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NAME OF PRESENTER:	Dr. Mark Love
PAPER TITLE	Vernacular language, biocultural diversity, intangible cultural heritage and social order: Case-studies of applied language maintenance and revitalization from Vanuatu
THEME	<i>Theme 3: Diverse Communities - Intangible Heritage</i>
PAPER ABSTRACT:	
<p>This paper introduces and briefly examines three social development projects from the Republic of Vanuatu – the world’s most linguistically diverse nation (on a per capita basis) – that seek to promote, support and maintain vernacular languages. Amidst increased mobility and substantive socio-cultural and economic change, language practices are changing and linguistic diversity is shrinking. Vernacular or mother languages are crucial to the practice and transmission of intangible cultural heritage and the continuance of biocultural diversity; both of which have been identified as important to human resilience and well-being more generally. The locally embedded rationales behind the three case studies examined herein reiterate these points, but further highlight other important aspects of vernacular language. In addition to maintaining cultural identity, nourishing a connection to place and supporting nature-culture linkages (including applied practices, such as seasonal calendars and indigenous medicine), the practitioners and participants involved in these programs view vernacular language as not just a vehicle but a <i>form</i> of social capital itself that positively informs social order. Two of the projects examined draw on what is called the “language, family and relationship” approach, a series of structured conversations and action learning community-outreach activities that use vernacular kin and leadership terms to reflect upon the roles and responsibilities of individuals, families and communities. The other case study is a “<i>kastom sku</i>” (custom school), where knowledgeable elders ran classes for children and young adults on a broad range of topics (local medicine, handicraft, horticulture, pig raising, <i>kastom</i> stories etc.) as well as vernacular language itself (which less than 50% of households were using). These low cost, locally-tailored outreach approaches not only allow for but celebrate the fact that linguistic and cultural diversity encompasses different ways of thinking, governing, understanding and communicating, and may be a good model for other Melanesian contexts. Of further interest is the fact that neither practitioners nor participants viewed these activities as “education” or primarily concerned with identity or culture but rather saw them as tools of development and governance. This raises significant questions - specially for donors - about when and how development ‘subjects’ get a say in defining what constitutes “social capital” and “development” in the first place.</p>	
BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRESENTER:	
<p>Dr. Mark Love - University of Queensland; RMIT University. Anthropologist, co-investigator and project manager, ‘Family, Language and Relationships project’ (L,F&R project). Funded by The Christensen Fund (2015-18).</p> <p><u>Co-authors (not in attendance):</u> Associate Professor Anne M. Brown - RMIT University. Chief Investigator L,F&R project. Samuel Kenneth - Anglican Church of Melanesia, Diocese of Vanuatu and New Caledonia (ACOM/DOVNC) in-country co-coordinator, L,F&R project. Gorden Ling – Facilitator, L,F&R project (ACOM/DOCVN). Kaitip Kami – Curator, National Museum of Vanuatu, Director Tepvikviklas (South West Bay <i>kastom</i> school). Supported by The Christensen Fund. Daniel Luki – Facilitator, Vanuatu <i>Kastom</i> Governance project (VKGP) (2006-2012). Rosleyn Tor – Facilitator, VKGP (2006-2012), Train the trainer (L,F&R project). Miriam Bule - Facilitator, VKGP (2006-2012), Train the trainer (L,F&R project)</p>	