



# The Manambu Language of East Sepik, Papua New Guinea

*Alexandra Aikhenvald*

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## **The Manambu Language of East Sepik, Papua New Guinea** Alexandra Aikhenvald

This book is the first comprehensive description of the Manambu language of Papua New Guinea and is based entirely on the author's immersion fieldwork. Manambu belongs to the Ndu language family, and is spoken by about 2,500 people in five villages: Avatip, Yawabak, Malu, Apa:n, and Yambon (Yuanab) in East Sepik Province, Ambunti district. Manambu can be considered an endangered language.

The Manambu language has many unusual properties. Every noun is considered masculine or feminine. Feminine gender - which is unmarked - is associated with small size and round shape, and masculine gender with elongated shape, large size, and importance. The Manambu culture is centered on ownership of personal names, and is similar to that of the Iatmul, described by Gregory Bateson.

After an introductory account of the language and its speakers, Professor Aikhenvald devotes chapters to phonology, grammatical relations, word classes, gender, semantics, number, case, possession, derivation and compounding, pronouns, morphohology, verbs, mood and modality, negation, clause structure, pragmatics, discourse, semantics, the lexicon, current directions of change, and genetic relationship to other languages. The description is presented in a clear style in a framework that will be comprehensible to all linguists and linguistically oriented anthropologists.



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