionnaires maristes,* edited by Antoine Colomb. The dictionary, of which a handwritten manuscript was found by French anthropologist, Jean Guiart, in the mission of Touho in the middle of the 20th century, was first compiled by Father Vincent and subsequently edited and revised by several other priests (Rivierre, 1994, p. 15). Rivierre notes that of all the lexicographic work done by the Marists in New Caledonia, Colomb's dictionary in the Wagap language is the only work that would get published (Rivierre, 1994, p.24), namely in *Actes de la Société philologique* in 1891.

As the handwritten and embellished title page of the manuscript reveals, the dictionary of 152 pages had, as its main objective, to serve as a tool to be used by the missionaries working in the Cèmuhi region. No further information is given by the compilers with regard to their orthographic choices, methods of collections, or possible informants they relied on to collect their data. Nor is there any mentioning or description of the geographical region where

the language is spoken or whether the Marist priests were aware of any dialectical variations that may have existed at the time. The written manuscript of the dictionary, however, does give an indication of the methods used by the Marists to collect the Cèmuhi words. The many empty slots in the list below seem to suggest that they started from a handwritten, pre-constructed list of French words. It was quite common to work with such standard lists, just like anthropologists worked with standardised 'notes and queries'.
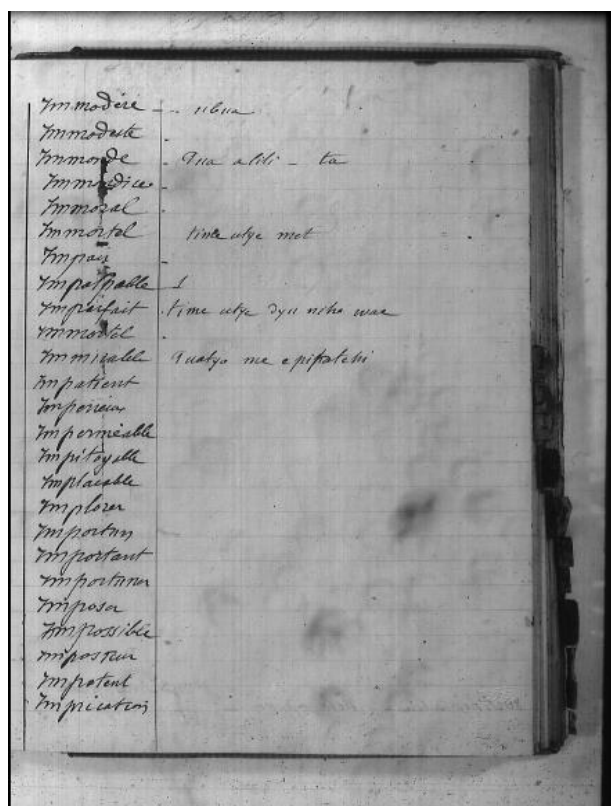
Figure 5: *Page 184 of the handwritten manuscript of Vincent's French-Tyamuhi dictionary*

One can imagine how the priests went around in the villages, trying to fill the empty slots on the list in an attempt to complete the dictionary. The manuscript, shown above, reflect the difficulties they encountered in fitting Cèmuhi into the French language. Unknown concepts in the Melanesian culture often had to be captured in descriptions, circumlocating the

semantic pitfalls and treacherous gaps in a culture which gradually began to reveal itself to its visitors. The presentation of the Marist's work, and the relatively 'simple' and 'straightforward' orthography, makes their work more accessible than, for instance, the works produced 100 years later by Rivierre and Bensa.

5.2.5 'Lettre de Jack'. a proclamation of amnesty from the governor Saisset. As the Marists had a good working knowledge of the language, they were from time to time convocated by the French administration to play a 'go-between' role. One of their roles was to serve as translators of official documents, such as a proclamation of amnesty from the governor Saisset. This proclamation, also known as *the letter of Jack*, was translated into 14 Kanak languages, and appeared in *Le Moniteur Impérial* of December 4th, 1859, as shown below:
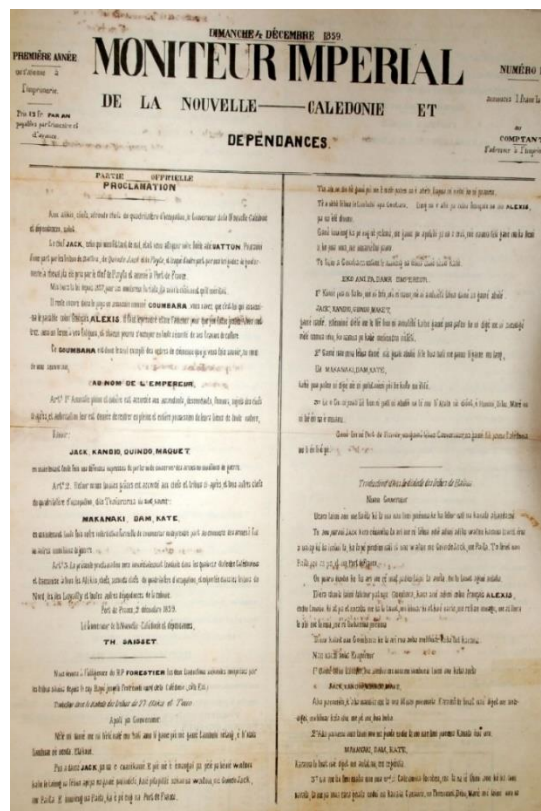

Figure 6*: Publication of the 'the letter of Jack' in the Le Moniteur Impérial of 1859*

Citing a letter form Father Montrouzier, Rivierre (1994, p. 17) notes that Father Forestier in particular had a very good knowledge of *le Tié,* also known as the variety of Cèmuhi spoken in the village of Tiwaé. He became the obvious choice to translate the letter in the Cèmuhi language. This translation would become the first ever publication in the Cèmuhi language. The letter states how amnesty had been granted in the name of the emperor (Napoleon the 3rd) to some local chiefs and their descendants, with the exception of chief Jack, who had attacked big chief Watton (an ally to the French), and un *assassin (a murderer)*, named Gombara, who had been captured and imprisoned for murdering a French colonist.

The historical context of the so-called *letter of Jack* is further explained in the journal of Ulysse de la Hautière (1869, p. 210), in which he recounts the circumstances surrounding this event. He writes that, as a result of the help of Watton, one of the most important big chiefs of central New Caledonia, Jack got captured by the French authorities. In an act of gratitude, a letter from the governor, signed the 12th June 1859, and translated in his mother tongue by a Marist, was sent to Watton to thank him for his service to the French.

« TI WATTON.

« *Mé médyéré Iova mo vuané até ou né !*

« Ngho Kan ongi, go avuinyiri mo ngho. Bo-
vouavoué Jaques mo Kandio akao yé amé nanté
ta the baba rhu ou Damé.
  « Ngho vué ndouengaé gin vétewèré. Ngho mé
veneya nanté, go mé toa athé ngho, go mé vékaré
ngho ngain ta ouadou tokouaté.
  « Go te baba rhu ou Mourari.

« 12 juin 1859. »

Figure 7*: Letter to chief Watton in a Kanak language in de la Hautière's journal*

TI WATTON.	AU GRAND CHEF OUATTON.
Mè médyéré lova mo vuané até ou né !	Gloire à Dieu ! Que son saint nom soit béni !
Ngho Kan ongi, go avuinyiri mo ngho.	Tu es notre allié fidèle, je suis ton ami.
Bovouavoué Jaques mo Kandio akao yé amé nantë ta the baba rhu ou Damé.	Les assassins Jack et Kandio sont chez Damé.
Ngho vue ndouengaé gin vétewèré. Ngho mé veneya nanté, go mé toa athé ngho, go mé vékaré ngho ngain ta ouadou tokouaté. Go te baba rhu ou Mourari.	Vas les prendre, tu seras richement récompensé si tu me les amènes, et tu me prouveras que tu es digne d'être l'allié de mon gouvernement.
Le 12 juin 1859	*Au camp de Morari, le 12 juin 1859.*

[To the great chief Watton. Praise to God! May his name be glorified. You are our faithful ally. I am your friend. The murderers Jack and Kandio are with Damé, Go and get them, you will be rewarded greatly if you bring them to me, and you will prove that you are a worthy ally of my government.]

For his loyalty, chief Watton was compensated with 1000 Francs and decorated in 1862 "*d'une médaille en or, frappée en France spécialement pour lui, à l'effigie du souverain*" [a gold medal, specially printed for him in France, with the effigy of the King] (p. 211).

The publication of these letters in a Kanak language, not only show the close relationship between the church and the government in the early days of colonisation, but also how the insertion of snippets of language, or even whole stories, in these early works, mark the beginning of a subtle way of appropriating very recently codified languages and (re)-contextualising them in various contexts. The practice of presenting snippets of Kanak languages to the public as a curiosity, "*pensant que le lecteur sera curieux d'en voir un échantillon*" *(p. 210)* [thinking that the reader might want to see a sample], as de la Hautière puts it, was not uncommon in works of explorers in the 19th century. Moreover, the

representation of the Kanak people in these texts was often very selective. Those who delivered hand services to the French or missionaries, such as Watton or Apégu, were often represented favourably while others were not or ignored altogether.

5.3 The linguist's practice

From the 1960s until the 1980s, linguists and ethnographers such as Haudricourt, Bensa and Rivierre followed in the footsteps of the Marists to conduct further linguistic research into the Cèmuhi language. In order to gain grammatical insight, Bensa and Rivierre partly built their research on the work of the Marists, despite the fact that their work represents a tradition "qui ne sépare jamais le projet scientifique d'un militantisme religieux, moral et politique" [that fails to separate the scientific project from a moral, religious and political militantism], as Bensa describes it in a double interview with Pierre Bourdieu (Bensa and Bourdieu, 1985, p. 69).

Aiming at building a sound corpus of 'real language' on which grammatical claims can be made, the new generation of linguists deployed modern linguistic tools and techniques to extract linguistic and cultural knowledge through the recording of oral histories. These practices used in descriptive linguistics, as well as ethnography, are, as Blommaert (2013b) puts it: "regimented, disciplined practices, that together, produce a 'discourse' or 'regime of truth' on language(s)" (p. 6). Blommaert further notes that the exertion of linguistic authority is typically expressed through the grammar sketch or the so called *esquisse grammaticale* of smaller unwritten languages. The descriptions of these unwritten languages become, as to speak, *artefactual ideologies of language*, which he explains as: "an ideology in which particular textual practices can reduce language to an artefact that can be manipulated like most other objects" (Blommaert, 2008b, p. 292, see also Blommaert, 2013b, p. 8).

It is with regard to the exertion of this authority that one also has to understand the secular linguists' common critique of the work produced by missionaries in the 19th century, which is often considered as lacking in detail or inaccurate. This critique, however, is often inspired by a general uneasiness about the missionary epistemology, rather than that it is based on a thorough comparative analysis between the ethnographic and linguistic observations of the missionary ethno-linguist and that of its scientific counterparts. By dismissing the ethnographic and linguistic notes as trivial or failing to separate the missionaries' religious musings and judgemental observations from the more objective observations on language and culture, valuable insights in the history of early codification of a language and its culture, including the particular nature of its products and practices, are lost[84]. The different practices of missionaries and that of secular linguists, however, are both embedded within a particular epistemological and methodological stance, which Ellen Barton (2004) defines as having "a perspective on knowledge or knowledge making" (p. 74).

Both practices need to be placed on the same continuous line scale, of what Johannes Fabian (1986) calls: "descriptive appropriation" (p. 83) as both the Marists and ethno-linguists have employed a wide range of discursive practices that enabled them to exert some form of authority, either religious or linguistic. In the discussion below, I will show how several key persons have exerted linguistic authority as it progressed from a religiously motivated endeavour to a purely scientific project, starting with Maurice Leenhardt, who can be seen as a link between the two traditions.

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[84] Apart from work of Catholic missionaries in the Americas, such as Hanzeli's work, *Missionary linguistics in New France* (1969) and Suárez Roca's *Lingüística misionera española* (1992), Zwartjes (2012) observes that the work of missionary linguistics has been mainly neglected in the 20th century. It is only in the last two decades that the contribution of missionaries to linguistics and language description has become scrutinised (see also Koerner, 1999).

5.3.1 Maurice Leenhardt and Arthur Capell.   Before the visits of Haudricourt, Bensa and Rivierre, who all did extensive scientific research on Cèmuhi, two other persons made more modest contributions to the description of the language. The most well-known is French ethnographer and Protestant missionary, Maurice Leenhardt, who classified and studied some Kanak languages, resulting in the publication *Langues et Dialectes de l'Austro-Mélanésie* (1946). Less well known is Arthur Cappell, a Sydney based linguist, anthropologist, and Anglican priest, who made a bibliography of earlier work on New Caledonian languages to be found in his *Linguistic survey of the South-Western Pacific* (1954)[85]. His sketchy field notes on Cèmuhi are mainly interesting from a historical point of view and will not be discussed here. My main focus, however, will be on Maurice Leenhardt's contribution to the study of the languages of New Caledonia and more specifically the Cèmuhi language.

Even though missionary, Maurice Leenhardt,[86] had a clear religious agenda, his ethnographic approach, as well as the many sociolinguistic observations he made on Kanak languages, sets his work apart from that of the Catholic missionaries who were less interested in discussing sociolinguistic phenomena, such as language variety, language contact, and linguistic change. In his work, *Langues et Dialectes de l'Austro-Mélanésie* (1946), for instance, Leenhardt gives a comparative overview of the vocabulary of 30 Kanak languages, which he classified in three geographical groups (North, South, and the Loyalty Islands). The main part of this work is dedicated to a succinct overview of each language, covering the phonology, word formation, and construction of phrases. His linguistic observations are partly based on

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[85] Capell, Arthur (1954). *A linguistic survey of the south-west Pacific* (New and Revised ed.). Nouméa, New Caledonia: South Pacific Commission.
[86] Dousset-Leenhardt's biography of Maurice Leenhardt, *L'Homme* (1977), gives a fascinating insight in the personality of Maurice Leenhardt, whom she describes as a man who could play different tunes: poetic, scientific, and pietic (p. 106).

the work of the Marists and on his own research during one of the two scientific trips he made to New Caledonia (Naepels et al., 2007)[87].

In the introduction of his study on Austro-Melanesian languages, Leenhardt makes the observation that, until then, the work of the Marists on the languages of New Caledonia had been mostly overlooked in the earliest studies on Melanesian islands languages, even in French studies such as Meillet and Cohen's *Les Langues du Monde* (1926), where New Caledonia is hardly mentioned. Apart from Father Colomb's aforementioned word list and grammar sketch on the language of Wagap, which could have added to the linguistic knowledge of this part of the world at the time, and Father Lambert's more ethnographic observations in *Moers et Superstitions des Néo-Calédoniens* (1900), there was very little to believe that New Caledonia could have been part of Melanesia, at least not in the minds of non-francophone 19th and 20th century linguists, such as Gabelentz, Father Schmidth, Codrington and Ray, as mentioned by Leenhardt.

Further discussing topics such as language distribution, language change and vitality, and even language death[88], Leenhardt remarks that, apart from inter-tribal war, it was the action of women that caused language change. Referring to the Cèmuhi language, Leenhardt discusses how intermarriage[89] in the Paicî-Cèmuhi region at the time had a profound impact on language change in the area. As more women coming from other clans or regions continued

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[87] Leenhardt writes in his introduction that after having lived for 25 years on the island as a missionary, he and his wife visited New Caledonia again from May 1938 till November 1939, with as specific aim to collect data of all the languages spoken on the archipel (1946, p. IX).

[88] Leenhardt writes rather ironically how the language *Aekè* was spared from extinction only after the leader of the conquering Paici tribe, Gondou, was killed by the French army in 1876, in order to restore the peace in the region. It allowed the Aekè to rebuild their villages on the conquered land to the point that it reinvigorated their language (p. XV).

[89] The phenomenon of intermarriage is also discussed by Haudricourt and Hollyman (1960, p. 225) which, as they note, is seen by the Kanak people as a major reason of linguistic change.

to teach their children their mother tongue, their language gradually gained inroads in the clan of their husbands: "Ainsi dans la région du cap de Tiparama, vers Poindimié, nous avons vu, en trente ans, la langue Camuki[90] reculer en faveur de la langue Pati, par le seul fait que les femmes, qui jadis venaient de Touho, ont été prises, dans la précédente génération, du côté de Bayes et de Ponérihouen" [So, in the region of Cap Tiparama, towards Poindimié, we saw how the language Camuki retreated in 20 years in favour of the Pati language, for the simple reason that the women, who used to come from Touho, were taken in the previous generations from Bayes and Ponérihouen] (p. xvi).
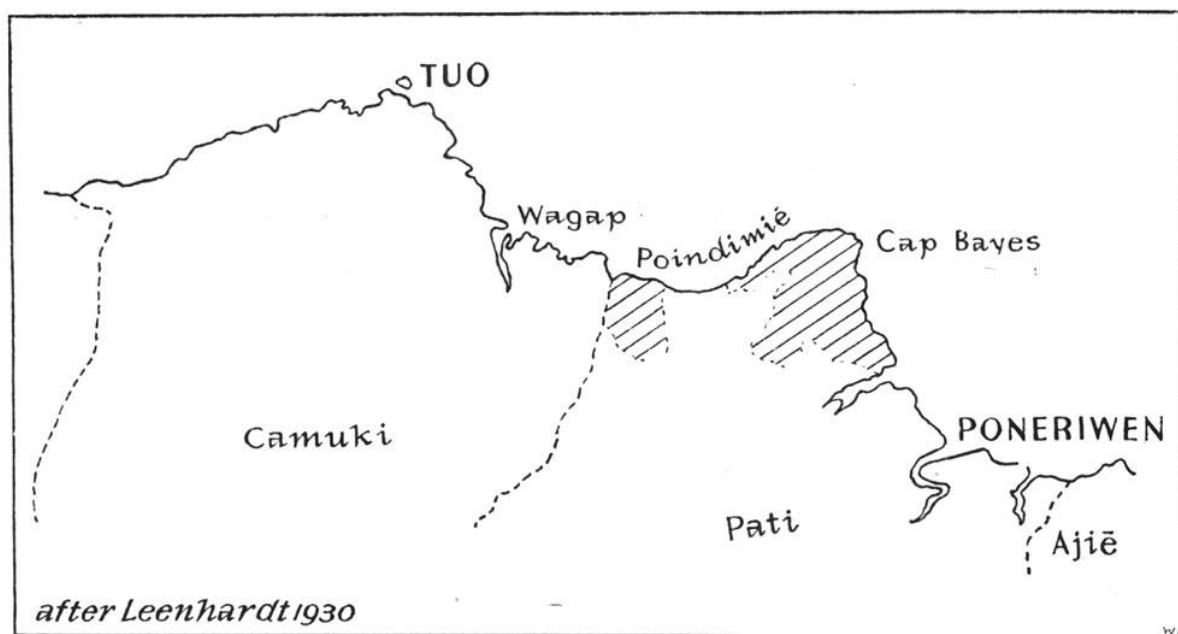
MAP III

Camuki areas lost to Pati as a result of a change in the clans with which intermarriage took place.

Figure 8: *Map from Haudricourt and Hollyman (1960, p. 226)*

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[90] Cèmuhi was first written as Camuki by Leenhardt, reflecting the pronunciation of neighbouring languages who do not have the phoneme /h/ (Haudricourt 1968 p. 228).

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As Leenhardt's study is comparative in nature, the notes on each language are very brief. In total, only nine pages are dedicated to the *Camuki* language. The notes, which are mainly based on Colomb's grammar sketch, are presented in a scientifically structured fashion. Phonetic features, overlooked by Colomb, are now added in the consonant inventory, such as the palatal plosives [c] and [ɟ], which, as discussed earlier, have no phonemic status in Colomb's analysis.

A discussion of the nominaliser *a*, discussed under the section, Articles, in Colomb's analysis, is treated under a separate section on *invariable particles*, which also includes a discussion on the assertive particle *tè* and the personal masculine article *pa*, mistakenly analysed by Leenhardt as '*particule d'insistance'* [assertive particle], as in:

Panae dame [the son of the chief]

Which in Rivierre's orthography reads as:

Pa   nai-n daame [the son of the chief]
Art. masc. son-his chief

In a footnote, however, Leenhardt asks the question whether the particle *pa* could also play a role as an emphatic masculine particle, noting that Colomb has left it out from his dictionary. Leenhardt then moves on to a description of some variable particles, mainly focusing on the extensive sets of personal pronouns in Cèmuhi. His outline, however, seems to be merely a repeat of Colomb's outline.

While Leenhardt provides more linguistic insight and knowledge, his notes on the Cèmuhi grammar remain sketchy and incomplete. His work is mainly significant from a comparative point of view, as the second part of this work gives an impressive overview of several categories of vocabulary in the 36 languages, bearing witness to Leenhardt's extensive

knowledge of Kanak culture and languages. While his work does not add significantly to the process of codification of the Cèmuhi language, it takes an important place into the emergence of the comparative method in the 19th century, which was aimed at comparing the sound system, vocabulary, and grammar of different languages, especially non-European languages.

5.3.2 André Haudricourt. The first professional description of the languages of New Caledonia was produced by André Haudricourt, a French linguist who visited the territory as early as 1959. He classified the Kanak languages of New Caledonia into six major groups, according to their geographical location: Far North, North, Center (with two subgroups), South, Far South, and the Loyalty Islands. In his Grammar, Rivierre (1980, p. 15) writes how Haudricourt revised a word list of about 2500 words compiled by André Dufour in March 1963 in Tiwaé, the village of Suzanne Poinine. Haudricourt's main contribution, however, is a study of the prosodic system in some of the five New Caledonian tone languages[91], including Cèmuhi, and its neighbouring language, Paicî. They both share the for Austronesian languages rare phenomenon of tonality, a feature that was ignored by Marists and Leenhardt alike. Haudricourt's hypothesis for this tonogenenis was discussed in a paper titled, *La langue de Gomen et la langue de Touho en Nouvelle-Calédonie* (1968)[92]. In this paper, Haudricourt writes, "Je pus en 1963 passer deux semaines à Tiouaé, près de Touho, et en vérifiant le sens et la prononciation des mots, m'apercevoir qu'il s'agissait bien d'une langue à tons ponctuels, ou à régistres, hypothèse à laquelle m'avait conduit la pauvreté en phonèmes de cette langue [In 1963, I was able to spent two weeks in Tiwaé, near Touho, and while checking the meaning

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[91] Grace was the first to claim that New Caledonia had five tone languages in 1955 (Rivierre 1993). These are Cèmuhi, Paicî, Numèè, Drubea and Kwenyi.

[92] Haudricourt, André-Georges (1968). *La langue de gomen et la langue de touho en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, Bulletin de la Société de Linguistique de Paris, LXIII, p. 93-104.

and pronunciation of the words, realised that it was a level tone language, or a register tone language, a hypothesis I made on the basis of the lack of phonemes in this language" (p. 227). Haudricourt is in fact referring to the handwritten manuscript of Colomb's French-Tyamuhi word list, which was found in the mission of Touho by Jean Guiart in 1950. At the invitation of Haudricourt, linguist Jean-Claude Rivierre, who had already done research on tonal languages, subsequently visits New Caledonia to check the word list for tonality. It is from that moment that both old and new texts will receive tone markings, including the 'letter of Jack', as shown earlier. In a later paper, *Tonogenesis in New Caledonia*, Rivierre (1993, p. 160) reiterates Haudricourt's hypothesis that there is a correspondence between high tone in Cèmuhi and aspirated consonants and voiceless fricatives of some northern languages, such as Kumak, Nemi, Fwai, Pijé, and Pwapwa[93].

5.3.3 Alban Bensa. According to French ethnographer Bensa et al. (1985), the most visible traces of Kanak culture, such as the sculptures, the traditional round huts (*mwa*) and the alleys (*pwaadén*)[94] along which these huts are symbolically and choreographically configured, have been gradually eradicated by the mission and the colonial administration. For that reason, as Bensa puts it: "*une ethnologie moins visuelle qu'auditive… s'impose* [an ethnology that is auditory rather than visual is essential]" (p. 77). Bensa's *ethnologie*

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[93] Rivierre (1993, p. 156) argues that high tone and aspirated consonants have a common origin in previous syllable reduplication, which can produce geminate or double consonants, a process which Haudricourt had observed in some Polynesian languages, such as Kapingamarangi. Depending on the language, he further argues, these double consonants have subsequently developed into tones languages or languages with aspirated consonants.

[94] In *La Maison Kanak,* Boulay (1990, p. 48) writes that "L'existence d'une grande allée dominée par la case de l'aîné du lignage est l'apanage des chefferies importantes. Elle est, comme le disent les locuteurs de langue Cèmuhî, le signe de la présence d'un contenant de chef [or mwo daame in Cèmuhi]." [The existence of a grand alley dominated by the hut of the eldest in the lineage is the privilege of the important chiefdoms. It is, as the speakers of Cèmuhi say, the sign of the content of the chief.].

du discours[95] is exemplified in his major work (co-authored with Jean-Claude Rivierre), *Les Chemins de l'alliance* (1982)[96], which gives a detailed description of the socio-political structure of Cèmuhi society.

Attempting to reconcile *l'oralité* or *La Parole Kanak* with the notational style of the ethno-linguist, Bensa's aim was to construct a blueprint of the Cèmuhi social system as it emerged through the oral testimonies of the Cèmuhi society's protagonists. According to Monnerie (1993, p. 27), Bensa's work stands out from that of many researchers who chose to collect information in Kanak French, often without taking into account the implications of this choice made in either a colonial context, or in a bilingual or trilingual society that is still dominated by Kanak languages.

Les Chemins de l'alliance consists of two parts. The first part explains the Cèmuhi social system and aims to provide a framework for the understanding of the eight traditional texts that were collected in several Cèmuhi villages around Touho. Bensa (1982, p. 12) notes that the main form through which Cèmuhi express themselves are traditional literary genres, such as, *cihedée* (legends or stories), *jèma* (historical-mythical traditions), and *pwöoti* (expressions or recounts of certain events). While the eight stories presented in his work all belong to the category of legends, Bensa also includes other genres of oral expressions (such as songs or poetry), mainly as part of the commentary that accompanies each story.

Bensa starts out with an outline of the territorial or spatial divisions, highlighting some of the keywords that provide a framework for his discussion on the Cèmuhi social system,

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[95] See also Monnerie (1993, p. 27).
[96] Bensa, A. and J.C. Rivierre (1982). *Les Chemins de l'alliance*. *L'organisation sociale et ses représentations en Nouvelle-Calédonie (Région de Touho — aire linguistique cèmuhî)*. Paris: Selaf.

which, as he summarises, is characterised by the orienting role of the place of residence and spatial reference in the construction of kinship groups (Bensa, 1982, p. 7). While it is not the aim here to repeat or give an in-depth discussion of all the key terms, it is important to introduce them here briefly, as some of the terms also emerge in the writing of Suzanne Poinine. For now, this brief introduction of some of the key terms, as explained by Bensa, will be complemented by a discussion of their contemporary use in texts written by Suzanne Poinine, as the analysis in Chapter 7 will aim to show.

Bensa starts with the overarching spatial reference of the *amu* (referred to by the Kanak as *le pays* [the land]) where people from the same house or clan (*mwa*) reside, fish, hunt and cultivate their gardens. People from the same *mwa*, however, can also reside outside the *amu*, which can be a valley or coastal area. They belong to the same clan. At the lower level is the domestic space or the *pomwo,* which refers to the basic residential unit consisting of a group of residential houses or traditional huts (*ju-mwa*), where the usual domestic and ceremonial activities take place. These residential huts were traditionally lined up along the main alley or *na-pomwo;* at the far end of the alley was the house of the chief or mwa-*daame*, as well as the *mwa hiuulè*, a smaller hut in which the chief stores the treasures of the clan, precious objects or gifts that have been received. Some of the huts are for communal use or for visitors, such as the *paao* [cooking hut] and the *mwa hwo* [hut for reunions]. Each hut is built on the foundation of a raised mound or *bidaa mwa*, which can also refer to a parental group or the *pwomaiu,* which is the convergence of a domestic space (*pomwo*), linked to the mound on which the hut is built (*bidaa mwa)*; or, as Bensa describes it, the identity of the *pwomwaiu* is built through a set of both genealogical as spatial references, hence his translation "tertre-lignage" [land lineage] (p. 57).

Bensa concludes with a description of the residential group or *mwo-daame,* which refers to a group of affiliated 'tertre-lineages'. The *mwo daame* is, so to speak, the domain of the chief (le "contenant du chef") (pp. 69-70). The different land-lineages or *pwomwaiu* within the *mwo-daame* are positioned hierarchically according to the original foundation of their original land or tertre, which is linked to an ancestor or chief, whereby the oldest chief takes up a higher place than the younger ones (the subjects).

The second part contains a transcription of eight stories belonging to the genre of the *cihedee* or legends. The stories are archetypically presented in an ethno-linguistic format, where each utterance is numbered, with an interlinear gloss underneath. An image of the legend 'Le masque et la liane céleste' [the mask and the celestial vine] is shown below:
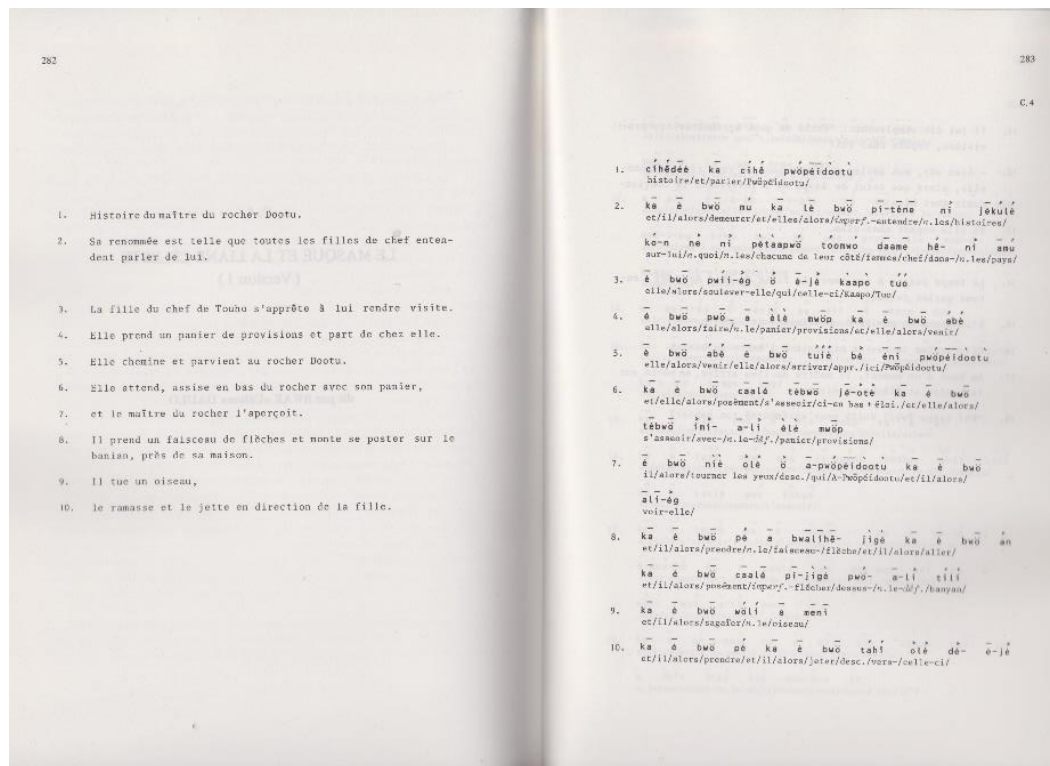

Figure 9*: Kanak legend transcribed and published in Les Chemins de l'alliance*

(Bensa and Rivierre, 1982, pp. 282-83)

5.3.4 Jean-Claude Rivierre.

5.3.4.1 Orthography. Rivierre has made several changes to the orthography used by the Marist Fathers. He made a distinction between short and long vowels, differentiated between the open vowel [o] and half open vowel [ɔ]. He also accounted for nasalisation and tone, phonological features that were ignored by the Marist. Following the scientific dogma that each sound should be represented by a separate symbol, Rivierre has chosen for an orthography that reflects linguistic accurateness rather than practicality. The overrepresentation of the sound system in Rivierre's orthography is reflected in the style of notation, with the use of a two-tier level of diacritics (one to distinguish vowels at phonemic level and one to account for three level tone). Drawing on the phonological characteristics and repertoire of the French language, Rivierre uses diacritics such as acute accent (é), grave accent (è), and trema (o vs ö) to make a distinction between the different vowels, and the circumflex to indicate nasality (â, ê, î, ô). A second tier of tonal marks (´ ‾ `) is used to represent the three-tone system discovered by Haudricourt.

Unfortunately, Rivierre's changes to the orthography did not enhance the readability of the Cèmuhi language, as many Cèmuhi speakers testified (personal communication). Rivierre's goal, however, was not to develop an orthography aimed at facilitating reading and writing in the language, but to give complete and accurate picture of the Cèmuhi sound system; as such, reflecting the linguist's agenda.

5.3.4.2 Grammar. Apart from his contribution to Bensa's ethnographic work, Jean Claude Rivierre also developed a grammar and dictionary in the Cèmuhi language. As a former member of INALCO, Rivierre made several trips to New Caledonia to describe several of the Kanak languages. His first missions to the Cèmuhi area were in 1971, 1972, and 1975 (together

with Alban Bensa) with the aim to further study tonality, a lexicographic investigation and to collect oral text, a work which he claims had not yet been done before.

Rivierre's grammatical description is based on a corpus of "plus de trente heures de textes enregistrés comprenant des contes, légendes, mythes claniques, textes historiques, cérémoniels, anecdotiques, etc. [more than thirty hours of recorded texts including stories, legends, clan myths, historical texts, ceremonies, anecdotes, etc.]" (p. 16).

He also notes that: "[u]ne *esquisse grammaticale*, destinée à la nouvelle édition des Langues du Monde, a d'abord été rédigée en 1971" [a grammar sketch was first prepared to be included in the new edition of *Langues du* Monde [languages of the world] in 1971]. This grammar description was conducted with the help of a questionnaire of phrases as they were compiled in the work *Enquête et description des langues à tradition orale* by Bouquiaux and Thomas (1971), and of which an English translation appeared within SIL International in 1992. In the preface (dated 1976), Rivierre admits to having no practical knowledge or experience of the language and that the grammar he developed aimed to provide a clear and progressive presentation, which is: "(…). susceptible d'être lue avec profit par un public familiarisé ou non avec avec les notions linguistiques. J'espère donc que cette description sera utile au lecteur profane autant que spécialiste des langues océaniennes" [Susceptible to be read with ease by an audience that is familiar or not with linguistic terminology. I therefore hope that this description will be of use to both the uninitiated and the specialist of oceanic languages] (p. 16).

It needs to be seen, however, whether his grammar has also reached the Cèmuhî speaker uninitiated to linguistic terminology. Rivierre's *esquisse grammatical* follows a pattern or structure that is often used in descriptive linguistics, starting with a description of the

smallest units of language, the sounds or the phonology, followed by the basic categories of words or word classes, then the simple propositions, complex propositions, and, finally, a small corpus of texts. It is what Blommaert (2013, p. 38) sees as the "canonical structure" shared by these grammar sketches.

A closer look at Rivierre's grammar reveals the archetypical processes through which specialist linguists in the 20th century have captured the linguistic and cultural realities of speech communities whose languages had not yet been codified. Even though the methodologies of language description have become much more participative, especially in the field of language documentation, they were far less so in the 1960s and 1970s, where the linguist was still very much in charge of the process of data collection. Similar to what Van Toorn (2006) recounts as "word hunting expeditions" (p. 42) of linguists working among Australian indigenous language groups, one Cèmuhi elder told [personal communication] the anecdotal story of how a white man visited her village in the 1960s, prompting her to say the name of the objects he was showing or was pointing at.

While linguists have welcomed Rivierre's highly technical grammar and description of the phonology and grammatical system of the Cèmuhi language, it is doubtful that these the visits of French linguists have been received with the same enthusiasm by the Cèmuhi people themselves.

5.3.4.3 Dictionary. A second work of elaboration is Rivierre's *dictionnaire Cèmuhi-Français* (1990), followed by a French-Cèmuhi finders list and a glossary of biological, botanical, and marine terms. Rivierre used lexical material made available by Haudricourt. While the development of a dictionary in a small language as Cèmuhi can be seen as an important step towards the standardisation of the language, it was never Rivierre's intention

to propose a norm-setting orthography. Inscribed in the tradition of descriptive linguistics, where lexicographic work usually accompanies the grammatical description of previously unwritten languages, Rivierre's aim is to give a detailed account of the vocabulary of the Cèmuhi language. The 4000 or so entries are presented with as much phonological and morphological detail to form as to the meaning as linguistically required, making it, as Tryon (1998) describes it in a review of this work: "an invaluable tool, especially when used in conjunction with earlier phonologically oriented papers and books published by A.G. Haudricourt, F. Ozanne-Rivierre and J.C. Rivierre since the mid-sixties". With a similar notational style as in Bensa's work, the entries are presented with morphological breaks, augmented with two levels of diacritics and a second tier of gloss, which serve as a proof of the linguist's technical expertise and authority over the grammar of the language.

5.3.4.4 Texts. A corpus of texts form, alongside the grammar and dictionary, the prototypical triumvirate aimed at giving a complete picture of the language under study. Even though Rivierre's grammar is based on a variety of texts, he only includes a traditional legend and a historical text in his two major works. The majority of Cèmuhi texts are to be found in Bensa's *Les Chemins de l'alliance*, as discussed above, and of which an audio corpus of each text can be accessed on the website of the *Laboratoire de Langues et Civilisations à Tradition Orale* (LACITO).

Legends and traditional stories are usually the default genre to be found in technical descriptions of unwritten language. They form, so to speak, the *mores veteres* or the texts of the ancients on which grammatical claims are made. The first text is the *Légende du chef de Hienghène* [Legend of the chief of Hienghène]. In the English *résumé* of his grammar, Rivierre (1980) writes that: "the work ends with a sample of traditional text" (p. 7). The text has a total

of 172 lines of interlinear text, with a numbered French translation on the left of each page. In a footnote, Rivierre mentions that the story is told by a certain *atéè tijit* from Tiwaka, without giving any further details about the circumstances and context in which the story was told. The second text is a more, historical story that recounts the first encounter between the Kanak in the Cèmuhi region and the Marists*. Les débuts de la mission mariste à Wagap* is a Cèmuhi speaker's recollection of an event that must have become part of the collective memory of the Cèmuhi community. This account of the beginnings of the Marist mission in Wagap was collected in the village of Tiunao, in the presence of Emmanuel Amo, descendant of the chief (Apitéègen) who once welcomed the missionaries. In the introduction of the dictionary, Rivierre writes that the story concerns: "un texte *rédigé*, élaboré par des représentants du lignage Waka-Amo, et consigné dans un cahier à partir duquel il nous a été dicté" [an edited text, drafted by representatives of the Wako-Amo lineage, and recorded in a notebook from which it has been dictated to us] (p. 39). A sample of the second text shown below reflects how dictation and notation were part of the linguist's key practices. The first three lines of story, which has a total of 341 lines, are represented as a cluster of the Cèmuhi original, as told by the teller, with underneath interlinear text, and with the French translation at the end of each page. It is represented in Rivierre's dictionary (1990, p. 41) as follows:

1.
 wö Mgr. Douarre me ni daame iitihi hè lé tuiè ne Balade ka alo luupwö-naa lu tuiè bé ne Tuo.
lui qui/Mgr Douarre/avec/*n.*les/chefs-sacrés/quand/ils/arriver/à/Balade/et/deux/ces2-là/ils
arriver/par ici/à Tuo/
2.

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Ka wö pa-jè apitéèngen daame ne éni tiwaka me amo è pi-tene a-li bwö pii nen piè

Et/lui qui/celui-ci/Apitéègen/chef/à/ici/Tiwaka/avec/Amo/*impf.*-entendre/*n.la-déf.*/façon-dire/que

3.

Ilu tuo wö lupwö apuliè naa pwajo julu ka lupwö jène lépwö li lé caa met

Ils2 à/Tuo/eux qui/les2/hommes/que/blanc/eux2/et/les2/esprits-/les-que

déf/ils/*acc.*/morts/

1. A l'époque où Mgr. Douarre et les missionaires débarquent à Balade, deux d'entre eux viennent jusqu'à Touho.
2. Apitéègen, chef de la Tiwaka et de l'Amoa, entend dire qu'
3. A Touho se trouvent deux hommes blancs, deux revenants.

[In the time when Monseigneur Douarre and the missionaries disembarked in Balade, two of them arrived in Touho. Apitéèngen, chief of Tiwaka and Amoa, heard that there were two white men, two who had 'returned'[97]].

A couple of observations need to be made with regard to the text sample above: First, the interlinear format of the text reveals Rivierre's intention of presenting the reader with a sample of text that represents the Cèmuhi language as an artefactual object of study for the purpose of linguistic analysis rather than a purely historical recount. The fact that the words and sentences are divided into different parts, with an interlinear gloss or a word-for-word translation underneath and a string of meta-language explaining the morphology or syntax, underpins that the linguist's intentions prevail over that of the storyteller, whose expectations it is that history is told. A historical recount becomes as such refracted through the lens of the linguist, whose primary purpose is to present the reader with a sample of text used as

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[97] The English translation of Rivierre's French version of the Cèmuhi text are mine. For 'readability', the Cèmuhi orthography has been adapted to current 'conventions'. For purposes of linguistic analysis, the original version will be used in Chapter 6 and 7.

empirical evidence for the grammatical or lexical claims he makes in the grammar and dictionary. Instead of presenting the reader with historical insights, it is the linguist's aim to reframe the story. The fact that these historical stories are mostly found in the context of dictionaries and grammar description, and not in a history books, suggests that these stories are not meant to be taken at face value, that is, as historical accounts intended as such from a Cèmuhi perspective. Furthermore, Rivierre does not provide the information as to why, how, and in which context the story was told by the anonymous teller, information which as one would expect is essential for the reader who wants to gain insight into one's point of view.

Secondly, Rivierre reverts to the highly technical practice of recording and transcription, which is the most common tool in the linguistic toolbox, instead of notation as measure of recording the stories. As Van Toorn (2006) observed in the context of recording Aboriginal speech, the difference between the two is critical, as dictation asserts the authority of the speaker, while transcription on the other hand over-rides the speaker's intention through what she calls "unauthorised editing" (p. 48, see also Van Toorn, 2007, p. 174) of the transcriber. Similar remarks are made by Blommaert (2013b), who argues that the reconstruction of data allows the linguist to assert his linguistic authority.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to show how the codification of the Cèmuhi has evolved, from its first steps of codification by the Marist, to the subsequent work of descriptive appropriation by professional linguists. I have aimed to show that the resulting products in each movement or stage are the result of certain practices through which a certain form of authority is exerted. With this historical overview, I have aimed to show that both the Marists and ethno-linguists, Bensa and Rivierre, have applied western academically-imbued practices that involve the

maintenance of outsider's authority over the construction and dissemination of either religious, cultural or linguistic, knowledge in the Cèmuhi language.

It also proposes that the different ideological agendas from the Marists on the one hand and that of ethno-linguists on the other hand do not justify an anti-thetical view between the two, but need to be placed on a continuous line of practice involving dissimilar processes of appropriation of a language. Translation was used by the Marists to maintain authority over the construction of knowledge, which was then shared with the local people, while transcription was used by ethno-linguists to relegate some of this power to the local community, even if they remained in control of the process of knowledge construction. The above two positions of authority from the outsider are now being reclaimed through the writing – or what I will call the 'emerging writing' from the position of a native speaker of the Cèmuhi language, Suzanne Poinine.

Chapter 6:

Meta-Linguistic Phenomena in The Practice of Writing Cèmuhi

6.1 Introduction

This chapter is an analysis of meta-linguistic phenomena in the practice of writing Cèmuhi. I will first discuss some of the challenges and obstacles Suzanne Poinine has encountered as a member of a society where oral traditions are strong, especially in the Northern Province of New Caledonia. I will then give a brief outline of the different text types or genres she produced over the last four decades, such as word lists, sentences, short stories (of cultural or daily practices), personal narratives, or first person accounts and legends. This will be followed by a *Rich Feature Analysis* based on a corpus of 'unedited' handwritten manuscripts. The rich feature analysis of the different text genres presented below will focus on tracing emerging textual, formal, as well as organisational, features in the text corpus.

6.2 The constraints of writing in a minority language

Even though most established Kanak writers express themselves in French nowadays, often justifying themselves for doing so, such as well-known Kanak writer and politician, Déwé Gorodey[98], some Kanak people have also made attempts to write in their own mother tongue from as early as the 1900s. Bwesou Eurijisi, for instance, considered the first Kanak writer by Jean Guiart (1998), wrote in his mother tongue, Ajië, and was one of several indigenous *natas*[99]

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[98] In an interview in the Kanak cultural review Mwa Vee (nr. 24) Déwé Gorodey, for instance, justifies the appropriation of the coloniser's language as follows: "when I write in French I use a Kanak way of thinking ...somehow by using the French language to achieve my ends I am engaging in subversion" (Jouve et al., 2005, p. 12).

[99] Kanak pastors.

who received training by Maurice Leenhardt at the established mission of Do Neva in Houialou. Apart from those names who made it into the local history books, there are more and more invisible Kanak people who have at least tried once to write in their mother tongue, such as Suzanne Poinine. Yet, in her own community, she is the exception. Writing in a minority language, however, comes with limitations and constraints. Apart from the socio-political discrimination of language minority groups, there are also the constraints of writing in a language without a fixed orthography and with very little reference points or co-text. She is effectively deprived from the convenience of intertextuality, which refers to the interrelationship between texts or what Bakhtin (1986) saw as the dialogic process or relationship between and within texts (see also Kristeva, 1980)[100].

Poinine also had to deal with socio-cultural stigma. Her writing has often been received with criticism from within her own community. In a society where knowledge is traditionally constructed and shared through the oral storytelling of the elders, the solitary nature of the act of writing has been interpreted by some members of her village as an expression of contempt for the Melanesian tradition, where many of the tasks and activities are done collectively or by consensus. Yet, these obstacles have not deterred Poinine to explore her life and culture in writing. As a walker who tests a new walking stick, poking at the obstacles and potholes they encounter on the track, so too has Suzanne Poinine tested her tool - her pen - which enables her to construct words, sentences and stories in a language of which the morphological bits and pieces have only just started to reveal themselves, partly through her familiarity with existing works in Cèmuhi, such as Rivierre's grammar and dictionary, but

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[100] Referring to the interrelationship between texts, Julia Kristeva (1980) describes textuality rather opaque as "a *productivity* [...] in the space [of which] a given text, several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralise one another" (p. 36).

mainly from her own growing awareness and intuitive in experimenting with the sound patterns, rhythm, and grammatical structure of a language for which community consensus of an acceptable orthography has yet to be reached.

This short biography shows that, even though Poinine's writing could be seen as an act of distancing from the Melanesian tradition of constructing and sharing knowledge through oral storytelling, it can also be perceived as an act of appropriation, innovation, or embracing the cultural and linguistic world as it is re-constructed through writing which, as Goody (1977) described it in the context of oral societies, is "the achievement of individual intellectuals trying to make sense of their new universe … and to produce a synthesis of the two traditions that was personally meaningful to them. In so doing they are pursuing the role of the intellectual in society, whether that society is simple or complex, literate or non-literate, colonial or traditional" (p. 34).

6.3 Text genres

6.3.1 Word lists. The variety of handwritten documents that were produced by Suzanne Poinine takes a significant place in the ongoing process of codification of the Cèmuhi language. As one of the few people who can write in the language, these texts in Cèmuhi are one of a kind, as they were created without the use of any intermediary practices such as translation and transcription by non-native outsiders. The first type of texts or genre that I will discuss are 'word lists' which, as Goody (1977) notes, are proto-typical examples of early writing systems, whether these were made in Ancient Mesopotamia[101] or in more contemporary contexts. They represent a timeless activity of people wanting to categorise,

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[101] Goody (1977) notes that the activity of making lists in Ancient Mesopotamia is the object of a particular field of study known as 'Listenwissenshaft'or 'the science of list making'.

label, or classify knowledge by giving names to objects in the world around them. Not surprisingly, word lists are also one of the genres to be found in Suzanne Poinine's early writing repertoire.

The data obtained for this study contain several pages of hand written word lists, some of which contain very short and simple topical listings of trees and plants, while others are more extensive lists, with additional example sentences. The word lists compiled by Suzanne Poinine can be roughly divided into four categories: *graphic*, *syllabic, topical,* and *homophonic lists*, of which each will now be given some brief consideration.

The *graphic lists* contain strings of words starting with the letter M and N, each containing 84 and 56 words, respectively. At first sight, the lists seem to be just that: words, randomly put together one after the other and separated with a comma, as a copy of the manuscripts below shows:

Figure 10*: List of words starting with the letter 'M'*

As the lists above show, the M-word list also contains words which start with the prenasal sound [mw], which has phonemic value and is therefore listed separately under the letter 'mw' in Rivierre's dictionary. The same can be said for the word 'nyu' [anchor, herb] at the end of

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the N-list, shown below. The palatalised nasal [ny], which has phonemic value in Rivierre's dictionary, is not treated as a separate phoneme by Suzanne Poinine.

Figure 11: *List of words starting with the letter 'N'*

A second category is *syllabic* word lists. The example below, for instance, shows how five different columns of words are categorised according to the first syllable or consonant-vowel sequence: ta-tè-ti-to-tu-té:

Figure 12: *Syllabic word list*

A third category is topical *word lists*, organised and labelled under different semantic fields or topics, such as names of plants, trees and food items. In total, six topical word lists were copied from the original manuscripts, of which a picture of list VI is shown below:

I. vulvuaa [palm trees], (5 entries)

II. tai [climbing plants or lianas], (19 entries)

III. acuut wahin [small bush trees], (8 entries)

IV. mèté [grasses], (36 entries)

V. o [bamboos], (7 entries)

VI. ni nii ju[102] waéo [the 'authentic' names of Taros] (21 entries)

Figure 13: *List of 'authentic' names of Taro species*

Some topical lists are also alphabetically sorted, but without being given a particular label, such as the seventh list containing the names of trees:

VII. Trees

-A- awia [mamala tree]

acuö pwödan [prickly tree]

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[102] The determinative particle 'ju' is usually preposed to a noun to indicate that an object or natural being is considered as 'authentic' or 'traditional'.

aawhi [shrub used for its bark]

-B- bwicia [calabash tree]

bonuaa [?]

bwéit [hard aspen, citrus]

bwone acuut [?]

-C- cèlè [flowering plant, wild aubergine]

-D- dologo [orange tree]

dèluo éjaa [coral tree or "peuplier Kanak"]

dèluö wöjo [white coral tree]

-E- éjaa [pine tree]

ééi [Malay apple tree]

èlèbwé [Glue berry tree]

èpi [pea plant[103]]

ééi caoot [wild myrtle plant]

ééi pwo pwaalé ['White people' myrtle plant]

ènèdi [medicinal plant?]

The *homophonic* word list contains words that share similar homophonic or homographic syllables. As each word in this list is illustrated with example sentences, this list will be discussed under the genre of 'sentences'.

6.3.2 Sentences. The second type of texts are sentences that almost always form part of a list of words illustrated by an example sentence in which the key word is used. The list, shown below, contains 18 numbered sentences, without key words.

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[103] Written as *èèpé* in Rivierre's dictionary.

Figure 14: *Sentences numbered I-XVIII*

There are also two lists with words that share a combination of homographic and homophonic properties, such as the list below, which contains 12 sentences. Finally, a shorter list with 7 sentences contains key words which have certain sounds and syllable patterns in common, such as the words *m(i)i* [the false guaiac], *nim* [five], *in* [breadfruit tree], *timi* [to paint], *meté* [grass], and *meni* [bird].

Figure 15: *A list of words that show homographic and/or homophonic similarities*

The bulk of the sentences are arranged around words that start with the letter A. The words, however, are not further ordered by the second or subsequent letters in the alphabet, as illustrated by two of a total of four pages that contain 97 entries and accompanying example sentences:

Figure 16: *Two pages with sentences starting with the letter 'A'*

6.3.3 Short Stories. A third type are short stories of cultural objects and common food items. The stories, which were written at the occasion of the Kanak writing festival, Su fè, *tara,* are titled:

Adi [Kanak money]

A û [The Yam]

Tààwi [The water taro field]

A è apwömi [The pandanus]
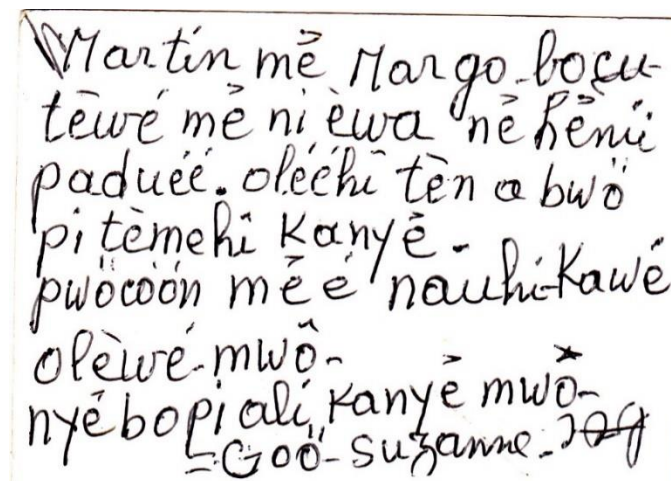
Three other unpublished stories are focused on customary practices performed at the occasion of the birth of a child and the preparation of a wedding. The latter story, shown below, also has a French word-for-word translation and contains drawings illustrating the different steps that are involved in making a traditional wedding dress, which makes it one of the first samples of procedural writing in the Cèmuhi language.

Figure 17*: Short story 'The dress of Bourao', with drawings*

6.3.4 Personal story. A last genre produced by Suzanne Poinine are short accounts in

the first person, including a personal testimony about how she became a Christian. Apart from

this personal story, she also wrote a short 'thank you'-note[104] and a few personal reflections

in response to a questionnaire[105], which was aimed at assessing the feasibility of organising a

writing workshop in the village of Tiwaé. She, for instance, writes: "É tii ni nyêbi, ni cihêdée, é

bitèhi hê pwö tié ni jèkulè hè pwopwaalé (français) [I write songs, legends, I translate stories

from the language Tié into French[106]]. She also wrote a 'thank you' note –written on a small

card– signed with both her Cèmuhi name 'Goö' and her French name, as can be seen below:

Figure 18*: A 'thank you' note written by Suzanne Poinine*

The handwritten story, however, which Poinine gave to me unsolicited during my second field

trip in September 2015, is the only story/personal narrative written in the first person. The

story, shown below, contains 9 lines (a total of 94 words) written in Cèmuhi, and with a French

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[104] The note, addressed to my wife and myself, was sent to us after we provided her daughter Ruth (and
grandson Bo) with accommodation during a medical visit to Sydney in 2015.
[105] The questionnaire was conducted during my first field trip in November 2014 (See responses to the
questionnaire in the Appendix).
[106] 'Popwaalè' literally means 'the language of the White people'.

translation made by herself. Touching in its simplicity and fascinating in its complexity, it tells

the story about how she fell ill and consulted a traditional healer in her village. However, after

she was healed, she writes how she felt burdened, until she received 'a pwooti' [a word], which

forms the turning point of the text.

Figure 19*: Suzanne Poinine's personal testimony (in French and Cèmuhi)*[107]

6.3.5 Legends. A last genre in the repertoire of Poinine is legends. The written data

obtained contain in total four legends: *The legend of Bèwééne, The legend of the Flying Fox,*

the legend of big worm and small worm, and *the legend of rat and octopus*. Some of the

legends are also known in other language groups on the territory and even in the Pacific.

Moreover, some of them have never been written down before in the Cèmuhi language, while

some are also known in other languages of New Caledonia and more widely among language

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[107] See discussion in Chapter 7 for and English translation.

groups in the Pacific, pointing to centuries of migration and exchange. A slightly shorter version of Suzanne Poinine's 'Rat and Octopus', for instance, is also known as *Le rat et la poule sultane* [The rat and the purple swamphen], collected and transcribed in Ajié[108] and published in the grammar on the language of Houailou by ethno-linguist Jacqueline de la Fontinelle (1976). A similar version of this story, as collected in the language of Nauru in Micronesia, has been subject to a comparative study with the Ajié-version by Petit-Skinner (1978)[109].

Even though they take an important place in the repertoire of Suzanne Poinine's writings, they are strictly speaking part of the oral literature that has been handed down from word of mouth over many generations. Poinine is thus mainly transcribing or writing down an existing story that has gone through various formative stages. It has been noted that the structure of the legend is already present in the mind; it is there in the collective mind of the people who transmitted the legend orally from generation to generation (Olson and Torrance, 1996). For that reason, the legends written down by Poinine will not be taken into consideration for the thematic analysis in Chapter 7. They are nevertheless worthy of mention, as some of them have never been written down before. They also may shed light on some of Poinine's writing practice in general. The four legends, of which an image of one of them is presented below, will be shown to the interested reader in the Appendix.

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[108] Ajié is spoken in the region of Houailou on the mid-east coast of New Caledonia.

[109] While it is not the aim here to make a comprehensive interpretation of the content of the different versions of this story in particular, some comparison will be made between the transcribed versions and Suzanne Poinine's written version, as they reveal some interesting differences between the oral and the written, and between the practice of transcription and the practice of writing, as will be made clear when discussing traces of orality in her writing.
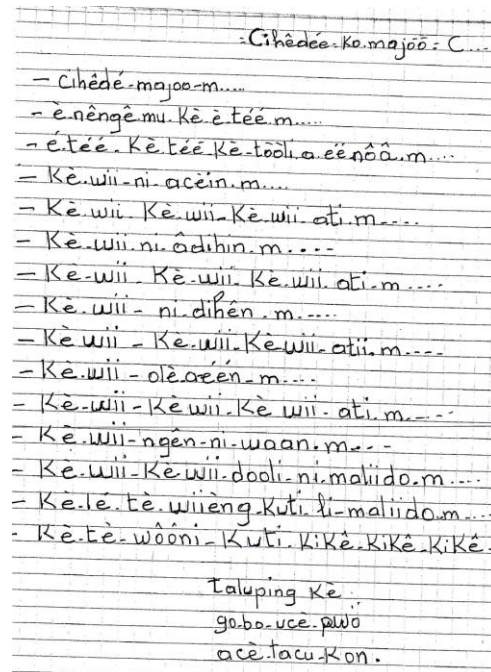
Figure 20: *The Legend of de Flying Fox*

6.4 Meta-linguistic phenomena in the practice of writing Cèmuhi

6.4.1 Tracing heterography. In a society where writing in the mother tongue is a rare event, and where writers are not influenced by an established literary tradition in the language, every trace or mark left on paper becomes a testimony of the often erratic and inevitably unstable process of language codification. As I have discussed earlier, this process started in the case of the Cèmuhi language with the Marists and further developed with the arrival of the linguists, Haudricourt and Rivierre, who wrote the language in the form of a grammar and a dictionary. While the spelling and syntactic conventions of the Cèmuhi language, as proposed by Rivierre, were not meant to be prescriptive, both these works gained a certain normative status among Cèmuhi. Rivierre's works also began to be the main reference for Suzanne Poinine's writing, who confirms to have consulted the grammar and dictionary, especially in the early years of writing her language.

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While Rivierre's work in Cèmuhi is linguistically sound, the overrepresentation of suprasegmentals such as tone, nasalisation, and diacritics to represent certain vowel differentiations, makes his orthography a challenge for the novice Cèmuhi reader, but even more so for the writers among them. As many orthographic issues have never been dealt with at the wider community level, and the language is not being taught in schools, Suzanne Poinine had to pretty much rely on her own intuitive devices when writing down her language.

While the data reveal a fairly consistent spelling, with only the occasional word being spelled differently, as for instance the word 'legend', which she writes in four different ways (*cihêdé, cihêdée, cihêdéé,* and *cihê déé*), Suzanne Poinine's writing is essentially 'heterographic' in nature. Heterography, which is a common feature in many forms of writing at grassroots level, is described by Blommaert (2008a) as "The deployment of graphic symbols in ways that defy orthographic norms" (p. 7). These norms are spelling and syntactic conventions, as they are usually materialised in the form of a grammar or a dictionary or officially taught in an educational environment. In the absence of an institutionalised framework in which some standard of Cèmuhi is being taught, one can hardly speak of a norm then.

The grassroots writer is constrained by having to write in a language that has no fixed orthography. Moreover, there are still unresolved orthographic issues that need further linguistic attention, especially at the phonological level. One example, for instance, is whether the vowel /ö/ has phonemic value or not. Rivierre (1980) notes that the status of the vowel /ö/ is unclear, as it can be seen as a phonological variation of the vowel /è/ under certain conditions (following labiovelars and adjacent to other rounded vowels), but it also seems to occur in less clear conditions, making it a vowel that, as Rivierre puts it, is "en voie de

phonologisation" [in the process of shifting towards phonemic status] (p. 43). The manuscripts show that Suzanne Poinine fairly accurately differentiates between /o/ and /ö/. She near-consistently follows the spelling of Rivierre for words that are written with /ö/. Apart from some cases, where there is allophonic variations ö/a, according to Rivierre's phonological analysis, she consistently writes ö instead of a, as the list below shows:

Poinine's orthography	Rivierre's orthography
bwöhemwo	bwahemwo/ bwöhemwo
pwöcoon	pwacoon
aboloö	abwalooö
pwöjo	pwajo
bwöliihi	bwaliihi
pwötau	pwatau

The variation in the spelling of the words listed above can be explained by the difference between the judgements of a native speaker's or the so-called 'native speaker intuition' of these sounds and those of the linguist, whose decisions are founded on the basis of rigid linguistic methodologies and tools such as recording devices and/or speech analysis software, which allows the linguist to 'hear' what the human ear cannot.

The argument is often made that non-linguists or speakers with little education rarely make introspective judgments about well-formedness or correctness (see Wasow and Arnold's article on the use of intuitions in linguistic argumentation, 2005), therefore concluding that a native speaker's intuition may not always be a reliable source to provide empirical evidence. This is certainly the case when it comes to distinguishing vowels that are near identical, such as /a/ [ɑ] an /ö/ [ɔ]. Rivierre's technical explanation of this phenomenon, however, is based on so-called scientific evidence which would be difficult to refute by speakers with no linguistic training or who never had the chance to read and write in their language. As a native speaker

does not always have access to tools that allow linguists to distinguish acoustic differences that are often difficult to perceive by the human ear, ongoing input of the speech community, and especially of those among them who can write, is needed in order to have their voice heard. Unfortunately, by the time the first people become literate in their language, the linguist is often long gone, leaving the orthography more or less 'fixed' in publications.

Yet, it is through the act of writing that Suzanne Poinine has been able to reflect 'on paper' what otherwise would have been 'lost' or only intuitively 'heard' in her mind. By using the tool of writing, she provides her own context (instead of being prompted into a context where the linguist asks to repeat a phrase or tell a story or to explain whether a certain expression is right or wrong). Even though Rivierre's orthography is being advanced as the 'norm', Suzanne Poinine shows that she is keen to deviate from that norm by letting her own primary intuitive judgements prevail over those of the linguist.

Other issues that would need to be taken into consideration, especially at the community level, are the questions in relation to word division. The Cèmuhi language is rich in complex compound words and has many homophonic morphemes, which further complicates the decisions on how to write these compounds. Below, is an example of a complex compound form in Poinine's orthography, compared with the notational style of the same word as presented in Rivierre's dictionary:

Poinine	Cèmuhi-French dictionary (J.C. Rivierre)
apibeen	a-pi-bee-n (the two brothers in law) *a* = prefix used in front of terms indicating the relationship of two persons *p*i = reciprocal prefix *bee* = noun [brother] *-n* = default third person suffix

Poinine also uses the hyphen or dash (and even dots or periods) in some of her texts, though not as a way of separating segmentable morphemes of a compound or multi-syllable word, as is common practice in linguistic notation, but at the inter-word level. The practice of using word dividers is exclusively found in the legends and in some of the traditional songs, but also in her early translation work of French Christian hymns and the Scriptures into Cèmuhi. She does not use these dividers, however, in the example sentences, short stories or the personal testimony, as the overview of the transcripts of four different genres show below:

Hyphenated/dotted text	Non-hyphenated text
Transcript of a legend	*Transcript of sentences*
Cihêdéé - ciibwi - mê - ibwén - m…. [legend of rat and octuopus] lu - tibwi - li - ûja - kè - lu - cié - ma - paé – m… [They cut the sugar cane and make it into a raft]	-Lé caa tuiè ati èwa he cèmun [Alll the children arrive from school.] -Lé tuiè ö lépwö amehi he lé koo wii nu [The parents and their children came to eat coconut.]
Transcript of translated traditional hymn	*Transcript of a short story*
È.pawiè.nè.tè.Adamu.ma.Eva.a.ni.aduuna.ö.pa.Duéé [God chases adam and Eve from the garden]	È tèko pwö ali tààwi wêêgi ukéiu. Kè tèko cémi li ju waéo. [The old woman is planting taro. She plants the traditional taros.]

 There are several possible hypotheses to explain the practice of inter-word hyphenation or inserting periods between words: first, it could be seen as an oratorical device aimed to help the reader sing or read the text aloud. The fact that it is only used in the legends and traditional hymns[110] seem to support this hypothesis, as all these genres are either told, sung or read out in church. By separating each word with a hyphen or a period, it is as if Suzanne is inserting a

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[110] These hymns are also known as the 'Temperances', which are Christianised Melanesian songs that are sung a-capella and in multiple voices.

reading pause to help the novice reader during the reading process. Another possible explanation is that Poinine wanted to slow down her own writing (or translation) process. By inserting periods or hyphens, it is as if she gave herself time to accurately write down the oral legends or traditional songs as she recalled or remembered each word separately. Alternatively, the use of hyphens between words may have been inspired by the demand for accuracy or faithfulness to the source text. Inserting a period or hyphen between each word may have helped her to slow down the translation process, enabling her to reflect on the Cèmuhi equivalent for each French word, literally making it a word-for-word translation. Finally, in some cases, hyphenation could also be interpreted as a way of grouping words or multiword sequences that are interpreted as belonging to the same unit of meaning, which may help the reader or singer during the reading process.

This idiosyncratic use of periods or hyphens in some of her texts can therefore be seen as either a mnemonic or oratorical device that is used in genres that are based on existing oral sources (e.g. legends and traditional hymns) or where there is a need to accurately translate an existing written source text, such as the French hymns. The fact that this practice of inter-word hyphenation is absent in the manuscripts of sentences and stories and in her personal testimony seem to support this view, as the latter genres are the result of a writing practice in which Suzanne Poinine is able to use her imagination more freely.

The last and probably most salient feature in the texts is the heterographic use of diacritics and tone marks, of which there are plenty when we take Rivierre's orthography as the norm. In Rivierre's analysis, the three tone registers, of which the` discovery has been accredited to Haudricourt, are marked as low (`), mid (-), and high ('). This second tier of tone markings comes on top of an orthography that is already highly cluttered with diacritics and

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suprasegmentals, such as nasalisation, for which the circumflex is used (ˆ). Even though Poinine seems to apply the most common diacritics (grave, acute, and trema) fairly consistently, especially in her later work, her manuscripts also show traces of applying certain diacritics randomly.

One particular diacritic that is occasionally used, especially in her early writings, is the symbol (>), which is used by Rivierre to indicate that a word or morpheme has no tone at all (neutral). The word or grammatical morpheme carrying this symbol indicates that it takes the same register as the preceding syllable or as Rivierre (1990) explains in the dictionary "enclitique de ce qui précède" [enclitic to what precedes] (p.74). The fact that the symbol (>) randomly appears on certain words seem to suggest that the use of it is an attempt to copy Rivierre rather than the result of an intuitive notion or understanding of the use of this particular prosodic feature.

6.4.2 Tracing text or knowledge organisation. In this section, I will discuss how Suzanne Poinine has organised knowledge formally rather than semantically. I will particularly focus on the word lists that are organised in a less linear fashion than, for instance, the word lists and dictionaries developed by the Marists and by Rivierre. Whereas these works are typically arranged alphabetically, the word lists composed by Poinine are arranged according to different criteria. Even though the lists produced by Poinine are not of the same level of complexity as Rivierre's Cèmuhi-French dictionary, it is a lexical list, "a kind of inventory of concepts, a proto-dictionary or embryonic encyclopaedia" (Goody, 1977, p. 80), showing traces of a process of constructing a dictionary type of work. Even though the list of sentences resemble the formatting style of a mono-lingual dictionary, whereby a lexeme is followed by

additional information, her aim is not to produce a dictionary, as nearly all the sentences are illustrating rather than explaining the meaning of the word used in the context of a sentence.

Almost all the word lists compiled by Poinine are organised topically or thematically. As mentioned earlier, the data contain seven topical word lists with the names of trees, plants and grasses. One list (VI) contains an inventory of the traditional names of Taro species or the *Ni nii ju waéo.* The list deviates quite significantly from the names of Taro listed in Rivierre's dictionary.

While the previous example is quite straightforward, the organisation of words in the following two lists is less clear. The two lists contain words starting with the letter M and the letter N. Apart from being grouped under their respective letter, the list does not reveal any particular organisational principle:

M-Words

Mwangin, mametè, mwoti, medè, miido jéiu, mabut, majélè, metaahi, madi, mwoolu, magié, metè, mwihi, meget, meget, madaamu, majing, mevuuleen, mwogilaa, mang, miu, miidèn, menii, meniing, mii, **maii, macéedè**, mwaalè, mwa, maga, matitiilè, mwotilè, mwomwohi, mwojuia, mwop, menihi, muu, muu, miu, mwani, maaco, maan, mee, mwaaga, mwonika, meiwölè, muum, mejeiu, mwawi, memevo, megeha, melepiing, mino, mwin, mitè, macetè, mwametau, miin, malooga, maloobi, mii, mevu, mwonee, **mwaanu, me, mwoto, mwoto, menyo, min, miimin, ma, ma,** mwoteng, mwodeiko, **macete, mwani, mi**, muu, mwiin, maliido, meiu, mehin, mwoudu, majing, mwaken

N-Words
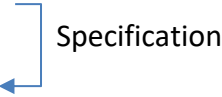
Nu, noa, nooni, nai, nani, naamii, **niilè, nīlè, nilè**, niitihi, niin, nim, nabu, niu, neelé, neebé, neegen, needa, neda, neolè, nengen, **negaalè, negaapé**, nacu, naadu, nahi, nacié, niugen, nitu, nan, nanihi, **nemen, nemi, nebwö, neje**, nemwo, nen, nabwén, **niihen, niihem, niihung**, nataam, naatiing, nuule, neebaa, najilè, nii, neduö, ninim, namu, naunaa, neloa, nuo, nehune, **nemihi, nuumwihi, nyu**

At first sight, one could think of these lists as a random arrangement of words written down one after the other. However, Poinine has ordered the words, unconsciously or not, according to certain principles that are testimony of a holistic and relational worldview, instead of a structured and more linear way of seeing things common among non-native westerners. The word groupings suggest that word sequences in the list are based on a variety of ordering principles. The question we need to ask is what these principles of categorisation in the word lists of Poinine are or how some words appear in the list while others were excluded[111]. The outline in the tables below show that other arranging principles are at work and that each word in the list is linked to or triggers the next word with which it shares certain phonetic, morphological, or thematic properties.
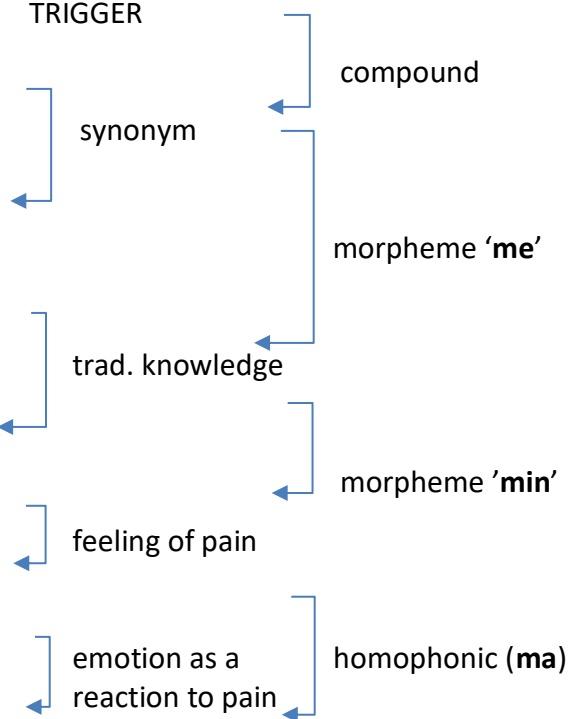
Thematic properties

A first sequence of words, *maii – macéédè,* to be found in the M-list (highlighted in the table above), share topical or thematic similarities. As no translation is provided by Suzanne, the reader has to rely on Rivierre's dictionary, which provides two senses for the word *maii* - 1. crashing of waves; 2. crab (Actaea). It is the following word, *macéédè* [name of crab], however, that helps to unlock the correct sense of the previous word, which in this case is also 'crab'. The second word (27) is, therefore, aimed at specifying the previous word (26) in its second sense, 'crab'.

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[111] It is interesting to note here that Goody (1977) asks a similar question as to why certain words ended up in Ancient Sumerian lists which, he notes, are based upon the "the acrographic or acrophonic principle" (p. 97). Suzanne Poinine's combination of different types of lists show analogies with the way scribes of Ancient Mesopotamia attempted to make inventories of Sumerian words. Landsberger (Goody, 1977) described the challenges they faced as similar to those of any lexicographer in the early stages of developing a dictionary or word inventory: "should the entries be organised thematically, by subjects, or should they be arranged in a serial order based on graphic or phonological characteristics of the words?" (p. 98).

26	maii	-crashing of waves -**crab** (Actaea)	TRIGGER
27	macéédè	-**name of crab** (**Eriphia**)	Specification

A more complex grouping of words can be found in the next table, which contains a sequence of words from the M-list:

63	mwaanu	garment, clothing	TRIGGER
64	me	**part of, piece of** (e.g. piece of cloth > me mwaanu)	compound
65	mwoto	part, portion	synonym
66	mwoto	?	morpheme '**me**'
67	**me**nyo	manioc (> fr.)	
68	min	1. tree **2. inedible portion**	trad. knowledge
69	mii**min**	sharp point	morpheme '**min**'
70	ma	ant (black ant that has a sharp sting)	feeling of pain
71	ma	cry	emotion as a reaction to pain — homophonic (**ma**)

This sequence of words unveils again the underlying thinking process of the writer. The word *mwaanu* [garment], for instance, triggers the next word, *me* [piece of], which is commonly used in the compound *me-mwaanu* [piece of cloth]. The word *me* [part of] triggers in its turn the synonym *mwoto* (portion], which occurs twice in the list. The word *me*, however, may also have triggered the word, *menyo* [manioc] further down the list, as *me* is embedded in the word *menyo*. As manioc or casava are highly poisonous if improperly cooked (the root in particular

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contains high doses of the toxin 'linamarin'), it may have been a cultural trigger for the next word *min*, of which its second sense is 'inedible portion'. The word *min* (68) in its turn triggers the word mii**min** (69) [sharp point], which contains the morpheme -min-. The word then triggers the word 'ma' [black ant known for its stinging bite], which may cause someone to cry in pain, as reflected in the homophone 'ma' [to cry].

The next sequence contains words that share material and functional properties:

74	macete	machete (> French loan)	TRIGGER	materiality 'iron' or foreign objects made of similar material 'iron'
75	mwani	money (< English loan 'money')		
76	mi	point, as in mi-da (sharp point of knife)		'part of knife or machete'

In the N-word list, the following sequence of words share properties of sense and taste, starting from the general word for 'taste':

31	nemen	taste	TRIGGER	
32	nemi	to taste		Synonym of 'sense of taste'
33	nebwö	bitter tasting		Specification or exemplification (e.g. bitter)
34	nejè	sweet, candied		Contrasting (bitter vs. sweet)

The following sequence of words are related in meaning but used in different contexts. It also includes the word *nyu* 'anchor', which from an alphabetic ordering point of view does not belong in the list of n-words.

54	nemihi	swallow (of food), drink down (of water)	TRIGGER
55	nuumwihi	submerge (with water)	similar in meaning (submerge)
56	nyu	anchor	exemplification of submergence

What these examples show is that Poinine is, not only making an inventory of cultural, botanical concepts, but that she does it in a particular relational way. The, at first sight, random flow of words reveals a rather complex and varied stream of consciousness, whereby each word triggers another in the mind of Poinine. These sequences or networks of word maps could also be seen as examples of what Goody (1977) calls "associative or co-ordinative thinking" (p. 68), whereby associations are made following certain culturally relevant patterns that are different from our own. While it is not the aim here to revisit the debate whether certain forms of thinking are inherently present in oral societies or a consequence of literacy[112], it is through writing that Poinine is able to leave traces that more accurately reflect a cognitive process that would otherwise remain invisible (or less verifiable) through other forms or methods of codification, such as elicitation and transcription by a linguist.

The examples also show that Poinine's writing is explorative in nature. This explorative process is, in some way, similar to the Kanak practice of *pwö jèpulè* [telling stories, to joke], which literally means 'to talk the earth', or *pi cihe* 'to discuss', which involves the tracing of knowledge of the ancestors. By appropriating the tool of writing, Poinine is taking a step back from the way of sharing knowledge through storytelling; it allows her to observe, objectify,

[112] Even though Goody (1977) does not mean to argue that 'associative thinking 'is absent from non-literate societies, he notes that the introduction of writing in oral societies, either by actors or observers, tend to provide "simplified frameworks for the more subtle systems of oral reference" (p.70). In other words, one can say that the rigid classification of the world in categories and dichotomies, including the scientific deconstruction of those that are false, are direct consequences of certain forms of writing, which can in itself lead to misrepresentations of these societies and those who describe them.

and categorise a world, first by making word lists and concepts which she arranges according to her own intuitive devices rather than applying the, for her, less familiar orthographic ordering principle of the 'alphabet'.

6.4.3 Tracing phonological, morphological, and lexical awareness. The data show several instances or traces of different levels of linguistic awareness, ranging from awareness of the structural composition of a language, such as phonological awareness or morphological awareness to lexical awareness. In this section, I will give examples from the word lists and sentences that provide evidence of different levels of linguistic awareness, from the basic unit of sounds and segments such as syllables, to lexical awareness, particularly of synonyms, antonyms, and minimal pairs.

Phonological awareness

The classification of words according to phonological principles is most apparent in the *syllabic* word list, which not only testifies to phonological awareness, but also indicates a preference of one categorisation principle over another. Goody (1977) notes that "writing enables people to analyse, break down, dissect, and build up speech into parts and wholes, into types and categories, which already existed but which, when brought into the area of consciousness, have a feedback effect on speech itself" (p. 115). By writing these word lists, Poinine has, not only explored the potentialities of writing in her mother tongue, but also the phonological fabric of Cèmuhi as it was interpreted and represented, first by the Marists and then by linguists such as Rivierre. The syllabic word list (see Fig. 12) provides evidence of Poinine's insight into the phonological structure of her language, presenting the data into six columns categorised according to their initial syllable or first two letters (*ta, tè, ti, to, tu, té*):

Ta	Tè	Ti	To	Tu	Té
taluping	tèbwö	tiiti	tohen	tugili	téehi
taatè	tètéé	tingin	tooli	tuu	te udu
tagilihi	tèn	timi	toli	tu	téé
tamaahi	tèbwö cèni	titi	to	tuö	téénè
tati	tèhi	tii neng	tonga	tuvulu	tèalè
taéém	tèpéén	tii u	toopihi	tulèhègéi	téai
talupe	tè (menung)	ti he tabè	toca	tupoila	ténè
tapwö	tèmen	tihènit	to, todè	tuaagèt	tèp
taphilihi	tègoo	tii (cèmwo)	towii (mèté)	tuihène	tee (miu)
tanim	tèli	tidiihi	toii (pènem)	tuöii	tè he tabè
taa (mwo)	tèité	tito	to acuut	tuulén	té (ko in)
taneu-eng	tèlè	tiahi	too bwölè	tupwöcii	téè a mwi
taa(bé)	tèlè ko a ét	tii	toonelè	tubwi	té (acuut)
ta pwö juöt	tèmèhi	tii	tonii	tupwövu	téép
takaino	tètèlu	tiicè	toa	tupwöhenit	tétéél
taa (nu)	tèucé	time(nu)	toojet	tuudaé	téèlè
tale	tèhènèbét	timaa	tokii	tuovedaa	téèbé
taawon	tèuu	tinge	toomwo	tupwö itèn	tééngo
talewii	tèwéa	tiéén	too	tupwö dihèn	téélé
ta ilihi		tilo	tomen	tuuwiit	témèdè
tauili		tihèdèwi	topaalè	tupwöaateep	tééjèn
tahi		tiden	tomaan	tupwöaadi	
tai acuut		tioot	toojèwé	tupwökaot	
tapèlè		tiotéi	tomaajè	tuiè	
taii (nu)		tihodè	toopé	tuti	
talèti		tihèdi		tulèpi	
tai(èng)		tipei		tupi	
tagèti		tibwi		tupwömwaèoo	
tai tabè		timahi		tupwö	
taa ota		tibo		tuume	
tai		tihè			
taa (acuut)		tihèbuli			
tatéè		titing, tim			
taa kumwala		ti kaalu			
tatééèng		titem			
tatén		tikaciié			
tabeki		tipabet			
taawi		ti pwöket			
tabihi					
tawii					
tagaau					
tabè					
taau					
taap					
taatèè					

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Ta	Tè	Ti	To	Tu	Té
tap tahègé taange (ibwèn) tahnitöö tanim, tatu tabilè tam tapèhi					

Even though Poinine is not using the phonological notation used by phonologists, she succeeds in using her own devices as an emergent writer to present a list of words according to a more complex ordering principle. The recognition of syllables as phonological 'building blocks' of words and the organisation of this knowledge in tables is, not only a testimony of her capabilities to analyse her own language, but it also shows the possibilities that writing has given Poinine to reflect on her language in new ways. These lists seem to validate Goody's claims about the effects of writing or literacy. Goody (1977) notes that the making of tables and lists can partly be seen as a consequence of writing. Goody notes that words sorted under their own heading, and in mutually excluding columns, makes these kinds of lists in itself a mode of classification, of defining a 'semantic field'. He argues that this kind of formulating of classificatory systems or semantic fields is unique to writing "that takes words out of theirs speech context and places them, so abstracted, in a unilateral relationship with words (concepts/morphemes, lexical units, possibly phrases), deemed to be of a similar class, i.e. possessing certain common features…" (p. 104). In addition, more recent research suggests that this type of phonological analysis is enhanced through literacy[113].

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[113] See for instance Reis and Castro-Caldas (1997), who claim that illiterate persons have more difficulty in memorising pairs of phonologically related words compared to pairs of semantically related words.

It needs to be noted that none of such more complex lists have been recorded in the past by Rivierre or the Marists. The only lists that have been transcribed or translated are those mentioned in four customary speeches that were translated by Marist priest, Forestier. The speeches only contain semantically related words for food items and lists of tribes and clans, which are usually recited during the death of a chief. An excerpt of a customary speech, translated by Forestier, for instance, contains a list of food items that are commonly exchanged during a funeral:

Cèmuhi	English translation
Game abe. Game pedabe ni nando nelan. Game puaila dyena nako a melete padameheme.	We have arrived and we have brought along these things here. Today, we bring them here and we will prepare a meal at the occasion of the death of our grea chief.
Ka game patigo ko **ni u nelan me ni uaio, ka ni epuen, ka ni udia ka ni ikua…**	We present you these yams, taros, mats, sugar cane, fish…

A second speech, given at the occasion of a feast, contains a list of food items, but also a list of people representing different clans or tribes. While the names of the clans are not mentioned by Forestier, the excerpt bears witness to the common practice among the Kanak people of New Caledonia to recite all the visitors of different clans and tribes in a customary speech. The excerpt first recites a list of people that are present, a list of food items, and then again a list of people who could not make it to the feast because of the rain.

Cèmuhi	English translation
Game tabe ; nako ni nando nelan. Game nimigo. Game tapetigame nako a buenandoteme tyeli ubua, **ka…le tabe tyeigame ua lebua…Ua lebua…ka lebua….ka lebua….ka lebua…ka lebua…**	We have come here to present these things. Our thoughts are with you and we assemble here together for this feast which will be great for all those people who are present here today: the people of [name of clan], the people of [name of clan]…the people of [name of clan]…

| Game pedabe ni u ka **ni uaio ka ni epuen ka ni udia ka ni ikua…**. | We have brought yams, taros, mats. Sugar cane and fish… |
| kahe time le tabe me le mu ko abuenando ua lebua….**ka lebua….ka lebua….ka lebua….ka lebua.** Le pi pie be ubua a uie ka le bo tabe mèé. | But they could not come to the feast : the people of [clan name]…the people of [clan name]…. the people of [clan name]… They said that it rained too much and that they will arrive tomorrow. |

Morphological awareness

Some texts also indicate morphological awareness. Some of the manuscripts contain example sentences of the same word in different inflected forms, such as, for instance, the word *alèm* [basket with precious objects], presented in the table below:

alèm	Go ne nge alèm a buto[114] ko a èpwénem	You give me your basket with the 'tricot' fish
alèn	È ne nge alèn a tii ko a èpwénen	He gives his basket with striped shells
along	É ne bé along a apinyi ko a tiuung	I give my basket with my knotted cloth

The word *alèm* is presented in its different inflected forms for person. Interestingly, the paradigm does not begin with the first person, as we would usually expect from a Eurocentric viewpoint and as the pronominal paradigms are presented in Rivierre's dictionary, but with the default form *alèm* [(your basket or basket tout court], followed by the third person form, *alèn* [his basket] and then along [my basket]. The fact that these sentences are written in this order seem to suggest that they aim to reflect or illustrate the way the number is marked on nouns and pronouns.

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[114] The *buto* is a small black reef fish with a tail resembling a knife, also known by its scientific name *Callicanthus lituratus* (Rivierre, 1990).

This ordering principle of pronominal paradigms can also be found in some word sequences in the N-word list, which contains a paradigmatic sequel of the word *niihen* [power] and *nataam* […], as highlighted in the table below:

N-Words

Nu, noa, nooni, nai, nani, naamii, niilè, nilè, niitihi, niin, nim, nabu, niu, **neelé, neebé**, neegen, needa, neda, neolè, nengen, **negaalè, negaapé**, nacu, naadu, nahi, nacié, niugen, nitu, nan, nanihi, nemen, nemi, nebwö, neje, nemwo, nen, nabwén, **niihen, niihem, niihung**, **nataam, naatiing**, nuule, neebaa, najilè, nii, neduö, ninim, namu, naunaa, neloa, nuo, nehune, nemihi, nuumwihi, nyu

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As these examples show, the possessive paradigm does not start with the first person form, but with the default form, which in most cases is the 3rd person in Cèmuhi. From there, Suzanne Poinine is moving on to the 2nd and 1st form of the noun. The dictionary form of nouns without their complement is always presented with the 3rd person suffix – n in Rivierre's dictionary (who lists the same possessive paradigm of the word *niihen* in the opposite order (niihung, niihem, niihen).

niihen	his power	Possessive 3rd (-n) (Default form or dictionary form)
niihem	your power	Possessive 2nd (-m)
niihung	my power	Possessive 1st (-ng)

In the same list, we find further evidence of segmental awareness. The word sequences *neelé, neebé* and *negaalè, negaapé,* also highlighted in the table above, show the paradigm of common spatial suffixes, such as *–lé* [while moving away], *-bé* [while moving closer], that are commonly attached to verbs, and the directionals *gaalè* [to walk across an obstacle such as water] and *gaapé* [to walk along a horizontal axis].

A similar example can be found in the corpus of sentences. In the example below, Poinine first gives the paradigm of the word, *an* [foot] in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd person, followed by an example sentence:

a	**An, am, ang**- cinu ni ang, bè cibu.	his foot, your foot, my foot. My feet hurt, because they are swollen.

A final example of morphological awareness are the homophones in the list, such as the homophone *alo,* which has two senses: 'two' and 'to see'. Again, Poinine presents this by giving two example sentences in which the word is used in each of the senses. In the first example, Poinine alerts the reader that 'alo' has to be understood as 'number' by first writing *Cèiu kè alo* [one and two] and then continuing with the actual example sentence in which the word is used. In the second sentence, she also includes the synonym, *oomehi* [to visit, to see, to observe][115], which is the more figurative sense of 'to see' and contrasts it with 'to see' someone literally, hereby also giving evidence of lexical awareness.

Alo [number]	Cèiu kè **alo** – alo lupwö pèhi waéo naa é pai	One and two - the two magic stones that I put on the fire.
Alo [to see]	Lé **alo** kong he é tuiè daabé mu pèlè-lé **omeéo**	They will see me when I visit them.

Lexical awareness

In the following sentence, Poinine is experimenting with the synonyms, *mwotio* [to be afraid] and *koli* [for fear of]*:*

abwöbwö	**Mwotiong** me é imwi a baacuut bè abwöbwö **koli** è tuu.	*I am afraid to take that piece of wood because I am afraid it might be the 'banian'.*

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[115] In Rivierre's spelling.

Consider the following example, where the idea of lifting (*adi*) is repeated in the second part of the sentence, where new and more specific information is added. Instead of using the more generic word, *bwöhemwo* [ground], the more specific word *paahiin* [*terras*] is used*,* which refers to a specific area in front of the hut where ceremonial dances usually take place.

adi	**Adi** ali talihi mu pwö **bwöhemwo**, **adi** li hiuulè mu pwö **paahiin**.	Lift up the mats from the ground, lift up the presents from the terras.

In the next example, the act of attaching a rope [*tai*], first to the horse, is repeated by using the synonym, *nyu* (which is now attached to the tree). Again, Poinine expresses a similar idea in a particular sequence, from the use of the generic term for rope, *tai,* in the first part of the sentence, to the use of a more specific term for rope, nyu, which conveys the idea of being anchored (e.g. of a vessel to the ground or a horse to a tree):

apilihi	**Apilihi** ko hene a haricaan **a tai** kon, **apilihi** ko a acuut **a nyu** a haricaan pwöjo	Attach the rope of the horse to the neck. Attach the rope of the white horse to the tree.

The next example is a grammatically more subtle repetition. The phrase, *a gi tèm* [your knife], is used in a subordinate clause of purpose, introduced by *me* [so that] in the first part, whereas it is used in a subordinate clause of reason, introduced with *bè* [because] in the second part.

Anyee	Go ètè **a gi tèm me anyee**. cilè **a gi tèm bè anyee**	Sharpen your knife so that it cuts well, be careful of your knife because it is sharp.

In the following example, two different actions (clearing vegetation and carving wood) are used as an illustration to introduce the key word 'blunt' (of a knife or axe):

Anyeebwö	Pwöcoon me é pwöpwi bè **anyeebwö a kuto.** Pwöcoon me é céè a acuut bè **anyeebwö a gi**	It is difficult to clear the vegetation because the knife is blunt, it is difficult to carve the wood because the axe is blunt.

In the next example, the concept of perception is explained by contrasting the key word *alèhidè* [to look], which conveys intention or purpose, with the non-intentional verb *oomehi* [to see, to observe] in the first part. In the second part the same intentional form of 'looking at', is contrasted with the verb *niè* [to observe]:

alèhidè	è **alèhidè** daa pwa acuut me **oomehi** a majoo, è *alèhidè* daa he miidèn, è **niè** daa he miidèn	He looks up to see the flying fox in the tree. He looks up at the sky. He observes the sky.

The following example illustrates the antonyms, *nyaalè* [soft] versus *pwö dan* [prickly]:

Acè	Acè tai **nyaalè** piin: acè acuö **pwö dan**.	Passion fruit is soft in the middle. Prickly fruit tree or fruit that is prickly.

A final example illustrates a minimal pair, such as the word, *anye* [eating leaves], which again seem to have triggered the word, *anyee* [sharpen], which are also words in the Tyé variety.

Anye	Ni anyu naa lé ko pébé bè me nye **anye**.	Bring the leaves so that we can eat them.
Anyee	Lé pi **anyee-ng** nge mwo he pwoma tèn.	They sharpen them in his house.

6.4.4 Tracing orality. The prevalence of oral features is one of the characteristics in the writing of cultures that are in the process of adopting writing forms in their mother tongue. This influence of the oral in the written is also present in the writing of Suzanne Poinine. One

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of the more salient features is the use of repetitive language, a characteristic mnemonic device in oral stories and legends, which is also used in many of the sentences written by Poinine, as will be discussed in more detail below. But first, I will look at some particular oral features that Poinine has embedded or encoded in one of the legends: *A cihe dé é Majoo* [The legend of the Flying Fox], of which she wrote two slightly different versions, as outlined in the table below:

Cihê déé	A Cihe dé é majoo	The Legend of the Flying Fox
1. Cihe dé é majoo… è ne nge mu, kè téè… è téé kè téé kè téé… kè tooli a éé noa… 2. kè wii, ni acèhin… kè wii kè wii kè wii atii… è wii ni adihin… è wii kè wii kè wii ati… 3. è wii mwo ni dihen… è wii kè wii kè wii ati… è wii olè a één, kè wii ni waan… kè wii dooli ni maliido… 4. kè lé tè wiieng kuti[116] … li maalido… kè tè oni kuti… kiko kiko kiko kiko. taluping	Cihêdé majoo – **m…** è nêngê mu kè è téé. **m…** è téé kè téé kè è tooli a éé nôâ. **m…** kè wii, ni acèin. **m…** kè wii kè wii kè wii atii. **m…** kè wii ni âdihin. **m…** kè wii kè wii kè wii ati. **m…** kè wii ni dihên kè wii kè wii kè wii ati kè wii olè a één kè wii kè wii kè wii ati. **m…** kè wii ngên ni waan kè wii kè wii dooli ni maliido Kè lé tè wiièng kuti li maalido. **m…** Kè tè wôôni: Kuti kikê kikê kikê kikê **taluping kè go bo ucè pwö acè tacu kon**	Legend of the flying fox it ponders and pondering starts to fly it flies and flies and finds the trunk of the noa[117] and eats the fruit and eats and eats and eats it all and eats the leaves and eats and eats and eats it all and eats the branches and eats and eats and eats it all and eats while climbing down to the roots and eats and eats and eats it all and eats the roots and it eats and eats and find the ants and the ants really bite and that is how it was: kiko kiko kiko kiko that's it, it is your turn to speak

Figure 21*: Two written versions of the legend of the flying fox*

While it is not uncommon in both oral and written societies to have several versions of the same story circulating, the two versions written down by Poinine are near-identical, with only

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[116] 'kuti' is an emphatic particle.
[117] Big tree with small yellow fruits,

a few orthographic and formal differences. The differences are to be ascribed to variations in her personal writing style or to her attempts to explore the morphological fabric of her language rather than to different oral versions of the same story. Each line of the first version, for instance, starts almost always with *è* [3rd pers., it], while the lines in the second version start with *kè* [and], which in fact could also be seen as a morphing of the phrase *kè è* [and he or it] > *kè* (which she also writes as *kèè* in other texts).

More formal differences include the adding of numbers in the first version, which better highlights the compositional structure of the developing story (1. The flying fox finds the noa tree. 2. Then it eats the fruit and the leaves. 3. Then it eats the branches and the roots. 4. Then the ants bite). The second version, on the other hand, does not have the numbering, thereby reflecting the continuous flow of the story as it is told. A more specific feature, however, is the encoding of the interaction between the storyteller and the audience. As the version in the second column shows, each line ends with the oral feature [m…], which represents the practice of a humming response of the audience to encourage or reaffirm the speaker during his speech or storytelling. This practice of steering on the orator while he gives his speech is common during the custom and is an expression of acknowledging him.

By including it in the written form of the legend, Poinine highlights the significance of this practice in an oral context. Despite the fact that transcription is in essence a practice or means to code oral speech, these oral features have been left out in Rivierre's transcription of traditional stories. In addition, they do not show up in the translation of the Marists' customary speeches, even though they recognise the existence of it in their notes.

A second feature is the formulaic expression at the end of the story:

taluping kè

go bo ucè pwö

acè tacu kon

Poinine seems to attach value to these kind of audience's responses by including them in her writing of the legend. This invitation to verbal exchange is a common practice in the customary speech as well and underlines the important cultural value or principle of reciprocity in Kanak society, where the exchange of materials gifts, accompanied by the customary speech, where 'la parole' [the word] is exchanged, is a necessary feature to maintain harmony and balance in relationships. Keeping harmony by inviting the other to place a word as well is in a sense more important then what is said, as the response copies what the first speaker said. This exchange of words and gifts in the customary speeches is also explained in the notes of the speeches collected by Marists. Father Colomb (1890) makes the observation that "la réponse au discours se modèle sur ce qui vient d'être dit. On reprend le tout dans le même ordre." [the response to the speech is based on what has been said before. Everything is repeated in the same order.] (p. 49).

A more obvious trace of orality is the use of repetitive language, which is commonly found in oral stories and legends and helps the listener retain or recall information. The relatively short legend of the flying fox contains the repetitive and successive use of phrases, such as *kè wii*, kè wii ati, kè kéè, and the onomatopoeic *kiko,* which gives the impression that the story is usually told with high speed. As many of these legends were told to children, this repetitive use of words and phrases may also have had educational purposes of teaching children certain phrases, words, or sounds. This may also explain why the mnemonic devices that are commonly used in oral storytelling also appear in the other types of text written by Poinine.

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Many of the sentences, for instance, contain repetitive phrases or words that express similar ideas. By carefully composing these sentences, Poinine seems to give evidence of not only wanting to display her knowledge of Kanak culture and her mother tongue, but to also present it in a way that facilitates memorisation or supports the learning of words and sounds that are similar in meaning.

Consider the following sentence, which describes the scene in which a particular kind of cicada, *aléloa*[118], appears when the yam starts to grow. It contains the repetitive phrase, *ka lé*, a frequently used narrative device, whereby bits of new information are gradually added to the story line in order to facilitate remembrance or learning. The latter is probably what Poinine had in mind when she wrote the sentence: teaching children about a certain species of cicada that are also known to damage coffee plants by positing eggs between the twigs which cause them to break off.

aléloa	Lé caama mu he pulut li aléloa, kè lé tée, ka lé pwönyebi hem babwén, ka lé tabwö he ni bihi u he ciè	The cicada are appearing on the earth and they fly and they sing until dawn and they hide between the lianas of the yam

Drawings

Another phenomenon in Poinine's writing is the use of drawings, which are only added to the stories that describe traditional practices, such as the weaving of mats, dresses or coverings, as shown below:

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[118] Also known by its scientific name, *Ueana lifuana* (Rivierre, 1990).
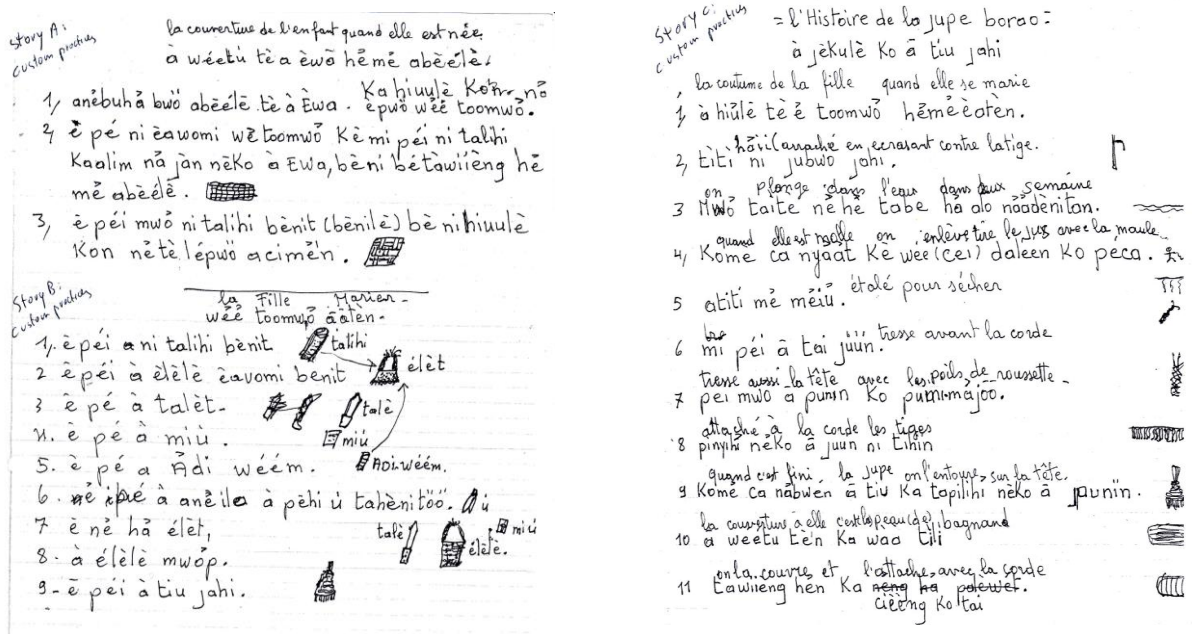
Figure 22: *Traditional stories with drawings*

The drawings, which form an integral part of the written text, underline the multimodal nature of Poinine's writing and links the text to the daily practice of these activities. The combination of diagonal and straight lines in her drawings show similarities with the geometrical shapes that can be found on traditional incised bamboo or the two-dimensional and flattened lines of carvings that are widely found on trees in New Caledonia. The drawings in Poinine's text, which reflect the process of incision by a sharp object, indicate that her writing, including the illuminations, are rooted in orality of which pre-alphabetic forms form a part of.

By writing these practices down in alphabetic script, however, Poinine is engaging in a different form of knowledge transfer. Whereas traditional knowledge was usually passed on from generation to generation by women who teach their children to imitate the movements and specific techniques of making things, this knowledge is now encoded in script and in a more linear, almost analytical, fashion. By adding detailed drawings of the tools and materials

used to make a dress or weave a mat, however, Poinine is maintaining the connection between the oral and the written, between the traditional ways of knowledge transfer through imitation and experience and the more linear and analytical representation of it 'on paper'. By adding drawings that represent the *talihi* [mat], *talè* [knife], *miu* [fire], *adi* [traditional money], *u* [yam] and the *élèt* [sacred basket] in the story *Wéé toomw aatèn* [The married girl], Poinine seems to underline the sacredness of each object that is required to make the dress itself. Whereas the way in which clothing is made in a western society is mostly irrelevant to the wearer in a western society, this disconnect is non-inexistent in the mindset of a Kanak writer for whom every move and every action that leads to the creation of the dress purposely fits the Melanesian worldview. It is through this multimodal form of writing where the visual meets the material that Poinine is reconciling the oral with the written. Her way of 'documenting' traditional knowledge is, in that sense, of a completely different nature to the recording and transcription activities of a linguist or ethnographer.

Poinine's multimodal writing, however, is also different from the multimodal nature we find in new forms of communication through social media and which has been extensively discussed by Gunter Kress who adopts a semiotic approach towards writing, arguing that writing is increasingly being displaced by image, through the effect of the image and the screen (e.g. Kress 2005). Discussing Kress' work, Blommaert (2004) notes that the multimodal design of new forms of literacy "forces text consumers to combine the activities – "reading" as well as "looking at" – and synthetic (the whole sign) as well as analytic (different constituent parts of the sign) decodings" (p. 655). However, from a Melanesian perspective, there is also another perspective that is often lost from a western perspective. As the written description and the drawings of the objects can be seen as a continuation of how Poinine perceives them in real

life, as sacred objects that are wrapped in the *talithi* [mat] or placed in the *élèt* [sacred basket], the writing of the words has equally become sacred[119].

6.4.5 Tracing emerging literary features and genres. A final phenomenon that will be discussed is the tracing of emerging literary features and style figures in the aforementioned genres. The study of 'genre' in grassroots writing, however, is riddled with constraints and potential pitfalls, as the concept of a particular 'genre' in a language with a short writing history may be quite different or even non-existent compared to the genres we are more familiar with in an established language. The genres outlined earlier are therefore to be taken as broad categories of composition that can be applied to Suzanne Poinine's writing. Some of the genres are well-known to the writer, such as, for instance, the legends that have been orally transmitted from generation to generation. Others might be the result of her knowledge to certain so-called "distant genres" (cf. Blommaert 2008a). An example of such a distant genre is the personal story or testimony, which is a rather a-typical reflexive recount in the first person in Melanesian culture. The following discussion will give some examples of certain literary features or style figures that emerged in the different genres.

A new genre that is starting to emerge in the writing of Suzanne Poinine is poetic language. The string of words in the sentence below is an illustration of how Suzanne is playing with sounds and synonyms, whether consciously or not. She makes phonological and lexical associations in a chain of words that show homophonic or homographic properties, as the sentence below illustrates:

aadoa	Pwièlè toa ko a caama. A aadoa, ko acaama.	Early morning, low tide at morning, the low tide of the morning. It is morning.

[119] This also explains, for instance, why Suzanne Poinine's translation of the Scriptures was not approved by the elders, who considered a sacred work that could only be done by men.

As we can see, the sentence contains words with alliterate sounds, such as *toa, ko a, aadoa*.

Suzanne also plays with words that have subtle difference in meaning, such as *pwièlè* [early morning] and *acaama* [morning]; *toa* [low tide] and *aadooa* [small low tide in the morning].

By using these words in one sentence, she seems to have unconsciously written a concise poetic verse that creates certain imagery and that could be visually presented as follows:

> Pwièlè toa   Early morning tide
>
> ko a caama   at morning
>
> a aandoa   low tide of the morning
>
> ko acaama   it is morning

Another sentence which has the cadence and rhythm of a poem is:

ahu	Ahu a amu ko a muu miu, élè ali pao tè Apégu.	The land is filled with the smoke of the fire. The 'kitchen-hut' of Apégu is heating up.

Even though the English translation above does not accurately capture all the nuances of the words in the source language (e.g. the word *ahu* literally means 'smoke-filled', while *pao* refers to a specially designated hut in which a stone lined oven or fire place can be found, capturing the image of a 'hearth'), one can feel the mood that is created in the first part by just listening to the quick succession of sounds. By subdividing this simple sentence into four lines, the sentence becomes a haiku-like poem:

> Ahu a amu   Smoke filled the land
>
> ko a mu miu   with dust of fire,
>
> élè ali pao   hot is the hearth
>
> tè Apégu   of Apégu

The poem starts with an assonance whereby the vowels *a* and *u* are repeated in the words *ahu* and *amu.* The rhythmic cadence created in the first line continues with an alliteration in the

second line, whereby the sound *m* is repeated in the adjacent words, *muu* and *miu* (the word *miu miu* literally means 'fire dust'). The cause of the tranquil scene created in the first two lines, is revealed in the next two lines which starts with a consonance, with the recurrence of similar sounding consonant, *l* (élè > ali) and *p* (pao > Apégu). The poem ends with a rhyme to complete the rhythmic pattern that started in the first two lines. The simple sentence becomes even more meaningful if one is aware of the historical context, which situates Apégu as a chief who aimed for an impossible conciliation during the Kanak insurrection that started in the Cèmuhi region against the French colonial power in 1917, resulting in many villages and fields being burned down (Bensa et al., 2016).

Alliteration is, not only found in the sentences, but also in some of the word lists. Consider the example, below, of the last five words in the homophonic word list (see Fig. 15). The words in the list (whereby each word is used in an example sentence) seem to be, not only randomly organised, but also put together in such a way that it resembles a word change game, whereby one gets from one word to the other by replacing or adding one letter or prosodic feature at the time.

èni [eat] > **éni** [here] > **nemi** [to gulp] > **nene** [breathless] > **nene** [insister]

HOMOPHONE/   ALLLITERATION   HOMOGRAPHS/HOMONYM
MINIMAL PAIR
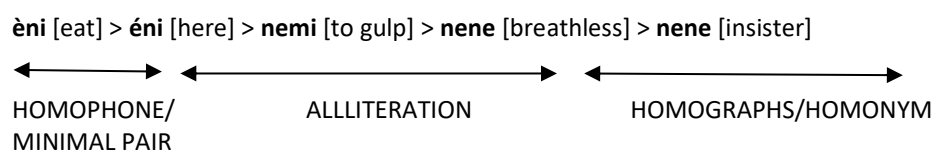
The words above form part of a list of sentences with homographic and homophonic features. The list starts with the word *èni* [to eat]. In each subsequent word, one or two letters or prosodic features are either changed or added. During this unconscious process of stringing sound-like words together, Poinine is experimenting with concepts such as homophones, alliteration, and homonyms.

New genres

Let us now reconsider the story, 'a jekule ko a tiu jahi'. As we have discussed earlier, this story contains both text and drawings, and a word-for-word translation. As we can see below, each line is numbered, giving a sequential overview of the steps that are involved in making a marriage dress. This numbering (together with the illustration) makes it a unique example of procedural writing, a genre that until the story was written down by Poinine was non-existent in written Cèmuhi. By numbering each step, each movement as it would be executed in real life, Suzanne is engaging in a form of writing that is new in the Cèmuhi language. The procedure of making a dress, however, is embedded in a traditional story that was probably orally transmitted from mother to child. It also shows how storytelling is an educational tool, whereby a mother teaches her child a certain practice. By adding her own French translation, Poinine makes it, not only an example of procedural writing, but makes this story available to a wider public.

A jèkulè ko a tiu jahi [The story of the Bourao dress]

1. A hiuulè tè è toomwo heme è atèn.
    La coutume de la fille quand elle se marie.
    The custom of the girl who is going to marry.

2. *Titi hai ni jubwo jahi.*
    (elle) arrache en écrasant contre la tige.
    The bark of the bourao is peeled off.

3. *Mwo taite ne he tab ha alo naadènitan.*
    On plonge dans l'eau dans deux semaine.
    It is soaked in water for two weeks.

4. Kome ca nyaat kè wèe (cei) daleen ko péca.
    Quand ell est molle on enlève (tire) l jus avec la maule.
    As soon as it is soft, the mucus is drained with a maul.

5. Atiti me meiu.

(elle) étalé pour sécher.
It is then left to dry.

6. Mi pei a tei juun.
   (elle) tresse avant la corde.
   the dress is plaited with the strings.

7. Pei mwo a puun ko pumi majoo.
   (elle) tresse aussi la tête avec les poils de roussette.
   the top is plaited with the skin of the flying fox.

8. Pinyihi neko a juu ni tihin.
   (elle) attaché à la corde les tiges.
   The stalks are attached to the dress.

9. Kome ca nabwén a tiu ka tpilihi neko a jaunin.
   Quand c'est fini, la jupe on l'entoure sur la tête.
   When the dress is finished, it is tied together at the top.

10. A weetu tèn ka waa tii.
    La courverture à elle c'est la peau de bagnand.
    The veil of the dress are the roots of the banyan.

11. Tawiièng hen ka cièèng ko tai.
    On la couvre et l'attache avec la corde.
    It is covered and strung together.

This story also provides evidence of Poinine experimenting with unfamiliar practices such as interlinear gloss, as an excerpt form the story shows:

A weetu   tèn   ka   waa   tii
La courverture   à elle   c'est   la peau de bagnan.
The covering is made of the bark of the banian.

Even though the gloss does not reflect any authoritative linguistic claims, the use of a culturally unfamiliar scientific practice can be seen as a form of 'interpracticality'. Analogous to the application of distant genres, Poinine has also found inspiration to the distant practice of interlinear gloss, which is commonly used to present Cèmuhi language data in the works of Rivierre and Bensa.

Another genre that is rare in written Cèmuhi is the 'personal story'. As mentioned earlier, Suzanne Poinine has written very few 'first person' accounts. The two documents that fall into this category are the 'testimony', a 'thank you'-note, and the written answers on the questionnaire. I will now look at some of the characteristics of these sub-genres.

The personal testimony or 'short biography' about Suzanne Poinine's becoming a Christian is one of her most recent writings and is a reflective recount of how she became a Christian. It is the only personal account known to have ever been written in the language and could therefore be seen as an emerging genre in the Cèmuhi language. Interestingly, the text is one of a few where she provides her own French translation. This suggests the importance she attached to her testimony and to having her voice heard beyond her own close community.

Pwö a cèiu bènaawen na cinu jong.	Il était une foi j'étais malade.	*One day I was sick.*
E mu ha picani, é âdoo lépwö a pwö èti.	J'étais souffert, je consul les guérisseurs.	*I suffered and consulted the healers.*
Hê wécèhin, kè wâé jong kèhê caa time pwö ahwin a bwö wâe jong ânnebun.	Après j'étais gueri, mais ce n'est plus comme ma santé au début.	*After I got healed, my health wasn't as it used to be.*
Emaan jong, téé jong, ticè cèli mê nê pwia tong.	J'étais fatigué, lourde, personne peut me soulager.	*I was tired and felt burdened. Nobody could help me.*
A bènaamwên nââ è tuiè nêtong a pwööti nâ pièè	A ce moment là m'arrive une parole qui dit:	*At that moment a word came to me:*
Abé dèéong ögawé nâ mââlè oke éé. Bè ébo nê tèwé tèbwö èhi.	"Venez à moi vous qui êtes fatiqué et charger je vous donne du repos."	*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest."*
A pwööti pii tè Jesuu Wêêngâ nâng a pwööti nâ nênihung.	Une parole dit par Jesus Voici cette parole qui m'encouragaient.	*This was a word given by Jesus.*

Tabuhi hâ tan nââ, é pawiè a moulihun nè tè Jesuu kê wêêng nâ èko mulihung.	A partir de ce jour là je donne ma vie à jesus, il vit en moi.	*This is the word that encouraged me.* *From that day, I give my live to Jesus. He lives in me now.*

In addition, the 'thank you' note in written form is a first person account, in which she identifies herself with her own Kanak and French name. The thank you note, which was sent to us in June 2005, following a medical visit of her daughter and grandson in Sydney, reads as follows:

Martin me Margo Bocu tèwé me ni èwa ne hemu paduéé. Olééhi tèn a bwö pi tèmehi kanye. Pwöcöön me é nauhi kawé. Olèwé mwo nye bo pi ali kanye mwo. Goö-Suzanne	*Maarten and Margo* *Greetings to you and the children in the Lord.* *I am grateful to know you.* *It is hard to forget you.* *I thank you and know that we will see each other again.* *Goö-Suzanne*

While this may be an ordinary note in any other language, it is far less so in a language such as Cèmuhi and this for several reasons. First, it is safe to state that this note is most likely the only 'thank you' note that has ever been written in the Cèmuhi language. Moreover, the fact that this message has been sent overseas, to a country where the language of communication is English, is proof of the significance of this communicative act. Thus, by sending the note, Poinine established a communicative act that is highly unusual in the context of a globalised world where English has become the major language of intercultural communication. Yet, this simple and, at first sight, insignificant act of writing, has enabled her to establish an effective and meaningful communicative act between a sender and a receiver.

Writing is no longer a way of exploring and reflecting on her own language, as she did in the beginning of her writing career through writing word lists, but it has now become a

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communicative tool that enables her to keep the necessary balance and harmony that is so important in Kanak culture. While it is more common in Kanak culture to express gratitude orally and as part of the customary exchange, it is through adopting and applying this new register or genre in writing that Poinine has been able to accommodate the need for balance and harmony. Giving the examples of Australian Aboriginal languages which start to develop their own written forms as soon they come to be written down, Halliday (1985) observes that new written registers or "functional variation in language" (p. 44) will emerge, according to the function it needs to serve.

6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed some meta-linguistic phenomena in the practice of the writing of emergent writer Suzanne Poinine. I have mainly focused on the more salient features such as heterography, text organisation, linguistic awareness, oral features, and emerging literary features and genres. The second part of the analysis (Chapter 7) is focused on a thematic analysis of the textual products itself.

Chapter 7:

Linguistic Phenomena in Cèmuhi Texts

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will give an analysis of emerging themes (the linguistic phenomena) in the different text genres and textual artefacts written by Suzanne Poinine. The analysis will focus on sentences, short stories, and an autobiographical narrative. Legends, which could be considered more or less a fixed genre of oral literature, will not be included in this analysis. As the aim of this study is to shed light on how the Kanak voice has been shaped or represented through the process of codification of the Cèmuhi language, the analysis will include references to some of the works that were developed by outsiders (as discussed in more detail in Chapter 5). The following works will be taken into account in this comparative analysis: Rivierre's *Cèmuhi-French Dictionary* (1994) and the Cèmuhi Grammar (1980); Colomb's *French-Tyamuhi dictionary (1891)* and his ethnographic work, *La Tribu de Wagap, Nouvelle-Calédonie, ses mœurs et sa langue d'après les notes d'une missionnaire mariste* (1890); Bensa and Rivierre's work *Les Chemins de l'alliance* (1983); *The legend of the chief of Touho*, which was collected and discussed by Father Lambert in his work *Mœurs et Superstitions des Néo Calédoniens* (1900); and other significant historical works, some of which have also been mentioned in Chapter 5.

7.2 What's in a sentence?

7.2.1 Thematic analysis. The thematic analysis is based on the various lists of sentences produced by Suzanne Poinine. They are outlined in the tables below, which contain four lists

of sentences (with my own English translation) that illustrate a key word, followed by 18 numbered sentences (I-XVIII) without key words, and then a list with 12 sentences around key words that share a combination of homographic and homophonic properties. The last two tables (sentences I and II) contain sentences around key words that have certain sounds [m] and syllables (-mi-, me-, ni-) in common. For each theme discovered in the text corpus, a three letter code has been assigned, as outlined in the table below:

Table 6*:*

List of thematic codes

ACC (Accidents)	DIV (Division of labour)	MIS (Mistreatment)
ADV (Adversity)	DIVm (male tasks)	MYT (Mythology)
BIO (Biology)	DIVf (female tasks)	NAM (Naming)
CHR (Christianity)	FOO (Food and cooking)	PAR (Parenting)
CON (Contemporary)	HAR (Harvesting)	PRA (Traditional practices)
CST (Custom)	KIN (Kinship)	STO (Storytelling)
CSTb (birth)	LRN (Learning)	SUP (Superstition)
CSTd (death)	MC (Material culture)	TAB (Taboo)
CSTe (Exchange)	MCh (hunting)	VAN (Vandalism)
CSTm (Marriage)	MCf (fishing)	VAR (Regional variety)
DIS (Disciplining)	MCb (building)	WRI (Writing)

Nr.	Key Word	Sentences pages 1-4	Themes
1	aai	Pébé ni öta me nye aai a wömiidu beme ö pwö acè tabè udu tè nye abé me nye ini a wömiidi. *Bring the animals so that we can dig a water source for them to drink.*	DIV BIO
2	aai	Gaé aai opé ati ni hiuulè me ni winaado naa, bè me nye pi-patihi ne ko nye. *Bring along the presents and food so that we can share it among us.*	CSTe

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Nr.	Key Word	Sentences pages 1-4	Themes
3	ahu	Ahu a amu ko a muu miu, élè ali pao tè Apégu. *The land is filled with the smoke of the fire. The 'kitchen-hut' of Apégu is heating up.*	NAM
4	Apégu	Abèélè a nai Caoom kè toii kon piè(è) Apégu, m… ni niin piniilu me Avét. *Caoom's child is born and his name is Apégu. They share the same name with Avet.*	KIN NAM
5	adi	Adi ali talihi mu pwö bwöhemwo, adi li hiuulè mu pwö paahiin. *Lift up the mats from the ground, lift up the presents from the terras.*	CSTe
6	agénu	Lé pacuuli a mwa, na agénu pitihi – pwö agénu he pao na lé mwo ko pwö, lé tabwö he agénu. *They build the hut, the terras of communal gathering, it is the place where the 'hearth' is build, where they gather on the veranda.*	CSTe
7	aduö	Pwöcoon me nye alièng bè cubwönièng ni tai adèlè. *It is hard to see because of the fern leaves.*	BIO TAB
8	aaè	Caa ticè uja ka waéo, bè lé caa aaè kanye ni pahabu me ni ciibwi caa ticè adaanu. *There is no more sugar cane and taro, because the birds (purple swamphen) and the rats have eaten it all – the plants are all gone.*	FOO BIO ADV
9	aadomwin	Lu tuiè ölu aiu me toomwo, lu aadomwin *The old man and his wife are arriving, a married couple.*	KIN
10	ahaap	Ko cim ni aanhap a-oté pwö ön dè diu, he jié. *The purslanes ('pourpiers') are growing along the coast line, where the sea eels are.*	BIO

Nr.	Key Word	Sentences pages 1-4	Themes
11	ahi	Game ko abé he ahi dubé naa mwo ju waé. *We follow the traces of the deer which will be really good.*	BIO
12	aan	Pé bé ni aa acuut me nye jili a taap. *Bring the wood boards so that we can build a table.*	MCb
13	abaduu	Lé caa tiéèng ne mwo habaduu ni caa me ao tèn ne duèng he itihi. *They have buried the remains of their fathers and grandfathers.*	CSTd KIN
14	abiihi	Ne acè abii ko a paataa ko a capwiihe ila bè ét/élè. *Give me the mitt (made of leaves of a plant) so that I can take up the hot cooking pot.*	FOO MC
15	abwöbwö	Mwotiong me é imwi a baacuut bè abwöbwö koli è tuu. *I am afraid to take that piece of wood because it might be the 'banian'.*	TAB MYT
16	ati	Lé caa tuiè ati èwa he cèmun. *The children are returning from school.*	LRN
17	abwalooö	È caa abwalooö ö pali nai ane tili. *The child draped in cloth is sleeping on its belly.*	PAR VAR
18	amèhi	Lé tuiè ö lépwö amehi he lé koo wii nu. *The parents and their children came to eat coconut.*	PAR FOO
19	apibeen	Time nye ne ce pane lupwö apibéen. The two relatives have nothing to bring.	KIN CSTe
20	ajèlu	Mwo time lé tuiè ö lépwö ajèlu. *The family of the bride has not arrived yet.*	CSTm
21	abii	Waé he me pwö acè abi ko a mwo adi cè. *It would be good to make a wallet for the money.*	CST DIVf
22	aadén	Time nye péeèng nye he pwö tau bè aadén nang. *We won't take him fishing with us because he is clumsy.*	VAR LRN
23	ap	Lé ko ap bè caa piolo ö gèrè Duui.	NAM

Nr.	Key Word	Sentences pages 1-4	Themes
		They laugh because Dui is drunk.	
24	aan	Gaé nebé cè aang me é cèmi he ciè tong.	DIVf
		Give me the seedlings so that I can plant my yam field.	
25	abèéti	È abèétiong ö pa Angèla tè pa Duée.	CHR
		The Angel of God has appeared to me.	
26	abéélè	È abèélè ne he me öta ö pa nahi apulip.	CHR
		The Son of Man has come in the flesh.	
27	apilihi	Apilihi ko hene. A haricaan a tai kon. Apilihi ko a acuut a nyu a haricaan pwöjo.	BIO
		Attach the rope of the horse to the neck. Attach the rope of the white horse to the tree.	
28	alo	Alo ni adaaanu tè lupwö amehi pwöjo.	KIN
		The two fields with plantations are for the parent and his child.	CSTe
29	Alili	Puu ni èpwén bè alili ko a muu pulut.	DIVf
		Wash the clothes because they are dirty.	
30	Atiti	Atiti ni talihi bè titi ko a utè tibwén.	DIVf
		Dry the mats because they are wet because of the rain last night.	
31	Anye	Ni anyu naa lé ko pébé bè me nye anye.	VAR
		Bring the leaves so that we can eat them.	HAR
32	Anyee	Lé pi anyeeng nge mwo he pwoma tèn.	VAR
		They sharpen them in his house.	DIVm
33	Acéi	Ganye acèin diè haamu ne galilé.	CHR
		We follow him to the land of Galilee.	
34	Atingi	È wiè mu he ni cabin a atingi.	MC
		He looks for leaves of the gum tree among the rubbish.	
35	a-pwailo	Le tii a ciè ka lé metè nata a apwailo mukon.	CHR
			CSTe

Nr.	Key Word	Sentences pages 1-4	Themes
		They harvest the yam field and they give the pastor his share (of the meat or yam).	
36	alée	Ko cim ni aléé me ni vulaao jamè a dihen. *Long leaves are starting to grow on the kudzu and palm trees.*	BIO
37	Abwièn	Cim ni abwièn he bwöpwo naa é mwo ko cèmi. *The Blumeas that I replanted start to grow in the garden.*	BIO
38	amo	Caa cuö li amohi ali mwa he pwö daame. *The central pole of the hut of the chief is erected.*	CST
39	amwö	Lé caa amwo li béénye li lé tuiè haabwén. *Our relatives who arrived yesterday are with us.*	CST KIN
40	Alèlè	Lé téne a buhe kuha ka lé piè alèlè caa tatéeèeng. *They hear a gun shot and shout: "They hit it!"*	PRA
41	Alébwön	È pii alèbwön a jèkuè tèn, ka (lé) time lé tèmehi a cèli ko nimen me pii tèlé. *He is not able to recall the story, and they can't remember the story they want to tell.*	STO
42	Aalaa	Lé tétè pwo aalaa ne ni otuun bè caa nabwén. Caa time nye alè he tabè. Nye caa adé ko miidèn. *The cars drive on the bridge that is finished. There is no need to cross the water. We can now go across the bridge.*	CON
43	Aakèwet	Lé wil ni adi caamwo (ne) ni aakèwèt. *The grasshoppers eat the banana leaves.*	BIO VAR
44	Alè	Lu alé wé. Ö lupwöli béénye? Tiime nye alili. *Where did our brothers-in-law go? We haven't seen them.*	KIN
45	aaii	È wöli a tiuun kè tiime pwö cè aaii hen. Tè ju caai. Tiè è aaii hèn. *She has sewed a dress but did not draw any folds in it. It is really tight because it has no folds.*	DIVf PRA
46	adi	Nii apulip. Lu tuiè mu nuuiè ö Adi me caa tèn.	NAM

Nr.	Key Word	Sentences pages 1-4	Themes
		Names of people. Adi and her mother arrive from Nouméa.	
47	Amunaa	Ikua he dunep. *Fresh water fish.*	BIO
48	angèdé	Ko ceigoo "Ajè! Go pe a èlè hem me go ne tè Amaan. *The village of 'Kokingone: "You there, take his basket and give it to Amaan."*	KIN NAM
49	ane	Ane ti he jié. *The content of the sea shells.*	VAR BIO
50	Abélè	Abét he ön. Tti he ön. Kiti abét. *Seashell in the sand. Digging sea shells.*	BIO
51	Avet	Go pii tè Avèt piè è nacu. *Tell Avet to stop it.*	NAM
52	Aacèp	Game wii aacèp haabwén he gohen. *We ate silver fish yesterday afternoon.*	BIO
53	Avéni	Lé toii kon piè Avéni – pa ajiène Atéè. *They call him Avéni - the brother of Atéè.*	NAM
54	Atéè	Caa mègèlè ahi aléé tè Atéè. *The traces of Atéè's passage are still fresh.*	NAM
55	Aléé	Caa muu ni aléé. Ni tai aléé na èp. *The Kudzu is blossoming. The stems of the Kudzu are crawling up.*	VAR BIO
56	Alècè	Lé bwö alècè ni toomwo ukèiu. *The old women are behind.*	CST
57	anebun	Lu anebun ö lépwö caa me ao. *The fathers and grand fathers are in front.*	CST
58	An	Lé caa an li ukéiu aiu. *The old men have already left.*	CST
59	aiu	E cilè pa aiu ö Adi (taatèè). *Adi took care of grand-father.*	NAM KIN

Nr.	Key Word	Sentences pages 1-4	Themes
60	Alica	Tahagéi ni adihi ali alica. Adihi a maloobwi. *To cut leaves of the palm tree. Leaves of the (base of the) palm*	PRA
61	ajè	Ajè, go abé puu ni am ne éni. *Hey, go wash your feet here.*	PAR
62	adèlé	Cim ni tai adèlé. *The vines of the ferns start to grow.*	BIO

Nr.	Sentences numbered I-XVIII	Themes
63	Lu péi ni élèt ö Baoé me Wiaa be me ni mwo tai ti. *Boaé and Wiaa are weaving baskets to be used to collect shells.*	NAM DIVf
64	Lu tuu a ihi ti ö gèe me maame ka lu utè ni anen. *The two sisters [grandmother and her sister} are taking shells from the pot and empty them.*	DIVf. FOO
65	Lu èpin ko tai ni mwaanu ö Wén me Vuvujo be o utè. *Wén and Vuvujo quickly remove the laundry because it will rain.*	NAM DIVf
66	Lé tauli mwa li toomwo ukèui ka lé tai cabin. *The old women are cleaning the house and collecting rubbish.*	DIVf
67	è ta pwö a èlèbwé ö Ujié ka è tèn. *Ujié climbs the gum tree and falls.*	BIO ACC
68	Lé tétè pwö vélo ö lépwö a pitai. *The racers are riding their bike.*	CON
69	Lé caa tuiè ne Poyes ö lépwö Nata haabwén. *The pastors have already arrived in Poyes, yesterday.*	CHR NAM
70	Lé bwö abé ne toomwo he cié pwèi-itihi ö lépwö Galahi. *The Galahi will come on Thursday to release the bride (the young girl).*	CSTm NAM
71	Lé ko tuö ni aneu he meté ö lépwö a èaai mwa. The men remove the bundles of hay and cover the house with it.	DIVm

Nr.	Sentences numbered I-XVIII	Themes
72	è ilèhi a tiu pwöpwi ö Mwaado bè nimen me/ mwo tiun.	CSTe
	Mwaando asks for Pwöpwi's dress, because she wants to wear it.	NAM
73	Lé ko pituti ni è-apun-ilé ne ni toomwo ukèiu.	PRA
	The old women are combing their hair.	
74	Lé ko tati ni (w)ötahen ö lépwö ukèiu aiu.	ADV
	The old men hit the dogs.	
75	Game alihi ali olè haabwén he babwén he tèbwö.	AST
	We have seen the moon when it appeared yesterday.	
76	Gaé caa tili ni a tii ko a goomwa cè.	WRI
	Did you remove the letters/writing on this wall?	TAB
77	Game ténè a kiloo(n) he ko cii.	CHR
	We hear the church bell ring.	
78	Lé picaa pwö nyèbi ni èwa écè, ka lé caa tèmèhi.	LRN
	The children only just started to learn the songs and they remember them	
	already.	
79	Lé ko pi uti a jèkulè wâé. Lé uti a pwaadèn nge Pwöbèi.	KIN
	They tell good stories. They follow the roads (fig. alliances) towards	LRN
	Pombèi.	CST
80	Lé necu ni ta tèlé ka lé mu ko pa Duée.	CHR
	They leave their sins behind and stay with God.	
81	Mene ni apulip bè ticè winaado.	ADV
	The people are hungry as there is nothing to eat.	

Nr.	Key Word	Sentences with homographic similarities	Themes
82	a ni-n	Game cèmi a acuö kè time me tèmèhi a ni-n.	BIO
		We plant a tree but we don't know its name.	NAM
83	ini	Lé ini u ni toomwo me lé pai.	DIVf
		The women are digging up yam to cook them.	HAR
			FOO

Nr.	Key Word	Sentences with homographic similarities	Themes
84	inaa	Lu pii tè pa èwa pièè go nacu inaa bè ta. *They tell the child to stop this because it is wrong.*	DIS
85	ni nin	Talui ni tami ikua bè lé o abé ni nin. *Cover the plates of fish otherwise the flies will get to it.*	FOO
86	èni	Lu èni a tami kumwala ö Waai me Kiolé. *Waai and Kiolé are eating sweet potato.*	NAM FOO
87	éni	Lé tuiè ne éni li nata he paciilè kè lé bwö èngen mwo mu éni he pw itithi. *The pastors will visit us on Friday and they will leave again on Sunday.*	CSTe CHR
88	nemi	É pai ni acèin kè lé abé nemi neni apulip. *I cooked the bread fruit and the people came to taste it.*	FOO
89	nene	Mwaalè ni nyaa ko a a cihe neko èwa bé nene jélé. *The mothers are tired from telling off the obstinant children.*	DIS
90	nene	È a he mwo dotéén, hemwo cinu bè tooeng a nene. *He has to go to the hospital.*	ACC

Nr.	Key Word	Sentences I and II	Themes
91	a ma	È éoö pwö a taap a ma. *The ants are crawling on the table.*	BIO
92	a mi	Lé ko wii ni acèhi a mii ni majoo *The flying foxes are eating the fruit of the Guaiac tree.*	BIO
93	a in	Game tèbwö ni acèhi a in bè caa maget. *We will pick the fruit because it is ripe.*	FOO HAR
94	timi	Lé ini a vulè ? pwajo ni toomwo be me lé timwi a mwa. *The women are digging up the white soil because they want to paint the house.*	DIVf MCb PRA
95	nim	O nim ni èwa ko winaado. *There are five children to feed.*	PAR

Nr.	Key Word	Sentences I and II	Themes
96	mèté	Nim ni mwa naa èaai ko mète. *Five houses are covered with hay bundles.*	MCb
97	meni	Ko jép ni meni he bènaamwon-cè. *The birds are fat at the moment.*	FOO HAR

7.2.2 Discussion. The outline of themes in the sentences shown above reveal the variety of topics in Poinine's writing. These topics can be assigned to some larger categories, which are not to be taken rigidly, as certain themes can be classified under several of the categories outlined below:

1. Education includes themes that refer to parenting, disciplining and learning.

2. Division of labour refers to activities or roles that are taken up by the different genders.

3. Material culture refers to objects, tools or materials made or used in everyday activities.

4. Biology includes terms of plants and animals.

5. Food and harvesting refers to the harvesting and preparation of food.

6. Illness and adversity refers to themes related to sickness, adversity, and accidents.

7. Kanak beliefs and customary practices include references to kinship, superstition, and taboo.

8. Contemporary themes include activities, animals, or items that were introduced in Kanak society since European settlement. This category also includes references to Christianity.

9. Linguistic themes mainly refer to sentences that include specific words in the Tyé variety.

7.2.2.1 Education. The scenes depicted in the sentences are a reflection of Poinine's role as a mother of five and a former mother tongue teacher in the local school, which was part of the revolutionary movement of the *Écoles Populaires Kanak* in the 1980s. Poinine's passion for teaching is also evident from her preference to write down legends that have a pedagogical or moral lesson instead of more historical or foundation stories (also known as *jèma*) with political content (such as the ones collected by Rivierre and Bensa[120]).

The most salient themes in the sentences produced by Poinine are related to parenting (17, 18, 61, 89, 95), disciplining of children (84, 89), and learning (16, 22, 78, 79). Many of the sentences, for instance, contain key words such as *nain* [baby], *èwa* [child], or *amehi,* which can best be described in English as 'parents and their children'. There are also indirect references, such as the masculine vocative 'ajè!' in sentences (61), which together with the female counterpart '*èjè*', is commonly used by women to rebuke their children. This aspect of rebuking or telling off children is also expressed in sentences (84), where the expression, 'go nacu' ["stop it!"), is used. The sentences also reflect Poinine's familiarity with different ontologies of learning and knowledge construction. The following sentence (22), for instance, contains a statement that hints at a traditional way of learning:

22	Time nye péeèng nye he pwö tau bè aadén nang.	*We won't take him fishing with us because he is clumsy.*

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[120] See, for instance, *The legend of the chief of Hienghiène*, which is a historical recount collected by Jean-Claude Rivierre and published in 1980 as part of his grammatical description of the Cèmuhi language and oral recount in Cèmuhi of The arrival of the Marist priests in Touho, which was published in Rivierre's dictionary of 1990.

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The word *aadén* specifically means 'unfit to fish or hunt' and is closely related to *kalaadèn*, which is described in Rivierre's dictionary as 'negligent, nonchalant, inattentive'. In the traditional Kanak society, fishing is mainly taught by older males who take the boys on fishing trips, but only if they are adapt or able enough to master the skill of fishing which involved different techniques depending on the place (ocean, river, reef) and the kind of fish to be caught. It also involved the preparation and handling of different poisonous plants that were used to catch fish. Leblic (1995, p. 219) notes that many Kanak language have a term for 'fishing with poison', such as *pwa-aru* in the closely related language Paicî, which is similar to *pwö tau* (pronounced: [rau] in Cèmuhi.

The following sentence (16), on the other hand, refers to more institutionalised forms of learning:

| 16 | Lé caa tuiè ati èwa he <u>cèmun.</u> | *The children are returning from school.* |

The key word here is *cèmun,* which is described in Rivierre's dictionary as 'to study' or 'school', and which nowadays is commonly used in combinations such as *mwa cèmun*, to refer to the 'school building'. By adding the transitiviser *–hi, (Cèmu-hi)* the noun becomes the verb 'faire l'école' [schooling or *lit.* to do school], as the speakers commonly translate the term 'Cèmuhi' themselves. It is unclear, however, whether this is an accurate translation, or whether it has been influenced by the introduction of institutionalised education by the Marists in the 19th century. In the earliest documents, the language was commonly referred to by the Marists as *la langue de Wagap* [the language of Wagap] or *la langue de Tuo* [the language of Tuo] (e.g. by Mountrouzier 1860), but we also find the term 'Tyamouhi/Tyamuhi' [pronounced as [Camuki] by both the Cèmuhi and the neighbouring Paicî-speakers) in both Colomb's published and Vincent's handwritten manuscript of the Tyamuhi-French dictionary. In the handwritten

version, Vincent translates the term 'école' [school] as *a chomii*, a term that cannot be found in Rivierre's dictionary, but that somewhat resembles the word *cèmi* [to plant], which is the lexeme that precedes *Cèmuhi* in Rivierre's dictionary. It is possible that the original concept of 'planting' in the word *cèmun* has become lost among the speakers and that a semantic shift or extension towards 'schooling' has taken place through the exposure of the speakers to the school system established by the Marist[121]. Moreover, the concept of learning in Kanak society is also closely linked to the land itself and the process of knowledge transfer can be traced in the physical objects and trajectories in the landscape. This intricate relationship between the landscape and knowledge transfer becomes particularly clear in this sentence:

79	Lé ko pi uti a jèkulè wâé. Lé uti a pwaadèn nge Pwöbèi.	*They tell good stories. They follow the roads (fig. alliances) towards Pombèi.*

Not only is storytelling the Kanak way of teaching children how to behave or do things, it is also a means of learning about the past and one's place in the kinship system. First, it is important to note that there are different genres of oral stories. Apart from the *cihedé* (legend), there are also the word *jèma*, which Bensa describes in his work, *Les Chemins d'alliance*, (1982 p. 157), as a foundational tale or story by which each group reveals its identity trough tracing their origins. Under the lexeme 'histoire': *djakut – djama*, Colomb gives the example *uti dyama*, 'raconter une histoire' [to tell a story]. Rivierre's dictionary on the other hand differentiates between *jèkut ~ jèkulè*, which means 'an anecdote, a story, news or information', while *jèma* refers more to a historico-mythical story.

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[121] This semantic shift has also occurred in the English word 'Seminar', from the Latin word *seminarium*, which is derived from semen (seed). According to Steinmetz (2008) "The original meaning 'plant nursery' was extended in the 1580s to 'a breeding ground for the development of learning, a place of education." (p. 205). .

As the sentence suggests, the telling of stories is synonymous with following the road (or alliances), which are the two senses of the word *pwaadèn* [road]. To illustrate the link between storytelling and the concept of following or tracing the alliances that are embedded in the landscape, Poinine uses the word *uti* in the two senses listed in Rivierre's dictionary: in its first sense, *uti* means 'to follow', in its second sense 'to tell'. The relationship between the two concepts becomes even more clear through a morphological analysis of the word *jèkulè* (pronounced by its speakers as [jèpulè]), whereby *jè-* means 'to utter words' and *pulè* 'ground'. In other words, to tell stories, is to listen to the words uttered by the ground or to follow the traces on the road or *pwaadèn,* which in a figurative sense means 'alliances'. The specific alliances Poinine talks about are those between her village Tiwaé and Pombèi. The road that links these two village runs through the central mountain range and skirt the sacred mountain *mwiin dip*, which is also the traditional burial site of the ancestors of both villages[122]. This particular road is also mentioned in one of the legends collected by Bensa in 1965[123]. Bensa notes that it is not an ordinary road but a *pwaadèn iitihi* [sacred road], which, as he puts it, is: "un parcours institutionalisé, qui évoque la caractère ancien, et durable d'un système de relations intégrant plusiers groupes" (p.156) [an institutionalised itinerary that evokes the ancient and durable character of an intricate system of relationships between different groups]. This sentence illustrates that Poinine is not merely presenting cultural knowledge ethnographically, but also linguistically. Her linguistic voice has, in a sense, transcended her cultural voice by contrasting the two senses of the word *uti*.

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[122] Before the construction of the RN1 (Route Natonale 1) by the French government, the gravel road through the mountains was the shortest way by foot from Tiwaé to Pombèi.

[123] This legend recounts the story of Kaapo, a woman who leaves her family in search of her future husband who lives in the village Pombèi (Bensa, 1982).

The next sentence (78) is illustrative of Suzanne Poinine's past role as a primary school teacher:

| 78 | Lé picaa pwö nyèbi ni èwa écè, ka lé caa tèmèhi. | *The children only just started to learn the songs and they remember them already*. |

Even though the sentence does not make clear whether the songs were written down and/or learned in a classroom setting, it is a fact that Poinine was the first person to write down many of the traditional songs and hymns, also known as *temperance* or taperas in her language. The taperas, which are sung a-capella during social gatherings or festivities, have been transmitted orally from generation to generation. Because the younger generation have started to forget these songs, Poinine took the initiative to write down many of these songs in the Cèmuhi language. A common sight during these festivities is that a person holds up a big piece of paper with the text of the song written on it for those who can no longer remember the words.

7.2.2.2 Division of labour and gender roles. Division of labour is generally referred to as the different roles that are taken up by men and women in a society with an egalitarian ontology that, in reality, has lots of differences between gender and power differences between leaders and followers. Poinine's focus is predominantly on tasks that are done by women in Kanak society, such as doing the laundry (29, 65), cleaning and collecting rubbish (66), drying mats (30), sewing dresses (45), weaving baskets (63), harvesting and cooking food (64, 83), or parenting (59). Only a few sentences contain themes that directly refer to activities done by men or which have a male as subject of the sentence, such as men building a hut (71), old men hitting dogs (74) or sentence (22), where the masculine form of the stative personnel pronoun is used (*nang*) with reference to fishing.

The power and gender differences are particularly reflected in the following three consecutive sentences:

56	alècè	Lé bwö alècè ni toomwo <u>ukèiu</u>.	*The old women are behind (or following).*
57	anebun	Lu anebun ö lépwö caa me ao.	*The fathers and grandfathers are in front.*
58	an	Lé caa an li <u>ukèiu</u> aiu.	*The old men have already left.*

These sentences can both be interpreted literally, as well as symbolically. It is not uncommon to see women keeping a short distance behind their husband when they walk in the village or go to church, the market, or a social gathering. This practice reveals the customary status, ranking, or hierarchy of men and women of different age groups in Kanak society. Yet, by writing these sentences, Poinine does not only give expression to her cultural voice, but also to her linguistic voice, by experimenting with the semantics, as well as grammatical, constructions in the Cèmuhi language. In the first two sentences, for instance, Poinine illustrates the antonyms, *alècè* [behind] and *anebun* [in front], which are presented as key words for the sentences. She further seems to play with the word, *ukèiu,* which Rivierre puts in the category of 'stative verbs', even though these 'stative verbs' can also act as adjectives (e.g. ukèiu mwa > old house). Poinine also experiments with the use of the word in adverbial positon (*ni toomwo ukèiu*], even though the more common expression is *ukèiu toomwo*, which is also given as an example in Rivierre's dictionary. Furthermore, the expression, u*kèiu aiu* [old men], in sentence 58 is also somewhat unusual as well. The common term used by the speakers to refer to old men (or "les vieux") is *ukèiu* without a determiner, while *aiu* is generally used to refer to the male or husband. The unusual combination, *ukèiu aiu*, however, may have been triggered to match the expression concordantly with *toomwo ukèiu* in

sentence 56. These examples show that writing can trigger new expressions, new collocations, or even new grammatical patterns that may be considered 'incorrect' or unusual in speech.

Finally, elderly men are more specifically referred to in sentence 57 as *caa me ao.* This fixed expression is described by Rivierre as 'the fathers and grandfathers, the subjects and servants of the chiefdom.' They are the first to take up *la parole* [the ceremonial speech]. Bensa notes that they are also commonly referred to as *mwo-ukèiu* or 'the container of the elders', which gives them an important status as foundation fathers who are responsible for the organisation of the ceremonies, even though, hierarchically, they are considered as the 'subjects' to the 'chief' or *daamè.*

7.2.2.3 Material culture and related practices. Poinine's writing includes many references to material culture or the tools and objects that are used or made to execute daily activities such as cooking. Many of these tools or objects are made with what is found in the environment. The *abi ko a paataa* [mitt] in sentence 14, for instance, literally means 'a wrap of leaves', which is made of a plant identified in Rivierre's dictionary as the *Urena Lobata* herb, known for its healing properties and also used to treat burns.

14	Ne acè abii ko a paataa ko a capwiihe ila bè ét/élè.	*Give me the mitt so that I can take up the hot cooking pot.*

This category also includes daily activities that are not necessarily part of the preparatory practices before the customary ceremonies (such as for instance the traditional practice of making Kanak money with shells and the bones of the flying fox). The practices described in the following sentences, however, are related to the activities of everyday life, such as making or building a table with wood (12), weaving baskets to collect sea shells (63), or digging up white soil to paint a house (94). Most of these sentences contain a purpose clause, introduced

by *me* or *be me,* whereby an action executed by a person leads to a particular result, such as in the following sentences (12, 63, 94):

12	Pé bé ni aa acuut <u>me nye jili a taap</u>.	*Bring the wood boards so that we can build a table.*

63	Lu péi ni élèt ö Baoé me Wiaa <u>be me ni mwo tai ti.</u>	*Boaé and Wiaa are weaving baskets to be used to collect shells.*

94	Lé ini a vulè ? pwajo ni toomwo <u>be me lé timwi a mwa</u>.	*The women are digging up the white soil because they want to paint the house.*

In some cases, however, the purpose of the action is not made explicit. Sentence 60 mentions the cutting of the leaves of the base [*maloobwi*] of a certain palm (*alica*). The palm appears in Rivierre's dictionary under its scientific name as the *basssselinia* palm, of which the base is used as a utensil or to serve as a cover for the rain or sun.

60	Tahagéi ni adihi ali alica. Adihi a maloobwi.	*To cut leaves of the palm tree. Leaves of the (base of the) palm.*

The next sentence (34) does not clearly indicate what the leaves of the gum will be used for. Again, we can rely on the information that is provided by Rivierre to get some clues. The leaves of some species of gum tree, such as the *tingi*, categorised by Rivierre as the *Alstoni plumosa* or the *èlèbwé* (*Cordia Myxa*) are commonly used to make traps. According to Rivierre's dictionary, the glu in the fruits of the *èlèbwé,* in particular, is used to catch cicada.

34	È wiè mu he ni cabin a atingi.	*He looks for leaves of the gum tree among the rubbish.*

Some of the examples also include certain customs or habits, such as in sentence 40, where it is customary to shout out 'kuha' or in French "touché!" ["hit!"] when a gunshot is heard.

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40	Lé téne a buhe kuha ka lé piè alèlè caa tatéeèeng.	*They hear a gun shot and shout "They hit it!"*

7.2.2.4 Biology. The sentences written by Poinine include many species of plants, trees, fish, birds and common mammals, both endemic and those that were introduced since European settlement. These sentences include references to domestic and/or introduced animals, such as deer (11), horses (27), and dogs (74). The sentences include terms of animals that are native to New Caledonia, such as, the purple swamphen (8), rats (8), and the flying fox (92).

There are also references to tree species, such as the purslane (10), the Kudzu (36, 55), the Blumea (37), and the Gaïac (92). Each key word is given in the context of a sentence, without explicitly explaining what the word means. The exception is sentence 47 where Poinine gives a short description of the word, *amutaa*. She describes the word as *Ikua he dunep* [fresh water fish], while Rivierre describes the lexeme as the generic name for river eels. Sentence 10 seems to hover between a description and an illustration of the word, *ahaap*. Consider the difference between the description (translated in English) of the word in Rivierre's dictionary with Poinine's use of the word in the context of a declarative sentence, but with some additional information ("where the sea eels are"):

10	ahaap	Ko cim ni aanhap a-oté pwö ön dè diu, he jié.	[*The purslanes ('pourpiers') are growing along the coast line, where the sea eels are.*]
Rivierre Dict.	ahaap	Herbe comestible du littoral; pourpier, Portulaca oleracea L., Portulacacées	[*edible herb inhabiting the coastal line, pourpier*]

7.2.2.5 Food and harvesting. Harvesting and food preparation are common themes in Poinine's writing. Several sentences include direct references to some form of food gathering or harvesting, such as collecting leaves (31), digging up yams (83), picking fruit (93). As we can see below, all of these sentences take the form of purpose, reason or result clause, which are introduced in Cèmuhi with *bè* or *me* or *bè me*:

> (31) Ni anyu naa lé ko pébé <u>bè me nye anye</u>.
> *Bring the leaves so that we can eat them.*
> (83) Lé ini u ni toomwo <u>me lé pai</u>.
> *The women are digging up yam in order to cook them.*
> (93) Game tèbwö ni acèhi a in <u>bè caa maget</u>.
> *We will pick the breadfruit because it is ripe.*

While not overtly expressed, sentence 93 may refer to the customary practice of exchanging breadfruit (*in*) of which the first harvest of it is commonly shared among the families in Koowéi, one of the Cèmuhi villages along the coast, as the description of the lexeme *in* in Rivierre's dictionary states. The following sentence (97), however, makes an indirect reference to the time of harvesting. The key word *meni* [bird] most likely refers to the pigeons and flying fox, which are both eaten by Kanak people as soon as they are fat. This coincides with the harvesting of the yams between April-June, which are often consumed together with the birds.

97	meni	Ko jép ni meni he bènaamwon-cè.	*The birds are fat at the moment.*

Apart from harvesting and cooking, the theme of sharing of food is also prevalent in many of the sentences. While the exchange of food is usually an integral part of the customary practice as a way of maintaining the social harmony between different families, clans and tribes, it is also a considered as a form of retribution for received services. In sentence 35, for instance, Poinine writes how the pastor receives his share of the yam harvest. This form of sharing is to

be interpreted as a form of remuneration for the pastor's services to the church community. As pastors receive only a very small wage, they often have to supplement their income with what is being donated by the church members in the form of food, such as yams. In traditional sense, however, the sharing of the first yams is much more symbolic and has more to do with the way in which ties or alliances are maintained in Kanak society than a form of providing food as such.

| 35 | Le tii a ciè ka lé metè nata a apwailo mukon. | *They harvest the yam field and they give the pastor his share (of the meat or yam).* |

Sharing of food with the missionaries is also reflected in the customary speeches that were collected and translated by Colomb in *La tribu de Wagap*. In the speech addressed to the missionaries (See 5.2.3.4), Kanak people express their gratitude towards them by giving them food, even if they did not have enough for themselves, as the excerpt below shows:

Time utye shuan ni ninando. Be te dyu shuangame, ke….game patigo ko ni nando nelan.

[We don't have a lot of foods because we are with many…yet, we offer you these.]

7.2.2.6 Illness and adversity. This category includes themes that relate to sickness and adversity, such as the destruction of food crops caused by rats and water birds (8) and hunger (81). It also contains the theme of mistreatment, such as hitting dogs (74) and accidents, such as falling from a tree (67). In Sentence 81, reference is made to the theme of 'famine', which was a common problem in earlier Melanesian society.

81	Mene ni apulip bè ticè winaado.	*The people are hungry as there is nothing to eat.*

Another emerging theme is what, from a western perspective, it could be perceived as 'vandalism', even though it could be interpreted as an indirect reference to forms of resistance against colonial rule, such as in the sentence below:

76	Gaé caa tili ni a tii ko a goomwa cè?	*Did you remove the letters/writing on this wall?*

In (76), reference is made to the writing on a wall, which at first sight could be interpreted as an allusion to the graffiti that clad official buildings, bus shelters, and '*aire de repos*' [rest areas] that are often built with local materials. This kind of graffiti mostly concerns politically motivated messages and images of leaders of the Kanak independence movement (e.g. Elio Chamorro and Jean-Marie Tjibaou) often against the background of the Kanak independence flag. While the graffiti is usually sprayed or painted, they can also be carved into the wood of picnic tables found near tourist sights.

7.2.2.7 Kanak beliefs and cultural practices. The following sentences contain themes that are specifically related to Kanak beliefs and customary practices that often take place in specific areas of the domestic house. In sentence (5), Poinine writes about the *bwöhemwo* and *paahiin*. While the first term is the more general term for ground or soil (on which the mats are spread out), the second term *paahiin* is a slightly elevated place or what Rivierre's describes as a *terras* in front of the hut and opposite the *grande alléé* [main alley]. Discussing the organisation and layout of the traditional housing environment in the Cèmuhi region, Bensa describes the *paahin* as the place where the ceremonial dance takes place and where the presents for the customary exchange are displayed (p. 37).

5	Adi ali talihi mu pwö bwöhemwo, adi li hiuulè mu pwö paahiin.	*Lift up the mats from the ground, lift up the presents from the terras.*

In the next sentence (6), the main theme is *agénu*, which refers to the veranda attached to the house and which is used to relax or to have gatherings. It is also used for the *pao* [hearth], which is an important concept in Kanak tradition, also mentioned in sentence 3, below.

6	Lé pacuuli a mwa, na agènu pitihi – pwö agénu he pao na lé mwo ko pwö, lé tabwö he agénu.	*They build the hut, the terras of communal gathering; it is the place where the 'hearth' is build, where they gather on the veranda.*

3	Ahu a amu ko a muu miu, élè ali pao tè Apégu.	*The land is filled with the smoke of the fire. The 'kitchen-hut' of Apégu is heating up.*

Both Rivierre and Bensa translate *pao* as 'case-cuisine [kitchen-hut]. Bensa also discusses the 'case-cuisine' in *La maison Kanak* (Boulay et al., 1990, p. 120), while Rivierre illustrates the use of the term in his dictionary, with a phrase that is most likely an excerpt of a transcription of a customary speech, *he ni mwa me pao cè* [in this house with its dependencies].

There are also frequent references to names of clans, such as Galahi (8) and names of the villages, Poyes (7) and Pombèi (70), which together with the village of Tiwaé form the basis of the object of Bensa and Rivierre's detailed analysis of the intricate system of marriage alliances between different Cèmuhi clans. From Poinine's writing, however, one can only conclude that there is indeed a system of exchange of brides between different groups in Cèmuhi society, such as the Galahi, as illustrated here:

70	Lé bwö abé ne toomwo he cié pwèi-itihi ö lépwö Galahi.	*The Galahi will come on Thursday to release the bride (the young girl).*

As we have seen earlier, the sharing or exchange of food is an important cultural value in Kanak society. In the following sentences (35), *apwailo* is the key word in the sentence, which is described by Rivierre (p. 321) as 'the ritual kitchen or the cooking pot that contains grilled meat or tubers, such as yam or taro'.

35	a-pwailo	Le tii a ciè ka lé metè nata a apwailo mukon.	*They harvest the yam field and they give the pastor his share (of the meat or yam).*

Many of the practices or daily activities are also highly symbolic and have an ideological meaning as well. Consider for instance sentence 38:

38	amo	Caa cuö li amohi ali mwa he pwö daame.	*The central pole of the hut of the chief is erected.*

Erecting the central pole, also known as *diha,* has as meaning that the chief has taken on his role or responsibility as chief of the clan.

Some of the sentences contain themes that relate to superstition and taboo, such as sentence 7, which talks about something that is hidden behind 'fern leaves':

7	Pwöcoon me nye alièng bè cubwönièng ni tai adèlè.	*It's hard to see because of the fern leaves.*

The fern is a plant that was traditionally used to conceal or hide certain objects, such as the handle of the 'casse-tête' [tomahawk] (also a phallus symbol) or the male sex. They were also linked to transferring coded messages. Another usage is proposed by Leblic (2010, cited in Coiffier, 2013), who notes that in the neighbouring Paicî region, the "liane fougère" or *nyärä èdërë,* an unidentified fern, is always associated with the preparation of the first yam. This fern is also used to envelop food items that are distributed to the nephews, younger brothers,

aunts, and sisters during customary exchange. This is most likely what Poinine had in mind when she wrote this sentence.

The theme of concealing, hiding or taboo, can also be found in sentence 15.

15	Mwotiong me é imwi a baacuut bè abwöbwö koli è tuu.	*I am afraid to take that piece of wood because it might be the 'banian'.*

This sentence is also an indirect reference to a well-known origin story, *Téâ Kanaké*[124], in which the banian plays an important role. The story tells how *Téâ Kanaké* entered in the Banian tree, which represents the body of the living souls. In order to get access to the life of human beings, however, he had to follow its roots and go past the land of the dead. The ashes of the ancestors fed the roots of the banian, tabooing the place. This story was for the first time transcribed in the Paicî language and translated in French by Jean Guiart. In her 2013 doctoral thesis, "Pathways between traditions. (Re)writing and Identity Construction in Kanaky/Nouvelle-Calédonie", Emma Sinclair notes that even though Guiart "acknowledges the tellers of the stories in the collection, [he] presents their names and the places that the stories were recorded…The Kanak-language texts are absent from Contes et Légendes…." (p. 338).

7.2.2.8 Christian and other contemporary themes. Apart from Christian themes which are frequent in Poinine's writing, there are also three sentences that could be coded for contemporary activities such as 'cars on a bridge' (42), where Poinine makes allusion to the new bridge that was built to better access her village (Tiwaé), 'bicycle riding' (68) and 'writing' (76). Several sentences, however, contain references to Christian practices, such as the comings and goings of the protestant pastors (69) who usually arrive in the villages on the

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[124] Also entitled: "Histoire des vieux d'il y a longtemps et des pays de Nouvelle Calédonie" [history of the elders of yesteryear and the lands of New Caledonia (Guiart, 1955).

north-east coast on Fridays and leave on Sundays (87), often with the rest of the food that is shared communally after the church service (35). There are also direct or indirect references to the Scriptures (25, 26, 33, 80, 81), which seem to be examples of an emerging intertextuality, whereby Poinine is likely referring to sections of her own translation of the Gospel of Matthew[125].

7.2.2.9 *Tyé as a linguistic variety.* Even though the Cèmuhi language has become the common denominator for the three known varieties or dialects, as mentioned earlier, Poinine often refers to her language as *pwö-tié* [language of Tié], which is the variety spoken in the villages of Poyes and Tiwaé[126]. As such, several sentences (22, 31, 32, 43, 49, 55) contain words in the Tyé variety or *Pwö-Tié*[127] which are also marked in Rivierre's dictionary as 'Tyé'. The Tyé words in the sentences are *ane* [content] (16, 49); *aadén* [clumsy in hunting or fishing] (22); *anye* [to eat leaves] (31); *anyee* [to sharpen] (32); *aakawét* [coconut grasshopper] (43); *abét* [type of sea shell] (50); *èp* [to crawl up]. Some of these words also appear in the short stories (e.g. *ane*) and legends (*anyee*). With the exception of the words *ane* and *abé*, most of the Tyé words do not appear in Colomb's French-Tyamuhi dictionary, or a more general word of equivalent meaning is listed instead. Rivierre on the other hands lists all the words, often with their orthographic variations, as the comparative list of the Tyé words is shown in the table below:

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[125]Apart from writing, Poinine also participated in a Bible translation workshop organised by the international NGO SIL International[125] in the 1990s.

[126] Rivierre (1994, p. 12) cites a letter from the hand of Montrouzier, dated 13th august, 1862, in which the Marist priest mentions that each tribe has its own idiom of which "Tié" is spoken by de people in Tuo (which includes the villages Poyes and Tiwaé.)

[127] The lexeme *pwö* literally means 'mouth, voice, or entrance'.

Table 7:

Comparative list of Tyé words used by Poinine, Colomb, and Rivierre

Tyé variety in Poinine's sentences	Entry Colomb's French-Tyamuhi dictionary	Entry Rivierre's Cèmuhi-French dictionary
ane	-contenance: anen [capacity]	-ane-(n), âne-(n) (Tyé): contenu [content]
aadén	-inhabile: - [clumsy]	-aadén, èaadén, èaadéèn (Tyé): inefficace, malhabile à la chasse ou à la pêche [inefficient, inept in hunting or fishing]
anye	-manger: pua winando (+ notes[128]) [to eat]	-anye, ânye (Tyé): manger des feuilles [to eat leaves] -èni: manger (tubercules) [to eat (tubers)] -wii: manger (viande, choses dures) [te eat (meat, solid or hard foods)]
anyee	-aiguisser: étè [to sharpen]	-anyee, ânyee (Tyé), coupant, aiguisé [cutting, sharp]
aakawét	-sauterelle: kole – koty [grasshopper]	-koléé: sauterelle [grasshopper] -akawét, akèwè (Tyé): sauterelle de cocotier [coconut grasshopper]
abét	-coquille: a piti (+ notes[129])	-abét-abélè, âbét (Tyé): coquillage bivalve [bivalve mollusc]
èp	-grimper: pela [to climb]	-pala/pèla: grimper [to climb] -èp, èm (Tyé): ramper, grimper (liane) [to crawl, to climb (stem)]

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[128] Colomb also gives some synonyms of the word 'winando', such as 'wi' (to eat meat or pork) and 'eni' (to eat yams, taro, etc.). The word 'anye', however, is not mentioned in his notes (p. 212).

[129] Colomb adds in his notes a short list of different species of sea shells, including 'abé' which he describes as: "amas de petits coraux qui se voient à marée base [sic.]". [shell middens that appear at low tide]. (p.80)

7.3 What's in a short story?

      7.3.1 Thematic analysis. Whereas each sentence is an illustration of one particular theme in Kanak life, a much more complex picture of that society starts to emerge in the short stories written by Suzanne Poinine. The themes discussed in the sentences reveal a closely interconnected world where each gender related task, each object or food item needs to be seen in the light of *la coutume* or the practice of the Kanak customs, which regulates the social harmony and organisation of Kanak society. The short stories that I discuss below make reference to traditional practices and materials that are used to make certain items and who is involved in it. The stories also shed light on the symbolic significance of these objects in the customary exchange. The tables below contain short stories of which some were published in *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes*, such as *Adi* [Kanak Money], *A û* [The Yam], *Tààwi* [Water taro field], and *A è apwömi* [The Pandanus]. The other three stories, of which some are numbered in verses by Poinine, were all collected on the field. They include A *wéetu tè a èwa he me* abèélè [The covering for the newborn child], *pé toomwo aatèn* [To marry a girl] and *A jèkulè ko a tiu jahi*[130] [The story of the Bourao dress). The themes that emerge from these stories will be arranged under two main categories: food and harvesting and Kanak custom, and division of labour and material culture.

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[130] This story also includes hand drawings of the different objects used to make the dress (See Fig. 17 in Chapter 6).

A û [The Yam]		Themes
Nyè tèko cémi li ù kè hê nyè nîîmihi li ju ù tè nyè bè koli bwo tièdèm kè hê înâa tè cim wàà (pwö) bwöhêmwö tènyê.	We grow our yams and it is important to preserve the real species to avoid that they will disappear from our land.	HAR FOO DIVm/f CST
Bè à ù kè tè à èà pa aiù.	The yam plant symbolises the male.	
Kè tèè étènyê nî ju nîîn nâ pièè bwàtànà, bwààji, pèvuö, tahènitoo, ééù, cèoéhê ù, èpvé, nâhi ù, tomo, ju ûn, kacoo, géréén.	We can find the real yams all around us: bwàtànà, bwààji, pèvuö, tahènitoo, ééù, cèoéhê ù, èpvé, nâhi ù, tomo, ju ûn, kacoo, géréén. [Names of different Yam species]	

Tààwi [Water taro field]		Themes
È tèko pwö ali tààwi wêêgi ukéiu. Kè tèko cémi li ju waéo.	The old lady is preparing her water taro field. She only plants the real taros.	FOO DIVf CST
Kè pièè: "Oê toomwö kè tè à èàn a ju wàéo"	She says: "These are the plants that symbolise the female."	
Kè tèko pii nii ni ju waéo: "Uhum, pida, waéo tè téat, waéo magat, ba-piing"	She gives the taros their names: "Uhum, pida, waéo tè téat, waéo magat, ba-piing"	
Kè pii mwô pièè: "Wô nî ju waéo nâ pwô mê ânyu tè ê nyââ tè èwa kè niin pièè tàng, kè pwô mê jààbwô tè pa cuöèwa hèmè mwôko wàhinêng.	And she says: "The leaves of some of the taro are eaten by the mothers, they call them 'tàng'. They also gather the vines for their infants."	

Adi [Kanak Money]		Themes
È âdé kè pwö ali âdi piing.	*He is in the process of making black 'Kanak money'.*	MC DIVm
È pwö koni duu mâjoo ké ni ti è jiiè: pwocègé, jatoo.	*He does so with the bones of the flying fox and the sea shells: Pwocègé and the Triton's Trumpet.*	CSTm CSTe
È bwö mu kèè niimihi pièè wâé hêmê pwö acè béén. È pé ali âdi kèè â nê tè ukéiu acimên pièè nimèn mè lu mu mê nâîn (talupini), nâbwen.	*He thinks it would be good to have a wife. He takes the Kanak money and brings it to his old maternal uncle so that he can marry his girl. End of story.*	

A è apwömi [The Pandanus]		Themes
È tè ko pé li apwömi wèegi ka tè ko péi ni pwömi. Ka piè: "A pwömi cè ka a niin pièe: "kàalim". Time nye ucè ne à à pihe huô ko a apulip bè a atèbo te nye" Ka pii mwo piè: "A pwömi cè, ka bènilè anaa nye ne ko a huo ko a apulip"	*The woman gathers pandanus leaves and start weaving the mats. She says: "This mat is called 'Kââlim', it is not used during the custom because it is used to sit on." And she continues: "The other mat is called 'bènilè', it is the one that is exchanged during the custom."*	MC DIVf CSTm CSTe
È pïè mwo a ju élèt kè piè: "Ani ka a élèhi ni miu me ni talè ka ni hiuulè"	*She also plaits the ceremonial basket and says: "This is the basket for the fire (to cook), it also contains de knifes for the ceremony."*	
Ka piè mwo a céiu élèt kè piè: "Ani ka a élèlè mwôp bè lupwo élèlè cè ka lupwö pane è toomwo da he cè mwa me a womoop cèli è o caniè tèbwö hen."	*And she continues to plait another one and says: "This one is for the food (provisions). These are the two baskets that the wife will take with her when she marries."*	

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A wéétu tè a èwa he me abèélè [The cover for the newborn child]		Themes
Anebuha bwö abèélè a èwa. Ka hiuulè kon naa è pwö wé toomwo. È pé ni èawomi wè toomwo ke mi péi ni talihi kaalim na jan nèko a èwa, bèni bè tawiièng he me abèélè. È péi mwo ni talihi bènit (bènilè) bè ni hiuulè kon ne tè lépwö acimen.	*Before the child is born, the women starts to weave a gift for the child.* *The woman takes the pandanus and first plaits a mat that will serve as a canopy frame for the child. It will protect the child when it is born. She also pleats mats with two threads (twill weave), which will serve as presents for the child's maternal uncle.*	MC DIVf CSTb CSTe

A jèkulè ko a tiu jahi [The story of the Bourao dress]		Themes
1. A hiuulè tè è toomwo heme è atèn.	*The custom of the girl who is going to*	CSTm
2. Titi hai ni jubwo jahi.	*marry.*	CSTe
3. Mwo taite ne he tab ha alo naadènitan.	*The bark of the bourao is peeled off.*	DIVf
4. Kome ca nyaat kè wèe (cei) daleen ko péca.	*It is soaked in water for two weeks.* *As soon as it is soft, the mucus is drained*	MC
5. Atiti me meiu.	*with a maul.*	
6. Mi pei a tai juun.	*It is then left to dry.*	
7. Pei mwo a puun ko pumi majoo.	*the dress is plaited with the strings.* *the top is plaited with the skin of the flying fox.*	
8. Pinyihi neko a juu ni tihin.	*The stalks are attached to the dress.*	
9. Kome ca nabwén a tiu ka >pilihi neko a punin.	*When the dress is finished, it is tied together at the top.*	
10. A wéétu tèn ka waa tii.	*The veil of the dress are the roots of the banyan.*	
11. Tawiièng hen ka cièèng ko tai.	*It is covered and strung together.*	

Pé toomwo aatèn [To marry a girl]		Themes
1. é péu a ni talihi bènit.	*She weaves the mats with two threads.*	MC
2. è pèi a èlèlè èapwomi bènit	*She weaves the basket with two threads.*	DIVf
3. è pé a talèt		CSTm

4. è pé a miu	*She takes a knife.*
5. è pé a adi wéém	*She takes the fire.*
6. è pé a ane ila a pèhi u tahèni töö	*She takes the white money*
7. è ne ha élèt	*She takes the content of the pot and the*
8. a élèlè mwop	*yam.*
9. è péi a tiu jahi	*She puts it in her basket.*
	in the food basket.
	She makes the Bourao dress.

7.3.2 Discussion.

      7.3.2.1 Food and harvesting. The first two stories that will be discussed explain the symbolism and use of certain plants, such as in *A û* [the yam] and *Tààwi* [water taro field]. In this section, I will first discuss the themes in relation to food and harvesting, material culture and division of labour and I will then explain how they are interconnected and fit into the broader category of the Kanak customs and kinship. I will again compare some of the themes in her texts with a discussion of similar topics or themes presented in the work of the Marists, Rivierre, and Bensa. The two stories show the symbolic significance of some of the main food items, such as the yam and the taro. The different stages in the cultivation of the yam, for instance, from the moment of preparing the field to the harvesting of yams are also associated with specific events in Kanak society, such as birth, marriage, death, or the inauguration of a chief. In the first story, *a u* (the yam), Poinine writes about the significance of preserving the real yam species and concludes with a list of traditional names (*ju niin*). The prefix *ju* is usually preposed to nouns that designates objects in the natural world (e.g. *ju in* [his right hand]), but it also designates traditional objects (e.g. *ju mwa* 'traditional house' or 'hut'). Compared with Rivierre's nomenclature of yam species in the dictionary (p. 438), Poinine's list, as shown in the sentence below, is much more concise, as it mainly contains edible yams of prime qualité:

Kè tèè étènyê nî ju nîîn nâ pièè bwàtànà.

bwàtànà, bwààji, pèvuö, tahènitoo, ééù,

cèoéhê ù, èpvé, nâhi ù, tomo, ju ûn, kacoo,

géréén. [We can find the real yams all around us, (Names of different Yam species)]

Some of these are also marked in Rivierre as 'Tyé' (e.g. *bwaatana*: igname de "première qualité" [yam of superior quality]; *tahînetöö*: igname de prémices [newly harvested yams]; *nâhi ù*: clones d'ignames de première qualité [yam of superior quality]; *kacöö*: Dioscerea Alata [purple yam]; *cèwé-u*: clone de Dioscerea Alata [purple yam]).

Whereas the men are also involved in the planting and harvesting of the yams (and the women in taking care of the plants during the growth season), the planting of the taro is the exclusive domain of the women. As such, the story of the *Tààw*i [Water taro field], has been written from the perspective of a female subject (the old lady who is preparing her taro field). Moreover, compared with the passive style of the first story, the voice of the female subject is quoted directly. Apart from these differences of perspective and the direct/indirect style, the stories have similar story lines. Both indicate the importance of planting the real species, followed by a list of these names. More importantly than the naming, however, is that the two statements at the beginning and at the end of the text derive their true meaning by what is a centre piece in both texts:

A û [The Yam]	Tààwi [Water taro field]
Bè à ù kè tè à èà pa aiù [The yam plant symbolises the male.]	Kè pièè: "Oê toomwö kè tè à èàn a ju wàéo" She says: "These are the plants that symbolise the female."

By making this statement, Poinine gives the reason why it is important to grow and preserve the real species of the yam, as their existence is directly linked to the position of the male, and more specifically the male ancestors whose presence in the landscape is a central theme in Kanak culture. Bensa (1982, p. 155), notes that the different species of yams are classified in different categories and that the place of a person can be expressed by the yam that is offered, received or eaten. The *tahinetöö*, for instance, which is harvested by Kaapo before she is about to meet her future husband in the *legend of Kaapo Ciinyii*, represents the first harvested yams that are used in the ceremonial exchanges and rituals of the summoning of the ancestors. Even though the metaphorical use of the yam and the taro are considered as a known fact among the Kanak, Poinine does not consider this as assumed knowledge to her readers. The explanation at the end of each story reveals her intention of writing these little stories. Her aim is to either educate the younger generation or to have her parental voice heard beyond her own community.

7.3.2.2 Kanak custom, division of labour, and material culture. The most common themes in the short stories are related to the Kanak custom of exchange, division of labour, and material culture and practices. The traditional practices and the specific role men and women have in the preparation or making of certain objects are closely linked to the Kanak custom, which is at the heart of every stage of life.

In the next story, *pé toomwo aatèn* [To marry a girl], Poinine describes the ceremony of a Kanak marriage from the perspective of a girl who is preparing to meet her future husband. The activities are centred around some key objects that will be exchanged (the yam, the fire, the Kanak money). These preparations are along the same lines as the beginning of *Legend of Kaapo Ciinyii* who made similar preparations before she starts her journey to visit

her future husband: she first uproots the yam (È adè ka è ini a pu-*tahînetöö*), weaves a mat (*Ka è bwö ali pwömi*), puts everything in her basket (*Ka è pa ali élè hen*). The story of Kaapo, however, deviates from the traditional procedures. Where the bride usually needs to be released by the family, Kaapo takes the initiative herself to bring the gifts to her future husband. Bensa remarks that "l'équiluibre des échanges réels n'est pas respecté…le conteur donne toute l'initiative à Kaapo" [The balanced exchange is not respected…the teller [of the story] gives all initiative to Kaapo.'] (p. 155) and, by doing so, makes his clan (the Galahi) the principal craftsman of the marriage alliance and master of the situation.

Apart from the making of Kanak money or *Adi*, which is a male activity, the focus in Poinine's writing is on activities women engage in, such as weaving of mats and ceremonial baskets in the story *A è apwömi* [The Pandanus] or clothing, such as a wedding dress in *A jèkulè ko a tiu jahi* [The story of the Bourao dress] and a baby's covering, which is the main topic of the story *a wéétu tè a èwa he me abèélè* [The cover for the newborn child].

The story *Adi* is about a man making black money, also known as *monnaie Kanak* [Kanak money], referring to the colour of the materials used to make the money, such as the bones of the flying fox and shells. *Adi* was not money as such, but a symbolic gift of exchange during birth, marriage, or a funeral. The other stories all have Kanak women in their role of executing preparatory tasks that involved the making of items such as mats and baskets with pandanus leaves. In the story *A è apwömi* [The Pandanus], for instance, Poinine describes how a woman gather pandanus leaves to weave mats and ceremonial baskets. The *a-pwömi* is described in Rivierre as the "pandanus à nattes (planté)" [pandanus used to make mats]. From Bensa's (1982) observations, we also learn that the making of mats is a strictly feminine activity

and that these mats are used as presents exchanged during the ceremonies; they also serve as places to sit or sleep on (p. 157).

This information provided by Bensa, however, is presented by Poinine in the form of a short story whereby the main player is a woman who is explaining the purpose of each mat, which again is similar to the way knowledge was traditionally transferred through oral storytelling.

> kè piè: "A pwömi cè ka a niin piè: "kàalim". Time nye ucè ne à à pihe huô ko a apulip bè a atèbo te nye" Ka pii mwo piè: "A pwömi cè, ka bènilè anaa nye ne ko a huo ko a apulip"

> *She says: "This mat is called 'Kââlim', it is not used during the custom because it is used to sit on." And she continues: "The other mat is called 'bènilè', it is the one that is exchanged during the custom."*

The Pandanus, which is commonly found in nature, is also used to make other items, such as described in the story *a wéétu tè a èwa he me abèélè* [The cover for the newborn child]. The mats that are woven together with the cover for the baby serve as presents for the maternal uncle, as part of the "cadeau de longue vie" [present for a long life], which is also mentioned in the legend of Kaapo. An extract of the story collected by Bensa, shown below, details that after Kaapo's baby is born, she returns with the presents (which also include yams) to the maternal uncle who in return blows the breath of life or bé-bwali-nene-hên [*lit*. for-long-breach-for him] into the ears of the new born:

49. ka è cè.. abèélé ..mwo
    and the baby is born
50. ka è cè.. mu ..mwo ka è cè.. pé ..mwo a-li bé-bwali-nene hê-n
    [and as time passes; she takes the 'present for a long life'

In the next story, *A jèkulè ko a tiu jahi* [The story of the Bourao dress], Poinine describes how a wedding dress is made of the bark of the Bourao. On its own, this story only gives the steps that are involved in making the dress. By writing down the different steps that are involved in making the dress, however, Poinine has unconsciously produced a procedural narrative, further highlighted by numbering each step of the process. Both this story and the story *Pé toomwo aatèn* [To marry a girl], indicate the symbolic significance and the role different objects, such as the Boroa dress, play in the customary exchange.

7.4 The emergence of the autobiographical narrative

The emergence of the autobiographical narrative in Poinine's writing is most evident in her personal testimony about her conversion to the Christian faith, as shown below. This short piece of reflective writing, for which Poinine also provided her own French translation[131], was collected during a fieldtrip in November 5, 2014 and is the first of its kind written in the Cèmuhi language.

Personal narrative in Cèmuhi		THEMES
Pwö a cèiu bènaamwen na <u>cinu jong</u>.	*Once upon a time I was sick.*	ADV
É mu ha picani, é âdoo lépwö a pwö èti.	*I suffered, I consulted the healers.*	CST
Hê wécèhin, kè <u>wâé jong</u> kèhê caa time	*I was healed shortly after, but my*	CHR
pwö ahwin a bwö <u>wâe jong</u> ânebun.	*health wasn't as before.*	
<u>Emaan jong</u>, <u>téé jong</u>, ticè cèli mê nê <u>pwia</u>	*I was tired, burdened, nobody was*	
<u>tong.</u>	*able to comfort me.*	

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[131]"Il était une foi j'étais malade. J'étais souffert, je consul les guérisseurs. Après j'étais gueri, mais ce n'est plus comme ma santé au début. J'étais fatigué, lourde, personne peut me soulager. A ce moment là m'arrive une parole qui dit: "Venez à moi vous qui êtes fatiqué et charger je vous donne du repos. Voici cette parole qui m'encouragaient. A partir de ce jour là je donne ma vie à jesus, il vit en moi." (Poinine's own translation)

A bènaamwên nââ è tuiè nêtong **a pwööti** nâ pièè	On that moment, a word came to me:
Abé dèéong ögawé nâ mââlè oke téé. Bè ébo nê tèwé tèbwö èhi.	"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
A pwööti pii tè Jesuu	A word spoken by Jesus.
Wêêngâ nâng a pwööti nâ nênihung	This is the word that encouraged
Tabuhi hâ tan nââ, é pawiè a moulihun nè tè Jesuu kê wêêng nâ èko mulihung.	me. From this day, I gave my life to Jesus. He lives in me.

The major themes in this personal story – which is in essence a conversion story – are illness, healing, and references to the Christian faith. The first part of the story starts with *a cèiu bènaamwen na*, which can best be translated as "once upon a time". It is mainly written in the first person (I suffered, I was sick, I was healed, I was tired). Poinine writes how she consulted the local healer (pwö èti = to do 'magic'], but even though she was healed from her illness, she still felt tired and burdened and her health was not as it was before. The central point in the narrative, again beginning with the phrase *A bènaamwên nââ*, occurs when Poinine writes that she received a word or *pwööti*[132]:

> A bènaamwên nââ è tuiè nêtong pwööti nâ pièè.
> *On that moment, a word came to me.*

The lexeme *pwööti*[133] is generally understood as 'words, message' and signals the revelatory work Poinine has received, which is in this case a written passage of the Gospel of Mathew (Math 11:28), translated by Poinine herself. By including a verse from the Gospel, Poinine has

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[132] While Suzanne Poinine uses the word 'pwööti' for 'word', it actually is a compound of two verbs or action words that have become fused. Pwö + ti = pwöti > pwööti, which literally means: 'to speak-engrave'.

[133] The lexeme *pwööti* is described in Rivierre's dictionary as: "paroles, mots, message" [spoken word, words, message].

made an intertextual connection with her own (unpublished) translation, (a word of her own making) which has now become the context, or for that matter, the co- or inter-text for this short biographical narrative. It is important to note, however, that there are some differences between her unpublished translation of that passage and the quote in the personal story. First, a comparison of the two passages show that the use of diacritics is rather erratic, which indicates the difficulties Poinine has experienced in applying Rivierre's technical orthography consistently:

Poinine's translation of Math 11:28	Quote of the same passage in the story
Gaé <u>abé dèéong ögawé</u> lepwona <u>téé</u> gawé ko ni aneulè, <u>bè è bo ne tèwé</u> a maalè.	<u>Abé dèéong ögawé</u> nâ mââlè kê <u>téé</u>. <u>Bè é bo nê tèwé</u> tèbwö èhi.

The comparison also reveals that Poinine is writing a more free version of her own translation, which, not only reflects a more literate rendering of the original, but is also grammatically more complex, with more frequent use of personnel pronouns (*gaé* 'you' (plural, active pron.); *lepwona* 'those who' (relative pronoun); *gawé* 'you' (plural, statif pron.) and the realis aspect marker *ko*. She also uses the more prestigious word *aneulè* 'burdened' (Tyé variety) in the translation.

Interestingly, the handwritten story shows Poinine's crossed out Cèmuhi name, *Hénèké,* followed by the initial S. (for Suzanne) after the first part, which is mainly written in the first person, as shown below:

Figure 23: Letter from Suzanne Poinine

This feature seems to suggest that it was Poinine's initial plan to end the story at that point (just after gospel quote), and to validate her personal story with her own 'signature'. Yet, she apparently changed her mind by adding an explanation or 'after thought', a postscript, as it were.

The second part of the story, then, starts with the phrase *a pwööti pii tè Jesuu* [a word spoken by Jesus], followed by *Wêêngâ nâng a pwööti…* [This is the word….], a phrase that is commonly used at the end of customary speeches or in the legends. This shift from the first person narrative in the first part to a focus on 'a word spoken by Jesus' is an indication of how Poinine as a writer of her own reflective story remains mindful of the customary practices of Kanak oral society, where speeches and legends are often concluded with a similar phrase. The end of the legend of the chief of Hienghène [*a cihêdéé tè a ééngin pa daame*], published in Rivierre's grammar (p. 353), for instance, has a similar ending:

Ka wèèngaââ anaa piè a cihêdéé ne ko Jéo me Jééne …
[This is the legend of Jéo me Jééne…]

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This story shows how Poinine is walking a fine line between expressing her own personal voice in writing, for which she initially claims authorship by adding her Cèmuhi name, but then decides to relinquish this privilege in favour of an end that reflects the speeches and legends that have been transmitted from generation to generation. The anonymous tellers of these stories, however, remain subordinate to the spoken message that is in stark contrast to the claims for authorship of a text written in a western context. While some have argued that there is no cultural mixing or exchange between Kanak and non-Kanak culture (e.g. Kanak linguist and writer, Wéniko Lhage,[134] for instance), this autobiographical passage is an example of how elements and world views of different cultures have come together in written form. In her PhD thesis, *Re-writing Pathways: Oral Tradition, Written Tradition, and Identity Construction in Kanaky/Nouvelle-Calédonie (2013)*, Emma Sinclair mentions how comparative scholar Francois Bogliolo has recognised that, in New Caledonian literature, "a certain degree of often unacknowledged reciprocal exchange has taken place" (p. 4). While Bogliolo is mainly talking about Kanak literature in the dominant language of French, this short testimony bears witness to how an emerging storywriter is staking out her claim through writing in a culture and language that is still firmly rooted in orality.

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[134] Sinclair cites from an interview by Virginie Soula for her PhD, "Des ancrages littéraires et identitaires au "destin commun", une histoire littéraire de la Nouvelle-Calédonie: (1853-2005)", 2008.

Chapter 8:

Towards an Analysis of Voice

8.1 Introduction

In an interview, French anthropologist, Alban Bensa, notes that few people have paid attention to the writings of the Kanak who learned to write in New Caledonia's missionary schools and biblical colleges of the 19th century, as the idea was still rampant that those people lost in the middle of the Pacific were living relics of a traditional oral society and would therefore not be interested in writing.[135] While most of them wrote their *cahiers* [notebooks] in the language of the coloniser, there must have been at least a few who made an attempt to explore writing in their own languages as they gradually became codified. Unfortunately, these writings did not make it into the history books, nor were they used as examples of the subsequent grammars and dictionaries developed by outsiders who based their analyses on 'oral data'. In addition, in more recent scientific linguistic enquiry, such as *documentary linguistics*, there is a danger that the texts of emerging writers of endangered languages may fall through the cracks of history. Yet, as both Blommaert (2008a, see also Blommaert & Varis, 2015) and Lyons (2013) have shown, the products of 'ordinary writing' or 'grassroots writing', whether from the past or the present, cannot just be dismissed as trivial or unimportant.

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[135] Bensa (2016) writes: "L'apprentissage de l'écriture est dispensé dans les écoles missionnaires et les écoles bibliques dès le XIXe siècle. Dans des cahiers, les Kanak se mettent à écrire l'histoire de l'arrivée des Européens, bien sûr, mais aussi l'histoire de leurs chefferies, et notamment l'histoire de la réorganisation de leur vie politique dans le contexte des Réserves. Peu de personnes ont prêté attention à ces écrits, à cause de cette idée que des gens perdus au milieu du Pacifique ne pouvaient pas s'intéresser à l'écriture: on les imaginait plus volontiers comme les vestiges vivants d'une société à tradition orale" (In *Mensuel de critique et d'expérimentation sociales*, 2016, nr. 159).

This study addresses this concern and in the previous chapters I have analysed the traces that were left on paper through the act of writing from the perspective of emerging storywriter, Suzanne Poinine. I have analysed both the practice and product of her writing against the background of the historical process of codification, whereby missionaries and linguists employed ideologically coloured textual practices. As most of the Cèmuhi texts collected by outsiders were presented in the context of a grammatical description or as part of an ethnographic or lexicographic work, the key research question was whether this form of re- or decontextualisation has had an impact on the on the representation of the Cèmuhi language and its culture (Chapter 5). I have also explored the meta-linguistic phenomena in the practice of writing, as well as the salient themes (linguistic phenomena) in the different text genres (Chapters 6 and 7). The aim of this two-pronged approach was to arrive at a comprehensive analysis of voice in the Cèmuhi texts produced by Suzanne Poinine.

8.2 The voices of Poinine

As the historical overview has shown, outsiders, who have claimed their stake of expertise and authority upon the Cèmuhi language and culture, investigated most, if not all the texts that were ever produced in Cèmuhi. The variety of texts and works that were produced by means of translating religious texts, conversational phrases, or speeches or transcription of oral stories that became the foundation of canonical works such as the Cèmuhi grammar or dictionary, reveal the epistemological framework from which each work or piece of text was conceived. The historical overview in Chapter 5 has also shown that, while the work of the Marist priests has shed light on certain cultural practices, the interpretation of their observations are heavily coloured by their bias towards the 'natives' they were aiming to convert. Even so, does the ethno-linguistic work of Rivierre and Bensa reflect their

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preoccupation to apply concepts and analytics tools that were inherent to their discipline, such as transcription.

While it was not the purpose of this study to discuss this analytical tool as such, it has been noted that transcription involves theoretical and pragmatic choices (Ochs, 1979, Duranti, 1997). Moreover, the collection and transcription of oral stories (which demands the help of informants), is, not only influenced by external contextual factors, but also by circumstances that are specific to the nature of 'oral storytelling', as each performance or telling of a story is a unique event set in a particular context. The possible distortion that comes with the choice of informants, the application of different techniques of transcription, combined with the personal writing styles and literacy skills, makes it difficult to capture and transcribe an 'oral tradition' in such a way that it gives a fixed or authoritative account. In many cases, the informant or the 'teller of the story' often remains anonymous or, at best, receives a mention in a footnote.

The Kanak stories told by French writer, Louise Michel, for instance, are influenced by her own ideological frameworks and reflect on the choice and content of her stories, as Ramsay (2014) notes. She writes that the question of cannibalism was one of the recurring themes in the legends collected by Michel. While Michel may have aimed to "give a voice to Kanak women", Ramsey (2014) concludes that her translations of legends and songs were "a hybrid work, privileging her own utopian, revolutionary, and often romantic and increasingly women-centred vision" (p. 95). The same can be said of Rivierre and Bensa who, from within their own academic space, preferred certain themes to others. Bensa's work, in particular, is narrowly focused on traditional Kanak culture and the alliances between certain clans within the Paicî-Cèmuhi regions.

However, as noted, Guiart severely critiques Bensa's methods, who he accuses of having based his analysis on only one version of the oral tradition as told to him by informants of one particular group or clan. Guiart (2006, p. 10) writes that Bensa failed to take heed of Claude Lévi-Strauss's motto that one has to account for all the versions of an oral tradition and that the notion of an 'authentic or stable text' is a residue of the Christian-Judean tradition. Likewise, one could question Rivierre's motivations for the orthographic choices he made. The overuse of diacritics in the Cèmuhi orthography, such as the grave, aigue and circumflex accent, for instance, seem to be heavily inspired by the French sound system. The unfortunate result is that the Cèmuhi people are left with an orthography that is highly impractical while being commonly advanced as authoritative.

Moreover, Guiart asks whether tones are at all present in the language, adding that Rivierre's introduction of a system of tone marks is too rigid to be accepted by speakers who were often trilingual from a young age and who varied their pitch and intonation depending on the daily situation or circumstances.[136] It is in light of these authoritative voices that I will now reconsider how some of the linguistic and meta-linguistic phenomena, which were discovered in the data, should be understood as the representations or expressions of Poinine's voice (or voices).

Firstly, Poinine writes in defiance of some of the orthographic norms and conventions that resulted from Rivierre's linguistic work. For instance, tone marks have been discarded altogether. 'French' diacritics on the other hand are used abundantly, even though Poinine

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[136] "Le problème de l'écriture d'une langue à tons ne semble pas réglé par le système proposé par Jean-Claude Rivierre, apparemment trop complexe pour être accepté dans la pratique… le système proposé est peut-être trop fixe et rigide par rapport à une réalité multiple, où les systèmes réels sont beaucoup plus fluides. Je pense qu'il faudra peut-être une nouvelle approche." [the problem of writing a tone language is not solved by the system proposed by Jean-Claude which seems to be too complex with respect to an otherwise fluid and complex reality. A new approach is therefore desirable] (Guiart, 2006, p. 4).

does not always apply them consistently. I also showed that the internal organisations of some of the texts and textual artefacts reflect a more holistic perspective of the world. The internal structure of some of the word lists, for instance, shows that each word is triggered by another.

Compared to the more linear structure of alphabetically arranged dictionaries produced by outsiders, these lists are a testimony of someone who, not only has insider knowledge of the language and culture, but aims to express her *cultural voice* by using a format that is more relevant to the writer and potential native readers. Poinine's holistic understanding of the world can also be derived from the analysis of the themes in the short stories where every described object and practice is connected with the land of the ancestors.

Even though Poinine uses a variety of foreign devices to express her own cultural voice, she always remains mindful of the different roles that men and women have in Kanak society. The story of making Kanak money (an exclusively male activity), for instance, is written in the third person masculine, while the first plural is used for the story of the yam, as both men and women are involved in the planting of the yam. The story of the planting of the water taro field, on the other hand, is written from the perspective of an old lady with whom Poinine is identify herself through the use of direct dialogue. The ease with which the author shifts between styles and modes, from being a distant narrator to someone who identifies herself with the main character (e.g. by directly quoting the voice of an old lady) are testimony to Poinine's ability to explore the possibilities these grammatical devices and styles have for expressing her own personal voice.

Every text can therefore be seen as an instance of someone who is, not only expressing a cultural voice but also a *linguistic voice*. Her linguistic expertise is now also recognised within her community. Poinine is now often consulted as the 'expert' in her language and has been

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asked to write lyrics for a local Kaneka[137] music group, *Pwenadjen.* The fact that she also took the initiative to translate the Bible in Cèmuhi and was the only Cèmuhi participate in the *su fe tara* writing festival, are further evidence of someone who is eager to express her linguistic knowledge in the language.

In addition, as I have shown, Poinine cannot draw on existing genres with their inherent structural features, from which she could have drawn inspiration. Yet, in her creative use of the language in written from, a *literary voice* has emerged through playing with sounds and words, often resulting in unintended poetic gems, but also in the composition of the short stories. As oral storytelling is fundamental to the emergence of narratives, the emergence of writing makes an important contribution to new forms of literature, such as the novel (Goody, 2010, p. 117). For this to occur, however, a whole society would need to be exposed to text, not only visually, but also mentally, through a process of interpretation, reformulation, and re-writing, provided enough people in society have this skill. One can thus only imagine how a novel would look like in the Cèmuhi language.

While this is theoretically possible in any language, the reality dictates that there are too few Cèmuhi speakers able to read and write in their native language for a novel to emerge. Despite the hidden and uncovered potential of any poorly documented language to express similar concepts and ideas, as in any major language, the chances for the Cèmuhi language to reach that stage or even become a means of expression that would be widely adopted within the community are slim. To think otherwise would resemble a naïve kind of romanticism. Yet,

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[137] Kaneka is a popular contemporary music style of young Kanak who use traditional percussion instruments. The lyrics are usually a mixture of Kanak languages and French (Ammann, 1998).

the writing of one person such as Suzanne Poinine has shown that there is far more possible than the current grammars, books, and ethnographies suggest.

The thematic analysis in Chapter 7 has also shown that Poinine writes about a variety of themes, of which the most salient ones are related to education and learning, especially in the sentences and in her choice to write down legends that are often geared towards a younger audience. Many of the legends such as the legend of *Bèwééne*, *Rat and Octopus* or *Small worm and Big worm,* for instance*,* are narrated to children and could therefore be seen as expressions of her *educational voice,* rather than purely expressions of oral or traditional culture, as it is often presented. Discussing oral storytelling in other parts of the world, Goody (2000) notes that adults only occasionally refer to these kind of tales and then, when doing so, in much the same way we would refer to similar children's tales. His conclusion is that "If we take these as a sample of thought of the oral culture, no wonder they end up with notions of their 'primitive' nature" (p. 69).

Apart from writing down stories that are geared towards a younger audience, the educational aspect is also discernible in the short stories about traditional customary practices. Whereas traditional knowledge was traditionally transferred from generation to generation by means of storytelling, mainly by men, or through on-the-job training, Poinine has appropriated the tool of writing to advance herself as the guardian or the teacher of this traditional knowledge. It is important to note that also among other Cèmuhi speakers, writing is foremost seen as a means of preserving that knowledge. This became particularly clear in some of the answers in the questionnaire (see Appendix).

In answer to the question: 'Écrire', qu'est ce que ca veut dire selon vous? [In your opinion, what does 'writing' mean?], one of the respondents, a 70 year old man from Tiwaé,

wrote: "[Écricre c'est]…Laisser une trace de quelque chose qu'on aimerait que les enfants sauront à leur âge d'adulte." [Writing is….leaving traces of something that we want the children to know when they become adults]. A similar answer was given by 25 year old female, who describes 'writing' as: "graver ou laisser des traces de son passages" [leaving traces of one's trajectory]. A 28 year old female writes: "Pour moi 'écrire' veut dire laisser quelques choses pour nos enfants, car ils pourront le lire plus tard quand nous ne serons plus de ce monde" [for me, writing means leaving something for our children, so that they can read it when we are no longer in this world]. Writing, however, is also associated with "rédiger ou composer des histoires" (to write or compose stories]; " or as a 39 year female writes in her own orthographic style: "*Abowinene wé go ti ni pwoti ai ni djèwoulè*" [it is the appropriate way to write words or stories].

Most of the answers are formulated in general terms rather than expressed in the first person. The exception is Poinine herself, and her oldest daughter, who describes writing as: "practiquer notre langue, avoir la fierté de notre identité Kanak, montrer notre savoir faire et notre capacité" [to practice our language, to be proud of our Kanak identity, to show our know how and abilities.]. Whereas Poinine's daughter, Ruth, uses the inclusive plural pronoun *gamé* [we –incl.], Suzanne Poinine expresses herself in the first person: "É̲ tii ni nyêbi, ni cihêdée, é̲ bitèhi hê pwö tié ni jèkulè hê pwopwaalé" [I write songs, legends, I translate stories from the language Tié into French]. In using the first personal pronoun 'É' and relating it to her own experience with writing and translation, Poinine's answer stands out against that of the other respondents who formulate their answer in more general statements and without reference to how they use writing personally.

The analysis has shown that Poinine's personal or *autobiographical voice* is most evident in her narrative of her conversion to the Christian faith, which can be considered an emerging genre. While Christian themes are obviously very present in the various Cèmuhi texts (e.g. the Catechism, hymns and some of the conversational phrases produced by the Marists), it is Poinine's personal reflection that stands out and which can even be connected with some of the texts produced by Bensa and Rivierre. In the story, *Les débuts de la mission mariste à Wagap* [the beginnings of the Marist mission in Wagap]), a story that was told by the descendants of chief Apégu to linguist, Jean-Claude Rivierre, we can find reference to Poinine's village, Tiwaé, which was one of the first Cèmuhi villages to receive Protestant converts. The story, of which an extract is shown below, gives a recount of how the first Protestant missionaries arrived in New Caledonia (line 154) to preach the Christian message (line 159). After a discussion broke out between two groups of converts, as the story continues, one group left and settled in the village of Tiwaé (line 166):

(159) *Ka lé caa ko pi-pé li pwööti li lé pé bé ö lépwö âgele.*

[And they received the religion (or message) of the English]

(166) *ka wö lépwö-naa lé mu ne-da pwaahê éémwa ka lé cèpwaka lé mu mwo ne-oté Tiwaé.*

[And those who lived there near the river left the region to live in Tiwaé.]

(154) *Tuiè nge mwo he cèi bènaamwö-amu lé tuiè ni âgele naa lé pé a pwè iitihî a érétiii.*

[At another time, the English disembarked to bring 'heresy']

While the work of missionaries and linguists have often been portrayed in terms of an antagonistic relationship, especially in the context of Melanesian society, Douglas (2001, cited in McIntyre, 1990, p. 83) notes that Christianity in Melanesian villages is "not a veneer…[but] a pervasive and institutionalised belief system" (p. 39) that is well integrated in the Melanesian

social system, one based on reciprocity and sharing. The texts of both present and past, for instance, indicate that Kanak people attach great value to reciprocal exchange, not only when it involved the exchange of goods and services with the 'oppressors', as some of the Marist texts revealed, but also when it comes to belief systems, as is apparent in the aforementioned story collected by Rivierre, and also in Poinine's testimony. A story collected by Rivierre, for instance, reveals how a father-son relationship was forged upon mutual respect between chief *Apitéègen* and his 'adopted son' Father Vigouroux, with whom he shared a common physical trait (line 27):

> "A-jè go o pa nai-ng ka o pii ko-m piè a-hê-éémwa-amo bè bèaamu go pwöhâwii-o."
> ["Hey!, I adopt you as my son and I will call you In-The-Valley of Amoa, because you are left-handed as I am."]

As the analysis has shown, Poinine uses the tool of writing to create her own unique and independent space where traditional beliefs and oral traditions are in a reciprocal relationship with what she has received through the textual practices and worldviews of missionaries and linguists. For Poinine, language (in this case Cèmuhi) has effectively become, as Bourdieu (2000) puts it: "an instrument of action and power" rather than a 'study object' or 'meditative tool' (p. 53) in the hands of linguists and missionaries.

8.3 The absent voice or 'le non-écrit'

Even though Poinine has expressed her voice in many ways, there are also aspects where she remained silent, such as on political themes. Even though New Caledonia is one of the few places on earth that is still on the UN-list of Non-Self-Governing Territories[138],

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[138] See website: http://www.un.org/en/decolonisation/nonselfgovterritories.shtml (Accessed December 2017).

historical or political references are completely absent in the writing of Poinine who is otherwise a very engaged member of her community and who actively participates in socio-cultural events where Kanak life and tradition are celebrated. Even though depicted as a Kanak women writing at her kitchen table with the Kanak independence flag in the background (see Fig.24), Poinine's repertoire is surprisingly silent on political issues or the colonial past.

Figure 24: Picture of Suzanne Poinine

If one had to look for historical or political content in the now available Cèmuhi text, however, one would have to solely rely on texts that were mediated by outsiders, such as *The letter of Jack*, the proclamation of amnesty of Governor Saisset or *Le Chef the Touho,* texts which were both translated and written down in Cèmuhi by the Marists, or *Les débuts de la mission mariste*

à Wagap, a historical recount of the establishment of the first Marist mission in Wagap, which was recorded and transcribed in Cèmuhi by linguist Rivierre.

There are several possible explanations for these 'silent gaps' in Poinine's writing. One explanation is that 'politics' is a topic that is only discussed by men. A more accurate explanation, however, is that writing or talking about the colonial past or political issues are generally considered a taboo subject among Kanak people and almost always entail dominant writing (Angleviel, 2003). The topic is even more shunned when white people are around (or in Poinine's case, potential readers of her translated texts). Attempts to discuss the often violent past are therefore often followed by an awkward silence. This form of 'silent protest' is very common in a society that is still struggling to come to terms with its turbulent past.

It is also very common for Kanak people to abstain from voting in referenda or elections (e.g. the boycott of the referendum in the 1980s which resulted in the political unrest, also known as les 'événements' or the 'events'). A more recent example is the staggering percentage of absentee votes in the various French presidential elections. The Presidential election of 2017 showed up to 80% absentee votes in the territory, especially in the Northern Province, which has a high percentage of Kanak people and which is known as a hot bed for the independence movement. It needs to be seen whether a similar form of protest will be expressed during the upcoming referendum on independence from France to be held on November 4th, 2018. New Caledonia is therefore often referred to as "le pay du non-dit" [the land of the unspoken]. The term 'le non-dit' was first evoked by Barbançon (1992), who used the term to refer the code of silence that existed among descendants of convicts that were deported to New Caledonia in the 19th century.

To extend the analogy, 'le non-écrit' or 'what remains unwritten' could therefore equally be seen as deliberate act of Poinine to exclude, from her writing, everything that is too sensitive to write about or does not belong to the world she aims to picture. As the themes in her texts regularly reveal, the past belongs to the ancestors and any reference to events that may corrupt or soil the land that belongs to the ancestors seem to be weeded out. Whether this is a deliberate or unconscious decision is doubtful, as it is common in Kanak society to talk about certain topics in a concealed or hidden way. The theme of hiding or tricking, for instance, is very common in Kanak legends or allegories, which have been the subject of conjecture by Lambert (1900).

With regard to the story of the chief of Touho, Lambert observes that Kanak people often told these stories to express their voice or opinion about the French authorities in a concealed fashion. He gives the example of the allegory, *Le chef de Touho*, which he had previously written down and once told to the children in his village. Similar to the image of the Rat sitting on the head of Octopus, a legend written down by Poinine (See Appendix), the allegory contains an image of a spirit sitting on the shoulders of the chief of Touho, which got the children particularly excited. Lambert (1900) writes how they started yelling: "Tuons le, perçons le de nos lances" (kill him, let we pierce him with our knives".

This enthusiasm was proof for Lambert that "le récit est bien ménagé pour remuer les passions, porter a la guerre et a la révolte [the story is tailored at stirring up passion for war and revolt." The children particularly got excited when the spirit is killed because, as Lambert explains, "Tel devait etre, selon eux, le sort du commandant du poste de Balade [this should be, according to them, the fate of the [French] commander in Balade". Lambert concludes with the rhetorical question: "Que doit-ce être, quand c'est dit par des bardes ou poètes du pays,

par ces hommes spéciaux chargés de porter ces allégories à l'oreille des masses [Imagine this is told by the miserables rags) or poets of this country, by those people who have chosen to bring these allegories to the masses" (p. 319).

The use of metaphors (e.g., the yam symbolising the male and the taro symbolising the female) and analogies is common in all cultures, and more particularly in folk tales or legends. It is therefore not entirely inconceivable that certain sentences in Poinine's texts contain hidden messages or could be interpreted differently by insiders (the Kanak reader). The sentence below, for instance, is, apart from its poetic beauty, also full of symbolism, as it contains a reference to Apégu, who was one of the chiefs arrested during the Kanak revolt against the French colonisers in 1917, even though he aimed for reconciliation between the Kanak and French colonial government. Apart from the many casualties (over 300 people died during these revolts), complete villages and their plantations were burned down. While an idyllic scene may have been pictured in the sentence below, a more sinister reality may have inspired Poinine to write this sentence:

Ahu a amu ko a muu miu, élè ali pao tè Apégu.
The land is filled with the smoke of the fire. The 'kitchen-hut' of Apégu is heating up.

Rather than expressing a combatant voice, Poinine's ultimate act of resistance (if that is her intention at all), is to write in her own mother tongue about the things that are important in her life. Her unmediated writing is a testimony of the freedom she has gained for herself to write in her own language and to create or construct out of a world of mediated words her own world of words, regardless of whether her linguistic rights have been deprived, curtailed, or defended by outsiders.

8.4 limitations and areas for further research

Despite the moral concern for the rights and voices of indigenous people, which has prompted a number of field linguists (Craig, 1993; Cameron et al., 1993; Grinevald, 2003; Truong and Garcez, 2012) and advocates to find new methods of 'inclusive' or 'participatory' research, in an effort to engage the community in language documentation or to gain 'an emic perspective' of the culture under study, the data are mainly provided by the communities by means of interview, discussions, drawings, or recorded narration only. As more and more of the lesser spoken languages in the world become documented, analysed, and interpreted through the scientific work of outsiders, the more grassroots writers will start to experiment with their newly codified languages. This may open interesting avenues for further research, such as, for instance, the impact of their writing on language change. As a linguistic innovator within her own community, Poinine has already had an inspirational impact on other members of her community, as more people have started to write down the traditional *taperas* or traditional hymns or consulted her as the 'expert' in the Cèmuhi language.

While it is not yet clear what impact an individual writer such as Poinine may have on the further standardisation of the Cèmuhi language, her work can add a valuable voice to the more authoritative voices of professional linguists or the language academies such as the *Académie des Langues Kanak* (ALK). The work of individual grassroots writers can provide a mirror into which possible errors of codification, description, or interpretation are seen. Linguists and writers like Poinine can also be catalysts for language change, which is usually discussed in the context of speech acts. Explaining the dynamics of language evolution, Mufwene (2003), for instance, explains how the repetition of communicative acts may result in the emergence of new genres and patterns.

Using as an illustration, Keller's phenomenon of the "invisible hand",[139] in which analogies between vehicle traffic and language changer are made, Mufwene (2008) writes that this phenomenon, "amounts to the cumulative, though typically uncoordinated, actions of individual speakers which bring about change, this being typically an unintended outcome…as some speakers adopt innovations or deviations produced by other speakers, new structural and/or pragmatic patterns emerge" (p. 61). Likewise, the adoption or copying of structures introduced by an innovative writer as Poinine may result in the emergence of new genres. Pre-text then serves as an example that may generate repetition of usage, which subsequently becomes normsetting. As such, a longitudinal study of the impact of her work is a possible avenue for further research.

Another area of research is the inclusion of grassroots interpretation. Even though my study has aimed to address some of the concerns raised when working within a language documentation of descriptive linguistics framework, the interpretation of Poinine's text have been done from within an academic space, with its own predetermined tools and rules of representation, interpretation, or analysis. The limitations of the tools, methods, and theoretical frameworks, and not least the tool of 'writing' are what Bourdieu calls (1980, p. 139) "ces instruments d'éternisation" [These instruments of eternisation], which are the preferred instruments of the scholar who has the privilege to retreat and re-create the objectified 'other', as if it were *in his own image.*

While beyond the scope of this study, the place of grassroots interpretation by a larger readership is essential to, not only understanding culture, but to do justice to cultures, who for too long have been approached within the epistemological and methodological boundaries

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[139] Keller, R. (1994). *On Language Change: The Invisible Hand in Language*. London: Routledge.

of scholarly knowledge construction and interpretation. Deploring the "captivity of narrow and homogeneous interpretation", Bakhtin (1986, p. 140) notes that there is no such thing as 'fixed' meaning and that interpretations of text are infinite. As many of the grassroots texts are usually only interpreted and questioned by researchers (who are often also involved in the codification of the language through their grammatical descriptions), and because of the limited readership among the community in which these text emerged (for obvious reason such as lack of reading skills in their mother tongue), I argue that a potentially homogenous 'ethnographic' reading should ideally be supplemented by a grassroots interpretation of grassroots texts.

Bird (2011) notes that we could learn from philosopher, J.L. Austin[140] (1962), who remarked that ordinary language is prone to potential abuse by scholastic interpretation and the prevalence of highly technical idioms which, "reflects a dominant presumption that texts written by certain designated, qualified authors (trained churchmen, accredited fellow academics, canonised historical figures, etc.) provide the source of insight into the phenomena to be investigated" (p. 110). While Austin's focus was mainly on political theory and everyday speech, his insights and methods could also be applied to the way grassroots texts or textual interpretation written in 'ordinary language' are approached. The present study may therefore be richer if it would have included community members' interpretations of Poinine's text. As co-constructors of meaning, the interpretations of Poinine's texts by Cèmuhî readers would have added valuable insights into the language and culture under study.

Other areas of future research are in the area of grammar writing or lexicography from a native speaker's perspective. What grammar or dictionary would emerge when the author,

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[140] Bird is referring to philosopher J. L. Austin's work, *Sense and Sensibilia of 1962*.

or compiler of such a grammar, was a native speaker? The title of such a study could be "the native speaker as grammar writer' or 'the native speaker as lexicographer'. The result of such a massive work may result in a mono-lingual dictionary which, as a young Cèmuhi speaker once acknowledged, would be his or her preferred dictionary. Even so, could grassroots grammars look quite different from the reference grammars constructed by professional linguists, who usually start their analyses from the smaller units of sounds and works? A grassroots grammar may well turn out to be a mono-lingual intuitive description of emerging grammatical phenomena in the context of discourse, then.

A further possible remark is that more attention could have been paid to Poinine as a *bilingual* writer. The nature of her texts and textual practices, however, show that Poinine is in the first place a monolingual Cèmuhi writer. As the analysis has demonstrated, Poinine makes a clear distinction between two textual practices (writing vs translating). This distinction is also made in the quote mentioned earlier, where she writes: **"**É tii ni nyêbi, ni cihêdée, é bitèhi hê pwö tié ni jèkulè hê pwopwaalé" [I write songs, legends, I translate stories from the language Tié into French]). The few instances where Poinine uses French in her texts are all the result of a translation practice, whether it is parts of the Bible, Christian hymns or even her own conversion story. Even though her conversion story has emerged from a 'bi-literate' context (e.g. The integration of formal propterties typcially found in French Christian conversion stories, in the Cèmuhi version), her language of choice as 'a writer' is her mother tongue, Cèmuhi. It is in her mother tongue that Suzanne Poinine wants to express her voice and it is through the publications of some of these stories in Cèmuhi, that she wants to be recognised as such: a Cèmuhi writer. This makes her writing a rather unique and singular enterprise, as the vernacular literary practices in New Caledonia are few and and often difficult

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to detect. There is only anecdotal evidence of Kanak people (mainly women) who have made attempts to write in a Kanak language. The fact that many of these attempts remain hidden to the public eye, makes it even more urgent to trace those emerging writers so that their voices can be heard.

The aim of this thesis was to focus on Poinine's expression of voice in the Cèmuhi language, taking into account the unique context of a Melanesian society that is still very much rooted in orality. I have therefore opted for a combination of a more contemporary theoretical framework as found in Blommaert's "ethnography of voice" and a more traditional framework, where the differences between orality and writing are highlighted, most seminally in the work of Jack Goody. Goody's work is often seen as being contentious because of the presumed creation of an unnecessary juxtaposition (or a so-called great divide between written and oral societies). His work, however, can also be seen from a more historical, comparative perspective that aims to show the differences between two modes of communication. In an interview (in 2005), Goody clarified that he wanted to "think about what it was in written language that led to the kinds of activity that we are engaged in, in the university or in the society at large. So, I did question the differences that writing made.[141]"

It is clear that the adoption of writing (whether in ancient times or in a colonial era oral societies) has not gone by without major consequences. The fact that important canonical works (a grammar and a dictionary) in Cèmuhi were produced through the writing practices of an 'élite' or 'privileged' class who were able to set the tone and/or boundaries of a particular discourse on the Cèmuhi language, underlines the impact and power this mode of

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[141] Goody, J. (2005, September 12). Myth, Word, and Writing (interviewer: E. Efe Çakmak). Retrieved from: https://www.eurozine.com/myth-word-and-writing/?pdf

communication has on how we perceive language. That these works are now for the first time 'challenged' through the writing of an indigenous Cèmuhi writer, makes it all the more important to investigate how the voice of Suzanne Poinine has emerged at the transitional boundaries of a context-specific oral/written interface.

Since it has become a commonly accepted practice that many of the grammars and dictionaries in endangered languages are produced by professional linguists, who often do not speak the language themselves, there is often little academic interest or belief in the potential of native speakers to become developers of their own grammars and dictionaries or even to pay attention to the texts they have written in their mother tongue. This study addresses this concern by focusing on the product and practice of an emerging storywriter. While the intermediate practices of translation and transcription may have produced authoritative works and provided valuable insights into the Cèmuhi language and culture, it is through the independent practice of writing of an emerging writer that the full potential of a language and its speakers comes into full view.

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Appendix

Topical word lists with names of plants, trees and food items

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
Vulvuaa [Palms]	Tai [Lianes]	Acuut wahin [Small bush]	Mèté [Herbes]	O [Bambou]	Ni nii ju waéo [names of Taros]	(Trees)[142]
Maloobwi wiimain (Maloobwi) Vualaao Aalè Wotilè	Adèlé Aléé Du Koho Evé Jaagoo Hidoopwon Pailè Boo Duéé Wöleng Nidè Otei Ducié Hu piing Ééja Cèbwè Dudèlé Tai udu Tai duga	Paataa vumuun magat hètabè kacia èdi Hujéti waan mudimé	Mwawi Maaolè Aaèp u-dubé dahabu tabèmiero nyu mwodinii abwièn o wie-otju ju mété nyebulè tè majoo nyebulè téé tiodèt dèdèwé cimwawi dèmèlé ééja tè ota nu he mèté vida nu tè mwahu kamaraa pamé toneo ciibwi vuhi pamulip nuhedihen atu calaap I Ma Nyen iti nucètè	o pauiu o pwotbehin o pwopwaalé o jaameda o écuu ecuu o mèélè	tang mègèt tidèu vida uhum waéo tè téat jiinè wàapèngè èwàà waéo tè lupwö apibé bapiing malooga tèbwo tè meni waéo magèt jali mwing jali puun jali un pèhi nu waa péjèt waéo tè Matéo	awia acuö pwödan aawhi bwicia bonuaa [?] bwéit bwone acuut cèlè dologo dèluo éjaa dèluö wöjo Éjaa ééi èlèbwé Èpi ééi caoot ééi pwo pwaalé ènèdi

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Questionnaire sur l'utilisation de la langue cèmuhi par orale et par écrite.
Novembre 2014

Cher participant/chère participante,

Vous trouverez ci-joint un questionnaire qui fera partie d'une recherche linguistique qui me permettra de préparer un thèse de doctorat à l'Université de Macquarie à Sydney, Australie. Cette recherche a pour but d'examiner **la pratique de l'écriture en cèmuhi.**

Les questions posées dans cette enquête ont pour objectif de recueillir des informations concernant l'utilisation de la langue maternelle (le cèmuhi) par l'orale et par l'écrit.

La participation à cette enquête est libre et les informations et votre identité ne seront pas dévoiler, sauf si vous y consentez. Les réponses sont collectées, soit oralement ou par écrit, dans la langue de voitre choix (le français ou le cèmuhi).

Je vous remercie d'avance de votre participation.

Maarten Lecompte
Chercheur

Contact Email : maarten_lecompte@sil.org

Dear Participant,

In order to prepare my doctoral thesis at Macquarie University in Sydney, I would like to ask you whether you would be willing to participate in a linguistic survey that is part of an investigation into the practice of writing in the Cèmuhi language.

The questions in this survey are aimed to collect data concerning the use of the mother tongue (Cèmuhi) in oral or written form.

Participating in this survey is completely free and the obtained information or your personal details will not be disclosed without your consent. The survey can be done orally or in writing in the language of your choice (French or Cèmuhi)

Thank you for your help and participation in this survey.

Maarten Lecompte
Researcher

A. Questions sur la langue parlée

1. Quelle est votre langue maternelle? (Quelle est la première langue que vous avez apprise à la maison dans votre enfance?)
What is your mother tongue? (What language did you speak/learn at home when you were a child?)

- ☐   Le cèmuhi
- ☐   Le français
- ☐   Une autre langue: ………………

2. Quelle langue parlez-vous à la maison, aujourd'hui?
Which language do you speak at home today?

- ☐   Le cèmuhi
- ☐   Le français
- ☐   Une autre langue: ………………

3. Dans quelle langue est-ce que vous êtes le plus à l'aise pour parler? Le francais ou le cèmuhi?
Which language do you feel most comfortable speaking? French or Cèmuhi?

- ☐   Le cèmuhi
- ☐   Le français
- ☐   Une autre langue: ………………

4. Quelle langue parlez-vous à vos enfants? Avec votre marie/épouse? Avec vos ami(e)s?
What language do you speak with your children? With your husband/wife? With your friends?

- ☐   Le cèmuhi
- ☐   Le français
- ☐   Une autre langue: ………………

5. Est-ce que vous pensez en français ou en cèmuhi?
Do you think in French or Cèmuhi?

- ☐   Le cèmuhi
- ☐   Le français

B. Questions sur la langue écrite

6. Est-ce que vous savez écrire ou lire en cèmuhi?
Do you know how to read and/or write in Cèmuhi?

7. Avez-vous déjà essayé d'écrire quelque chose en cèmuhi, comme par example, une histoire, une chanson, un émail, une liste d'achats?
Have you ever tried to write something in Cèmuhi, such as, a story, a song, an email, a shopping list?

8. Si c'est le cas est-ce que vous pouvez partagez votre expérience et sinon pourquoi vous n'en avez jamais essayé ou même jamais y songé?
If that is the case, can you share your experience and if not, why have you never tried it before or never thought about it before?

……

……

……

9. Est-ce que vous aimeriez écrire en cèmuhi? Pourquoi ou pourquoi pas ?
Would you like to be able to write in Cèmuhi? Why or why not?

…….

…….

……
10. Aimeriez-vous participer à un atelier d'écriture?
Would you like to take part in a writer's workshop?

11. 'Écrire', qu'est ce que ca veut dire selon vous?
In your opinion, what does 'writing' mean?

…….

…….

The legend of Bèwééne

Cihêdéé Bèwééne.
È imwî ali opwé kè èngen.

The legend of Bèwééne.
He takes his flute and takes off.

È ân ân kè too pa ètè gi, hê ko ètè gi tèn.
È pii tèn pièè go ètè a gi tèm kè go ètè cidi bème o ânyêê.
È hègi ne tèn pièè go adé bè é bo tè pwö.

He walks and walks and finds the knife grinder grinding his axe.
He [Bèwééne] says: "Grind your axe and grind it until it is sharp." He answers him "Go, I will do as you told."

È ân ân kè too waawa he ko picine miu.
È pii tèn pièè go tèko cine miu kè go pitim ko ni öwiu [öpi] bème o wöjo [pwajo go.
È hêgi ne tèn pièè go adé bè é bo tè pwö.

He walks and finds the raven litting a fire.
He (Bèwééne) says: "Lit the fire and paint yourself with the ashes so that you will become white." He answers him: "Go, I will do as you told."

È ân ân kè too pahabu hê ko cìè uja.
È pii tèn pièè go cìè nî uja tèm, kè go pwö pwöjé [pinyi] kon bèmê o mang.
È pii tèn pièè go adé bè é bo té pwö.

He walks and walks and finds the sultan chicken tying up sugar cane. He says: "Tie up your sugar cane, but make a nod as well so that it holds together." He answers him: "Go, I will do as you told."

È ân ân kè too hôni me nî nain hê lé ko ééi éjaa.
È pii tèlé pièè gaé tè ko ééi éja.
Kè gaé pwö ko hâii pihwaa kélè ne hên bème o mwaiu ni pècuö ni naim.
Lé pii tèn pièè go adé bè me bo tè pwö.

He continues walking and finds the duck and his ducklings picking passion fruit. He says: "Pick the fruit but while eating it, crush the wjite pit inside as it will make your children's teeth strong." They answer: "Go, we will do as you told."

È ân ân kè too luua me ni bèlè tèn.
Hê léko cèbihi a acuö pwömwa.
Lé pii tèn pièè go cuö tèè kè omèhi pièè tèko momwön.
È omèhi kè pièè tè ju hêgo me hêgo pwôhewii a opwé cè éko pén.

He walks and finds the imperial pigeon and his crowdy nest erecting the wooden post of the house. They ask him: "Stand back and see if the post is straight."
He looks and say: "it is very straight… just as the flute I am carrying. [SP: The flute, however, is not straight!]"

Lé adé kè lé pi ne èhi mwo ali acuö pwömwa. Lé pii tèn mwo pièè cuö tèè kè omehi mwo.
È pii mwo pièè tè ju hêgo me hêgo pwöhewii a opwé cè é ko pé.
È olè ö pacè bèélè me omehi.
Kè pii tè lé pièè è tèko gèti kanye ö pajè. Kèhe caa tè mwomwen. Gaé abé me nye taièng me pa wiènye.
Lé tupwö olè mu pali acuut ka lé taièng.

They go and straighten the post. They ask him again: "Stand back and check it again." He repeats: "it is straight as this flute I am carrying with me."
One of them comes down to look for himself.
And he tells them: "He is lying! The pole was already straight! Come, let us go after him and eat him!"
And they come out of the forest and start chasing him.

È tétè kè too hôni me ni nain kè pii tèlé pièè.
Gaé pééong bè lé ko taiong ö luua meni bèlè

He runs away and finds duck with his ducklings and says: "Take me in and save me because

tèn. È pii tèn ö honi pièè me pééko bème apwödè go.

Pali go pièe me mehaii ni waakélè nehe ni éjaa. Ka anaa bwö ko tubwi ni pécuö ni naing.

Lé caa taièng. È tétè kè too pahabu.
È pii tèn pièè go péeong bè léko taiong ö luua me ni bèlè tèn.
Me é pééko bè me a pwödè go.
Pali go pii tong pièe me é ciè me pwö pwöje kon bème o mang kè anaa é bwö ko toolè heni pwöjé.

Lé taièng mwo è tétè kè too waawa.
È pii tèn pièè go péong bè léko taiong ö iuua me ni bèlè tèn.

È pii tè pièe me é pééko me awodè go.
Pali go pii tong pièe me é pi tim heni öpi.
Bè me éo wöjo jong ka anaa bwö ko bwiilè jong.

Lé taièng mwo. È tétè kè too pa ètè gi.
È pii tèn pièè go péeong bè lé ko taiong. Ö luua me ni bèlè tèn.
È pii tèn mwo ö pa ètè gi pièè me é pééko me awödè go.
Pali go pii tong pièe ètè cidii a gi tong bè me o anyee ka ana bwö ko anyebwö.

Lé taièng mwo kè tétè tétè tétè tipu he tabè.
Lé a tétè olè he tabè ö le pwöli léko taièng. Kè lé ètu kè lé ètu kè lé ètu.
Lé ètu kè meiu ali tabè kè tiè pali.
Lé wii ni péi kè lé tahi da hoiu.
Lé tahi da ali piiti kè ti ko watihe ali éjaa.
È â wiè mu ha li piiti ö Bèwééne.
È èlè da pwa ali éja kè ta kè ta kè ta.
Lé taièng da pwa ali éja lé ta kè lé ta.
Acunaa me lé cètééng kè pièè go oolè me go oolè cai pwödéè.
È cèièng daamwo ali éja.
Lé taièng ali éja.

pigeon and his crowd are following me."

Duck says: "Why would I help you after what you have done?" You told me to crush the pits in the fruit and now my children's teeth are broken.

They start chasing him and he [Bèwééne]runs away and finds the imperial chicken. He says: "Save me because pigeon and the rest are chasing me."
"I won't help you for what you have done to me." You told me to tie up my sugar cane and make a nod so that it holds together and that is how I got trapped."

They start chasing him as well. Bèwééne runs away and finds the raven. He asks him: "Save me because they are chasing me, the pigeon and the rest."

The raven says: "We won't help you for what you have done to me." You told me to paint myself with the ashes so that I would become white, but I am still black."

They continue chasing him. Bèwééne runs and finds the knife grinder. He says: "Save me because the pigeon and the rest are chasing me."
The knife grinder says: "Why would I help you after what you have done ?"
You told me to grind my axe until is sparkles and now it has become blunt.

They continue chasing him, Béwééne runs and runs until he falls into the water.
The ones who chase him follow him into the water.
And they start to draw and draw water.
They draw until the source becomes dry, but they can't find him. They lift up the stones and throw them on the dry land.
They also dig up a shell near the foot of the pine tree. Bèwééne comes out of the sea shell
He disappears in the pine tree and he climbs and climbs. They follow him in the tree and they climb and climb. When they almost reach him, Bèwééne asks the tree: "Stretch yourself until

Kè ta è ta lé tèko taièng acuna me lé cè téèng.
Kè pii mwo pièè go oolè me go olè cai pwö dé.
È oolè mwo ali éjaa kè lé taièng.
È tuiè da pwö naami ali éja kè hêjii.
È hegi olè kè olè cuö pwö bwöhemwo.
È pawiè ali naami éja. kè he ko oélé pwön olé
pwö li léko taièng.
Kè taputéélé ali éja.
Kè lé muko adé ti.
Lé ti he duaa tabè ada ö lépwö béén.
lé ti he duaa tabè cè ö lépwö béén.
kè bö tè cuö ö béwééne.

Taluping
Kè go bo ucè pwö Acè tacu kon.

*you reach the summit." The tree stretches
himself. The others continue climbing the tree.
They climb and climb until they have almost
caught him. Bèwééne says: "Stretch yourself
until you reach the summit." The pine tree
keeps growing as they keep climbing. When
Bèwééne reaches the summit, the tree starts to
bend. The tree bends all the way until it touches
the ground. Bèwééne let go of the trunk, while
the rest continues to climb up the tree.
Suddenly, the tree bounces back.
And all of them are launched into the air.
One part is ejected to the west coast.
Another part is ejected to the east coast.
But Bèwééne is the only one left standing.*

*That is the end.
It is your turn now to tell a story.*

NOTE: *The legend of Bèwééne* written down in Cèmuh is the only known version known in a Kanak language, which begs the queston whether this legend is typically Cèmuhi

The legend of Rat and Octopus

Cihedee ciibwii me ibwen.
The legend of rat and octopus.

Lu tubwii li uja kè lu cié ma paé.
They cut the sugar cane and attach them to make a raft.

Lu cié ati kè lu ta tè-bwö pwön.
After they attached them all they go sit on the raft.

Kè lu olè he jié.
They go down the ocean.

Kè toa neko lu.
But the low tide catches them by surprise.

Kè tè mene ciibwi kuti (emphasis).
And rat becomes really hungry.

È adé kè wii li uja ko ali paé.
So they he starts eating the sugar cane from the raft.

È wii kè wii ati.
He eats and eats.

Kè taamwobé ali hegilè.
But the sea rises.

Kè tè é kuti ö ciibwi.
And rat starts to cry.

È téneeng ö ibwén he ko é.
Octopus hears the crying.

È abé kè tamween pièè.
He appears and asks:

É muko adè na go ko é?
"Why are you crying ?"

È pii ö ciibwi pièe:
And rat answers:

"É ko é bè é wii ali paé tènyu heko menung. È pii tèn ö ibwén piè:
"I cry because I have eaten the raft and I was hungry."
And octopus says:

"Go tèbwö pwö puning bè é bo ko daamwo."
"Go sit on my head so that I can take you to the shore."

È tèko éoom imieng ö ibwén.
Octopus strats swimming while carrying rat.

Kame mu omehi ali kotèhe ibwén kè ap.
But as rat sees the face of octous, he starts laughing.

Lu tèko wönaa da he tabè.
That's how the two continue in the water.

Lu tuiè da hoiu è téèlè da ö ciibwi.
Until they reach the shore and rat jumps off.

È tahimweeng ö ibwén pièè:
Octopus asks:

"É mu ko adè naa go tèè ko ap he nyu ko taabé?" É ko awihi a kotehem. É té okéé kuti ö ibwén.
"Why did you laugh on the way here ?"
Octopus turns around and gets really angry.
He trows his tentacle around rat.

È tahi daabé a taangen kè tapilihi kon.
But rat frees himself and cuts off the tentacle.

È cèida a toua tèn ö ciibwi kè tahagéi.
Octopus says: "Even though you cut my tentacle,

È pii tèn pièè: "Anaa go ko tahagèi kè o tè cim mwo."
it will grow back."

E tahi daamo ni bee taangen :
Octopus throws his other tentacles, [and says]:

"Kèhe ö go, ke kome pièè éo pwiiko kè ca(a) té tièko."
"You see, as son as I tell them to grow, they start growing back."

E tapilikon mwo ka tè tahagèi.
But, as soon as he wraps rat, the tentacle is cut off.

E pii tèn mwo pièè: "Anaa go tahagèi kè o tè cim mwo."
Octopus says: "Even though you cut this one as well, he will grow back."

É téèlè mu he tabè ali puni ibwén.
Octopus' head emerges from the water [and says]:

"Kèhe kome pièè éo wiiko kè caa tètièko." Bè me téèlè ne hwii ciibi. É cèi da ali tèua kè öli ali puni ibwén.
"As soon as I tell them to grow, they start growing back."
And suddenly, rat jumps on top of him.
He takes his knife and cuts octopus' head off.

É bwö melè ö ibwén kè bwö mulip ö ciibwi.
Octopus dies while rat is alive.

Taluping. Kè go bo Ucè pwö acè tau kon.
That is the end. It is your turn now o tell a story.

NOTE: The legend of Rat and Octopus is widely known in the Pacific. Petit-Skinner (1978), for instance, compares a version from Nauru with a version that was collected by Jacqueline de la Fontinelle in the language Ajié (New Caledonia).

The Legend of the Flying Fox

Cihêdé majoo – m…
è nêngê mu kè è téé. m…
è téé kè téé kè è tooli a éé nôâ. m…
kè wii, ni acèin. m…
kè wii kè wii kè wii atii. m…
kè wii ni âdihin. m…
kè wii kè wii kè wii ati. m…
kè wii ni dihên
kè wii kè wii kè wii ati
kè wii olè a één
kè wii kè wii kè wii ati. m…
kè wii ngên ni waan
kè wii kè wii dooli ni maliido
Kè lé tè wiièng kuti li maalido. m…
Kè tè wôôni: Kuti kikê kikê kikê kikê
taluping kè
go bo ucè pwö acè tacu kon

Legend of the flying fox
it ponders and pondering starts to fly,
it flies and flies and finds the trunk of the noa[143],
and eats the fruit,
and eats and eats and eats it all,
and eats the leaves,
and eats and eats and eats it all,
and eats the branches,
and eats and eats and eats it all,
and eats while climbing down to the roots,
and eats and eats and eats it all,
and eats the roots,
and it eats and eats and find the ants,
and the ants really bite,
and that is how it was: kiko kiko kiko kiko,
that's the end
it is your turn to speak

The legend of Small Worm and Big Worm

Cihedé bélè ubwö me bélè wahin.
Lu mu kè pii ö bélè ubwö pièè.
Lunyu pi (a)ai cè pwömii du tè nyu.
Kè lu muko ai ni pwömii du tè lu.
Lu èai kè lu èai kè lu èai.
Kè lu èai ati.
Kè ubwö a pwömiidu tè bélè wahin.
Kè wahin a pwömiidu tè bélè ubwö.
Kè tè okéé kuti ö bélè ubwö.
Kè tè cahi kuti a pwömiidu tè bélè wahin.
Kè tè é kuti ö bélè wahin.
Kè téne ali pwö é tèn ö bwödèi apulip jèda he miidèn.
Kè pièè dè ko é cau ni naing me pabung ne oté pwö bohemwo.
E pii ö bélè wahin pièè.
Waéo bélè wahin.
E ko é bè gamu pi éai pwömiidu me bélè ubwön.
Kè ubwö a pwömiidu tong kè wahin a pwömiidu tèn.
Kè adé kè cahi a pwömiidu tong.
Kè anaa é (bwö) ko
Talupiing kè go
Bo ucè pwö acè tacu kon

The legend of big worm and small worm.
As the two are there, big worms says: "Let us dig a hole."
And they start digging their holes..
They dig and dig and dig.
They dig until they can no further.
And the hole of small worm is really big.
And the hole of big worm is really smal.
And big worm is getting angry.
And he destroys the whold of small worm.
And small worm begins to cry.
But 'Finger of man' hears the crying voice above the ground and he asks: "Who among my chlldren and grand-children up there is crying?"
And small worm answers :
"It's me, small worm."
"I am crying because I was digging a hole with big worm; and my hole became big, while his remained small."
"So, the distroyed my hole ; and that's why I am crying."
That's the end. It is your turn to speak.

NOTE: A similar version was collected and transcribed by Bensa in the neighbouring language Paicî in 1973.

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[143] Big tree with small yellow fruits.

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3 June 2014

Associate Professor Karen Speedy
Department of International Studies
Faculty of Arts
Macquarie University NSW 2109

Dear Associate Professor Speedy

RE: *Collection of written data in Cemuhi, a language of New Caledonia*

Thank you for submitting the above application for ethical and scientific review. Your application was considered by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC (Human Sciences and Humanities)) at its meeting held on 2 May 2014 at which further information was requested to be reviewed by the Executive out of session.

The requested information was received with correspondence on 21 May 2014 and 26 May 2014.

I am pleased to advise that ethical and scientific approval has been granted for this project to be conducted at:

- Macquarie University

This research meets the requirements set out in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007 – Updated March 2014) (the *National Statement*). This letter constitutes ethical and scientific approval only.

Details of this approval are as follows:

Reference No: 5201400402

Approval Date: 3 June 2014

The following documentation has been reviewed and approved by the HREC (Human Sciences and Humanities):

Documents reviewed	Version no.	Date
Macquarie University Ethics Application Form	2.3 – July 2013	Received 26/3/2014
Correspondence from Mr Maarten Lecompte responding to the HREC's feedback.		Received 21/5/2014
Participant Information and Consent Form (entitled *Questionnaire sur l'utilisation de la langue cemuhi par orale et par ecrite*) (French & English versions)		19 May 2014
Questionnaire (French version)		19 May 2014

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Please ensure that all documentation has a version number and date in future correspondence with the Committee.

Standard Conditions of Approval:

1. Continuing compliance with the requirements of the *National Statement,* which is available at the following website:

http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/book/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research

2. This approval is valid for five (5) years, subject to the submission of annual reports. Please submit your reports on the anniversary of the approval for this protocol.

3. All adverse events, including events which might affect the continued ethical and scientific acceptability of the project, must be reported to the HREC within 72 hours.

4. Proposed changes to the protocol must be submitted to the Committee for approval before implementation.

It is the responsibility of the Chief investigator to retain a copy of all documentation related to this project and to forward a copy of this approval letter to all personnel listed on the project.

Should you have any queries regarding your project, please contact the Ethics Secretariat on 9850 7850 or by email ethics.secretariat@mq.edu.au

The HREC (Human Sciences and Humanities) wishes you every success in your research.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Karolyn White
Director, Research Ethics & Integrity,
Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee (Human Sciences and Humanities)

This HREC is constituted and operates in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007) and the *CPMP/ICH Note for Guidance on Good Clinical Practice.*