

ARIBWATSA, AN ALMOST EXTINCT LANGUAGE IN NORTHEASTERN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The Austronesian Aribwatsa language of the eastern end of the Markham Valley, in the area of the present-day town of Lae in northeastern New Guinea, has now only one surviving very old female speaker. The language is heading for extinction, but there are now concerted efforts by direct descendants of this last speaker to at least partially revive it.

The contribution on the language by Dr Susanne Holzkecht of the Australian National University, which is based on fieldwork undertaken a number of years ago gives a good insight into, and provides a permanent record of, the Aribwatsa language in a state which still very much corresponds to its traditional form.

S.A. Wurm, Editor

