

Endangered languages listing: REMPI (AIC) [rmp]

Total population of language area: 1,594 (2000 census).

The Rempi language is spoken in a number of villages north of Madang, adjacent to the coast and the North Coast Highway. It is one of a cluster of similar, closely related languages belonging to the Hanseman family, part of the Madang subgroup of the large Trans New Guinea phylum (Z'graggen 1975). Speakers of these languages commonly name their own and other languages after the word for "what?" in each language. The Rempi language is thus known to its speakers as "A'e", or "Aic" (the letter "c" represents a glottal stop in the local orthography). The name "Rempi" comes from the local Catholic mission station. The language is accusative type, with SOV ordering and postpositions.

There have been no recent full-scale surveys of this area. However, language shift to Tok Pisin appears to be occurring in Rempi and related languages. SIL personnel have been told that the following languages are "dying": Rempi ("A'e"), Raptig ("Ale" [ISO code: rpt]) and possibly Yoidik ("Ia" [ISO code: ydk]) (Costin and Costin 1986). This statement is supported by observations, at least in the Rempi language. In addition, recent (2006) observations show that shift to Tok Pisin is also occurring in Garus ("Em" [ISO code: gyb]) and Nobonob ("Ari", Garuh [ISO code: gaw]). There is scope here for a survey on the extent of language shift in this cluster of related languages.

Alphabet development workshops for the Rempi and Garus languages were conducted in 1999.

Language resources:

Aic language trial spelling guide: includes mini-dictionary (297 entries).

References:

Aic language trial spelling guide. 1999. Nobonob, PNG: SIL / BTA.

Axelsson, Jim, Michele Axelsson, Joey Carreon, Iris Carreon and Ian Tupper. 2006. Report on Baiteta and Hawen villages. Manuscript. Nobonob, PNG: SIL-PNG.

Costin, Graeme and Faith Costin. 1986. Bible translation for the Em speaking people. Unpublished manuscript. Ukarumpa: SIL.

Ethnologue (15th edition). 2005. Ed. Raymond G. Gordon. Dallas: SIL International.
<http://www.ethnologue.com/>

Personal communication from Rempi speaker. 2004.

O'Rear, Paul and Greg Purnell. 1989. Sociolinguistic survey of the Garus language group. Unpublished manuscript. Ukarumpa: SIL.

Z'graggen, John A. 1975. *The languages of the Madang district, Papua New Guinea* (Pacific Linguistics B-41). Canberra: Australian National University.