FOUNDATION FOR ENDANGERED LANGUAGES

OGMIOS

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The FEL Chairman meets Lucia, Aranese chanteuse

Where is the Poetry?

Review of Jane Freeland and Donna Patrick ed., *Language Rights and Language Survival*

312 pp., (pb £17.99 / $32 incl. P&P), Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing 2004: ISBN 1-9000650-74-6

If truth is beauty, or at least contains it as a part, something is missing in this learned and wide-ranging discussion of the concepts and ethics at the root of language maintenance policies.

It is a collection of essays informed by the language situation in a striking variety of countries. But every one is troubled by the same moral conundrum: is our concern for disappearing languages based on naïveté, or even on a pack of lies? Can you believe a language is worth maintaining without also holding that the culture and identity of its speakers depend on its continued use? Is an old language, when more and more mixed up with parts of a newly dominant tongue, necessarily worth less for being impure? They all hope not, because they are well-informed and sophisticated sociolinguists, and they know that people and some of their traditions go on even when their former languages are being replaced, and that small language communities seldom have the luxury of a language clearly distinct from those of all their neighbours, let alone a chance to speak it without admixtures due to migration, urbanization or ever more intrusive global media. Yet they struggle to convince, despite their plucky insistence that languages are worth defending for all that.

Overall they identify three of what Plato might have called "noble lies", which have been commonly – but they all feel, invalidly – used to defend linguistic human rights:

1. the claim, once associated with German idealists such as J.G. Herder, and more recently American cognitivists like Benjamin Lee Whorf, that there is an essential link between a particular language and a people's identity, that even extends to give them a distinct understanding of reality
2. the belief that a language can be identified with a clear and distinct grammar and dictionary, which can be standardized to define it as an ideally pure code, and
3. the creed that members of a community share an identity, which defines what is to be preserved if their rights to survival,

and maintenance of cultural attributes, are to be respected.

As against these comforting but apparently illusory cultural tenets, they point up some facts that we may term "ugly truths" of the struggle for survival, when language are under threat of decline or extinction:

1. what they term Mufwene's "wicked problem"[1]: this is the situation where a community is confronted with the choice whether to survive economically but without its language, or to stay put with its culture and language, but at the cost, ultimately, of all its members. To borrow a tune from Mozart, *'la gente è mobile'*: in modern conditions, it is impossible to survive through isolation, but to open the borders is to invite dispersal of the community, even as it risks being overrun by outsiders.
2. the resilience of cultural identity through language change: as language transmission begins to break down, identity will be preserved to some extent through language mixing, and the resulting mixed codes – even if their subtleties are lost on linguists – may become very important to their speakers. Creolized languages, even when the differences are reduced to a matter of accent, need to be accorded parity of esteem by would-be cultural guardians.
3. the side-effects of the linguistic human rights ideal: the case is made that in many places – notably in modern South Africa – official implementation of these rights can oppress and endanger the many languages which they inevitably marginalize. This, they hold, is because they stem from liberal political theory (infused with the individualism of 18th-century Enlightenment!) and hence cannot see the values of group asset like language diversity, which can never be applied consistently and uniformly.

This is heady stuff, and not always easy to assimilate at a first reading: after all, as Laakso and Östman put it, "the foundations of linguistic unity have to be scrutinized once we bring polyvalent narratives of identity to bear on our analyses … the very balancing on the edge of ambivalence and hegemony requires ethnographic standpoints, standpoints that are negotiated among the sociolinguist and the villager, the human being." It does not make it easy for the less theoretically-primed reader that most of this kind of discourse is found in the early chapters of the book, where descriptions of particular communities and their linguistic colouring are rather outweighed by ponderous sententiosity.

Nevertheless, there are some ideas offered to justify ways of language activism to more

refined conceptual consciences, ideas that are likely to be interestingly new precisely to readers (such as the present reviewer) who are indeed less theoretically-primed. A favourite remedy for these writers is to appeal to the work of Pierre Bourdieu[2], who has been here before, and has detected some ways round and about the conundrums. He posits a 'language economy', seeing an interplay within a multilingual community that accords the languages a variety of values in use. And his idea of 'habitus' provides a third way between half-falsehoods: culture is not an essential property of a people, but is created and propagated in their discourse; nevertheless, it has an identity that persists beyond the mere instrumental patterns, which are all that a positivist or reductionist might see, and hence gives us something that we really can value.

Even if the theoretical cases remain opaque at times, the book is also useful as a compendium of local language policy details by experts with direct experience. A list gives the best idea of the variety available here:

- Finland – Solv-speakers amongst Swedish: Ville Laakso and Jan-Ola Östman
- S.W. Ontario – Iroquoian and Algonquian: Regna Darnell
- E. coast Nicaragua: Jane Freeland
- N.E. China – Oroqen: Lindsay Whaley
- Sabah Malaysia – Rungus: Jeannet Stephen and Veronica Atin
- E. Canadian Arctic – Inuktitut: Donna Patrick
- S. Africa: Christopher Stroud and Kathleen Heugh
- European Union: Sue Wright
- Central Spain: Luisa Martín Rojo

There will be points of interest here for everyone. For me, high points were to learn that the linguistic social layer-cake of Nicaragua's eastern coast (Spanish above English above Miskitu above Ulwa above Rama) goes back to English buccaneering of the 17th century, spreading a consciousness of distinct identities that contrasts to this day with the mestizo "melting-pot" theory of society that prevails in the rest of country where the Spanish empire prevailed; and that members of the European Parliament Patijn and van der Hoek (though both sadly mis-spelt in the book, p. 233) proposed in vain in 1974 that Latin be the language of the European institutions.

All the same, there is throughout this book a decided feeling that the authors are wrestling with their own theoretical consciences, rather than coming down from the mountain with the new doctrine worked out. I would hesitate to put this book into the hands of a monolingual politician or civil servant. It may be that language rights are a bad basis for linguistic policy: but how are governments to

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1 quoting his 2002 article 'Colonisation, globalisation and the future of languages in the 21st century' (http://www.unesco.org/most)

2 especially his Outline of Theory of Practice, Cambridge University Press 1982.

be persuaded to give the smaller languages a break if legal guarantees do more harm than good? Too little is said for my taste to convey the real values of all these languages, and to convince the unconverted that we all really are better off with many languages than with few.

Probably it is the unremitting stance of the sociolinguist that makes them miss this fundamental point. The aim appears to be to show that languages can be defended on a basis that is tough-minded, even objective. There is not, and apparently cannot be, anything here about beauty, mystery or inspiration, or even loyalty to an age-old tradition; there is no awareness, not even one fraught with intellectual guilt, that one's own, and above all other people's, languages contain treasures that are unique. To re-apply a memorable utterance of the head of linguistics at MIT[3]:

> I think that I shall never see
> A tree as lovely as little old me.

For this we'll need a new sociolinguistics, one that is not a stranger to aesthetics.

Salem Mezhoud & Joan Moles in conference with a hospitable Aranese

2. Development of the Foundation

Call for Applications for FEL Grants

The Foundation for Endangered Languages is now accepting proposals for projects of work that will support, enable or assist the documentation, protection or promotion of one or more endangered languages. These endangered languages may be anywhere in the world.

The Foundation's funds remain extremely limited and only an exceptional award will be greater than US $1,500. Smaller proposals stand a better chance of funding.

Please pass on this announcement to your friends and colleagues in endangered-language communities who may not have access to Ogmios, the Internet or e-mail.

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[3] Jay Keyser, anno 1978

Format for Submission

As of this year, there has been a change in the format for submissions to the Foundation. In future, applicants must submit a short "Case for Support" and an Application Form. Guidance on how to write a Case, and fill out the form, is accessible at the Foundation's website: - http://www.ogmios.org/grant.htm It may also be obtained from me at the address below. (Any other, older, FEL materials - as still at http://www.ogmios.org/question.htm - are obsolete, and should not be used.)

The Case for Support (CS) and Application Form (AF) are best submitted as Word files attached to an e-mail message sent to <FEL@chibcha.demon.co.uk>. Non-ASCII text should be in some form of Unicode. The two files should be named "languageCS.doc" and "languageAF.doc", substituting the name of the language to be studied for 'language'.

Copies printed on paper will also be accepted as an alternative. In general, it is not necessary to send a hard copy of an electronic proposal for confirmation, but FEL may request this if there are major difficulties in reading the file.

All proposals must be submitted in this format, to ensure comparability. Unless agreed with me in advance in writing, all proposals must be in English.

Deadline

The time-limit for proposals will be 30 January 2005. By that date, full proposals (consisting of Case for Support and Application Form) must reach me at the address below. All proposals received will be acknowledged on receipt.

The FEL Committee will announce its decision by 31st March 2005.

Comments on Draft Proposals

FEL tries to keep its procedures as simple as possible. But it recognizes that they may be especially taxing for those without training in a western university. In the case of proposals from communities or community linguists, FEL is prepared to comment on drafts, and suggest weaknesses and potential remedies (without prejudice) before the selection. Such draft proposals - clearly marked "DRAFT" - should reach FEL as soon as possible, and no later than 31 December 2004.

This commenting service is simply offered in order to help: it is never required to submit such a draft. If draft applications are received from applicants who are judged not to be members of endangered language communities or such communities' designated linguists, they may be re-classified as final applications, at FEL's discretion.

Note:

The Foundation for Endangered Languages (FEL) is a separate from ELF, the Endangered

Language Fund (http://sapir.ling.yale.edu/~elf/). It is perfectly possible (and has indeed occurred in the past) that the same project can be partially funded by both FEL and ELF.

Guidance Notes for Completion of the Case for Support and the Application

A. Guidance on writing the Case for Support

The Case for Support should usually be no longer than three sides of normally-printed A4 paper (for example, using Times New Roman 12 point); this means it should be no longer than about 2,000 words.

The Case should have the following parts.

1. Title of Project
This should be an explicit phrase including the name of the language to be studied or developed and the kind of work to be done: e.g. "Survey of Kagoro and neighbouring languages"; "Kazandusun: Development of reading materials"; "Sierra Miwok: Master-Apprentice Scheme".

2. Background to the work
Describe the language: its nature, location, number of speakers, relation to other languages, etc. You should include such details as adjacent languages (genetically and geographically) the number of known first language speakers, the number of known second language speakers, whether or not the language is being passed on to younger generations and, if so, by what means. You should state whether the language's speakers view it as a distinct language or as a dialect of some other language. You should indicate what languages of communication are used with neighbouring communities and whether this communication in other languages is general, or limited to certain spheres of activity.

You should describe previous research stating whether the language has been documented previously (if so please attach a bibliography), whether or not sound recordings have been made, transcribed or analysed, whether or not the language is written and, if it is if the orthography is in general use by the speech community and whether it was devised specifically for this language.

You should describe the current sphere and range of use of the language (for example mass media, religious/ceremonial use, spoken communication etc).

You should also state whether the community has literacy in other languages.

You should describe the nature of the threat to the language and the process of language diminution or loss as far as is known, with statistical evidence if possible.

Finally, describe how your work fits in with other work on the language, including work within your own organisation.

3. The work
Describe the work for which you are seeking support. Set out the aims and objectives and how you intend to achieve these. Describe the methods to be used.

4. Expected outcomes and beneficiaries
Describe what you hope will come from the work. What outcomes do you hope for? What material will be produced? How will the results be used, who will use them and for what purpose?

You should also set out how the work might lead on to further projects and indicate what these projects might be.

5. Collaboration
The Foundation is keen to see the work it supports benefit directly the linguistic communities under study. Please describe how you intend to collaborate with the communities in this project.

6. Resources
Please justify the resources you have asked for on the form. Please state clearly why you need the items requested, for what purpose will they be used and how were the sums requested were calculated?

Where support from FEL will be in addition to support you already have state why the resources were not provided within the other grants and why additional resources are requested from FEL

7. Qualifications
Briefly describe your working background and academic qualifications as an indication of why you are suitable to carry out this work.

8. Summary
It should be a brief description of the work proposed, its aims and objectives. It helps if you note aspects of the work that will be novel. Also make it clear why the work needs to be done soon, why it is important and why you are well-placed to carry out the work.

B. Guidance on completing the application form

The following paragraphs describe what is expected under each of the headings in the Application Form. The numbering follows the numbering on the form.

1. Applicant details
Please give your full name, the institution and department you work for, or are affiliated to, and the address for correspondence. If this address is different from the organisation address, please give the organisation's address on a separate sheet with an explanation of why the addresses are different. Please also give any other contact details such as your phone, fax and e-mail where available.

2. Title of Project
Please state the title of the project. This should be the same as in the Case for Support.

3. Target language and location
State clearly the language to be studied and its geographical location (country, region, etc)

4. Objectives
Please list the objectives of the project in order of their priority. No explanation need be given here -- we are looking for the main points.

5. Overview
Please summarise the aims, and likely outcomes of the work **in terms that a general audience can understand**. This is different from the Summary in the Case for Support, since (if your project is funded) it will be used to describe your project to the public. The Foundation is a charity funded by membership subscription and donations. We need to explain the nature of the work we support to potential donors. The information you supply here will help us to do that.

6. Resources
List the resources for which you are requesting support. State clearly the currency being used.

7. Collaboration with local communities
Please describe briefly the collaborations you propose with local communities naming the groups with whom you are collaborating.

8. Support from other organisations
We would like to know how the work you are proposing fits into other work being done by yourself, or close colleagues. We would also like to know where our support would be additional to support you already have, so please state clearly what other support is available for the work, and why additional resources are requested from FEL.

9. Declaration
As the wording of the declaration states, the Foundation is a charity and must be able to prove the work it supports is of public benefit. The declaration also requires you to provide the Foundation with a list of recommendations for further monitoring and work on the language that is the subject of the application. This material will serve both to support the current application in the selection process, and also to provide the Foundation with arguments in their quest for further funds to supplement existing projects in the future.

Generalitat de Catalunya

FEL VIII "On the Margins of Nations: Endangered Languages and Linguistic Rights", Barcelona 1-3 Oct. 2004: an Insider's View

Report by Joan Argenter, Conference Chairman, and leader of our partner, the UNESCO Chair of Languages and Education at Barcelona.

1.Overall description and assessment.
Statistics: (i) Abstracts received: 66; (ii) Abstracts accepted: 55; (iii) Abstracts accepted for oral presentation: 34; (iv) Abstracts accepted for poster presentations: 21; (v) Oral presentations at the Conference: 24; (vi) Posters presented at the Conference: 11; (vii) Papers published in the Conference Proceedings: 36. (including the editors' preface and keynote lectures).

2. Contents: Main subject. Suggested main themes.
The subject was a relevant one, if broadly diverging in its recognition and implementation between communities. The suggested themes were relevant too, though they were unevenly dealt with. Authors opted mainly for theme (1: Grass-roots efforts and top-down institutions) – also the most general one –, then theme (3: Languages Crossing Borders) and very sparsely for theme (2: The Global vs the Localk in Linguistic Rights).

3. Format of the Conference.
The number of abstracts presented, our inclusive policy and the decision to avoid parallel sessions suggested that the poster presentations and the poster discussing session was to be a good way of managing with a great number of contributions. Problems raised: a few abstract presenters decided to resign when they knew they had been assigned a poster presentation.
The inclusion of poster presentations in the Proceedings as one-page contributions probably was a good idea. Problems generated: some authors' misunderstanding of the publishing instructions, some papers were too extended to be published, many extended just a few lines when formatted, the number of pages of the book increased.
A few previously identified keynote lectures is not a bad policy, provided that the authors choose an appropriately oriented topic if needed. In Barcelona there was a certain redundancy: Goenaga's lecture dealt with languages crossing borders (theme 3) to an extent that overlapped with de Graaf's, to

whom it had been assigned. However, the local organizer thought that highlighting the Basque case was sufficiently justified.

4. Keynote speakers

Keynote speakers were correctly identified – even if not specialists in "linguistic rights". As a matter of fact, "language policies" were taken as being just as relevant as "linguistic rights" by all participants. We decidedly avoided a lecture on "language rights" as a general abstract topic, a topic to be defined or presented in an essentialist way, etc.

Patxi Goenaga & Joan Albert Argenter

Leanne Hinton ("The Death and Rebirth of Native American Languages") and Tjeerd de Graaf ("The Status of Endangered Languages in the Border Areas of Japan and Russia") are both involved in endangered languages research and advocacy. Patxi Goenaga ("Fronteras que dividen y fronteras que separan. Una Mirada a Europa desde el Euskara") was representative of the language in Spain which is arguably the closest to being endangered, and a case that merits interest for evident reasons, linguistic and sociolinguistic.

5. Excursions and visits: relevance and deployment.

Both excursions, to Val d'Aran and to North Catalonia, were relevant in terms of particular language situations within Catalonia. (Val d'Aran is the Occitan-speaking area where the language has been accorded an official status and has been standardized.)

In a way, they were complementary too. Probably the nature of the case in North Catalonia might have be conjectured in advance, since it is under the rule of French State. Val d'Aran, however, is rather less known, since it is under the rule of Catalan institutions. They were also relevant in view of their relation to their own linguistic domains (Occitania and the Catalan-speaking area, respectively). The interest of getting first-hand knowledge of these cases justified the choice, although the journeys to reach them were rather long.

Excursions turned out as foreseen. Our contacts there were the right ones – representative, cooperative and informative. The weather was in our favour too, and people enjoyed their trip.

The visits combined various sources of insight on the situations of these language communities and their current evolution: interviews with local "politicians" and/or

advocates, visits to museums and ethnographic sites (e.g. the "cottage" in the small Vilamós village, Val d'Aran), a cultural evening of Aranese song, visits to natural places and landscapes, and light walking gave a result that surpassed the expectations of the overloaded organizers (!). Moral: If you work hard and skilfully eventually you are rewarded (or not).

The fact that Val d'Aran implied one night away from Barcelona may have dissuaded some people from registering. Still, the deal agreed with Hotel Turin – whereby the party was away for one night in the midst of their stay - was a good one. This should be taken account of in new conferences in the future. Actually, the only inconvenience was either the narrowness of streets in the small village (Bordes), the size of the bus's horns and their volume.

Era Glèisa de Vielha, Val d'Aran

From an organizational point of view, we did not know how many people were about to come to our first excursion, since many people did not register to the Conference until they were in BCN on Friday morning. To organize a trip before people registered in situ is a handicap.

Visiting the Palau de la Generalitat on Friday evening was a fascinating experience that you will be hard-pressed to find again in any tourist visit to Barcelona.

6. Organization: Role of partner (UNESCO Chair).

This was the first time that the FEL Conference worked with a local institutional partner. It is not to us to judge the experience. We think this has not been that bad. It is highly recommended for organizers to have attended previous FEL conferences, and to attend the Executive Committee meetings (our visit to Bath was very useful). It is needed to clarify all financial, organizational and competence matters. As a matter of fact, the cooperation between FEL and UNESCO Chair has been overall positive.

The schedule with which we worked was established in Bath: a bit late and a bit short-

termed – the editing experience, however, speaks of the need to have final originals in time early enough.

Main stages of the process: (i) Call for papers, (ii) Deadline for abstract presentation, (iii) Deadline for reviewers' job, (iv) Deadline for communication to authors, (v) Deadline for grants awarding, (vi) Deadline for full paper presentation, (vii) Deadline for early bird register, deadline(s) for plus-charge register, (viii) Deadline for editors' job, (ix) Deadline for printer's job, (x) Register at the Conference.

All questions and issues expressed by attendants have been reasonably afforded: financial help, register help, lodge help, invitation letters for home institutions, deals with Spanish Embassies or Consulates, etcetera. A few requests from purported attendees were dismissed owing to our doubts on the intention of petitioners.

7. Organization: Role of Host institution (IEC).

The Conference took place on a week-end. This conditioned the extent to which the host institution gave support to the Conference.

However, the Conference was diligently served by staff technicians in the Conference room and the housekeeper in the ground at the door of the building (in fact, a security guard) the whole week-end. Also we had administrative staff support on Friday. A higher level staff computer system technician was in service at home available, if necessary, within the range of 45-60 minutes on Saturday and Sunday. The role played by the Conference volunteers was of great help. Also the photographer attended – though not on Friday at the Opening session, but on Saturday (because of a local confusion). Joan Moles was everywhere and afforded all kind of needs.

The Host institution facilities were high standard quality.

To have a few – or just one –computers for attendants' use would be highly desirable; but we did not succeed in this.

8. Incomes: Fund-raising and Conference fees. Budget. Expenses.

FEL Conferences have been always based on a self-financing basis.

However neither FEL nor UNESCO Chair were quite without external fund-raising. UNESCO Chair applied for financial aid to different agencies. Eventually one of these applications was successful. But we did not know this until late July – partly, because of political changes after elections both in Catalonia and Spain. The UNESCO Chair did not know anything about its own funding. Until July then we did not know how we would afford the conference. This was the main reason to work with a self-financing scenario at the time when register fees were established – after all, however, our register fees amounted the usual prices in BCN conferences (plus the income from non-members). Also this was the reason why we asked FEL to afford for grants at the time when these had to be assigned.

9. Grants and grants policy. Invited participants.

As to the grants policy: the sum of Euro 3.000 was allocated in advance for grants. More people than we expected applied for a grant – including Western university-based teacher staff. Our policy was that a reasonably great number of people benefited of a partial financial aid to attend the conference – rather than to pay just a few full fees grants. This policy was a reasonable one, I think, but many people asked for a more substantial aid

10. Proceedings.

The policy of having the Proceedings book issued for the conference has many advantages (e.g., an effective spur to get material collected from authors, generally good image, fewer added costs for distribution, speedy availability of a volume to distribute (and sell) to non-attendees.). Inevitably, it imposes on the editors a hard job against the clock. Improvements on form and content of papers were made, and discussed with authors when necessary, and the whole volume was produced to schedule.

Perpinyà

The Chairman of FEL would like to add his especial thanks to Joan Argenter and Joan Moles for the excellent conference that they were able lay on for us

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3. Endangered Languages in the News

Effects of the Tsunami: the Fate of the Languages of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands

There has been considerable chatter about the effect of the tsunami of 26 December on the tiny communities of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands - each with their own distinct language. The islands are very close to the epicentre of the quake, and there were rumours that whole languages might have been wiped out.

Luckily, as we report below, the effects, both of earthquake and tsunami, appear to have been remarkably slight, at least among these people. There is even suggestion that the largely isolated (and in some cases uncontacted) people may have some special earth awareness that the modern world could learn from.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/new_nota.asp?idnews=26926>

Nevertheless, the fact that the issue has been raised in linguistic terms shows how the issue of language endangerment has been rising in popular (and media) awareness.

Background

The **Jarawa, Onge, Sentinelese and Great Andamanese** are thought to have travelled to the Andaman Islands from Africa up to 60,000 years ago. They are said to be racially of Negrito stock. The fact that the languages of the four tribes are mutually unintelligible indicate that they lived isolated lives on reaching the islands. However, their ways of life are similar - all are nomadic hunter-gatherers living from the forest and by fishing in the coastal waters. They have suffered terribly since the islands were colonized, first by the British, and later by India.

(The **Nicobarese**, racially Mongoloid, are believed to have immigrated from the opposite direction, much more recently but still anciently. Their languages are classified within the Mon-Khmer group of the Austro-asiatic language family.)

SIL Ethnologue has recognized 10 distinct Great Andamanese languages (6 central and 4 northern) of which all but A-Puchikwar, a central language) are extinct.) These were all distinct from Jarawa, Önge and Sentinelese They also recognize 5 distinct Nicobarese languages as well as Shompeng.

Bibliographies on the languages, and some general information, can also be found at: http://www.ciil.org/andaman/

A basic statement of the issues and the outcome was provided by Survival International on 2 January 2005

First Confirmed News on Isolated Tribes of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India

The first authoritative reports are now coming in on the fate of the five isolated tribes of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, hit hard by the Asian quake disaster. All appear to have survived. The more numerous Nicobarese tribe, however, has suffered huge loss of life.

* The 270 **Jarawa**, who lived in complete isolation until recently, appear to have escaped unharmed. They almost certainly were living in the forest when the tsunami struck

* Most of the **Onge**, who live in two government-built settlements, fled to high ground as the sea level fell, and so survived. They are currently being supported by a neighbouring community in a school house. Their awareness of the ocean and its movements has been accumulated over 60,000 years of inhabiting the islands. The

Onge had already suffered a disastrous fall in their population, from 672 in 1901 to barely 100 today.

* Reports from overflights of Sentinel Island, home of the most isolated of all the tribes, the **Sentinelese**, indicate that many have been seen on the beaches. The Sentinelese fired arrows at the helicopter overhead. However, confident assertions by the authorities that all the Sentinelese have been accounted for are premature, as no-one has any idea of their population (estimates range from 50 - 250), and landing on the island is impossible.

* No reliable reports have yet been received on the fate of the 41 **Great Andamanese**, but early indications are that they have survived more or less intact.

* Similarly, there has been no reliable information on the fate of the 380-strong **Shompen**, an isolated tribe of Great Nicobar Island. It is hoped that, like the Jarawa, the fact that this hunter-gatherer people live primarily in the forests rather that on the coast will have helped them survive

The sixth tribe of the islands, the 30,000-strong **Nicobarese**, have suffered much more. All 12 villages on one island, Car Nicobar, have been washed away, and many are feared dead. Unlike the other tribes, the Nicobarese are not hunter-gatherers but horticulturalists. They have largely converted to Christianity, and are much more assimilated than the other Andaman and Nicobar tribes.

The Foundation has a current project in support of Bidisha Som's work with the Great Andamanese, and he has written to us as follows, to some extent complementing thereport from Survival International.

As you might know that the deadly tsunami waves hit India as well along with other South Asian countries. One of the worst hit areas in India is the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Initially, there was a panic that the endangered tribal population there might have perished in the recent natural calamity.

At first I could not establish any contact with the island as the communication setup was totally disrupted.Now the contact has been restored and I am glad to inform you that the indigenous tribes in general, and the **Great Andamanese**, in perticular, are safe.

However,my plans for a second field-trip to the Andamans in last December had to be postponed for the time being, seeing the present conditions.

Regards, Bidisha Som

There is also some suggestion from other quarters that the tsunami may have a positive effect on indigenous communities - especially the Nicobarese - , and hence their languages,

in giving an opprtunity to discourage continued settlement from continental India:
http://asia.news.yahoo.com/050116/ap/d87ks9g82.html

Endangered Language Coverage in the *Economist*

The *Economist* magazine (dated 1st-7th January 2005) carried a largely sympathetic 3-page Special Report (pp 58-60 or 62-64, depending on edition) on endangered languages, giving some historical background as well as contrast with the first eleven of most dominant languages.

FEL members David Crystal, Daniel Nettle, Suzanne Romaine, Akira Yamamoto Mark Abley and Nicholas Ostler are all cited. To quote three paragraphs, particularly relevant to FEL's activities:

"Audio and video recordings can help, but the main need is for basic grammars and dictionaries, which are expensive to produce. {David] Crystal calculates that, assuming an average cost f $192,000 per language over three years, the cost of recording 3,000 endangered languages might run to $575m. But that is one guess among many."

"Clearly, there is no point in trying to save a language unless the speakers wish it, but most seem to be increasingly interested. In recent decades sevral moribund languages including Hawaiian, Maori and Welsh have been successfully revived. Nicholas Ostler, of the British-based Foundation for Endangered Languages, draws a parallel with fine art: though people do not need their ancient mother tongue for physical survival, it makes life far richer."

"The demise of any language is a loss for all mankind, but most of all a loss for its speakers. As one Navajo elder, quoted by [Akira] Yamamoto, told his grandson:

If you don't breathe, there is no air.
If you don't walk, there is no earth.
If you don't speak, there is no world."

Oh What a Tangled Web We Weave- by David Crystal

reprinted with permission from the November-December, 2004 issue of *Science & Spirit* magazine. For more information, visit
http://www.science-spirit.org

The Internet has proven itself to be the next leg of a linguistic revolution that began with the slow, steady spread of English and the death of other languages.

Linguistics used to be a much simpler affair: There was American English and there was the Queen's English. There was speech and there was writing. There were thousands of languages, none of them global in stature. There were certainly no smileys.

Those days are gone. Now, with a sequence of characters on the computer keyboard, we can tack happy little faces onto the end of our sentences (a colon represents the eyes, a dash the nose, and the right parenthesis the mouth:-). We can cut and paste by taking words from one place in an e-mail and adding them somewhere else. Web pages change in front of our eyes: Words appear and disappear in varying colors, sentences slide onto the screen and off again, letters dance around.

It's revolutionary, the Internet. Any linguists worth their salt cant help but be impressed. If nothing else, the Internet deserves great credit for granting us a mode of communication more dynamic than traditional writing and more permanent than traditional speech. In fact, electronic communication is neither writing nor speech per se. Rather, it allows us to take features from each medium and adapt them to suit a new form of expression. The way we use language is changing at breakneck speed. It has often been said that the Internet is a social revolution. Indeed it is, but it is a linguistic revolution as well. Consider traditional writing, which has always been permanent; you open a book at page six, close the book, then open it at page six again, and you expect to see the same thing. You would be more than a little surprised if the books page had changed in the interim. But on Web pages, this kind of impermanence is perfectly normal.

Then there are the hypertext links, the basic functional unit of the Web. These are the links you click on in order to go from one part of a page to another, from one page to another, or from one site to another. The nearest thing we have in writingthe footnote or the cross-referenceis always an optional extra, and there is nothing like this in speech. Real-time Internet discussion groups, or chat rooms, allow a user to see messages coming in from all over the world. If there are thirty people in the chat room, its possible to see thirty different messages, all making various contributions to a theme. In a unique way, you can listen to thirty people at once, or have a conversation with them all at the same time; you can monitor what each one of those people is saying, and respond to as many of them as your mental powers and typing speed permit. This too is a revolutionary state of affairs, as far as speech is concerned.

What so many people now understand is that there are very specific ways in which the Internet is changing our linguistic experience. There are symbolic ways as well. The Internet is part of a larger revolution, with two other major trends working in tandem. For one, English has emerged as a global language. For another, we are in the midst of a creeping crisis: Thousands of languages are dying out.

When the World Wide Web came along, it offered a home to all languagesas soon as their communities had functioning computer technology, of course. While the Internet started out as a totally English medium, its increasingly multilingual character has been its most notable change.

To get a sense of just how radical this change has been, consider the fact that in the mid-1990s, it was widely quoted that eighty percent of Internet pages were in English. By 1998, however, the number of newly created Web sites not in English was greater than the total number of newly created sites that were in English. Since then, estimates for how much information on the Web is in English have fallen steadily. Already, some have put the amount at less than fifty percent.

On the other hand, the presence of other languages has steadily increased. Its estimated that about one-quarter of the worlds languages have some sort of cyber existence now, and as communications infrastructure expands in Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America, the Internet as a whole will soon be significantly non-English.

The Internet has turned out to be the ideal medium for minority languages. If you are a speaker or supporter of an endangered languagean aboriginal language, say, or one of the Celtic languagesyoure keen to give the language some publicity, to draw the worlds attention to its plight. Previously, this was very difficult to do. It was hard to attract a newspaper article on the subject, and the cost of a newspaper advertisement was prohibitive. It was virtually impossible to get a radio or television program devoted to it. Surely, by the time someone wrote a book about one of these languages, got it published, and everyone read it, the language might well be uttering its last words.

But now, with Web pages and e-mail, you can get your message out in next to no time, in your own languagewith a translation as well, if you want. Chat rooms are a boon to speakers of minority languages who live in isolation from each other, as they can now belong to a virtual speech community. The Web offers a World Wide Welcome for global linguistic diversity. And in an era when so many languages of the world are dying, such optimism is truly revolutionary.

It is a real art to be able to make sense of a revolution as its happening, to not leave it up to the historians to later analyze its impact and effects. Revolutions are fast and dynamic by nature, radical shifts that take place in a short period of time. We are now at a transformative step in the evolution of human language.

The linguistic originality and novelty of the Internet should make our hearts beat faster. It is offering us a future of communication radically different from that of the past. It is presenting us with styles of expression that are fundamentally unlike anything we have seen before. It is revising our cherished

concepts of the way we think about the life of a language. Electronic communication has brought us to the brink of the biggest language revolution ever, and it is exciting to be in at its beginning.

http://www.science-spirit.org/articles/

4. Appeals, News and Views from Endangered Communities

Threat to Chuvash Autonomy
October 4, 2004

This, from the New York Times, makes an interesting, though discouraging, follow-up to the lead article in our last issue of Ogmios.I have emphasized the specific mentions of the Chuvash language. - Ed.

In Russia, Dissent Grows Over Moves to Curb Autonomy by Steven Lee Myers

CHEBOKSARY, Russia, Sept. 30, 2004 - President Vladimir V. Putin may have cowed Russia's national political leadership with his plan to concentrate still more power in the Kremlin, but in regions of the country that stand to lose the most, he has inflamed fierce popular discontent. People in this region along the Volga denounced Mr. Putin's proposal to end direct elections of governors and other regional leaders as unconstitutional and potentially destabilizing. They fear that the Kremlin is planning further steps to recreate a Soviet-like power over the people.

"We had such a long period of restrictions," said Vladislav V. Yefimov, a bookkeeper, referring to the Soviet era. "We were fed up with them. Now we are going to have them again, and I do not understand what for." The reaction among those interviewed here underscored what polls suggested was seething dissent in this and the other 20 ethnic republics that had achieved a measure of autonomy since the Soviet Union disbanded. In one poll across Russia, nearly half of those surveyed opposed Mr. Putin's proposal. But here, at least anecdotally, the opposition appeared to be stronger.

Mr. Putin has defended his plan, issued days after at least 339 hostages, half of them children, died in a terror siege at a school in Beslan, Russia, by saying he wanted to unify Russia against the threat of terror. But many warn that it could have the opposite effect, stoking ethnic divisions that in an extreme case dragged Chechnya, another of the republics, into more than a decade of bloodshed.

Atner P. Khuzangay

"Inside this monolithic structure there will be certain movements," said Atner P. Khuzangay, a leader in this republic of Chuvashia as it won some autonomy in the early 1990's. "There will be tension. I would not call it resistance, but tensions will appear." It remains to be seen whether public opposition will have any effect on Mr. Putin's proposal, which his aides submitted to a pliant Parliament in late September. Its leaders, all Putin loyalists, promise to adopt the changes quickly, but already there are signs of political challenges.

A regional legislator in Kaliningrad has asked Russia's Constitutional Court to clarify the legality of the proposal. The Chuvash National Congress, a private organization here, plans to meet on Oct. 8 to draft a statement of opposition. Its president, Gennadi N. Arkhilov, called the proposal "doomed," and added, "if not now, then eventually."

Nikolai Petrov, an analyst at the Moscow Carnegie Center, said regional parliaments, which under Mr. Putin's proposal would ratify Kremlin appointees, could still baulk, especially when regional laws conflicted with federal law or practice. **Chuvashia, for example, requires that its president be a speaker of Chuvash, a Turkic language spoken by two-thirds of the region's 1.4 million residents.** The new legislation, though, would give Mr. Putin the authority to disregard such requirements and to disband regional parliaments if they rejected his appointees twice.

"It will be very complicated to do this without risking an explosion," he said in a telephone interview. "There will be real opposition, but it will, perhaps, not be very public."

Indeed, few senior political leaders have openly defied Mr. Putin on the issue. Even the governors and other regional leaders, who will lose their independence and electoral legitimacy when the plan takes effect, have lined up behind Mr. Putin - at least publicly.

One exception is the elected leader of Chuvashia, President Nikolai V. Fyodorov. He has responded with silence, even when local journalists have pressed him to comment. He declined repeated requests to be interviewed for this article, with his office citing scheduling conflicts. Other elected officials here said he opposed Mr. Putin's proposal, but dared not say so publicly.

Mr. Fyodorov's position is delicate in part because of the nature of the autonomy that Chuvashia, like the other republics, received after Russia's first president, Boris N. Yeltsin, famously told regional leaders to "take as much sovereignty as you can swallow."

Chuvashia, a central region of forest and fertile steppe slightly smaller than New Jersey, wrote its own constitution and drafted its own laws. **The Chuvash language, once consigned to private conversations, experienced a revival in schools, theaters and, most important, in the corridors of government.** Mr. Fyodorov, an ethnic Chuvash who was first elected president in 1993, was generally, though not universally, considered a democrat and a nationalist willing to defy Moscow.

When war broke out in Chechnya in 1994, he issued a decree allowing soldiers from Chuvashia to refuse to fight there - an effort he ultimately lost. In 2000, when Mr. Putin stripped regional leaders of their seats in the upper house of Parliament, the Federation Council, Mr. Fyodorov was among the most vocal critics.

Unlike Chechnya, Chuvashia never had a separatist movement. One reason is that the Chuvash, descendents of Bulgar tribes that settled the Volga region in the seventh and eighth centuries, adopted Russian Orthodoxy, while other Turkic regions, including neighboring Tatarstan, adopted Islam. Another reason, people here said, was the autonomy Mr. Yeltsin granted.

Even under the Soviet system, Chuvashia had received special autonomous status on June 24, 1924 - a date still celebrated as the republic's independence day. That autonomy, though, existed only in theory; the Central Committee in Moscow controlled everything. To the Chuvash, Mr. Putin's proposal amounts to the end of Russia's short experiment with federalism.

"Putin needs a fully controlled system, a system where a command from the top is carried out just like in the barracks," said Yevgeny L. Lin, the leader of the liberal Yabloko Party here. "Federalism includes elements of independence, which he does not want, because there is no room for them in the barracks."

Like others here and in Moscow, Mr. Lin expressed concern that the Kremlin might also be considering plans to do away with the republics altogether, merging them into larger regions more easily controlled from the federal center.

Some here are resigned to the erosion of the region's autonomy. They call it an inevitable characteristic of Russia, where democratic traditions never really took root. "There's a saying in Russia," said Oleg A. Delman, an independent member of the local parliament, or State Council, who opposes the Putin proposal. "A country without its czar is like a village without an idiot."

Mikhail N. Yukhma, another of Chuvashia's nationalist leaders in the 1990's, has grown embittered with Chuvashia's course. He is a fierce critic of Mr. Fyodorov, whom he accuses of building his own autocratic power. He said he would prefer a leader sent from Moscow.

"I should admit this idea failed here," he said of Chuvashia's period of autonomy. "The electoral system can yield fruit only in some place like the United States - not here."

Viktor A. Ilyin, a Communist member of the State Council, said Chuvashia had been steadily losing autonomy ever since Mr. Putin came to office and began to strengthen his political hold over all of Russia. The region's budget increasingly relies on federal resources, doled out, he said, based on loyalty to the Kremlin.

But he said Mr. Putin's proposal - in its starkness - could prove too much for people to accept quietly.

"We should take into account the psychology of our people," he added. "They are like a young birch tree. If you bend it and bend it, sometimes it breaks. Sometimes, it snaps back."

http://www.nytimes.com/2004/10/04/inter national/europe/04russia.html

Scottish moves to save Gaelic

28 Sept 2004 The Guardian, London

The Scottish parliament today published a bill designating new powers to a Gaelic language board in a last-ditch attempt to save and revive the historical language of Scotland.

The Scottish Gaelic language bill was first presented last year, but has now been strengthened to give greater powers to Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the body designated to promote the use of Gaelic in schools, local authorities and government.

Under the new bill, Bòrd na Gàidhlig will be able to issue statutory guidance to schools on teaching about, and in, the Gaelic language, and will be able to advise all public bodies on the use of Gaelic.

The 2001 census showed a slow but steady decline in the use of Gaelic in Scotland, with 58,552 people speaking the language regularly, compared with 65,978 10 years previously.

The Scottish education minister, Peter Peacock, who has ministerial responsibility for Gaelic, said: "Today is an historic day for Gaelic as we move to secure the status of the language in Scotland, ensuring that - rather than dying out as some have gloomily predicted - it has a long-term future.

"The publication of the bill is just one reason for optimism - the fact that Gaelic medium education is flourishing and the number of young speakers is rising also gives us real hope."

He added: "This bill will make it easier for people to use Gaelic and ensure that public bodies - such as councils and health boards - have to take the needs of Gaelic speakers into account."

The chairman of Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Duncan Ferguson, said: "This is a momentous day for Gaelic, and Bòrd na Gàidhlig is delighted to welcome the publication of the revised bill. This bill is a clear demonstration of the executive's determination to secure and revitalise Gaelic, and it is also a most encouraging reflection of extensive consultation with, and input from, many people committed to the future of Gaelic nationally."

End of the Line for the Welsh Language Board

Eurolang
http://www.eurolang.net/news.asp?id=4841

The National Assembly of Wales has announced that the Welsh Language, Board, established in 1994, will be abolished in 2007. This is part of the Labour dominated Assembly Government's aim of reducing the number of semi-official bodies. In July 2004 it announced that bodies with responsibilities for economic development, education and tourism would be abolished in 2006, and at the beginning of December it announced the end of the language board, the curriculum assessment board and the health professionals' body.

The reaction throughout Wales has been mixed. The opposition parties have condemned the move but there is disagreement among the language pressure groups if this is a good thing for the language or not. The First Minister of the Assembly Rhodri Morgan said when he made the announcement that "you can justify the existence of arm's length bodies in government but there is no such thing as arm's length public money. Ministers are always responsible for its scrutiny. There is no dodging that responsibility".

The Assembly Government says that there is no need now for the Language Board as the government has established the *Iaith Pawb* (Language for All) policy and that it will appoint an independent regulator to ensure that the appropriate government department implements this plan.

But before the announcement, the Welsh Language Board - and others - had warned that the demise of the Board would make the language a "political football" as it was before the Board was established. The former minister with responsibility for the language, Jenny Randerson of the Liberal Democrats, warned that abolishing the board would make the language a "political matter".

After the announcement, the Language Board issued the following statement: "The Board has contributed enormously towards the reviving of the language over the last decade and this is reflected in the 2001 Census figures where an increase in the number of Welsh speakers was recorded. The Board wants assurances that it will be possible to support the momentum under any new regime. The Board will discuss fully with the Assembly Government the process of transferring its responsibilities and duties, and the method of regulating language plans in general."

But the language pressure group Cymuned has attacked the plans. "This means that the future of the Welsh language will be decided entirely by the Labour Party," says Aran Jones, the group's chief executive. "The Assembly Government has failed to win more power from Westminster, so now it's trying to increase its power by turning back the process of devolution within the borders of Wales." Cymuned has asked Alun Pugh, the Minister for Culture, to confirm that decisions about the Welsh language "will not be made on the basis of prejudice within the Labour Party".

Nevertheless, many language activists see this as an opportunity to attack the Labour Party who they perceive are not totally committed to the language, although it was Labour that established the Language Board. They say that the party will not from 2007 onwards be able to "hide" behind the Language Board if they are perceived not to be doing enough for the language. "One should look at this as a new opportunity," says Dafydd Morgan Lewis of *Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg* (The Welsh Language Society). "In its place a new Language Council should be established which would be more representative than the Board and also to establish a language ombudsman, a language planning body and a centre for standardising terms. They must look again at the Welsh Language Act as this act is now useless after this decision. Cymdeithas yr Iaith has already arranged a National Forum to discuss these matters."

Many working in the field of language revival have accepted that there is nothing they can

do to change the Assembly Government's decision. All they can hope for is that the expertise that the Board had gained over the years will not now be lost.

5. Allied Societies and Activities

Request for Proposals, Endangered Language Fund

The Endangered Language Fund provides grants for language maintenance and linguistic field work.

The work most likely to be funded is that which serves both the native community and the field of linguistics. Work which has immediate applicability to one group and more distant application to the other will also be considered. Publishing subventions are a low priority, although they will be considered. Proposals can originate in any country. The language involved must be in danger of disappearing within a generation or two. Endangerment is a continuum, and the location on the continuum is one factor in our funding decisions.

Eligible expenses include consultant fees, tapes, films, travel, etc. Overhead is not allowed. Grants are normally for a one year period, though extensions may be applied for. We expect grants in this round to be less than $4,000 in size, and to average about $2,000.

How to apply
there is no form, but the information requested below should be printed (on one side only) and **four copies** sent to our new address: The Endangered Language Fund
300 George Street
New Haven, CT 06511, USA
This address is valid both for regular mail and for express mail services.
Applications must be mailed in. No e-mail or fax applications will be accepted. Please note that regular mail, especially from abroad, can take up to four weeks. If you have any questions, please write to the same address or email to: elf@haskins.yale.edu

Required information:
Cover page:
The first page should contain:
- **title of the project**
- **name of language and country in which it is spoken**
- **name of primary researcher**
- **address of primary researcher** (include phone and email if possible.)
- **place and date of birth**
- **present position, education, and native language(s).**
- **previous experience and/or publications that are relevant**.

Include the same information for collaborating researchers if any. This information may continue on the next page.

Description of the project:
Beginning on a separate page, provide a description of the project.   This should normally take two pages, single spaced, but the maximum is five pages. Be detailed about the type of material that is to be collected and/or produced, and the value it will have to the native community (including relatives and descendants who do not speak the language) and to linguistic science.   Give a brief description of the state of endangerment of the language in question.

Budget:
On a separate page, prepare an itemized budget that lists expected costs for the project. Estimates are acceptable, but they must be realistic. Please translate the amounts into us dollars. List other sources of support you are currently receiving or expect to receive and other applications that relate to the current one.

Letter of support:
Two letters of support are recommended, but not required. Note that these letters, if sent separately, must arrive on or before the deadline (April 20th, 2004) in order to be considered. If more than two letters are sent, only the first two received will be read.

Limit to one proposal
A researcher can be primary researcher on only one proposal.

Deadline
Applications must be received by April 20th, 2005. Decisions will be delivered by the end of May 2005.

Acknowledgment of receipt
Receipt of application will be made by email if an email address is given. Otherwise, the applicant must include a self-addressed post-card in order to receive the acknowledgment.

If a grant is awarded
Before receiving any funds, university-based applicants must show that they have met the requirements of their university's human subjects' committee. Tribal- or other-based applicants must provide equivalent assurance that proper protocols are being used.

If a grant is made and accepted, the recipient is required to provide the endangered language fund with a short formal report of the project and to provide the fund with copies of all audio and video recordings made with elf funds, accompanying transcriptions, as well as publications resulting from materials obtained with the assistance of the grant.

FURTHER ENQUIRIES can be made to: The Endangered Language Fund 300 George Street, New Haven, CT 06511 USA
Tel: +1-203-865-6163

FAX: +1-203-865-8963
elf@haskins.yale.edu
http://www.ling.yale.edu/~elf
ELF - Request for Proposals, 2004

The Language Query Room

The Endangered Language Fund (http://www.ling.yale.edu/~elf), as part of the EMELD grant from the U.S. National Science Foundation (http://www.emeld.org), is pleased to announce the availability of The Language Query Room at:
http://www.emeld.org/queryroom

The Query Room is a part of the internet that is designed to:

- allow speakers of endangered languages a chance to post messages to each other
- allow learners of a language (especially heritage learners) to ask questions of native speakers of endangered languages
- allow linguists and other interested folk to ask questions as well

The Query Room is divided into areas devoted to various endangered languages. Each area has a host, who is typically a native speaker of the language. Anyone interested in the Language Query Room can register for free; no outside use will be made of any information registered. Then, the user can sign up for as many languages as are of interest. Registering for a language means that the user can post a query and it will be seen by everyone signed up for that language. Further, any time a new posting is made, an email will be sent to everyone on that list. If a native speaker feels like answering, then the answer will be posted and an announcement sent out. All postings are archived and will be available to users indefinitely.

Languages that have unusual orthographies will be able to make use of our pop-up keypad. This Unicode compliant keypad can adapt to many scripts, including Cyrillic, Arabic and Cherokee. Chinese and Japanese are not currently supported. The Query Room also supports audio files, allowing easy uploads and playback. The languages currently with rooms are: Ainu, Akha, Basque, Cherokee, Cree, Degema, Kumiɔi, Eastern Oromo, Hmar, Nafusi, Miami, Manx, Monguor, Navajo, Hiri Motu.

Your comments and reactions are welcome. Please write to
queryroom@emeld.org .

Native Nations, Native Voices: Albuquerque, July 2005?

Native Nations, Native Voices will be a festival to honor contemporary Native-language writers. To honor Native-language authors, Native-language writers have been invited to participate in a three-day festival. Writers will read from their works in their

own languages; national language translations will be made available to the audience at the option of each writer.

A special effort has been made to include and honor high school and college authors in Native languages, for they are the future of languages. Selected writers represent as broad a range of languages and styles as possible.

Organizer Gordon Bronitsky, PhD, with assistance from the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center of Albuquerque, NM, has scheduled the three-day event for July 2005. Taking place in Albuquerque, the festival will give voice to those Native people writing in their own language. Translations will be made available to the audience at the option of each writer

The next issue of *Talking Stick Quarterly*, published by the Amerinda Foundation in New York, comments:

> Amerinda Inc. is at the forefront of encouraging and supporting Native writers. We recently published, in conjunction with Nation Books, "Genocide of the Mind", edited by Marijo Moore. This anthology of Native writers featured mainly urban Indians, and for all accounts and purposes the writers used the English language to get their themes.
>
> Most of us were raised with English as our first language. For many of us, our Native languages are a Grandmother's whisper we barely remember. For others, there is no sound to remember, only the sadness felt when hearing what is essentially a foreign language. This loss of language is as profound and tragic as the loss of land, maybe even more so. To speak like our ancestors is to be able to think as they did
>
> Amerinda fully supports the *Native Nations, Native Voices* festival. As of this pressing, participants include those writing in such diverse languages as Cree, Otomi, Inuktitut, Greenlandic, Anishanaabe, Xokleng, Choctaw, Kawaikagamedzene (Laguna Pueblo) and many more. "

Gordon Bronitsky himself writes:

> I have been thinking about a Native language writers festival for many years and actually began planning *Native Nations, Native Voices* in October, when the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center agreed to serve as the non-profit conduit through which I could submit funding proposals Despite interest from across the United States and around

the world, the festival has not gained significant funding support with the wonderful exception of the Sheraton Old Town Hotel

I think much of the funding difficulty was best expressed in a conversation I had earlier this with people at a national arts agency about funding Native Nations, Native Voices. The person in charge of literary projects said they couldn't fund it because the writers were not writing in English or European languages; their folk culture official said they couldn't fund it because it wasn't a folk event such as a powwow or hula festival.

I have been privileged to read the works of the writers who would participate in *Native Nations, Native Voices* and I believe more strongly than ever that literature is the domain of writers, not particular languages. Native language writers have something to say to the rest of us and I have set October 8 as a funding deadline. If the festival does not attract a commitment of significant funding by that date, I will be forced to produce it elsewhere in 2005, perhaps bringing it back to New Mexico in 2006.

Details of what is currently planned for *Native Nations, Native Voices* can be obtained from Gordon Bronitsky himself at
<g.bronitsky@att.net>

PS from Gordon as of 19 Jan 2005:
> There's a funding bill in the New Mexico legislature for the festival, and I'm meeting with the Mayor of Albuquerque next week. If I can't get more funding by January 31, I'll postpone it till 2006, as there won't be enough time for the writers to get their visas.

He then lists tentative possibilities for 2006 (Hawaii or Connecticut), 2007 (Peru) and 2008 (Canada). He concludes:
> I've come to realize that it is the festival and the writers that matter; when and where is less important.

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6. Letters to the Editor

Marius Barbeau - Canada's answer to J.P. Harrington

I received Ogmios 24 and especially enjoyed the article on Mr Harrington. What a story!

In Québec and Ontario we had Marius Barbeau, working with mines and natural resources in northern lands, then turning into

a guy possessed, carrying wax recording cylinders on a bike, or bringing into town truckloads of indigenous artefacts (which now lie in the basements of the Canadian Museum of civilisations in Gatineau-Hull)!

Serena D'Agostino <serdag@citenet.net>

Visit from Suya (Kiseji) community of the Xingu Park of Brazil

Daniel Everett of University of Manchester writes:

In early June or late May of 2005 there will be a visit to the UK of two representatives of the Suya (Kiseji) community of the Xingu Park of Brazil, sponsored by the UK's Arts and Humanities' Research Board and Economic and Social Science Research Council.

There are two purposes for this trip. First, Kuiusi, the main chief of the Suya and one of the best-known leaders in the Xingu park, will be speaking about the importance of language and culture from his perspective as chief of a highly endangered group (there are only about 200 Suya left in the world). This lecture, by a dynamic and articulate spokesman from an Amazonian language will be a rare experience. The second purpose of the trip is to raise funds for a (yet-to-be-created) foundation for the preservation of the Kiseji culture and language.

(*FEL has agreed to offerits services as an appropriate registered charity to receive and transmit these funds.* - Ed.)

Although details are still being worked out, I would like to know how many departments might be interested in having Kuiusi (and his son-in-law and official interpreter, Gakomberi) speak at their university. Ideally, the audience would include not only linguists, anthropologists, etc. but also laypersons with interest or potential interest in the issue of language endangerment.

The Suya have some very well-thought out views on language and culture endangerment, intellectual property rights, and other issues that linguists and anthropologists often discuss, though at one remove from those most affected by the issues.

Aspects of Suya culture have been studied by Anthony Seeger, an ethnomusicologist at UCLA (formerly of the Smithsonian Institution). The AHRB and ESRC are sponsoring a three-year project to document and describe the Suya language.

If you believe that your university might be interested in hearing the Suya's perspective on language and cultural endangerment, could you please contact me at this email address?

Daniel L. Everett

Postgraduate Programme Director, and Professor of Phonetics & Phonology

Department of Linguistics and English Language, University of Manchester

Manchester M13 9PL UK

Fax: +44-161-275-3187

Phone: +44-161-275-3158

e-mail: dan.everett@man.ac.uk

http://ling.man.ac.uk/info/staff/DE/DEHome.html

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7. Overheard on the Web

Talking a Language Back From the Brink. Hawaiian professors band together to revive the islands' dying native tongue

On the first day of "Hawaiian Studies 474," a dozen students line up just inside a classroom doorway, open their mouths in unison, and breathe life into an ailing culture. Under a bank of fluorescent lights, young men and women wearing T-shirts and shorts chant an old Hawaiian poem asking permission to enter a place of learning.

"Kunihi ka mauna i ka la'i e," they intone without stopping for breath, voices blending in a melody that hovers around a single ancient note. Kalena Silva, a professor of Hawaiian language and studies at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, asks his students to repeat the entrance poem several times before he chants a response, ending in a drawn-out tremolo that fades to silence. Then he begins his traditional-hula class, starting with a lecture on the history of the dance.

As he asks questions, tells jokes, and keeps the students engaged, not a word of English passes his lips. This upper-level course, like others offered by the department, is taught entirely in the Hawaiian language. In the early 1970s, when Mr. Silva was in college, he could not have taken a class like this one. The University of Hawaii-Manoa, which he attended, treated Hawaiian as a foreign language, and a relatively unpopular one at that. Few professors and even fewer students had any fluency in the state's native tongue.

State law actually prohibited teachers from using Hawaiian as the classroom language in elementary and secondary school -- a holdover from the colonial rules imposed by Americans after they wrested control of the islands from the original Polynesian inhabitants in 1893. That law and the cultural dominance of the United States nearly succeeded in killing off the native language. But over the past 25 years, Mr. Silva and a trio of other professors at Hilo have given Hawaiian a second chance. Since their days together in college, Mr. Silva and his friends have made it their mission to resuscitate the language and the culture.

Along the way, they have established language-immersion schools reaching from pre-kindergarten all the way through to a master's degree. They have testified before Congress, changed state laws, and are now establishing the country's first doctoral program in indigenous languages. And they have created a small but burgeoning community of fluent Hawaiian speakers, some of whom are becoming the next generation of educators. "It's been an inspiration to a lot of other groups in the United States," says Suzanne Romaine, a professor of English at the University of Oxford, in England, who has studied threatened languages. Representatives of the Blackfoot nation and other American Indian groups have visited Hilo to study the college's programs. When the Hawaiian professors started their work, only 32 people under the age of 18 spoke the language at home. Now some 2,000 children are enrolled in Hawaiian-immersion schools, and as many as 6,000 people have some fluency in the language. "It's now secured a foothold," Ms. Romaine, who has advised the Hilo professors on their doctoral-program proposal. "I don't think anybody would have predicted that possibility 30 or 40 years ago."

The Spam Invasion
Through much of the 20th century, native Hawaiian culture was spiraling downward. American sugar- plantation owners, who had overthrown the sovereign Hawaiian nation at the turn of the 20th century, suppressed the native language so successfully that few people born after 1920 spoke Hawaiian at home. Then World War II brought thousands of American GI's to the islands, and with them came a tsunami of cultural influences that drowned out the existing heritage. Spam became a staple on Hawaiian tables. By the 1960s, many Hawaiians in the newly minted state -- which spells its name Hawai'i -- were looking outside the islands for an identity. "It wasn't a prideful thing to be Hawaiian," says Clayton Hee, a state senator who was in high school with Mr. Silva. "I'm half Chinese, and when I was younger, if anybody asked me, I would say I was Chinese-Hawaiian."

Mr. Hee and Mr. Silva attended an elite private academy called the Kamehameha School, which is financed by a bequest from a Hawaiian princess descended from King Kamehameha. The school accepted only students with native Hawaiian ancestry. Despite its namesake, though, the academy did not encourage students to study the language of Kamehameha. Mr. Hee took Spanish there. But Mr. Silva was drawn to a course in Hawaiian because he wanted to connect with his grandmother and others of her generation. "There was a lot of aloha -- warmth and love," he says. "The way they interacted was so beautiful, and I wanted to be like that."

Later, at the University of Hawaii, Mr. Silva studied the language under Larry L. Kimura, who had graduated from Kamehameha a few years ahead of him. Later another graduate of

the school, Kauanoe Kamana, arrived on the Manoa campus, on the island of O'ahu. She also became a student of Mr. Kimura's. The cadre from Kamehameha formed a lasting bond. Now, Mr. Silva, Mr. Kimura, and Ms. Kamana are all faculty members in the College of Hawaiian Language, at the state university system's Hilo campus, on the Big Island of Hawaii. A fourth professor in the college, William (Pila) Wilson, also studied Hawaiian under Mr. Kimura on the Manoa campus and later married Ms. Kamana.

Together in the 1970s, the four started a revolution by reaching toward the past. At the time, most students of Hawaiian were learning it for quiet academic purposes: so they could comb through documents from the unified Hawaiian kingdom of the 1800s and read the many Hawaiian-language newspapers that sprang up during that time. But Mr. Kimura and his students had a different, more vocal, idea. "The main contribution that they made is to get people to think this could be a viable language to serve your everyday needs," says Kerry Laiana Wong, an acting assistant professor of Hawaiian language on the Manoa campus. "They tried to make it a living language again. That's where the movement, at least in the language, really got its impetus."

Family Values
At the dinner table, it's clear that the Hilo professors have made their point. Mr. Wilson, Mr. Silva, and Ms. Kamana are so used to conversing in Hawaiian that they laugh when they hear one another talk during a meal with a mainlander. "It's really strange to speak English with these people," says Mr. Wilson, who grew up in Honolulu in a family that hailed from Kansas. Mr. Wilson was hired by Hilo in the late 1970s to set up a B.A. program in Hawaiian studies. As part of the hire, he stipulated that upper-level courses in the program would be taught entirely in Hawaiian. From classroom to bedroom, he brought those lessons home. After Mr. Wilson married Ms. Kamana, they started using Hawaiian as their primary language before the birth of their first child, in 1981. "You make the decision to do it," she explains. After rearing their son in Hawaiian at home, they faced a challenge when it was time for preschool and they couldn't find any where Hawaiian was spoken. So, out of necessity, they banded together with other families and started their own.

Along with their friends and colleagues, Ms. Kamana and Mr. Wilson set up a nonprofit corporation, the 'Aha Punana Leo (language-nest gathering), in 1983 to run Hawaiian-language preschools. They based their program on a successful one pioneered by Maori activists in New Zealand. The nonprofit group created its first preschool, on the island of Kaua'i, to serve a small community of Hawaiian speakers from the nearby island of Ni'ihau.

That privately owned island has a population of some 200 people, who, to this day, use Hawaiian as their first language. The second Punana Leo, in Hilo, attracted families like that of Mr. Wilson and Ms. Kamana, second-language learners rearing their children in Hawaiian.

When it was time for their son to enter kindergarten, Ms. Kamana and Mr. Wilson started one of those, too, without authorization from the state. (A longstanding Hawaiian law prohibited educators from teaching in the native language.) They were prepared to go to jail for their actions. But they managed to get the law changed and to establish a full elementary school. Then came a laboratory school for middle and high school, called Nawahi, which is run jointly by their college, the nonprofit corporation, and the
state department of education.

Their efforts extend far beyond the usual activities of college professors. "We had to train the teachers and change the law," says Mr. Wilson. "We had to make the curricular materials, and we even had to create words for things that hadn't existed in the lives of the older people." They brought Hawaiian into the modern world by inventing words such as huna hohoki, for neutron, and wikio, for video.

Sink or Speak
On the first day of school this year Ms. Kamana, who serves as principal of Nawahi, lined up more than 100 students to greet Mr. Silva and a visitor. The children stood at attention, arms straight down at their sides, chanting a Hawaiian poem together. Those students are but a small fraction of the nearly 2,000 children enrolled in Hawaiian-immersion programs around the state. From the modest beginning of one preschool, 20 years ago, the list has grown to include more than a dozen private preschools and 20 Hawaiian-immersion schools, all using materials developed by the Hilo college.

Many other students enter the language stream at the university level. In a section of Hawaiian 101 at Hilo, Haunani Bernardino leads her 20 students at a gallop through their first week of instruction. Every action is a teachable moment. When someone sneezes, she asks, "How do we say, 'Bless you?'" The class calls out in chorus, "E ola." The path these students are taking is much easier now than it was a generation ago, when Mr. Wilson and his cohorts faced countless roadblocks.

In the early 1980s, Mr. Wilson learned that he was breaking the law by setting up immersion schools, so he took the matter to the state capital. There he spoke with Mr. Hee, a former student, who at the time was serving in the State House of Representatives. Together they led an effort that by 1986 repealed the law. Since that success, Mr. Wilson and Mr.

Hee have joined forces many times to plow through the state bureaucracy in order to start other immersion programs, the Hawaiian-language college, and the master's-degree program.

Mr. Wilson's efforts haven't stopped at the state's borders. In 1990 he and others at the Hawaiian-language college worked with Sen. Daniel K. Inouye, a Democrat from Hawaii, to help draft the Native American Language Act, which supports efforts to preserve the indigenous languages of the United States. Last month he visited the senator in Washington, D.C., to drum up support for S 575, an amendment to the act, which would help export the language-immersion program used in Hawaii to other regions of the United States where indigenous languages are vanishing. The effort was unsuccessful this term, but Mr. Wilson will try again next session.

Campus Rivalry
Now Mr. Wilson is back in Hawaii, asking for more from the state. The Hawaiian-language college this year submitted a proposal to start a doctoral program in Hawaiian and indigenous-language studies, which would be the first of its kind anywhere in the world, says Oxford's Ms. Romaine. One branch of the program would focus on Hawaiian, while another would cater to scholars and educators from other cultures who want to learn how to revitalize or study threatened languages elsewhere. "There is a need for this because now there's a great deal of interest in the problem of language extinction and language revitalization around the world, and there isn't any place where people can go to receive training," says Ms. Romaine, who might play a role in the program.

Once again, Mr. Wilson's former student, Mr. Hee, is in a position to help. Last month he was re-elected to the State Senate, where he will serve as chairman of the higher-education committee, which oversees the University of Hawaii System. The Board of Regents met in October and approved the plan in concept, as long as there is sufficient coordination between Hilo and the flagship Manoa campus, which houses all of the university's current doctoral programs.

There is a bit of a rivalry between the two campuses when it comes to teaching the Hawaiian language. Although it has more students and more faculty members, Manoa is a step behind Hilo and is now trying to establish its own master's program in Hawaiian-language studies. Some professors at Manoa have wondered whether Hilo has sufficient qualifications to run a graduate program. They note that Mr. Silva and Mr. Wilson have the only Ph.D.'s in the faculty of the Hawaiian-language college there.

Mr. Wilson responds that it's a Catch-22 of sorts. "Since there are no graduate degrees in our area, it's a problem," he says. "We fought really strongly to ensure that the hiring in our

program would be based on actual knowledge of Hawaiian language and culture." The college can point to some recent academic successes. It has turned out four graduates with master's degrees in Hawaiian language. And Mr. Silva is editing a two-year-old journal of Hawaiian-language sources, called Ka Ho'Oilina, which is translated as *The Legacy*.

"We're finally at the graduate level, at the truly academic level," says Mr. Silva. Hawaiians have watched for decades as non-native scholars studied Hawaiian historical documents indirectly through translations. But now, students fluent in the language are starting to mine the hundreds of thousands of historical sources written in Hawaiian. "We are able to look at Hawaiian cultural material in our own language," he says. "It gives us added weight and insight into this material."

Nonetheless, the academic advances are only a small step toward the professors' main goal of bringing Hawaiian back into people's lives. "I'm looking forward to a time -- I'm not sure I'll see it in my lifetime -- when there is a large enough community of speakers" to sustain the language, says Mr. Silva, while driving on the outskirts of Hilo. Linguists estimate that it might take as many as 100,000 speakers to put Hawaiian on that solid a foundation. Only about 5,000 or 6,000 speak the language now, but schools and colleges are training more every year, says Mr. Silva as he pulls into the parking lot at Nawahi, where faculty members and students are, day by day, resurrecting the language of Kamehameha. "We're not there yet," Mr. Silva says. "But maybe in 50 years."

Text: Basics of speaking Hawaiian
Hawaiian is part of a family of eastern Polynesian languages and is closely related to the languages of Tahiti, Easter Island, and the Marquesas Islands. It also shares many similarities with the Maori language of New Zealand natives. When American missionaries arrived in Hawaii in the 1820s, they established a spelling system consisting of five vowels (A, E, I, O, U) and seven consonants (H, K, L, M, N, P, W).

Spelling:
Modern Hawaiian includes two features not present in English. An 'okino, written as a single open quotation mark, represents a glottal stop, which is made by closing off the back of the throat as in the English expression "uh-oh." A second feature, the kahako, is an accent bar over vowels that are elongated.

Pronunciation:
Vowels are pronounced separately unless they form the complex vowel sounds known as diphthongs, such as "au," which sounds like "ou," and "oi," as in "choice." Stress in Hawaiian words falls on the diphthong or on the vowel with the kahako. If a word has neither, the stress falls on the penultimate syllable.

Common mistakes:

aloha (ah-LOH-ha): Accent falls on the syllable "loh" instead of others.

Hawai'i (ha-VIE ee or ha-WHY ee): The correct spelling uses an 'okino.

Mānoa (MAH-NO-ah): The kahako over the first "a" elongates that vowel, and the second syllable is stressed.

mu'umu'u (moo oo-MOO oo): a type of dress, often mispronounced as "moo-moo."

O'ahu (o AH hoo): The glottal stop is often left out.

Hawaiian Chants:

At the start of each session of his traditional hula class, Kalena Silva has his students chant a mele or poem asking permission to enter a place of learning and then he responds with a chant.

The entrance poem begins "Kunihi ka mauna i ka la'i e." It means "The mountain Wai'ale'ale stands steep in the calm above the place called Wailua." According to Mr. Silva, director of the College of Hawaiian Language at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, "Mt. Wai'ale'ale is used here as a metaphor to express the chanter's wish to make an ascent, no matter how difficult, to a higher level of understanding and knowledge."

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Microsoft will translate Windows into Quechua and Mapudungun for Andean markets

By Luis Jaime Cisneros

LIMA, Nov 11 (AFP) - Microsoft will translate its blockbuster computer software Windows and Office into Quechua, the Inca language still spoken in six South American countries, told AFP a company representative in Lima. In the 15th-16th century Peru was the cradle of the Inca empire, which stretched from Colombia to Ecuador, Bolivia and down to northen Chile and Argentina.

Microsoft will incorporate Quechua to its two popular programs as it is the most widely spoken indigenous language in Latin America, numbering some 10 million speakers, said Marushka Chocobar, the educational liaison of its Peruvian branch.

Windows XP and Office 2003 Quechua version will be available in spring 2005.

"This is the first time that Microsoft has used an indigenous language in Latin America. Next year we will do something similiar in Chile, where we plan to translate the indigenous Chilean language Mapudungun", he explained. Chile having a highly developed informatic market, Microsoft will translate the same programs into Mapudungun, the language of Mapuches, who are the most populous ethnic group in the country, representing 8% of the total population of 15 million.

Translation to Quechua will be done in Peru, the country where the indigenous population is most highly concentrated. Some 3.2 million indigenous Peruvians speak the language.

One of the goals of the project is to promote literacy among these indigenous people most of whom are on low incomes. According to Microsoft Peru "The project's goals aren't oriented to commerce but to social improvement, aiming to bring technology to marginal sectors and fill the digital divide between the countryside and the city through new pedagogical tools".

The translation project was presented two years ago by the Peruvian branch to the US head office. The study was accepted and last Monday in Lima an agreement was signed with the Peruvian Ministry of Education. This is Microsoft's first experience of having the translation made in the country where the language is spoken rather than in the USA. According to a Microsoft representative, poor people will be able to access technology using a familiar language "by means of Internet boots", which are very popular in Peru. The Quechua project will also be used in Andean schools and universities where Peruvian Educational authorities will allow this technology.

"The multilingual version with Quechua will cost the Peruvian authorities 2.50 dollars per copy, comparing to the usual cost for a private school of 70 dollars", said a Microsoft educational spokesperson in Peru. The Quechua version is part of a global agreement signed by the Peruvian government and Microsoft in 2001, when President Alejandro Toledo visited Bill Gates' headquarters in Seattle WA.

Bambi Speaks Arapaho

From Allison Maher Admisnistrative Assistant of the Wyoming Council for the Humanities ninapb@uwyo.edu

Disney's classic "Bambi" has been released in the Arapaho language to help preserve a fading Arapaho language and culture. The Wyoming Council for the Humanities, a non-profit, state-based educational program of the National Endowment for the Humanities, has a limited number of videotapes of "Bambi" in Arapaho--the first feature length children's animated movie ever dubbed into a Native American language available for linguists, anthropologists, educators, and other interested persons.

The videotape is the result of a total immersion language project for children in grades K-3 conducted on the Wind River reservation and supported with funds from the Wyoming Council for the Humanities.

In the Arapaho version of the fifty-two year old Disney classic, the voices are provided by Arapaho children and adults who participated in the language project in the small Arapaho community of Ethete, Wyoming. Proceeds from the videotape are earmarked for Native American language preservation projects.

We currently have over 1,000 copies left and need to sell them so that more projects within the language preservation fund can be done. If you are interested in purchasing copies (copies are $20 plus $8 shipping) please contact me at the information below, or if you have any ideas on how to sell these videos please let me know. We are in need of any help, if you are willing to add our link to your website that would be absolutely wonderful. Please feel free to pass this email on to anyone who may be interested.

<http://www.uwyo.edu/wch/bambi.htm>

Our Voices - Omushkego Oral History (N. Manitoba & Ontario)

The *Our Voices* website presents the work of the Omushkego Oral History Project. The project has been devoted to the transcription, digitization, and preservation on CD-ROMs of a large portion of Louis Bird's extensive collection of audiotapes documenting the legends and oral history of the "Swampy Cree" people of the Hudson and James Bay Lowlands of northern Manitoba and Ontario. http://www.ourvoices.ca/

Alutiiq Revitalization

http://www.adn.com/alaska_ap/story/5358961p-5297521c.html

The *Anchorage Daily News* reports that an Alaska master-apprentice program aimed at preserving the Alutiiq language will be expanded with the help of a $171,000 grant from the US government. The grant will enhance a three-year Alutiiq language revitalization project at the Alutiiq Museum in Kodiak, Alaska. The program is modeled after a master-apprentice program developed by Leanne Hinton, a linguist at the University of California Berkeley, for a language preservation project involving ten native languages in California.

Records for Community Multilingualism

Richard Hudson <dick@linguistics.ucl.ac.uk> *from Linguist-list: 19 Jan 2005*

A couple of weeks ago I asked for information about communities where **everyone** speaks a lot of languages, with a view to establishing the highest number known - i.e. which community belongs in the Guinness Book of Records as having the largest shared verbal repertoire (counted in languages). This may sound a trivial query, but it's relevant to the question of the general human capacity for language learning, on the

assumption that these communities are genetically typical of all humans.

My guess was that the answer would be around five. Here are my results, with many thanks to those who took part in this pre-scientific survey.

A. Results

As you can imagine, it depends somewhat on how you define 'community'.

A1. If you mean 'group of people who live together', then the record seems to be 6. This was reported by Hilaire Valiquette who writes: I was in Wirrimanu (Balgo), Western Australia writing a dictionary of Kukatja (a dialect of Western Desert) in '91. There were five languages in the community, and people seemed to be comfortable in all of them. A sixth language was English, and people could handle that well too. My best consultant in Kukatja was a Ngardi speaker!

A2. But if you mean 'group of people based on something other than language and covering a wide social and intellectual range', then the record is 7. Sangeeta Bagga-Gupta writes: I conducted fieldwork for my doctoral thesis primarily in western India (in present day Mumbai and Pune) where I followed the work of a national NGO (the Mobile Creches) that served migrant construction workers and their families. At one point during the fieldwork phase the NGO was serving ca 20,000 children. One of the main interests of that study was literacies in everyday life. The predominantly women dominated NGO represented class structures in urban society in western India (during the late 80's early 90's) in an exceptional manner. In addition (and to my frustration) the members in the NGO spoke at least 7 languages and used at least 4 written languages in their everyday working lives in Mumbai. These included: Bambaiya hindi, Marathi, English, Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati, Konkani and Parsi. I documented and analysed the complexities and fluidity of multiliteracies in these settings where women with post graduate degrees worked together with women who had dropped out of primary grade vernacular schools. I may have a few copies of my thesis and could share this in case someone is interested.

A3.
As expected, there were also several reports of communities where everyone speaks 3, 4 or even 5 languages in one of two patterns:
A3a.
Everyone shares the same range of languages. (There are N languages such that every member speaks all these languages.)

A3b.
Everyone shares the same social system which requires multiple languages because members have to marry from an external group which speaks a different language. (For every member there are N languages that they speak - but not necessarily the same languages for all members.)

B. People and places

B1. I received messages from: Claire Bowern, Jean-Christophe Verstraete, Baden Hughes, Aone (Thomas) van Engelenhoven, Donald Osborn,Chris Beckwith, James L. Fidelholtz, Hal Schiffman, Jim Wilce, Sangeeta Bagga-Gupta, Hilaire Valiquette, Juliet Tembe, Jean-Christophe Verstraete.

B2. Communities with large shared language inventories were reported from: Northern and Western Australia, Papua New Guinea, the inland Niger delta of Mali (Mopti region), the North-West Amazon, India (and in particular, western India, in present day Mumbai and Pune), Cameroon.

http://linguistlist.org/issues/16/16-139.html

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8. Places to Go - On the Net and in the World

Kolyma Yukaghir: Online Documentation

21 Nov 2004: Irina Nikolaeva
<irina_a_nikolaeva@yahoo.co>

http://ling.uni-konstanz.de/pages/home/nikolaeva/documentation/index.html

This website is a multimedia collection of linguistic and cultural information on Kolyma Yukaghir, a highly endangered language spoken by about forty people in North-East Siberia. You will find here 52 original Yukaghir texts, both as audio recordings and in transcribed, translated and analysed form. The texts were recorded in 1980s and 1990s in the Yukaghir settlements Nelemnoe and Zyrianka. There are also dictionaries and pictures. Much use is made of cross-references and links between various kinds of data: textual, grammatical, lexicographic, auditory, and visual. The documentation was compiled in 2004 by Irina Nikolaeva, with the online implementation by Thomas Mayer.

Lakota Language Consortium

"The one road to language revitalization."

http://www.lakhota.org
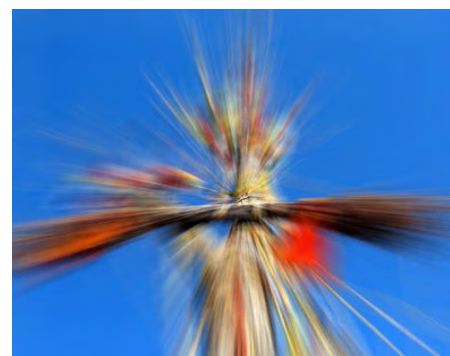
We are a nonprofit organization that develops Lakota language revitalization materials for schools in the Dakotas. Our goal is to help train a new generation of speakers through language curricula in the schools and to promote Lakota language in the communities. Thanks so much
Wil Meya, Director,
1130 N. Union #115
Bloomington, IN 47408
Tel. +1 (812) 340-3517

(Particularly striking is the dynamic map which shows the spreading annihilation of North American languages from the 17th century up to the present. As blood red uniformity spreads across the previous continental profusion of individual languages, the blood of the viewer runs cold. See:
http://www.lakhota.org/html/status.html
- Ed.)

WOCAL (World Congress of African Linguistics

The WOCAL Website is http://www.wocal.rutgers.edu

We would like to thank Prof Akinbiyi Akinlabi (who organized WOCAL 4) for creating the WOCAL website.

During WOCAL 4 at Rutgers in 2003, a Constitution was approved for the organization. One important objective of WOCAL is "To act as a forum at which scholars in African Linguistics shall meet and exchange ideas and knowledge on African Linguistics and related disciplines". This objective will be central as we meet for WOCAL 5 at Addis Ababa, the official seat of AU, the African Union.

An organizing committee for WOCAL 5 has been formed under the leadership of Professor Baye Yimam. The chosen theme of WOCAL 5 is "African Languages in the World of Globalisation". A call for papers has been circulated by the Organizing Committee, which is to be found in the website www.aau.edu.et/linguistics

Unfortunately this site has not been easily accessible to colleagues. Details may appear soon on the WOCAL website.

It is the hope of the Standing Committee of WOCAL that as many of us as possible will participate in the next Congress, particularly those in the African universities, as it will be relatively less costly in terms of air transport. As it was the case in the previous WOCAL gatherings, the Organising Committee has endeavoured to secure some sponsorships for a few participants. But these opportunities, if ever they become available, will be highly limited. It is therefore advisable that we all start early to solicit sponsorship as well as submit the relevant abstracts.

Herman M. Batibo
<BATIBOHM@mopipi.ub.bw>   President, Standing Committee of WOCAL

Vanishing Voices: the Film

Ironbound Fims is currently producing a TV documentary on endangered languages for PBS (Public Broadcasting System) in the USA. In its own words "*Vanishing Voices* is America's first look at how languages become endangered, and the awesome task of recording, archiving, and returning them to use." The producer is Seth Kramer, who in 2002 produced America Rebuilds: a Year at Ground Zero, also for PBS.

The film strongly features David Harrison and Greg Anderson's work to document Chulym in Siberia. A number of still pictures, and an animated trailer for the film itself, can be found at:

www.ironboundfilms.com/ironsinthefire.html

Languages of Saskatchewan

The Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre's website *Our Languages* (http://www.sicc.sk.ca/heritage/sils/ourlanguages/index.html) presents online resources related to Cree, Dene, Dakota, Nakota, Lakota, Nakawe.

Courses on Less Commonly Taught Languages

The University of Minnesota's Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) offers a database of course offerings for less commonly taught languages on their website:
http://carla.acad.umn.edu/LCTL/access.html

Technology-Enhanced Language Revitalization @ the University of Arizona

http://projects.ltc.arizona.edu/gates/TELR.html a web-site for Technology-Enhanced Language Revitalization @ the University of Arizona establishes an informational resource for community language specialists, advocates, and linguists centering on the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in language revitalization.

qe'ciyéew'yew', (thank you)

Phil Cash Cash (Cayuse/Nez Perce)
Ph.D. in the Joint Program in Anthropology and Linguistics
University of Arizona, Tucson

cashcash@u.arizona.edu
http://www.u.arizona.edu/~cashcash

Hansson Übersetzungen Updated to Include Catalan and Sorbian

The website for Hansson Übersetzungen GmbH (www.hansson.de) has been updated recently and now also contains a short presentation in the following languages:

Catalan, Czech, Hindi, Hungarian, Slovak, Sorbian.

The last is a minority language in Eastern Germany.

Frontier Language Institute Launches Website

The Frontier Language Institute (FLI) has launched its website
http://www.fli-online.org

The Frontier Language Institute is a training and resource center working to enable the language communities of northern Pakistan to preserve and promote their mother tongues. For more information contact info@fli-online.org

Patua of Macao

Wikepedia, an online free content encyclopedia collaboratively written by authors from around the globe, now includes an article on Patua or Macaista Chapado, a Creole language based on Portuguese, spoken in Macao on the coast of southern China.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patu%E1

Inuit Language (Inuktitut) with a new home on Net

BBC NEWS
http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/technology/3975645.stm

Inuktitut speakers will soon be able to have their say online as the Canadian aboriginal language goes on the web. Browser settings on normal computers have not supported the language to date, but attavik.net has changed that. It provides a content management system that allows native speakers to write, manage documents and offer online payments in the Inuit language. It could prove a vital tool to keep the language alive in one of the most remote communities on earth.

Vital link

Inuktitut is spoken by the Inuit people living in Nunavut, northern Canada, which is an area two to three times the size of France, as well as Alaska. An historic agreement signed with the Canadian government in 1999 allowed the communities living there independence to run their land how they chose. In this long-established society, the modern medium of the internet is proving a breath of fresh air. "There are 25 settlements, 30,000 people and no roads. It is a huge area of land and the internet is tailor-made for these groups," said Oliver Zielke, the chief executive of Web Networks, a non-profit organisation based in Canada which provides web services for socially committed groups. Web Networks worked with the Piruvik Centre of Iqualuit, the capital of Nunavut, to develop the system.

"It was a big challenge to give the Inuit and Inuktitut speakers the ability to have web pages published in their native language," said Mr Zielke. "A lot of people have older computers and limited ability to use technology," he added. With high-speed satellite net access planned for the region and the website providing the easy-to-use tools to make publishing easy, that is about to change. "The worldwide web can seem like a foreign place to these people but now they can be players in that world. The internet will eventually be one of the basic tools that the Inuit people use," predicted Mr Zielke.

The technology behind attavik.net can be used for other syllabic languages such as Cree, Oji-cree and Korean. The government of Nunavut is committed to making Inuktitut its working language. "This type of development puts that goal within reach," said Eva Aariak, Languages Commissioner for Nunavut.

Comment by Trond Trosterud:
The web-site Mr Zielke talks about is http://attavik.ca/en_index.html Here, all Inuktitut sentences are published as *pictures* (as you can see for yourselves if you look at the source code or if you try to copy the Inuktitut text over into another program). The preferred way of publishing text is, as Mr Zielke of course knows, as strings of bytes as the Nunavut government publishes its own Inuktitut-language web pages:
http://www.gov.nu.ca/Nunavut/Inuktitut/

If you cannot read the Inuktitut of the latter link, then you have what in the quote above is called a "normal computer", or equivalently, an "older computer". If you, as I, have a more modern computer, and above all, a more modern browser (less than 4-5 years old), with the capability of choosing UTF-8 as "Text Encoding" (and a large enough Unicode font), then you are able to read the www.gov.nu.ca site. If you belong to this latter group, than the attavik.net project is just harmful (text as pictures is not searchable). If you, on the other hand, have an older computer / software, without the possibility of

using Unicode (and by all means, many do), then the attavik.net initiative is very important, and very welcome indeed. This is thus not a critique of attavik.net (they do an important job, indeed), but of BBC, who presents this as the future of Inuktitut computing (it is not).

The general lesson to be taught here (in addition to not believing what you read in the media), is that in this transition period, languages need both forward- and backward-looking technology, but that the only way of securing a safe place in the digital world for a language is to store it as Unicode text. Fortunately, the Nunavut government itself is safely placed in the future solution already so that forthcoming generations may access today's digital archives.

Trond Trosterud
Institutt for språkvitskap, Det humanistiske fakultet
Universitetet i Tromsø

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9. Forthcoming Meetings

Conference on Endangered Languages and Cultures of Native America, 8-9 April 2005

The Conference on Endangered Languages and Cultures of Native America (1st annual CELCNA meeting) will be held April 8-9, 2005, on the University of Utah campus in Salt Lake City, Utah. The sponsors of this conference are: (1) Center for American Indian Languages (CAIL), University of Utah, (2) Department of Anthropology, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, (3) Department of Linguistics, University of Utah and (4) College of Humanities, University of Utah. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Leanne Hinton (Chair, Dept of Linguistics, University of California, Berkeley). Additional information is available online

http://hum.utah.edu/linguistics/pdfdocs/CELC
NAcall.pdf

Address enquiries for further information to:
Phatmandu7@aol.com (Jen Mitchell) or julialice@yahoo.com (Julia Pratt)

Less Commonly Taught Languages, 15-17April 2005

The National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages is holding its Eighth National Conference in Madison, Wisconsin on April 15-17, 2005. The theme is "The Year of Languages Expanding the Presence of Less Commonly Taught Languages." More information is available online:
http://www.councilnet.org/conf/conf2005/200
5-announce.htm

Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Symposium, 2-5 June 2005

The 12th Annual Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Symposium, "Weaving Language and Culture Together," hosted by the First Peoples' Cultural Foundation and The University of Victoria, will be held June 2-5, 2005 in Victoria, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada. Applications for presentations and workshops are due by 30 March 2005. Consult the website for details:

http://www.fpcf.ca/SILS2005/

Second International Vernacular Colloquium (Puebla, Mexico) 26 – 29 Oct. 2005

Please send a short VITA and an Abstract of a paper proposed for presentation at the Second International Vernacular Colloquium, organized by the Universidad de las Americas in Puebla, Puebla, Mexico, from October 26-October 29, 2005. This call for papers (in Spanish or English) is specifically for the section of the Colloquium on Language and Culture. For details, please consult the website of the upcoming conference:
        www.ipsonet.org/vernacular/2005

Language and Culture are increasingly intertwined both domestically and in the global arena, and they are assuming greater political importance. There is an important cooperative dimension to this nexus, however, assertion of linguistic and cultural rights is often a source of tension. Paper proposals are welcomed that approach the language/culture relationship from either side and which have either a domestic or international emphasis. Please send your short VITA and paper abstract to the Vice President of the Colloquium in charge of organizing panels for the section on 'Language and Culture':

Professor Michael Morris
Department of Political Science
Brackett Hall 232, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina 29634-1354, USA

morrism@clemson.edu
FAX: +1-864-656-0690

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10. Recent Publications

Note:
Items marked with an asterisk (*) are available for review by readers. Write to the editor to request a copy.

The Non-Pama-Nyungan languages of northern Australia: Comparative studies of the continent's most linguistically complex region - Nicholas Evans (ed.)

(A joint publication of the ANU Centre for Research on Language Change and Pacific Linguistics)

PL 552
The present volume brings together detailed comparative work on a number of non-Pama-Nyungan languages of Northern Australia, and is the first book-length study to span this linguistically complex region, containing as it does perhaps 90% of Australiaís linguo-genetic diversity in an eighth of its land area. Many papers originated at a workshop held at the 1989 Australian Linguistics Society conference at Monash University, but several have been written specially for this volume. It has been said that no language changes faster than a proto-language, and in the intervening period a great deal of new descriptive data on non-Pama-Nyungan languages has accumulated, as well as careful sifting of complex data, which has led many of the authors to completely revise or develop their arguments since the original workshop. Hence, the delay in the appearance of the volume reflects some major shifts in position on the part of some authors.

The introduction the main issues in comparative non-Pama-Nyungan studies, and forms a state-of-the-art survey of the classification of non-Pama-Nyungan languages, which have undergone substantial changes over recent decades. It also consider the main issues in their subgrouping, and their relation to the Pama-Nyungan languages. The second to fourth sections then looks at issues of subgrouping, reconstruction and areal influence that pertain to particular non-Pama-Nyungan families or subregions. The final sections returns to the issue of whether one can carry the process of reconstruction back to deeper levels than the families themselves, that is back to some level from which all or most non-Pama-Nyungan families are descended. Overall, the volume illustrates that - despite recent claims by some authors - the comparative method can be successfully applied to Australian languages. It also furnishes a number of detailed and intricate studies of morphological reconstruction applied to complex paradigms.
2003 ISBN 0 85883 538 X x + 513 pp
Australia   A$99.00   (inc.   GST)
International A$90.00

Nyangumarta: A language of the Pilbara region of Western Australia - Janet Catherine Sharp

PL 556
This book is a description of the Nyangumarta language spoken by several hundred marrngu 'people' in the north-west of Western Australia. The description is based on material which the author collected between 1983 and 1997. The book includes descriptions of the phonology, the morphology and word classes including the pronominal systems. It also includes detailed descriptions of Nyangumarta main and complex clauses.

Nyangumarta is of general typological interest. There are many reasons for this. Firstly, the status of word which emerges necessarily in the description of Nyangumarta verbal morphology contributes to the notion of there being a mismatch between what is regarded as a phonological word and what is regarded as a grammatical word in some languages. In Nyangumarta the paradigms of verbal pronouns illustrate a division between morphemes which are phonologically bound and those which are phonologically free; although both sets are grammatically bound to the verb. To add to this there is a class of derivational verbs which appear to be divided according to their phonological/grammatical word status. The inchoative and stative verbs are analysed as having phonological word status whereas the monosyllabic derivational verbs such as the affective and causative and the semantically 'empty' -pi are analysed as bound verbalisers.

The phonological system of Nyangumarta is of interest because its productive system of vowel assimilation within the verbal morphology is one of the most elaborate of all the Australian languages.

2003 ISBN 0 85883 558 4 xix + 262 pp
Australia A$119.90 (inc. GST) International A$109.00

The Duugidjawu language of southeast Queensland: Grammar, texts and vocabulary- Suzanne Kite and Stephen Wurm
PL 553

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, before he began work on the languages of New Guinea, Stephen Wurm undertook considerable fieldwork on languages of northern New South Wales and southern Queensland. His fullest materials were on Duugidjawu, spoken just to the northwest of Brisbane, and were recorded between 1955 and 1964.

Wurm was generous in making his materials available to selected researchers, and in 1997, an arrangement was made with Wurm for Suzanne Kite to write an MA thesis analysing these materials. These consisted of tapes and transcriptions, with Wurm's translations of these in his own shorthand, which only he could read. When he was in Canberra, Wurm would spend one or two afternoons each week going over these materials with Kite, explaining the shorthand and reviving his knowledge of the language. He had never written a draft grammar of Duugidjawu, but effectively had one in his head. It was hard to remember things exactly after a period of almost forty years and Kite sometimes mediated between what was on the tapes and Wurm's explications during their collaboration.Stephen Wurm passed away in late 2001, after the thesis had been approved but before this work could be published.

This is a slightly revised version of Kite's thesis. It comprises an invaluable record of the language of the Duuidjawu people, and through this of their traditions, customs and laws. It is the only substantial record of a language which differs in various respects

from prototypical non-prefixing Australian languages.It has five vowels and a fair number of monosyllabic words. Pronouns and nouns referring to humans or to dogs have distinct case forms. Following the grammar sketch are all the texts recorded by Wurm and a full vocabulary and thesaurus. All Wurm's information was provided by Willie McKenzie, believed to be about eighty years old in October 1955. He died in 1965.

2004 ISBN 0 85883 550 9 xiii + 298 pp
Australia A$88.00 (inc. GST) International A$88.00

The Bunganditj (Buwandik) language of the Mount Gambier Region - Barry Blake
PL 549

A single language appears to have been spoken in a triangle that stretched from somewhere north of Lacepede Bay on the coast of South Australia across to Bordertown on the Victorian border and south to the coast where the mouth of the Glenelg in far western Victoria formed the south-eastern corner. A consideration of various references indicates clearly that the territory of the Buwandik, alternatively Bunganditj, extended to the mouth of the Glenelg and further north it extended to Coleraine and perhaps Balmoral.

Practically all our data comes from old sources. There are twelve sources of vocabulary for the language and two direct sources of grammatical information on the dialect spoken by the Booandik or Bunganditj. One source for the grammar is a sketch of three pages by D.S. Stewart; the other is a slightly longer sketch by R.H. Mathews, which exists in two forms, manuscript and published. Some further grammatical information can be obtained from the 'Mount Gambier' sentences in William Thomas' Dialogues in six dialects (details below), and a few further scraps can be gleaned from the word lists, specially from the one by Stewart which accompanies his grammatical sketch.

PL 549, ISBN (Paperback): ISBN 0 85883 495 2
Australia A$39.60 (inc. GST), Overseas A$36.00

I'saka: A sketch grammar of a language of north-central New Guinea - Mark Donohue and Lila San Roque
PL 554

I'saka, the language of 600-plus residents of Krisa village in north-central New Guinea, is a previously undescribed language of the Macro-Skou family, which spreads across the north coast of New Guinea from the Skou villages in the west to Sissano lagoon in the east. I'saka represents the earliest split from the protofamily, and so represents a valuable source of data for comparative work in northern New Guinea. The language is endangered, with many of the younger

generation switching to Tok Pisin as their language of everyday communication, but I'saka remains the language of ethnic identity and is seen as emblematic of the uniqueness of the I'saka people.

The grammar of I'saka is interesting for the general linguist as well as for the New Guinea specialist, since it displays many features, some possibly unique, which will prove challenging for modern theoretical and typological linguistics. Two independent suprasegmental tiers for tone and nasality, and a lack of contrastive segmental nasals, are rare phonological phenomena. Morphologically, the language displays a paradigm of agreement morphemes that agree with non-core arguments, while leaving, in most cases, the object of a transitive clause unmarked on the verb. Special agreement marking for questioned subjects is also an unusual feature of I'saka.

This sketch includes discussion of the historical relationship between I'saka and other languages in the Macro-Skou family, as well as issues of language endangerment, language maintenance, and spheres of language use. There is also a word list and a selection of short texts illustrating many of the points covered in the grammatical description.

2004 ISBN 0 85883 554 4 xvii + 131 pp
Australia A$39.60 (inc. GST) International A$36.00

Tibeto-Burman languages of Nepal: Manange and Sherpa - Carol Genetti (editor)
PL 557

The country of Nepal is home to over one hundred distinct languages from four language families. The current volume provides grammars, glossaries and texts for two of these languages: Manange, of the Tamangic branch of the Tibeto-Burman language family, and Sherpa, of the Tibetan (Bodish) branch. Each grammar provides a full description of the phonology, morphology and syntax of the language, covering both the structural and functional properties of each. The glossaries contain lists of basic vocabulary, alternate forms, and comparisons with forms given in previous literature. The short texts provide insights into how speakers weave linguistic structures to produce fluent discourse.

2004 ISBN 0 85883 535 5 xiv + 324 pp
In Australia $99.00 (inc. GST) International $90.00

Orders may be placed by mail, e-mail or telephone with:
Publishing, Imaging and Cartographic Services (PICS) , Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies , The Australian National University , Canberra ACT 0200 Australia

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For our catalogue and other materials, see:

http://pacling.anu.edu.au   (under construction)

Anne-Marie de Mejia ed., Bilingual Education in South America

Multilingual Matters, 2005

Hbk: ISBN: 1853598194 pp 140,
U.K. £ 29.95, U.S. $ 54.95

This book presents a vision of bilingual education in six South American nations: three Andean countries, Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia, and three 'Southern Cone' countries, Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay. It provides an
integrated perspective, including work carried out in majority as well as minority language contexts, referring to developments in the fields of indigenous, Deaf, and international bilingual and multilingual provision.

http://www.multilingual-matters.com/multi/display.asp?isb=185359819
4

11. Book Reviews

(both reviewed by the editor, Nicholas Ostler)

Review of Robert A. Scebold: Central Tagbanwa - a Philippine Language on the Brink of Extinction
Manila: SIL 2003; ISBN 971-780-014-6

This is a sketch grammar of Tagbanwa, an Austronesian language spoken in the north-west of the island of Palawan in the western Philippines. The speakers live in the Taytay and San Vicente municipalities. The book is based on Scebold's field work in Binga, a village more or less in the centre of this area, over two years from May 1991.

As an approach to writing this kind of work, it is interesting in that it begins with a sociolinguistic assessment of the past and current vitality of the speaker-community. Scebold gives case histories of the language abilities of members of three families, and gives a fair number of statistics.

It is unsurprising that Tagbanwa is heavily threatened, when one reads of the changes in relative population figures. In the whole of Palawan Island, the population, which stood at 6,200 in 1903 (all speakers of Tagbanwa and the closely related Palawanon), grew to 56,000 in 1948, and has now reached 600,000. The growth has come exclusively from settlers from eleswhere in the Philippines, who came to farm after the Second World War when development of anti-malarial drugs had made it easier for outsiders to survive in the region. Tagbanwa traditions, in any case weakened by the short-lived Japanese invasion, had been to use low-intensity methods of slash-and-burn farming.

Now the few remaining Tagbanwa (under 1,000 in number) are of mixed parentage and highly bilingual, dominant in the local trade language Cuyunon (a Bisayan language with some 123,000 speakers) and Tagalog (the Philippine national language with 17 million). Scebold believes that the language is moribund given the population dynamics and the language attitudes he discovers, although at present there is still language use in all generations.

After 26 pages of history and sociolinguistic description, the book devotes 13 pages to phonology and 52 to grammar. It has a vocabulary with about 2400 head-words and some phrasal examples, and an English index to it. Finally, it has three texts, which are short narratives that give some cultural colour, "The Tagbanwa Man who Found Gold", "The Boy that was Gotten by a Crocodile", and a conversation about ashfall from Mt Pinatubo, a volcano in Luzon island that erupted in 1991. A taste of the language from this last:

- Kita kuno mag*isturia*n kaya paglïpak ka Pinatubo; ay ya *gusto* niya matawanan ing ono ya damdamin o isipan ka mga tao kaya pagtïgpa ka avo. (He says we are to tell of the past eruption of Mt Pinatubo; he wants to know what the feelings or thoughts of the people were back when the ash fell.)

- *Isus*! ay *aburido* ya mga tao ay *disti* liti maka inta a *oras* a nangyari. (Wow! People were anxious about it from the very time it happened.)

- Ako ing ka vahay, alam ko no talaha ya hula ka *Biblia*. (As for me in this matter, I know that the prophecy of the Bible is true.)

Tagbanwa phonology is interesting in having received a far greater number of Spanish loans (italicized above) than Tagalog: the result has been a separate "phonology within the phonology" for this part of the lexis. The morphology is highly inflected apparently on an agglutinative basis, but with copious morphophonemic processes, e.g. of infixation and metathesis. The clausal grammar is expounded on a straightforward semantic basis (e.g. Conjunction/Addition, Temporal Relations, Condition-Consequence). While not a "teach-yourself" manual, this is the kind of exposition that would make it relatively easy for outsiders to quickly grasp the basics of expression in the language, or perhaps for a linguist to reorganize as a pedagogical grammar. As such, it does not concentrate on any details of language relationships, or theoretical properties of the grammar.

There are four pages of bibliography, which range over the sociolinguistics of education and language survival, the analysis of related languages, and fields of theoretical linguistics.

The work should serve as a useful document of the language (though Scebold, especially in his vocabulary, is quick to point out its incompleteness) as well as a well-informed description of what the last stages of a language-endangerment situation look like, when the incoming languages are just the neighbours, not globalized mega-languages.

Review of G. Tucker Childs: An Introduction to African Languages.
Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins 2003
ISBN 9027226067 (Europe), 1588114228 (USA) Includes CD-ROM with recordings illustrate phonetics (including talking drums) and sociolinguistics.

This book can be seen as an attempt to break out of the constraints that usually surround linguistics, by focusing on a geographical (and cultural) area - namely Africa - but finding in it material for a survey of the full range of linguistic phenomena, from language classification through phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantic, to historical and typological issues and finally sociolinguistics. In this, the author offends the dictum of P.E.H. Hair that he quotes at the outset (p. 14):"The curse of African studies is that it is limited to Africa." But one has to admit that the effect is very refreshing.

Africa has indeed been the victim of 19th-century attitudes which characterized it as "The Dark Continent", with long-term effects in hiding its linguistic lights under a capacious bushel. I say this with feeling, having just come to the end of my own attempt at a global history of language spread[4] but without ever having encountered even a hint of the interesting linguistic effects of the expansion of Mande in western Africa, which are outlined in pp. 195-202 here. As Childs points out, "it shows what effects an empire can have even well after it has collapsed." Plenty of scope for global comparisons there.

Childs' accounts are particularly interesting because he is able to weave concrete linguistic details of phonology and

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4 Nicholas Ostler: *Empires of the Word - a Language History of the World*, HarperCollins 2005

morphology into his sociolinguistic stories, making it much clearer that the linguist and the historian (or sociologist) can - and must - be friends: it may be a well-known story in Africanist circles, but as an outsider I was fascinated by his discussion of the social basis for the borrowing of click phonemes across the linguistic divide from San into Bantu languages, in the pre-history of southern Africa (pp. 190-193): what, after all, do you expect to happen when Bantu invaders are gathering San wives, and there is *hlonipha*, a widespread taboo on young wives using syllables from their husband's names? What could be an easier stratagem than to mispronounce them with phones guaranteed not to be in the language? (And there is even a tantalizing suggestion that the causation may have run in reverse, with *hlonipha* arising as an extension of the desirably submissive behavour of San wives, then to be required of all wives.)

The book as a whole is demonstrates how much can be learnt about human diversity from the ancient traits preserved in language traditions. Childs writes engagingly, and appears to have an unerring instinct for telling detail, the "neat fact" which illuminates a lesson, even if - perhaps especially if - a theoretical explanation is hard to provide.

"Endangered languages" do not appear as such in the index: but students will be motivated world-wide to look for the treasures that any language may turn up, if they absorb just a little of this work, and its expansive and imaginative view of Africa's linguistic plenty.

12. Valedictory

Samuel Billison: Navajo Codetalker
7 December, 2004 The Guardian, London

Samuel Billison, who has died at Window Rock, Arizona, at an age believed to be 78, took part in one of the second world war's oddest enterprises, and went on to earn a PhD. He was one of the small band of Navajo "code talkers", young men who used their complex language to send and receive messages that were indecipherable to the enemy.

He was born on the earth floor of a poor hut in the Navajo nation in the western American desert. His parents expected him to be a shepherd, but from childhood he had an ambition to join the United States Marines, and he did so the day he graduated from high school in 1943. Soon he found himself recruited to the code talkers.

In 1942 the US military had been alarmed at the speed with which Japanese cryptographers broke their codes. An engineer, Philip Johnston, had a brilliant idea. His parents were missionaries, and he had grown up on Navajo land and knew the language. It was unwritten and rarely spoken outside the reservation; it also had infinite subtleties that even native speakers found difficult. "If you say something wrong, you might be cussing out your father-in-law," Billison explained in the scores of postwar speeches he gave about the code talkers.

Marine officers at Camp Pendleton, California, recruited 29 Navajos aged 16-18 and told them to invent a code. They gave ships the Navajo names of fish; vehicles were animals and aircraft were birds. For a tank they used the word for a turtle; amphibious craft were called frogs. The letters in place names and words that did not have Navajo equivalents were spelled out in Navajo alphabetical form, with three choices to avoid repetition.

When officials worried that the code was too cumbersome, a trial demonstrated that the code talkers could encrypt, transmit by phone or field radio and decipher a message in under three minutes. It took orthodox decoders more than two hours to do the job.

The Japanese never understood the Navajo code, although eventually there were 421 talkers; two were killed in action and each always had a marine bodyguard under orders to shoot them if they were captured, in case they might break under torture. That awful eventuality never happened.

Billison was ordered with five other Navajos to the vital but terrible battle of Iwo Jima in 1945. They transmitted more than 800 messages without error in a crucial 48 hours of the 36-day action on the Pacific island, in which 6,819 US marines and more than 20,000 Japanese died.

"Were it not for the Navajos," said Billison's commander Major Howard Connor, signal officer of the 5th marine division, "the marines would never have taken Iwo Jima." Billison liked to remind Americans that the code was devised by "a bunch of 16-year-old kids who were sheep herders".

The full story of the Navajos and their contribution to the war remained secret until 1968; three years later Billison helped to form the Navajo Codetalkers Association and was its president for several years. By that time he had gone to college on the GI Bill, and gained his doctorate in education at the University of New Mexico at Albuquerque. He became a teacher and later a school principal. He served for years on the Navajo Nation Council and under the Bureau of Indian Affairs he helped to reorganise the reservation's education system.

The extraordinary story of the code talkers was featured in scores of books, documentary films and articles, in most of which Billison was usually quoted. Then he was invited to become the consultant to the Hollywood movie, Windtalkers (2002), about the group.

It starred Adam Beach as a code talker, to the disappointment of Billison, who had hoped the part would go to an authentic Navajo; Nicolas Cage played his battle-fatigued minder. It was not a big box-office success, but Billison gamely described it as "a great war picture".

The year that it was released, Congress presented each of the five survivors of the original 29 code talkers with a gold Medal of Honour. Billison and other survivors received a silver medal. Fewer than 100 of the code talkers are still alive.

Kay Williamson

Roger Blench writes:
It with the greatest regret that I have to announce the death of Kay Williamson, (born Ruth Margaret Williamson), my friend and colleague of quarter-century, in Brazil on the 2nd of January, 2005. She was recovering from a major operation in November and decided to go to Brazil to attend the wedding of a niece. She had just finished the wedding and was about to go home when she fell down and died instantly.

Kay did an enormous amount for Endangered Languages even before they were fashionable. Her contributions to African linguistics will be well-known to many readers of Ogmios. A short vita together with a preliminary list of her publications can be found at:
http://homepage.ntlworld.com/roger_blench/Kay%20Williamson%20life%20RMB.htm
For an obituary see:
http://homepage.ntlworld.com/roger_blench/Kay%20Williamson%20life%20RMB.htm

Kay Williamson left four major unpublished manuscripts which should be brought to press. These are:
- Ijọ dictionaryI
- Comparative Ijoid
- Igbo dictionary
- Comparative Igboid

I am actively seeking suggestions both as to likely publishers and resources to bring the manuscripts into publishable form.

Roger Blench
Mallam Dendo, 8, Guest Road, Cambridge CB1 2AL, UK, Tel/Fax +44-(0)1223-560687
Email: r.blench@odi.org.uk

A View of FEL VIII in Session at Institut d'Estudis Catalans

FEL VIII: Conference Group Photograph

Foundation for Endangered Languages

Manifesto

1.   Preamble

1.1.   The Present Situation

At this point in human history, most human languages are spoken by exceedingly few people. And that majority, the majority of languages, is about to vanish.

The most authoritative source on the languages of the world (Ethnologue, Grimes 1996) lists just over 6,500 living languages. Population figures are available for just over 6,000 of them (or 92%). Of these 6,000, it may be noted that:
- 52% are spoken by fewer than 10,000 people;
- 28% by fewer than 1,000; and
- 83% are restricted to single countries, and so are particularly exposed to the policies of a single government.

At the other end of the scale, 10 major languages, each spoken by over 109 million people, are the mother tongues of almost half (49%) of the world's population.

More important than this snapshot of proportions and populations is the outlook for survival of the languages we have. Hard comparable data here are scarce or absent, often because of the sheer variety of the human condition: a small community, isolated or bilingual, may continue for centuries to speak a unique language, while in another place a populous language may for social or political reasons die out in little more than a generation. Another reason is that the period in which records have been kept is too short to document a trend: e.g. the Ethnologue has been issued only since 1951. However, it is difficult to imagine many communities sustaining serious daily use of a language for even a generation with fewer than 100 speakers: yet at least 10% of the world's living languages are now in this position.

Some of the forces which make for language loss are clear: the impacts of urbanization, Westernization and global communications grow daily, all serving to diminish the self-sufficiency and self-confidence of small and traditional communities. Discriminatory policies, and population movments also take their toll of languages. In our era, the preponderance of tiny language communities means that the majority of the world's languages are vulnerable not just to decline but to extinction.

1.2.   The Likely Prospect

There is agreement among linguists who have considered the situation that over half of the world's languages are moribund, i.e. not effectively being passed on to the next generation. We and our children, then, live at the point in history where, within perhaps two generations, most languages in the world will die out.

This mass extinction of languages may not appear immediately life-threatening. Some will feel that a reduction in numbers of languages will ease communication, and perhaps help build nations, even global solidarity. But it has been well pointed out that the success of humanity in colonizing the planet has been due to our ability to develop cultures suited for survival in a variety of environments. These cultures have everywhere been transmitted by languages, in oral traditions and latterly in written literatures. So when language transmission itself breaks down, especially before the advent of literacy in a culture, there is always a large loss of inherited knowledge.

Valued or not, that knowledge is lost, and humanity is the poorer. Along with it may go a large part of the pride and self-identity of the community of former speakers.

And there is another kind of loss, of a different type of knowledge. As each language dies, science, in linguistics, anthropology, prehistory and psychology, loses one more precious source of data, one more of the diverse and unique ways that the human mind can express itself through a language's structure and vocabulary.

We cannot now assess the full effect of the massive simplification of the world's linguistic diversity now occurring. But language loss, when it occurs, is sheer loss, irreversible and not in itself creative. Speakers of an endangered language may well resist the extinction of their traditions, and of their linguistic identity. They have every right to do so. And we, as scientists, or concerned human beings, will applaud them in trying to preserve part of the diversity which is one of our greatest strengths and treasures.

1.3.   The Need for an Organization

We cannot stem the global forces which are at the root of language decline and loss. But we can work to lessen the ignorance which sees language loss as inevitable when it is not, and does not properly value all that will go when a language itself vanishes.

We can work to see technological developments, such as computing and telecommunications, used to support small communities and their traditions rather than to supplant them.

And we can work to lessen the damage:

- by recording as much as possible of the languages of communities which seem to be in terminal decline;
- by emphasizing particular benefits of the diversity still remaining; and
- by promoting literacy and language maintenance programmes, to increase the strength and morale of the users of languages in danger.

In order to further these aims, there is a need for an autonomous international organization which is not constrained or influenced by matters of race, politics, gender or religion. This organization will recognise in language issues the principles of self-determination, and group and individual rights. It will pay due regard to economic, social, cultural, community and humanitarian considerations. Although it may work with any international, regional or local Authority, it will retain its independence throughout. Membership will be open to those in all walks of life.

2.   Aims and Objectives

The Foundation for Endangered Languages exists to support, enable and assist the documentation, protection and promotion of endangered languages. In order to do this, it aims:-

(i) To raise awareness of endangered languages, both inside and outside the communities where they are spoken, through all channels and media;

(ii) To support the use of endangered languages in all contexts: at home, in education, in the media, and in social, cultural and economic life;

(iii) To monitor linguistic policies and practices, and to seek to influence the appropriate authorities where necessary;

(iv) To support the documentation of endangered languages, by offering financial assistance, training, or facilities for the publication of results;

(v) To collect together and make available information of use in the preservation of endangered languages;

(vi) To disseminate information on all of the above activities as widely as possible.

Membership in the Foundation is open to all. If you need an application form, please contact the Editor at the address on page 2 above.