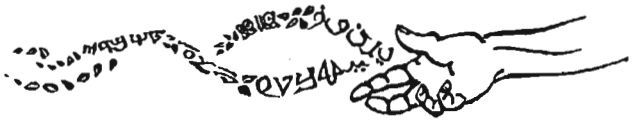
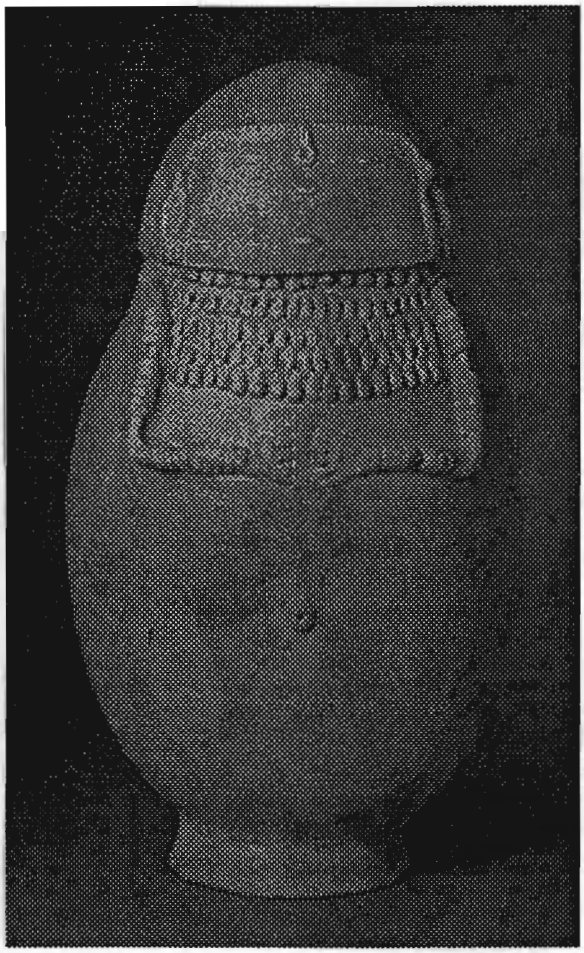
FOUNDATION FOR ENDANGERED LANGUAGES



OGMIOS



This issue of Ogmios features some good news about the **Chimila** people of Northern Colombia. (Frank Seifart's report on p. 8.) To give some historical background to their civilization, we show here an artefact from their ancient history. Bringing new life out of death, it stands well for the rebirth of the Chimila language in a regenerated community.

This is a Burial Urn, dated between 500 B.C. - A.D. 100. It is 60 cm high, with a 30 cm diameter. It is an instance of the Northern Andean practice known as "secondary burial," in which the bones and gold jewelry of the deceased were reburied in a large urn on the anniversary of the individual's death. Its size is a necessity to contain the leg bones but demonstrates considerable ceramic skill: it is hard to bring off so large a vessel when building by hand. Apparently, only the permanent parts of the body were needed to "grow" a new one after death; bones had to be buried, as if they were seeds being planted.

To contain these precious seeds of life was an image of fertility, here an egglike vessel representing a pregnant female. The jewelry marks her as a woman, and her distended navel and overall shape indicate pregnancy. The female body nurtures the bone/seeds for rebirth in an endlessly repeating cycle.

The urn is held at the Michael C. Carlos Museum of Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, (gift of William C. and Carol W. Thibadeau) and we gratefully acknowledge use of their photograph and documentation here.
www.cc.emory.edu/CARLOS/americas8.html

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1. Editorial Review

Kazuto Matsumura (ed.)
Studies in Endangered Languages
Tokyo: Hituzi Syobo Publishing, 1998, 254 pp.[1]

One of the most rewarding aspects of a serious interest in the smaller language communities of the world is their inveterate diversity. In journals like Ogmios, they are brought together, because they share some fairly brute problems: diminishing numbers, little power to express and develop their traditions, possible cultural extinction. But that is where the similarities end. When it comes to describing their situations, or suggesting what they or others can do to improve matters, history and cultural background come to the fore. In some sense, then, there is no common problem, and certainly no common solution or palliation. The student listens in awe to the different tales of how things got to be as they are. And of course, he feels corresponding humility in suggesting any immediate policy that might be helpful. And there is something of the feel of *eucatastrophe*, the bitter-sweet quality of an unexpected happy ending[2], when news comes that, in some respects and for some languages, their recent history may be more hopeful.

This volume is true to its theme: it is a fascinating congeries of diverse approaches. It is the published extension of the papers contributed to the International Symposium on Endangered Languages, which inaugurated the UN-inspired International Clearing House for Endangered Languages at the University of Tokyo on 18-20 November 1995. As such it contains versions of all the papers delivered on that occasion by experts scattered across the world.[3] And an outsider who happened by, and chanced to know the fate of those northern languages Aleut and Sámi, is included for good measure.

There are at least three types of paper in this collection.

There are **qualitative overviews of the kind of endangerment to be found in different regions**: Willem Adelaar on South America, E. Annamalai on India, David Bradley on China and South-East Asia, Matthias Brenzinger on Africa and Vida Mikhalchenko on Russia. Two of these contain valuable collections of statistical data in appendices: Bradley on size and location of national minorities in China whose languages are endangered (with Chinese name and self-designations), and Mikhalchenko data on the minor peoples of Russia (quoting the 1989 census but going beyond it).[4]

Each of these overviews finds different general points of significance.

Adelaar suggests that it is the languages of middling size in South America that have the best chance of survival: languages like Shuar (Jívaro) in Ecuador, Arhuaco (Ica) in Colombia and Campa in Peru are small enough to have a distinct identity and big enough to be to some extent autonomous. Quechua and Aymara, by contrast, are falling prey to widespread migration to the cities, and may well lose their status as badges of distinct identity. (He also notes, engagingly, that the level of diversity in South America exists as a standing refutation to the archaeologists' dating of its human settlement.)

Annamalai notes that, sometimes, languages in India disappear, but only so to speak as an accounting process, to be re-classified as "mother tongues" under major languages: this process is called "dialectalization": this may politically benefit the old language, if it is re-classified with other small languages and so achieves critical size needed for political significance; but it may undermine it, since there will be less concern to maintain a dialect than a full language. Furthermore, he recognizes a cyclical process of language loss and maintenance: sometimes people who have not effectively acquired a language as children come back to it after marriage when they join new social networks, or when they return to their villages having found progress barred in the cities they become politically active on behalf of the old community. Bodo in Assam, and Manipuri vis-à-vis Bengali are quoted as two examples of this "strategy of maximizing difference".

Bradley[5] bases his analysis on an extended historical analysis, which distinguishes the traditional tolerance of diversity in the cultural "Indosphere" (Malaya, Cambodia, Indonesia) from the disregard of linguistic minorities and assimilating tradition of the "Sinosphere" (Japan, Korea, Vietnam), both these traditions going back well over two thousand years and being extremely rich culturally. (Burma and Thailand moved from the Sinosphere into the Indosphere about a millennium ago, reacting against Chinese expansion.) But the account in general is more like a wide-ranging set of well-informed case studies: generalization would be difficult or impossible, were it not for the gigantic pervasiveness of Chinese-style nationalities policy, nominally supportive of minority status, but in fact with a focus on rapid integration "sometimes using rather unpleasant methods". When it comes to policy, however, all Bradley can point out is that, for the benefits of tourist development, "viable and diverse cultures will need to be maintained" - in

[1] ISBN4-938669-97-8 5,000 yen. Orders can be placed iwith payment in other currenciess as well at <naoko@hituzi.co.jp>

[2] described by JRR Tolkien in his analysis of folk tales and fairy stories, *Tree and Leaf*.

[3] It is noted by Krauss that Indonesia and New Guinea are missing from the panorama: also, there is nothing on Europe outside Russia and Scandinavia, or Mesoamerica. In a way, though, it adds to the sense of unknown diversity that the tour of continents is incomplete.

[4] Mikhalchenko also includes a proposed general-purpose questionnaire for eliciting language data, with exemplary answers for the isolate Ket.

[5] An abstract of his proposal for an active approach to language endangerment in China and Thailand can be found below in Section 6 of this Ogmios.

other words, the only chance minorities have of standing against centralized power is to build an unholy alliance with to some enlightened conception of the Gross National Product.

Brenzinger reviews different conceptions of language death in Africa, from direct suppression of its speakers, physical (in Sudan) or political (in Nigeria), through to language deprivation (where even a language such as Yoruba with 18 million speakers has been called deprived because it is dominated by English in secondary and higher education). He notes the almost ideal enlightenment of the Eritrean government, which refuses to name any language as official in its constitution. But he warns of "covert" endangerment, which is reminiscent of what Annamalai called dialectalization: a language may yield speakers to a related neighbour without anyone signalizing the process.

Mikhalchenko looking at the languages of Russia sees them as manifesting a known natural process of amalgamation of peoples, cultures and languages, reinforced by the previous government's project of building a "Soviet super-ethnic group". Now he sees government policy as aimed more towards preservation of minor groups with the 1991 Law on Languages of the RFSFR declaring that all languages are a national property under the protection of the State. For any success in this preservation, though, he believes it is necessary to "define those real socially actualized spheres of communication in which the respective language must be used. The next stage is purposeful organizational measures to revive or expand these functions." Evidently Russians still see a role for a directive state, or at least a body of policy-making linguists, in the future of these minority groups. Old traditions die hard.

Besides these wide-ranging qualitative overviews, there are a few **case studies of particular languages**: Knut Bergsland on Aleut and Sámi at opposite extremities of the Russian land mass, Suwilai Premsrirat on So (Thavung) in Thailand, Harumi Saiwai and Osami Okuda on Ainu, Japan's own endangered language isolate.

Bergsland gives authoritative accounts of the known histories of these languages. Sámi, in its northern and southern varieties, appears to be fighting back well. In the case of Aleut, though, it is particularly chilling to read first a relatively upbeat account from 1989 of language learning among young people at school in Atka, the main village where it survives ("most students from 4th grade on were fluent speakers... something they can cherish and have pride in as their cultural identity") and then the reports only five years later: 44 speakers (down from 60 in 1990), youngest speaker in his/her 20's. ("Most of the younger people do speak a little Aleut or understand the language more or less.") And courtesy clearly costs languages: "since the Aleut speakers are fluent in English, English has become the dominant conversational language of the village. In a small community even a few outsiders may change the linguistic situation."

Premsrirat gives the story of one of Thailand's 60 or so minority languages. The language So (Thavung) has only been in Thailand rather than Laos for 100 or more years, and was not at first recognized as a Vietic language: hence its similar name to its neighbour So (Katuic). There is a sociolinguistic, phonological and syntactic account of what is happening to it, and recommendations on how it can hold its own against the surrounding Lao and predominant Thai, with strong roles for linguists in devising an orthography and language-learning materials for schools.

Saiwai gives an upbeat account of prospects for the Ainu language, which is only partly offset by Okuda's very Japanese unease, on whether the language should be revitalized only by preservation of its role in traditional ritual and narrative, or should be taught for conversational fluency. The theme of Saiwai is that Ainu had been depressed by constant reiteration that it was the obsolescent language of a "dying race" of "former aborigines". There has apparently been a remarkable turn-around in the last decade, with widespread provision of textbooks and language classes, the latter subsidized by the Local Government of the Japan's northern island Hokkaido. She points out, however, that these classes are still at the weekly level, and there is yet to be created "a comfortable social environment for Ainu speakers".

In fact, the ambivalent attitude of speakers towards the revitalization of their own language looms very large in the third category of article, **meditations on attitudes to language endangerment, and appropriate policy responses**. Michael Krauss looks at the various responses there have been, among minority communities and linguists, to his sounding of the alarm at the impending twilight of the languages. Akira Yamamoto surveys the various expedients that have been adopted in the USA to address the concern for waning numbers of speakers, and looks at differences that emerge between the received opinions of linguists and language speakers. And Stephen Wurm leads into a survey of the methods that can be adopted in a community that wants to get its old language back.

Krauss does a bit of prehistoric reconstruction to paint a picture of how unique our prospective loss of languages must be in the history of the last ten thousand years. He notes how untypical ("well under 10%, maybe more like 1%") are the noted fighting minority languages of Europe (e.g. Welsh, Basque, Northern Sámi), in most of the world the main preservative force being that parents "don't know any better—yet" than to talk their old language to their children. Otherwise, when the decline of small languages is at last perceived by its speakers, the response is varied: from pride through to apathy, denial or regret. Which it is, will depend on their picture of the future that awaits them after their language has gone: and on this point, at least, the linguist outsider may credit himself with a more realistic judgement than the speakers.

Yamamoto notes that the ruling presumptions in many Amerindian language communities on what counts as learning or speaking a language may lead to disillusion when these communities really apply themselves to getting their languages back: the situation of a linguist who sincerely wants to help thus becomes a delicate one, which calls for great caution and humility if co-operation is to be achieved.

But despite all these qualms and regrets, Wurm leaves the reader with some grounds for encouragement. He boldly points out respects in which community confidence can be boosted on the way to renewed competence. Show them the utility of a minority language as a secret channel of communication. Let them in on the intellectual, social and emotional advantages of being at home in two languages and two cultures (Pity the poor white man, eh). And bring on the clowns and actors: re-enact your old culture if you know longer live it, and get everyone involved in the dramatics, with the young learning from the old, and the children amply rewarded. He follows this advice up with a heartening string of stories where the tide seems to be turning: Ainu; Australian languages such as Djabugay brought back from extinction; Maori language nests, Tahitian increasingly present in the media; Hawaiian, Mohawk and Seneca in the US, Faeroese, Greenlandic Eskimo recovering from Danish domination; Yakut, Yukagir, Evenki, Nenets, Khanty across Siberia; even Ejnu, a hybrid of Turkic Uighur structure but Persian lexicon in Chinese Xinjiang, a lasting human trace of the Silk Road. Finally he notes the expedient of Romansch Grischun, an invented common written language for the Rhaeto-Romance dialects which allowed it to be of service to adults, and hence to sustain the dialects' survival.

There is a wealth of food for thought in this book which leads one to ponder what will be seen as progress in the twenty-first century and beyond. Small communities seem to be taking to heart Jesus's rhetorical question (Matthew xv. 26): "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and he lose his own soul?"

And once you have lost your soul, is there any way to get it back?

2. Development of the Foundation

FEL Achieves Charitable Status

On 27 July 1998 the President received a letter from the Charity Commission for England and Wales informing him that:

FOUNDATION FOR ENDANGERED LANGUAGES
Registered No. 1070616
has been entered in the Central Register of Charities.

This new status should be a major asset to our fund-raising activities. And if these activities are successful, it should also benefit us when it comes to paying (less) tax: Andrew Phillips, in his "Charitable Status – a Practical Handbook" (Directory of Social Change, 1994), states that Britain is now probably the most generous tax régime in the world as regards charities.

The only possible disadvantage that it might entail is a limit on our ability in the UK to agitate politically for changes in the law. In current circumstances this does not appear to be a problem.

We should especially thank especially Andrew Woodfield, our Secretary, for securing this recognition. He has been diligently following up this necessary path to our future for almost three years now.

We are classified as follows:

Beneficiaries	Class 3-10-104 International culture, heritage
Functional class	Class 50-3-200 Conservation / preservation activities
Topic class	Class 5-80 Cultural heritage
Governing Document	Constitution, adopted 4 July 1996.
Charitable Objects	To support, enable and assist the documentation, protection and promotion of endangered languages.

FEL Conference - Edinburgh, 25-27 Sept. 1998: What Rôle for the Specialist?

This will take place at the Pollock Halls, Edinburgh University, as advertised in the previous issue of Ogmios. It is possible to register at the door, and there is still accommodation available for latecomers.

The Proceedings from the Conference are available for purchase by mail. See the relevant section of the order sheet at the back of Ogmios.

The programme is as follows:

Keynote Address
Donna B. Gerdts
The Linguist in Language Revitalization Programmes (Salishan, W. Canada)

Successful interactions
Bill Jancewicz
Developing Language Programs with the Naskapi of Quebec (Algonquin, E. Canada)
Jon Reyhner, Gina Cantoni
What Educators Can Do to Aid Community Efforts at Indigenous Language Maintenance and Revitalization (USA)
Veronica Grondona
Endangered languages, their speakers and the language specialist: the case of Mocovi (Waikuruan, Argentina)

Understanding the Language from the Outside
Jens Eberhard Jahn
Istria: Between Regional Ethnic Awakening And Nationalism
Diego Quesada
Competing Interpretations of History: What if they are Wrong? (Chibchan, Costa Rica)
Tapani Salminen
Minority Languages in a Society in Turmoil: the Northern Languages of the Russian Federation
M. Lynn Landweer
Indicators of Ethnolinguistic Vitality: Case Study of Two Languages, Labu and Vanimo (Austronesian/ Sko, NiuGini)

Understanding the Language from the Inside
N. Louanna Furbee, Lori Stanley and Tony Arkeketa
Two Kinds of Expert in Language Renewal (Siouan)
Kim Hardie
Role of Specialists: Flemish in Belgium

OPEN FORUM: at least
Birger Winsler, Jarmo Lainio
Digitalization : to reverse language shift in Ireland, Scotland, Sweden and Wales.
Iseabail Macleod
The state of Scots and Gaelic
Anda Hofstede
Jibbali, a Modern South Arabian language
Doreen Mackman
Yamaji Language Centre, Western Australia

The New Role of Information Technology
Bojan Petek
Slovenian Language in the Information Age
RC MacDougall
Effects and Defects of E-mail (Mohawk, US)

Taking Stock
Mari Rhydwen
Strategies for Doing the Impossible
Hilaire Valiquette
First Things First: on Language Preservation/Revitalization Efforts
Akira Yamamoto
Language Community, Scientific Community and Mutually Supported Community

3. Language Endangerment in the News

Indonesia discovers two new tribes in Irian Jaya (Reuters)

JAKARTA, June 25 - Indonesian officials have found two new tribes in the remote Irian Jaya province who communicate using sign language, the official Antara news agency reported on Thursday.

The report from the provincial capital Jayapura said that field officers of the social affairs office had recently discovered the two nomadic tribes living near the Mamberamo river area, about 4,000 km (2,400 miles) east of Jakarta.

The office's head for social welfare, Onesimus Y Ramandey, said members of the Vahudate and the Aukedate tribes are tall, have dark skin and curly hair and speak using sign language.

He said they roam the areas between Waropen Atas sub-district, Yapen Waropen district and the edge of the Mamberamo river in Jayapura district which borders with the Nabire, Puncak Jaya and Jayawijaya districts.

Based on a preliminary survey, the Vahudate tribe has 20 families and the Aukedate tribe 33 families, he said.

Irian Jaya, with its high mountains, steep hills and deep vallies has hundreds of distinct tribal groups speaking up to 800 dialects with many still living far from the reach of government in a near Stone Age existence.

New tribes are "discovered" almost every year.

Language on Trial in Belarus

by Jan Maksymiuk

Here's an interesting case of a national leader actively trying to quash his country's language [Belarusian] in favor of another's [Russian].

In 1997, the Belarusian National Assembly passed a law "On the Press and Other Media," which allowed the government in May 1998 to issue a warning against the biweekly "Nasha Niva." An independent newspaper published entirely in Belarusian and with a circulation of some 5,000, "Nasha Niva" was launched by its chief editor, Syarhey Dubavets, in Vilnius in 1991. The newspaper is printed in Minsk and distributed by the state network of kiosks and, to a lesser extent, by the editorial staff. It uses the traditional Belarusian orthography, which was changed by decree under Joseph Stalin's regime in 1933.

The media law, passed by the National Assembly in 1997 and amended in January 1998, explicitly prohibits the press from "distorting the generally accepted norms" of the language in which it publishes.

In a bid to forestall what seemed like preparations to close down his newspaper, Dubavets filed a lawsuit against the State Press Committee in June, demanding the warning be revoked as "groundless." He argued that the term "generally accepted norms" is void since there is no legally binding standards for spelling in Belarus. The case is to be heard at the Higher Economic Court on 12 August.

If the newspaper loses the case and persists in using the pre-1933 spelling, it can be banned after receiving another two warnings, according to the amended media law.

The "Nasha Niva" case, which in most countries would doubtless be regarded as a bizarre example of overregulation by the state, strikes a very tragic note in today's Belarus. Belarusians are gradually

losing their language and cultural identity. The number of Belarusian-language books and periodicals has plummeted to a very low level since the May 1995 referendum, which granted Russian the status of an official language, along with Belarusian. The state, which from 1991 to 1994 did a great deal to promote both the formerly neglected Belarusian culture and education in the Belarusian language, has practically ceased to support either under Lukashenka. For example, in 1994 there were 220 schools in Minsk whose language of instruction was Belarusian. Two years later, their number had shrunk to fewer than 20. Those students who want to receive a higher education in Belarusian will be hard put to achieve that aim, since Russian is the language of instruction in virtually all university departments in Belarus.

Lukashenka has made a point of ostentatiously promoting Russian-language and Soviet culture in Belarus. In a widely quoted statement, he once asserted that "one cannot express anything deep in Belarusian."

Non-Sovietized Belarusian culture and the Belarusian language are developed and supported mainly by non-governmental organizations and an ever dwindling number of intellectuals. "Nasha Niva" is one of the champions of that movement. Speaking Belarusian in Belarus is not only a means of communication but also a political declaration of loyalty to the country's indigenous cultural and historical heritage in defiance of the ruling regime.

The fundamental dividing line in Belarus is not between "democrats in general" and the Lukashenka regime; rather, it is between democracy- supporting "Belarusian nationalists" and the Sovietized and Russianized segment of society led by former Communist Party functionaries.

"Having forced the national symbols--the coat of arms [knight-in-pursuit] and the [white-red-white] flag--to go underground, the government of the Republic of Belarus has now declared war against the non-Soviet Belarusian orthography," Dubavets wrote in the 15 June 1998 issue of "Nasha Niva." He also expressed bitterness toward those Belarusian intellectuals who "have voluntarily remained in the Belarusian SSR in terms of spelling." The pre-1933 orthography was used at schools among some 2 million Belarusians in pre-war Poland and has never been abandoned by the Belarusian Diaspora.

Dubavets is not the only one to oppose the 1933 orthography reform. The "Belarusian Language Encyclopedia," published in Minsk in 1994, states that the 1933 reform focused "not so much on reflecting the specifically national character of the Belarusian language as on bringing its orthography in line with the Russian orthographic tradition."

In a wider sense, the 1933 ban on the traditional Belarusian spelling reflected Stalin's idea of merging the globe's cultures into one with a single language. Presumably, that culture was to be Soviet and the language Russian. In this way, the Belarusian language became a victim of Stalin's futuristic vision.

Some of the best-known Belarusian linguists have come out in support of the spelling used by "Nasha Niva." International human right organizations have protested, pointing that the State Press Committee's warning violates international law--in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Belarus is a signatory. But such protests are unlikely to carry much weight with the court. Most "Nasha Niva" supporters fear that, as one columnist put it, "no linguistic or even legal arguments are of any importance" in this case. It is the language that is on trial, not the spelling.

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California Passes Proposition 227 against bilingual education

This measure was passed in a state-wide ballot at the beginning of June. It was designed to replace bilingual education in Californian state schools with total immersion in English. In effect, a year of intensive English will replace bilingual programmes where children have been taught maths and other subjects in their own languages (mostly Spanish) while learning English so they can be "mainstreamed". The California Teachers' Association opposed the initiative, as did all four gubernatorial candidates and even President Clinton. However, it was passed; and apparently received the votes of 50% of the Hispanic community itself.

European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages in Jeopardy

As a result of a successful action in the European Court brought by the governments of Britain, Germany and Denmark, EU Commission discretionary grants amounting to ECU 560 million were blocked on 10 June. Effectively, the ruling denied the strict legality of a financing system which has been in operation since 1976. These budgets included the full budget line for the Bureau of Lesser Used languages of ECU 3.6 million, as well as a further 3 million support for minority language radio and TV.

It will only become clear after the holiday period if, and to what extent, these funds can be re-constituted through other channels.

4. Appeals and News from Endangered Communities

Situation of the Indigenous Languages of Colombia, especially Chimila

Frank Seifart of Freie Universität Berlin (fseifart@mail.zedat.fu-berlin.de and also at Ratiborstr.12, D-10999 Berlin, Germany, tel. +49-30-6123429) sends this report from his trip last year to CCELA in Bogotá.

Although more than 60 indigenous languages are still spoken in Colombia their existence is hardly recognized in public life. This is an astonishing variety compared to other Latin American countries, and in view of the *indígenas'* low share of the overall population, only 3%. Many of these languages are threatened with extinction, as the number of their speakers has dramatically decreased after a long period of suppression. But today a growing indigenous self-confidence and a tolerant political climate give rise to new hope.

However, this new tolerance comes too late for a substantial number of languages. About thirty languages are known which have ceased to be spoken since the arrival of the Spanish, among them the languages of the Muiscas, once the largest people of high cultural diversification living in the Andean Highland north of Bogotá, and the language of the Taironas in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, whose culture left us an impressive archaeological monument, the Lost City (*Ciudad Perdida*).

The reason for the extinction of the indigenous languages of Colombia lies in the different varieties of aggression towards the *indígenas* themselves. In the past this aggression took different forms. In the worst case it meant physical extinction of the *indígenas* in military conflicts or excessive economic exploitation, e.g. slave labour for rubber production on the Amazon at the beginning of this century. Another important factor for language death is the – often forced – migration of the *indígenas* from their predominantly rural settlement areas to the cities, where they gave up their language together with their traditional cultural background. Today the biggest danger for the *indígenas* is to be accused and persecuted as collaborators, as they often live in remote regions of the country that become the battleground for the military, paramilitaries and the guerrilla forces. The various guerrilla groups that operate in Colombia, most prominently the FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*) and ELN (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional*), do not pursue a uniform policy with regard to the indigenous cultures. The paramilitaries, on the other hand, who are paid to protect the property of the settlers, have a hostile attitude towards the *indígenas*.

In recent decades, a strong indigenous self-confidence has developed which is expressed in the regional and national organizations. The *cabildos* (councils) of the native groups are organized nationwide in the ONIC (*Organización Nacional de Indígenas de Colombia*). The ONIC represents the interest of the *indígenas* vis-à-vis governmental organisations. An initial success of this long-lasting struggle is the fact that the Constitution of 1991 provides for the first time for an official status for the indigenous languages. It states (article 10):

"The languages and dialects of the ethnic groups have official character in their territories. The education in territories of groups that have their own language tradition shall be bilingual."

These benevolent principles still have to be applied to a reality which looks very different in many cases. For many of the languages of Colombia no teaching materials are available, as the larger part of these languages has not yet been studied linguistically, apart from scarce and un-systematic work carried out mostly by missionaries over the last centuries.

To speed up the study of the indigenous languages, the Colombian government invited the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) in the 1950s, because Colombian linguists were hardly available at the time. The SIL gladly accepted the invitation and in short time built up an extensive infrastructure with their headquarters in the plains adjacent to the Andes. From here they flew directly to the *indígenas* areas. In the 1960s the SIL had to answer an investigating committee of the government, as they were suspected to have used their infrastructure, which was better than that of the Colombian army, for intelligence activities. Although it could never be proved, rumours of cooperation by the SIL with the CIA never ceased completely. Undoubtedly the efforts of the SIL, who – as everywhere – not only did Bible translations but in practice fostered the transmission of Western cultural values, paved the way for economic endeavours in the areas of the *indígenas*, most prominently for oil production.

In the 1970s the government dissociated itself from the SIL as they still failed to train Colombian linguists as the government had expected. Finally, in the 1980s, the majority of the SIL workers were violently driven out of the *indígena* areas by the guerrilla forces. As a result, the SIL has had to restrict itself to work in the relatively safe large cities, with informants taken from the reservations (*resguardos*). But to this day the SIL retains offices in a Colombian government building (*Ministerio del Gobierno*).

Nowadays the CCELA (*Centro Colombiano de Estudios de Lenguas Aborígenes*) has become the most important institution for the study of the languages of Colombia. This centre, part of *Universidad de los Andes* in Bogotá, is financed by French and Colombian funds. Colombian linguists are trained here on a regular basis, among them *indígenas* who are then able to study and describe their own languages. The results of the linguistic investigations of the native languages are used for

the edition of grammars, dictionaries and teaching materials. In those cases, where the speakers are not interested in preserving their languages, the work of the CCELA is limited to linguistic stocktaking in order to provide the descendants with the possibility to revitalize their ancestors' language.

Generally speaking, the peoples of the mountainous regions seem to preserve their languages better than those of the lowlands and the rain-forest. By way of their highly organized and hierarchical social systems and through their century-old experience in dealing with Western cultures they are far better prepared to defend their interests. Apart from the *cabildo* there are spiritual and traditional authorities to which the *cabildos* are subordinated. The cultures of the indigenous people of the lowlands, who live - or lived - as nomads in loose family groups, seem to be less resistant to the aggression and temptations of Western culture. They often lose their culture and language very quickly.

In recent years the *indígenas* of Colombia - both the large peoples of the mountainous regions as well as the smaller ones of the lowlands - have fought hard for their right to speak their language and live their culture. The different kinds of motivation for this struggle are of various nature. Many *indígenas* fear to lose not only their language and culture, but with it their identity as *indígenas*. Therefore they demand governmental support for projects that serve to protect their language, knowing that survival of their language is the first step towards the maintenance of their culture. For language carries in its myths, songs, etc. the contents of traditional culture. And the world-view of a culture reveals itself in the structure of the vocabulary and grammatical system.

But in the previous experience of indigenous languages in Colombia it has become clear that linguistic analysis, alphabetization and finally bilingual education entail radical interference with originally illiterate indigenous cultures. The alphabetization of the language and the recording of traditional texts change the cultural dynamics of the oral tradition: from the moment these texts are recorded they lose their variable character. Therefore many cultures decide to take this step only after much deliberation.

The concept of school education that we know, on the other hand, is not comparable with the traditional education of the indígena cultures. Therefore a special program of "*etnoeducación*" for the *indígenas* was set up by the ministry of education. Guidelines for curricula are developed, which try to take into account the diversity of the *indígena* cultures. In cooperation with ONIC, a programme for intercultural education is developed, which is to transmit both the values and world view of their own culture as well as those of the Colombian national culture. Another central purpose of intercultural education is bilingualism (indigenous language-Spanish): a good command of Spanish is necessary to benefit from higher education and university training, but also to safeguard the *indígenas*' standing as Colombian citizens. For the universities a special programme for them is in preparation.

In Colombia preservation and revitalisation of languages serve in some cases also to procure and secure a claim to status as indigenous people, which includes many advantages, most prominently the right for a reservation, which in turn means exemption from taxes and free energy supply. Although one's own language is not a necessary condition for the recognition of a group as an *indígena* people, it can be a strong support for this purpose.

The fate of the Chimilas is a good example of the many adverse conditions which the *indígenas* of Colombia have had to suffer and which in extreme cases lead to language death. The Chimilas live in the Departamento Magdalena in Northern Colombia. In the times of the *Conquista* they were a large and much feared people, who not only defended themselves against the Spanish, but also attacked them. As they lived on the banks of the River Magdalena, on the only route to the heart of the country where legendary *El Dorado* was assumed to lie, their existence meant a special nuisance for the Spanish. By the beginning of this century this people, once so large in number, had been reduced to a few hundred who had to make their living as landless labourers on the *fincas* of the settlers of the former land of the Chimilas. Fearing to be discriminated against as *indígenas*, they hid their language and culture, so that Gustaf Bolinder, a Swedish ethnologist, was already speaking the "last Chimilas" in 1920. When a linguist from CCELA (María Trillos Amaya) visited the Chimilas eight years ago, she was able to find some speakers who were prepared to speak their language. In 1991 the Chimilas were given their own reservation. The Government and the UNESCO are funding a re-afforestation programme, for the woodlands have been turned into prairie through cattle breeding. Within the limits of their reservation the Chimilas are more or less protected against the attacks of the paramilitaries who roam the area, and the language and culture of the Chimilas is slowly developing again. It turns out now that it had been passed on secretly over the centuries to a much greater extent than it had been suspected. The SIL employees who worked with the Chimilas had to leave the territory, but now accommodate Chimilas on their premises at Santa Marta. In the reservation the Lauritas order of nuns is running a school in which the Chimilas experiment with bilingual education. Today the Chimilas have found new hope and face a future in which they can speak their language and live their culture publicly, although they badly need an enlargement of their reservation.

Prospects for fair treatment in Colombia of indigenous languages and their speakers are now better than ever before, even if the debate in Colombia is not always on a high level: a senior officer in the army recently claimed that the Embera, a people living on the Pacific coast, simply make up their language so as to confuse the white people! Nevertheless, there are major tasks ahead. Above all, the new requirments enshrined in

the Constitution of 1991 have still to be put into action.

Reference:
Maria Trillos Amaya (1996): "Categorias Gramaticales Del Ette Taara - Lengua de los Chimilas". Bogotá. (= Lenguas Aborígenes de Colombia. Descripciones #10.)
Available from CCELA, Universidad de los Andes, A.A. 4976, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia
jlandabu@cdcnet.uniandes.edu.co
The Director of CCELA, Jon Landaburu, has considerable experience of the implications of the new consititution for indigenous languages in Colombia.

Recent Fieldwork in Nigeria: Report on Horom and Tapshin

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Overseas Development Institute, London

In March this year I was able to visit two communities in Nigeria, the status of whose languages has been uncertain until now. In the case of Tapshin, no data seems ever to have been recorded, while in the case of Horom, some 50 words, often inaccurate, have been published.

Horom

The Horom language is spoken in Horom village in Bokkos district of Plateau State, Nigeria. The main village of the Horom is some 10 km. (40 minutes drive) east of Richa over an extremely bad road. Richa is at the edge of the Jos Plateau some 2 hours drive SE of Jos and is the principal market-town for the area. All the other villages in this area speak varieties of Kulere, a Chadic language, with the exception of Mabo and Barkul. The Horom also have a small hamlet, Kura 'down', i.e. on the plain below the escarpment, where they live among the Rindre.

The Rom people (sg. Rom pl. BaRom) have been called 'Horom' in almost all the literature. Horom is the name of théir language, but in view of the ubiquity of this root for 'person' or 'man', Horom is a good reference name. Some early sources have the name 'Kaleri', apparently a distortion of 'Kulere', which appears in earlier classifications, but this is highly inappropriate.

The only published data on Horom are the sporadic citations in the Benue-Congo comparative word-list (Williamson and Shimizu 1968; Williamson 1973) although Daniel Nettle has in press in *Afrika und Übersee* a list of some 100 words which he has kindly forwarded to me. I collected a word-list of some 600 words with the assistance of Selbut Longtau from Abiya Ishaku Musa and a group of villagers in Horom on the 30th of March 1998.

The Horom language is spoken by perhaps 1500 speakers at a maximum. Surprisingly, the language does not seem unduly threatened; during the language elicitation session it seemed that many of the children present were able to produce the required lexical items simultaneously with the adults. This situation may be explained partly by the remoteness of Horom, although remoteness has not prevented the Chadic languages in the Bauchi area from disappearing. The Horom people are extremely multilingual; they reported fluency in Kulere, Rindre (a Plateau language spoken at the bottom of the escarpment), Hausa and several speakers of English also live in the village. Horom culture is still very much alive and presumably this has acted to preserve the language as well. Nonetheless, this is only a first impression and the small number of speakers suggests the urgency of undertaking a more comprehensive survey.

The Horom are regarded by their neighbours as culturally part of the Ron-speaking group. The only source for information on Horom culture is CAPRO (in press) .

The people of Horom are expert in traditional pottery. Other handicrafts are weaving of traditional sacks, smithing and carving. Almost every householder rears chickens, goats, sheep or cows. According to tradition, cows were kept for ceremonies and sacrifices.

It can also be said that traditional religion remains very lively in this area. The Horom have lively musical traditions including, rather surprisingly, the use of the xylophone.

Horom is said to belong to a group of languages classified as Southeast Plateau (formerly Plateau 6) along with Fyem and Mabo. Analysis of the wordlist has tended to confirm this view although there are unexplained linkages with the Tarokoid languages spoken south-east of this region. Nettle (in press) appears to argue against the inclusion of Mabo in this group.

Tapshin

The Nsur language is spoken in Tapshin village in Plateau State, Nigeria. Tapshin is some 25 km. north of the Pankshin-Amper road and reached by a track leading off the main road some 5 km. east of Pankshin. The road can only be traversed by a four-wheel drive and may well be cut off completely in the rainy season. Despite this, the area is densely populated with elaborate terracing systems.

The only published reference to this language is in Hansford et al. (1976) apparently based on some unpublished observations of Kiyoshi Shimizu, who apparently made the claim that Tapshin was related to Eloyi, a language spoken much further South. The name 'Tapshin' is locally considered to be Hausa, although it does not look like Hausa. At any rate, this is the name of the only village, a large dispersed settlement with numerous wards. The Tapshin call themselves Ns˙r plural ‡Ns˙r and their language kl̆s˙r and the reference name could be either Nsur or Sur. The Ngas people call the Nsur 'Dishili'. The name 'Myet' found in some earlier references is one version of the name Met, a settlement some distance west of Tapshin. The people of Tapshin claim that the people of Met speak 'the same' language as them, but this has yet to be directly confirmed.

A wordlist of some 600 words was collected by Roger Blench with the assistance of Selbut Longtau from a group on elders in Tapshin on the 21st of March 1998. We would like to thank the chief, Sale Sambo, for calling the meeting and John Tula Rabu for help with translation as well as all those who attended for their good-natured participation.

On the face of it, Nsur should be a prime candidate for language loss. All adults appear to be fluent in Ngas and Hausa and Tapshin is an enclave within the Ngas, a numerous population speaking a Chadic language, by whom they are culturally dominated. The number of speakers cannot be more than 3-4000, depending on the status of Met. The figure of 18,000 given in CAPRO (1995) would appear to be a serious over-estimate. However, it was apparent during the interviews that even young children are learning the language and there is no evidence of a decline in competence. Even more surprisingly, but no doubt related, the language is by no means full of loanwords from Hausa and Ngas, as is sometimes the case. The only source for information on Nsur culture is CAPRO (1995:323-327).

A comparative analysis of Nsur vocabulary has been undertaken. Tentatively summarising these results:

a) Nsur is a Plateau language
b) Nsur is part of the Tarokoid group and is probably most closely related to YaNkam.
c) There has been substantial mutual influence with the Ngas language, and Ngas is in some cases clearly the receptor language, despite its present-day numerical importance
d) Despite virtual bilingualism in Hausa there has been very limited influence except for recent items of material culture.

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Thanks to Patience Ahmed for supplying me with an advance electronic file of this document.

What Future for the Berber Language?

Abdenour Kilou , an Algerian Berber working as a North Africa specialist and French-language monitor at the BBC, has contributed this analysis of current events.

A law institutionalizing the general use of the Arabic language in all fields of public life came into force in Algeria on 5 July 1998. The law was voted in 1996 by the then unelected National Transitional Council. This acted as a provisional parliament, set up to fill in the vacuum in political institutions resulting from the military coup d'état that cancelled the 1992 general elections which the Islamic party had been poised to win. The council was dominated by members of the FLN, the National Liberation Front, the former single-party whose nationalist-cum-pan-Arabist ideology has always regarded Algeria as an Arab country that French colonialism disfigured culturally and linguistically. The re-establishment of the "Arab" charcater of Algeria had thus become a must, excluding all reference to the pre-Arab Berber past of the country – and indeed of the whole Maghreb. In spite of the existence of a significant minority of Berber-speakers (20-25% of the population) any attempt at rehabilitating the Berber language and culture has been denied. Yet the remainder of the Algerian people, Arab-speakers though they may be, cannot be described as Arabs. Algeria is a Berber country more or less Arabized.

Neither the current plight of the Berber language, nor the factors that have contributed to it, are a recent phenomenon. The Berbers and their language have been on the margin of history for thousands of years, or since historical records began. They refused to die and, for reasons that still puzzle historians and linguists, they have resisted and survived.

The Berbers or Amazigh (which means "free men" in Berber, or more properly the Tamazight language) of Numidia (as the modern Tunisia and Northern Algeria were known in antiquity) have rarely lived under a unified and independent state. An exception was the reigns of Massinissa and his successor and nephew Jugurtha. First known as small, often autonomous, vassal kingdoms under Carthaginian (ethnically Phoenician) domination, they were placed under direct Roman rule in 40 BC. They were conquered by the Arabs in the seventh century AD. In 1832 they became part of the French colonial empire.

Throughout this period Tamazight remained largely spoken by the local people, a vehicle of local culture, but was never elevated to the status of public and official language. The Punic language, Latin, Arabic and in modern times French became the lingua franca, instrument of official communication, the Berber élite and the local royal courts.

Although Tamazight is mostly an oral language, evidence of the use of a written form in the Phoenician era has been established. According to Chaker Salem[6], the script that developed for ancient Libyco-Berber is "certainly of Phoenician origin in its essence and structure". He also reports (p. 31) that the modern name given by the Tuareg to the Tamazight alphabet is Tifinagh, derived from the root *fnq/fngh* "Punic". But the Phoenician influence

[6] Manuel de Linguistique Berbère I, Éditions Bouchen, Algiers 1991, p.8

withered away as the Roman occupation progressed to full annexation. The Christian Church strengthened the position of Latin, thus achieving through the word of God what the Roman sword had started. Eminent "Roman" Christian scholars of Berber origin, such as St Augustine, St Cyprian, Apuleius and Arnobius wrote in Latin. As Roman penetration deepened, the cultural and linguistic space of Tamazight shrank. This process developed faster under the Arabs and French. The result is that today Tamazight is spoken in various dialects in pockets of more or less large minorities scattered across North Africa. Their survival is owed largeely to protection provided by the geographical elements. They are found either in the Atlas Mountains, such as the Kabyle, the Shawiya and Shinwa in Algeria, or the Shluh in Morocco, or in the Sahara such as the Tuareg and the Mozabit in southern Algeria and the Rguibat in western Sahara, to mention just a few. Statistically speaking, although no comprehensive survey has ever been carried out, Tamazight-speakers form about 25% of the Algerian population, and over 50% of the Moroccan population.

Is there a Berber or Amazigh identity? The answer is Yes, if identity is defined as a group of ppeople aware of their common heritage, be it cultural, linguistic or political, and willing to continue sharing it in the future. To put it simply, it is an awareness of common past and future destiny. Historically, as we have seen, Berbers lacked continuity in structural political development that would have led to the establishment of a modern form of polity, political culture and statehood. Instead, they seem to have gone through a process of successive periods of political hiatus that never allowed for the emergenece of nation-state with Tamazight at its base: contrast the experience of the major European languages, Persian or even Hebrew. Tamazight thus remained "a concept of an essentially linguistic nature that does not correspeond to a homogeneous social-linguistic reality in the conscience of its speakers" , as Chaker Salem describes it. Hence the difficulties encounterted by, Berber revivalists, be they academic or political activists, particularly in Algeria: the problem is to muster enough political will and unity among the different Amazigh communities to make a case for the authorities to recognize Tamazight as a national language. To this is added the unfounded argument of the authorities that any Berber demand is a threat to national unity, and the assertion that there is no need for a "dead" language when Arabic, the language of the Koran, is already there to cement national unity.

Apart from extremists, Berber revivalists accept Arabic as a national language, to be encouraged and developed, but not to the exclusion of Tamazight. It must be stressed that the the attitude and response of the authorities to the Tamazight question display the opacity of the political régime in Algeria. After a nine-month strike in Kabylie, a Tamazight-speaking region, the government agreed to set up a High Commission for Tamazight, charged with the task of overseeing the teaching of Tamazight in schools and introucing it into the media and wider artistic creation. This was at the height of the political crisis in the country. Concerned with its own survival and needing the support of Kabylie to fight Islamist terrorism, the then government gave in. But once the authorities gained the hand over the Islamists, they froze the work of the High Commission of Tamazight, broke their promises, and proceeded with the generalization of the use of the Arabic language in all public spheres, including political rallies and meetings by political parties in 1998.

In spite of this setback, Tamazight is alive even in the hearts of the Algerian Arab-speakers who have realized its importance and its place in the future of the country. Despite the pan-Arabist ideology of the Algerian régime, many Algerians have great enthusiasm for learning Tamazight: they have become aware that there is no real democracy if one basic dimension of one's identity is denied.

Is Tamazight in danger today? The answer, more than ever, is Yes, for two reasons.

The first is the duplicity of the authorities. On the one hand they pay lip service to the demands of Berber supporters by repeatedly recalling the constitutional "recognition" of Amazaghity as one of the components of national identity; but they leave the matter there, doing nothing serious or concrete to implement genuine rehabilitation of this heritage; instead, they give in continually to the rising "moderate Islamic" parties in the ruling coalition who are known for their inherent prejudice against Tamazight.

The second reason is the division in the Berber Cultural Movement, spearhead of the Tamazight revivalists: it is split between supporters of two rival Berber-based political parties, the Socialist Forces Front and the Rally for Culture and Democracy. The authories are well aware of this internal conflict in the movement, a split which tends to make the official line look much better.

Nevertheless, Tamazight enthusiasts continue their work, teaching and researching despite poor conditions, deprived of funds and necessary infrastructure. Makeshift independent schools are sprouting in villages and towns, run by voluntary teachers and associations. Their idealism and work cannot be written off by a simple piece of legislation. For a language whose recorded history alone tells of survival through thousands of years of foreign invasions and domination, the prospect must be good.

Mapuche Rights Threatened in Chile

This is a follow-up to the statement of Mr Mariqueo to the UN Commission on Human Rights which appeared in the last Ogmios.

Document presented by Mr Mariqueo on behalf of
MAPUCHE INTER-REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Sub-commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

WORKING GROUP ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
UNITED NATIONS
16th Period of Sessions 27-31 July 1998
Item 4 of the Agenda

Review of developments pertaining to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people.

Madam Chair, firstly, allow me to congratulate you, in the name of my organisation, on your re-election as chair of the Working Group. Your broad experience and commitment to the cause of human rights guarantees us, as always, a successful conference in this 16th Period of Sessions. We welcome this opportunity to address the distinguished members of the Working Group and all of attending this important assembly.

Madam Chair, the annexation, through the use of force, of the Mapuche nation's territory by the states of Chile and Argentina caused all kinds of conflict amongst our people. Now in Chile the repercussions of this annexation are evident and the present-day Chilean government still fails to provide a legal solution or historic compensation. Many Mapuche communities in the so called Region of Araucania demand the return of those territories appropriated illegally by latifundistas (big land owners), which are now in the hands of forestry companies; territories which the Mapuche have never renounced and the Mapuche, today fully aware of their rights, ask for a fair and equitable solution. Mapuche communties and timber companies are locked in legal battles over the ownership of more than 80,000 hectares of land in the VIII and IX regions and many of these cases have gone to court, but the courts have never ruled in favour of the affected communities.

The lack of protection for the property rights of the ancestral lands and the lack of justice has forced the Mapuche to protest actively, although non-violently. These protests have been violently suppressed by the Chilean authorities. At the end of 1997 and the beginning of the current year, the authorities introduced the Law of Internal Security of the State and Anti terrorist Law in five communes of the Mapuche region; a repressive law of the military regime which the authorities had previously condemned but now do not hesitate to apply with all the rigour of the law against the Mapuche. The police together with antiterrorist forces mounted an impressive police operation, spreading terror in the peaceful and vulnerable communities of the region. During October 1997 and into this year 87 people have been arrested among them women and children from the cities of Temuco, Malleco, Arauco, Angol and Santiago.

On the 16th of December, a peaceful demonstration in Santiago was violently disbanded by the Chilean police who attacked the demonstrators both physically and verbally through racist insults. Five Mapuches were injured and 16 arrested.

According to the testimony of the young Mapuche Juan Carlos Reinao he was held under arrest for 7 days incomunicado (in spite of the Chilean law which stipulates that people can be held for no more than five days) during which time he suffered inhuman and degrading treatment.

Madam Chair, in 1994 our sister Florinda Cheuquepan (who sadly died in 1997) informed the Working Group with optimism of the advances that Chile had made with regards to the indigenous legislation through the publication of the law 19,253 of 1993, in which norms of protection, promotion and development of the indigenous peoples were established. At the same time she warned that there needed to be a real commitment on the part of the government for the application and execution of the law and added because we know that however attractive the letter of the law is, if it does not come into being the words are meaningless. This is exactly what has happened in Chile with the indigenous law, norms such as those relating to the introduction of multicultural and bilingual education, the protection of the ownership of lands and waters, the prohibition of racial discrimination, among others, have not only not been implemented but systematically violated by the government itself.

The development and infrastructure projects, such as the privatisation of water, the construction of highways and hydroelectric projects are carried out without the consent of the affected communities. This in clear contravention of the indigenous law which states in article 13 that indigenous lands, by the demands of national interest, enjoy the protection of this law and cannot be alienated, seized, taxed nor acquired by force except amongst indigenous communities or persons of the same ethnic group. It is important to note the irreversible effects that the construction of Ralco Dam will have for both the Mapuche-Pewenche communities and for the environment of the whole region of the Alto Bio Bio.

We wish to make it absolutely clear that we the Mapuche do not oppose development but we want equitable, sustainable and harmonious development with respect for our rights and ancestral cultural values and development from which we are not excluded.

Finally we demand the constitutional recognition of the Mapuche people and the ratification of ILO Convention 169 by the Chilean government.

Thank you,

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5. Allied Societies and Activities

National Language Centre of Wales: a Year's Reprieve

On 13 August, the President was sent the following letter.

Some months have passed since my last correspondence with you... It gives me great pleasure to to tell you that the Centre is still open for business. In January this year, Meic Raymant, the former chief tutor at the Nant, was appointed Tutor/Manager of the new-look centre on the Lleyn peninsula. Meic has many years' experience at the Centre, and I have no doubt that he is the right man for the task ahead.

A new appointment has been made, namely that of Gwyn Hefin Jones, a former head of personnel with Gwynedd County Council's Education Department. Mr Jones, who is widely respected in his field throughout Gwynedd, is an adviser both to Meic and The Trustees / Board of Governors.

Sadly, six of the previous employees at Nant Gwrtheyn lost their jobs, but fortunately all but one has succeeded in obtaining alternative employment.

The Centre has been given one year to try and improve its situation by attracting more students through the doors. So far this year, things have been going very well, with encouraging attendance figures.

This is obviously a very important year for the National Language Centre of Wales. If you feel that you can help in *any* way, please contact Meic or Mr Jones at Nant Gwrtheyrn...

May I take this opportunity, on behalf of the remaining staff, as well as learners of Welsh everywhere, to thank you for your interest and your support during the crisis last year. In fact, the campaign had tremendous support amongst academic circles outside Wales... unfortunately support from the University of Wales, and institutions inside the Principality was not so forthcoming. Perhaps this alone says something about us as a nation...

As far as I am concerned the campaign was a success. A letter, together with the petition containing 624 signatures was sent to the Charities Commission for England and Wales earlier this year...

Before the campaign started, the Trustees intended to close the Centre for one year, during which time a massive renovation programme would have begun... The Centre was scheduled to re-open in 1999 as a Centre for Welsh History and Culture, with less emphasis upon teaching the Welsh language to adults. Thanks to your support and effort, the letter-writing campaign succeeded in keeping the debate very much in the public eye. As a consequence of the publicity, and the criticisms levelled at them, the Trustees decided to keep the Centre open. Furthermore, although there is a need to include some courses on Welsh history and culture, I have assurances that the Nant's prime function remains as teaching Welsh as a second language to adults.

Thank you all once again.

If you are ever in the area, I can assure you of a CROESO MAWR (warm welcome) at Nant Gwrtheyrn.

Gratefully yours

Sean Driscoll.

Sean enclosed this year's Course Programme, with offerings at all levels, and from 2 to 12 days long, extending right through until 10 December.

The National Language Centre of Wales is at Nant Gwrtheyrn, Llithfaen, near Pwllheli in Gwynedd LL53 6PA, North Wales.
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The Lleyn peninsula is the main north-western promontory of Wales, the "pig's ear" if Britain is seen as an old woman riding on a pig.

The Right to Communicate, an international hearing

From: ReindeR Rustema <rrr@dds.nl>

About two weeks ago I subscribed to this list (ELL) for a special occasion. I am involved in preparing a hearing about the Right to Communicate that will be held in the Institute for Social Studies, The Hague, the Netherlands.

The Right to Communicate is a so called 3rd generation human right that should be added to the existing rights. More about this in a quote from a paper contributed to the Virtual Conference

http://commposite.uqam.ca/videaz

on the Right to Communicate by Jan Servaes below.

It will be an annual hearing that will deal each year with different themes from the People's Communication Charter. I have copied the whole charter below. More information about this charter can be found at

http://www.waag.org/pcc

where you can sign on-line also.

The related article in this respect is

> ***Article 9. Diversity of Languages.***
> All people have the right to a diversity of languages. This includes the right to express themselves and have access to information in their own language, the right to use their own languages in educational institutions funded by the

state, and the right to have adequate provisions created for the use of minority languages where needed.

During the hearing cases will be presented to, testimonies will be heard by and recomendations will be made to the judges. Judges will be at least Boutros Boutros Gali, Tove Skuttnab- Kangas (VP of Terralingua) and John Mayarara (ex-judge of the Supreme Court of Zimbabwe ao.).

But... we need to prepare the cases. Perhaps you can help? The hearing is limited to three days so this implies a maximum of 3 to 5 cases. The cases of the Kurds, Sign language, English/Spanish education in California, Berber and Aboriginals have so far been chosen.

For a case the following needs to be prepared.

a. General background to the specific case (i.a. history).
b. The specific case.
c. Earlier proceedings (court cases, hearings, etc).
d. Recommendations from victims and experts to the panel of judges.

As the webmaster to the website of the charter and volunteer to preparing the hearing I would be most interested in hearing any advice from this forum. If you're interested in attending it or would otherwise like to be involved, let me know. Also if you know some funds or NGO's or sponsors willing to participate. The budget is not completely covered yet.

So far, to avoid information overload, more later hopefully,

Thanks in advance

ReindeR Rustema

Introduction

The concepts 'freedom of information', 'free flow of information' , 'freedom of opinion', 'freedom of expression' and 'freedom of the press' have always been at the base of the Western way of thinking. They, among other things, were explicitly referred to in the American Constitution of 1776 and during the French Revolution. Article 12 of the American Bill of Rights states that 'the freedom of the press is one of the great bulwarks of liberty and can never be restrained but by despotic government.' In the French Les Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen of 1789 it is stated that "the free expression of ideas and opinions is one of the most precious human rights; every citizen should be able to speak, write, and print freely; this freedom can only be restricted in those cases determined by law" (my translation, JS). Though the freedom of word and expression have always been subject to fundamental restrictions, they nevertheless are part of the European and American ways of thinking, which led to freedom of printing and a free press. These rights, the so-called civil or freedom rights, can be said to be the first generation of human rights.

A second generation of human rights was inspired by socialist revolutions at the turn of the century, and emphasize the economic and socio-cultural rights of people. The right to work, education, shelter and the right to participate in cultural life, belong to this second generation of human rights.

The first and second generations of human rights were reformulated as binding international law in two conventions that were adopted in 1966 and came into effect in 1976: the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The third generation of human rights - the so-called solidarity or collective rights - emerged through anti-colonialist revolutions emphasizing national self-determination and non-discrimination. Solidarity rights pertain primarily to certain collective concerns, such as peace, development, ecological balance, culture and communication (for more details, see Berting, 1990; Galtung, 1994; Servaes, 1996a; or Linden, 1997).

We, the Signatories of this Charter, recognize that:

Communication is basic to the life of all individuals and theircommunities. All people are entitled to participate in communication, and in making decisions about communication within and between societies. The majority of the world's peoples lack minimal technological resources for survival and communication. Over half of them have not yet made a single telephone call. Commercialization of media and concentration of media ownership erode the public sphere and fail to provide for cultural and information needs, including the plurality of opinions and the diversity of cultural expressions and languages necessary for democracy. Massive and pervasive media violence polarizes societies, exacerbates conflict, and cultivates fear and mistrust, making people vulnerable and dependent. Stereotypical portrayals misrepresent all of us and stigmatize those who are the most vulnerable. Therefore, we ratify this Charter defining communication rights and responsibilities to be observed in democratic countries and in international law.

Article 1. Respect.

All people are entitled to be treated with respect, according to the basic human rights standards of dignity, integrity, identity, and non-discrimination.

Article 2. Freedom.

All people have the right of access to communication channels independent of governmental or commercial control.

Article 3. Access.

In order to exercise their rights, people should have fair and equitable access to local and global resources and facilities for conventional and advanced channels of communication; to receive

opinions, information and ideas in a language they normally use and understand; to receive a range of cultural products designed for a wide variety of tastes and interests; and to have easy access to facts about ownership of media and sources of information. Restrictions on access to information should be permissible only for good and compelling reason, as when prescribed by international human rights standards or necessary for the protection of a democratic society or the basic rights of others.

Article 4. Independence.

The realization of people's right to participate in, contribute to and benefit from the development of self-reliant communication structures requires international assistance to the development of independent media; training programmes for professional mediaworkers; the establishment of independent, representative associations, syndicates or trade unions of journalists and associations of editors and publishers; and the adoption of international standards.

Article 5. Literacy.

All people have the right to acquire information and skills necessary to participate fully in public deliberation and communication. This requires facility in reading, writing, and storytelling; critical media awareness; computer literacy; and education about the role of communication in society .

Article 6. Protection of journalists.

Journalists must be accorded full protection of the law, including international humanitarian law , especially in areas of armed conflict. They must have safe, unrestricted access to sources of information, and must be able to seek remedy, when required, through an international body.

Article 7. Right of reply and redress.

All people have the right of reply and to demand penalties for damage from media misinformation. Individuals concerned should have an opportunity to correct, without undue delay, statements relating to them which they have a justified interest in having corrected. Such corrections should be given the same prominence as the original expression. States should impose penalties for proven damage, or require corrections, where a court of law has determined that an information provider has wilfully disseminated inaccurate or misleading and damaging information, or has facilitated the dissemination of such information.

Article 8. Cultural identity.

All people have the right to protect their cultural identity. This includes the respect for people's pursuit of their cultural development and the right to free expression in languages they understand. People' s right to the protection of their cultural space and heritage should not violate other human rights or provisions of this Charter.

Article 9. Diversity of Languages.

All people have the right to a diversity of languages. This includes the right to express themselves and have access to information in their own language, the right to use their own languages in educational institutions funded by the state, and the right to have adequate provisions created for the use of minority languages where needed.

Article 10. Participation in policy making.

All people have the right to participate in public decision-making about the provision of information; the development and utilization of knowledge; the preservation, protection and development of culture; the choice and application of communication technologies; and the structure and policies of media industries.

Article 11. Children's Rights.

Children have the right to mass media products that are designed to meet their needs and interests and foster their healthy physical, mental and emotional development.. They should be protected from harmful media products and from commercial and other exploitation at home, in school and at places of play, work, or business. Nations should take steps to produce and distribute widely high quality cultural and entertainment materials created for children in their own languages.

Article 12. Cyberspace.

All people have a right to universal access to and equitable use of cyberspace. Their rights to free and open communities in cyberspace, their freedom of electronic expression, and their freedom from electronic surveiilance and intrusion, should be protected.

Article 13. Privacy.

All people have the right to be protected from the publication of allegations irrelevant to the public interest, or of private photographs or other private communication without authorization, or of personal information given or received in confidence. Databases derived from personal or workplace communications or transactions should not be used for unauthorized commercial or general surveillance purposes. However, nations should take care that the protection of privacy does not unduly interfere with the freedom of expression or the administration of justice.

Article 14. Harm.

People have the right to demand that media actively counter incitement to hate, prejudice, violence, and war. Violence should not be presented as normal, "manly", or entertaining, and true consequences of and alternatives to violence should be shown. Other violations of human dignity and integrity to be avoided include stereotypic images that distort the realities and complexities of people's lives. Media should not

ridicule, stigmatize, or demonize people on the basis of gender, race, class, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, and physical or mental condition.

Article 15. Justice.

People have the right to demand that media respect standards of due process in the coverage of trials. This implies that the media should not presume guilt before a verdict of guilt, invade the privacy of defendants, and should not televise criminal trials in real time, while the trial is in progress.

Article 16. Consumption.

People have the right to useful and factual consumer information and to be protected against misleading and distorted information. Media should avoid and, if necessary, expose promotion disguised as news and entertainment (infomercials, product placement, children's programmes that use franchised characters and toys, etc), and the creation of wasteful, unnecessary, harmful or ecologically damaging needs, wants, products and activities. Advertising directed at children should receive special scrutiny.

Article 17. Accountability.

People have the right to hold media accountable to the general public and their adherence to the standards established in this Charter. For that purpose, media should establish mechanisms, including self- regulatory bodies, that monitor and account for measures taken to achieve compliance.

Article 18. Implementation.

In consultation with the Signatories, national and international mechanisms will be organized to publicize this Charter; to implement it in as many countries as possible and in international law; monitor and assess the performance of countries and media in light of these Standards; receive complaints about violations; advise on adequate remedial measures; and to establish procedures for periodic review, development and modification of this Charter.

PCC, p/a Society for Old and New Media,
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phone: +31 20 5579898, fax: +31 20 5579880
pccmaster@waag.org
http://www.waag.org/pcc

Fondation pour les Anciens et les Nouveaux Médias
Society for Old and New Media
Maatschappij voor Oude en Nieuwe Media
tel: +31-20-5579898 / fax: +31-20-5579880 /
http://www.waag.org

6. Overheard on the Web

Endangered Languages: an active approach - Thailand and China

David Bradley, Linguistics, La Trobe University,
d.bradley@latrobe.edu.au

Language death is the most urgent problem confronting linguistics. In longitudinal studies starting in the mid-1970s, we have been observing the process of language death in various settings. This has led to various theoretical observations on how language death differs from creolisation/ decreolisation (Thomason/Kaufman 1988) and other kinds of language change. It also suggests various practical strategies for assisting communities in language maintenance.

Examples will be given from speech communities in Thailand and China. These will be contrasted with the situation in speech communities who are being successful in language maintenance, and some conclusions and inferences will be drawn. In a team project with three local colleagues and various overseas partners we will be refining these strategies in the future.

Australian Linguistic Society (July 1998) abstract from
http://www.cltr.uq.oz.au:8000/als98/elbody.html

Wanted: Translations of the Slovene National Anthem into Many Different Languages

Fri, 11 Sep 1998 23:00:25 -0600
endangered-languages-l@carmen.murdoch.edu.au

This is not a plug for the Slovene nationalism!

Rather, the national poet of Slovenia, France Presheren, is having two important anniversaries soon: 1999 is the 150th aniversary of his death, 2000 the 200th anniversary of his birth. Among his works is a poem, "Zdravljica," = "A Toast", and the seventh verse was adopted by the young Slovene nation a few years ago, after independence, as its national anthem.

In honour of Presheren's anniversaries, a small booklet will be published next year in Kranj, the city in Slovenia nearest his native village; the booklet will contain the original of this verse, plus translations into many other languages.

My own translation of the seventh verse is as follows:

Let's drink that every nation
will live to see that bright day's birth
when 'neath the sun's rotation
dissent is banished from the earth,
all will be
kinfolk free
with neighbours none in enmity.

Which is a rather more acceptable anthem than some I could name . . .

Translations exist so far into some well-known European languages - French, German, Russian, English, Italian and so on - but not many others. This is an opportunity, perhaps, for *your* endangered language to get some publicity and to hob-nob with some of the so-called major languages of the world.

If any readers of this list are interested in contributing a translation in an 'endangered' language, I will forward it to the editor of the booklet. If you can imitate the rhythm and rhyme-scheme of the original, so much the better; but in some languages this will not be possible. The deadline is November 30, 1998. The editor's decision will be final, not mine; but he earnestly wants to collect many, many translations, so I don't think that he will try to check yours.

If any 'endangered' language-translations are sent in and accepted, I will recommend to the editor that he include as footnotes or endnotes a few basic bits of information about the languages - where spoken, and so on.

If you think that you may be interested, let me know and I will with pleasure send you (a) the original, (b) a version marked for stressed syllables so that you will appreciate the rhythm, (c) a "literal" translation and (d) versions in French, German, and Russian - whichever you wish.

* Tom Priestly
* Slavic & East European Studies
* Modern Languages and Cultural Studies
* University of Alberta
* Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6G 2E6

* telephone: +1-403 - 492 - 0789
* fax: +1-403 - 492 - 9106
* email: tom.priestly@ualberta.ca

7. Places to Go, on the Web and in the World

An annotated bibliography of Vanuatu languages, by John Lynch

This is an HTML version of selections from a book written by John Lynch and produced in 1994 by the Pacific Information Centre and University of the South Pacific Library in Suva, Fiji. It is intended to give some very general information about work done on languages of Vanuatu. Note that for a number of languages of Vanuatu there has been no significant work done.

Lynch, John 1994 An annotated bibliography of Vanuatu languages Suva, Fiji:Pacific Information Centre and University of the South Pacific Library.
ISBN: 982-01-0227-8
HTTP://artalpha.anu.edu.au/web/arc/vks/vanlangs.htm

Cimbrian Web Page

Ermenegildo Bidese <ebidese@hotmail.com> writes:

I want to inform you that a new web page about the Cimbrian language is appearing on the Internet. Cimbrish is an old German, nowadays endangered language that is still spoken in Northern Italy (Lusern/Luserna, Ljetzan / Giazza, Roana / Robaan). The homepage is in German and in Italian, but the Webmaster is minded to translate the page into English. Moreover, he intends to create a linguistics forum about Cimbrish.

The URL is:
http://www.diens.de/Zimberland

For Cimbrish texts take the link:
http://wald.heim.at/urwald/540006/texte.htm#texte

Symposium on Teaching Indigenous Languages: proceedings site

Jon Reyhner <Jon.Reyhner@NAU.EDU> notes the website for the proceedings of the 1996 Symposium on Teaching Indigenous Languages (primarily relating to North American Indian languages) and a link to the 1994-95 Proceedings.
http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jar/TIL.html

LING-AMERINDIA : Discussion List for South American Indigenous Languages

The LING-AMERINDIA list was proposed at the Indigenous langages workgroup at the XIII National Congress of the Brazilian Association of Graduate Programs in linguistics. It is intended for open discussion of problems in the description and analysis of syntax, morphology, phonology and lexicon of South American indigenous languages. Postings should preferably be in Spanish or Portuguese. All postings will be archived and will shortly be accessible through anonymous FTP and WWW.

To subscribe, send an e-mail message with SUBSCRIBE in the first line of the body to LING-AMERINDIA-request@unicamp.br. Postings should be sent to LING-AMERINDIA@unicamp.br.

Marcus Maia
Museu Nacional/UFRJ
maia@acd.ufrj.br

Hocak Goodvillage

Haho,

We are the GoodVillage Foundation, a Hocak (Indian) organization in Friendship, Wisconsin, USA. Our mission is to restore the language, culture, and sacred sites of our Hocak people, and to help other peoples do the same for themselves.

If we lose our language, culture, and sacred sites, we will cease to exist as a people. Neither the Hocak nor general public are sensitive to the consequences

of this loss, a fact which greatly compounds the situation. The GoodVillage Foundation seeks to address this problem by actively teaching the language and culture, restoring the sacred sites, and educating Hocak and general public.

We will take advantage of all available methods to make this mission a success, including the use of the best possible equipment and consultation with the best possible advisors to not only educate people in their traditions, but to prepare them for success in the outside world. We will begin by establishing a headquarters, then a language immersion camp, followed by an immersion school system, and finally progressing to the outreach program, all to be located on the Chief GoodVillage Site.

We have developed several videos, books, tapes and computer programs which teach our language and culture to the young people.

Pinagigi wi no, thank you,

Síle Shigley
GoodVillage Foundation
+1-608-339-2577
goodvillage@maqs.net

Canadian Language Planning Report

From Andre Bourcier (aae631@agora.ulaval.ca) 21 August 98:

The Centre International de Recherche en Amenagement Linguistique (CIRAL) has recently published "Language Planning for Gwich'in and Inuvialuit Communities" on its website:
http://www.ciral.ulaval.ca/textes/bourcier/bourcier.html

This report is the result of a research conducted in the Fall of 1997 in five communities of Canada's Northwest Territories. The suggestions contained in this report are based on a state-intervention approach to Language Planning. The CIRAL is a research center with 16 researchers and some 70 graduate students who envision languages as social phenomena embracing history, economics, politics, geography and many other fields of the humanities. Its mission is to answer questions raised by linguistic diversity and the social management of language issues. The Centre would like to use this opportunity to welcome any information concerning language planning efforts for indigenous languages in the Americas or anywhere in the world.

Postal address
CIRAL, Dept de langues et linguistique, Pavillon Charles De Koninck, Universite Laval, Quebec, QC, Canada, G1K 7P4.

"Words and Images: A Portrait of Languages"
http://www.rootsworld.com/hollow/gallery/sapmi.html

Elly Sherman has been collecting the voices of the world for a number of years via a unique artistic presentation called "Words and Images." In this series, she has taken one of her own poems and had it translated into over 80 languages, both ancient and contemporary.

Her website has two of those translations. The first is into the Sámi language of northern Scandinavia, and includes an audio reading of the poem in Sámi, some music from the region and some links to other Saami sites. The second is a translation of the poem into the Guaraní language of Brazil, and again includes an audio reading of the poem in Guaraní and some links to other Guaraní sites.

8. Forthcoming Meetings

Globalization, New Technologies, Multilingual Classrooms. Reading 21-2 Sept. 1998

Jim Cummins, Ontario Inst. Studies In Education
Viv Edwards, The University of Reading
Jim Anderson, Goldsmiths College
Richard Raby, Lingua Language Services
Urmi Chana, Chris Routh, Heather Leonard, An Ran, University of Reading

Day 1

9.30 - 9.45 Welcome and introduction Viv Edwards
9.45 - 10.30 New Technologies and Language Education: Possibilities and Pitfalls - Jim Cummins
10.30- 11.00 Tea/coffee
11.00 - 12.30 Choice of workshops:
1. Community languages and IT
2. Multilingual wordprocessing software
3. Producing learning resources in other languages
4. Recent multicultural children's literature

1.45 - 3.00
Group 1: Technology as a Cultural Amplifier in Shaping Community Identities
Jim Cummins
Group 2: The power of Babel
Viv Edwards
A look at action research in multilingual classrooms, paying particular attention to the use of new technologies.
3.00 Tea/coffee.
Opportunities to view AIMER and the Centre premanent exhibition and for hands-on experience of Chinese, Urdu and Panjabi wordprocessing
Book stalls provided by Roy Yates Books, Letterbox Library, the Reading & Language Information Centre and Multilingual Matters

Day 2

9.30 - 10.45
Group 1: The power of Babel - Viv Edwards
Group 2: Technology as a Cultural Amplifier in Shaping Community Identities - Jim Cummins

10.45 - 11.15 Tea/coffee

11.15 - 12.45 Choice of workshops:
1. Community languages and IT
2. Multilingual software
3. Producing learning resources in other languages
4. Multicultural children's literature

2.00 - 3.15 Concluding talk - Jim Cummins
3.15 Tea

Information On Workshops
1. Community languages and IT
Jim Anderson, Goldsmiths College
A review of the range of IT options now open to support community language teaching, including the internet.
2. Multilingual software
Richard Raby, Lingua Language Sevices
A look at the kinds of choices which you need to make in selecting software and the most recent products on the market
3. Producing learning resources in other languages
Heather Leonard & Urmi Chana
A bookmaking workshop which examines a range of very original approaches to multilingual resources.
4. Multicultural children's literature
Chris Routh
A chance to sample and enjoy recent examples of quality multicultural children's literature.

Contact: V.K.Edwards@reading.ac.uk
Conference cost: £160 sterling.

Maintenance and Loss of Minority Languages, 26-27 November 1998

Koningshof Conference Center, Veldhoven, The Netherlands

PROGRAMME

The conference will consist of three sections. The first section addresses the sociological and social-psychological explanatory context in which language shift processes take place. The second section deals with language attrition from a psycholinguistic perspective, and the third is fully devoted to the building of an integrated explanatory framework for processes of language shift and loss. In memory of Willem Fase, one of the initiators of the First and Second Conference on Maintenance and Loss of Minority Languages, who died in 1997, a new forum called the Willem Fase Lecture has been set up. This plenary lecture forum will be granted to a promising scholar, to be selected from the abstracts submitted.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1998

Section I: Language shift from a sociological and social-psychological perspective
Plenary sessions with Lesley Milroy, Richard Bourhis
Parallel sessions of free papers

Section II: Language loss from a psycholinguistic perspective
Plenary sessions with Kees De Bot, Joel Waters
Parallel sessions of free papers

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1998

Section II continued

Plenary session: Willem Fase Lecture
Concluding remarks on section I and II by Joshua Fishman

Section III: Towards an integrated explanatory framework for processes of language shift and loss
Preparatory workshops, followed by Round Table chaired by Michael Clyne

GENERAL INFORMATION

Conference Secretariat
Tilburg University
Research Group on Language and Minorities
c/o Heleen Strating-Keurentjes
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The Netherlands
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E-mail: language.loss.98@kub.nl

Organizing Committee
- Dr. Ton Ammerlaan, Arnhem School of Business
- Madeleine Hulsen, University of Nijmegen
- Dr. Jetske Klatter-Folmer, Institute for the Deaf/Tilburg University
- Heleen Strating-Keurentjes, Tilburg University - Piet Van Avermaet, University of Leuven
- Dr. Kutlay Yagmur, Tilburg University

Scientific Committee
- Prof. Kees de Bot, University of Nijmegen
- Prof. Michael Clyne, Monash University, Melbourne
- Prof. Joshua Fishman, Stanford University, California/Yeshiva
University, New York
- Prof. Koen Jaspaert, University of Leuven
- Dr. Sjaak Kroon, Tilburg University

World Indigenous Peoples' Conf. on Education , Big Island Hawai'i, 1-7 August 1999.

"The 1999 WIPCE (World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education) HAWAIT Theme 'Aia Na Ha`ina i Loko o Kakou - The Answers Lies Within Us' is intended to help you focus on the Past, Present and Future of our cultural knowledge practices, to identify current needs and strengthen future collaborations. We intend to shape the conference accordingly.

Philosophy of event:
For Na Po`e Hawai'i or Native Hawaiians, learning is made valuable through experience. We are looking for indigenous practitioners to address all levels of our physical and spiritual selves. This is a gathering of empowerment beyond ordinary networking. We are asking indigenous educators, artisans, political activists, healers, and community members to offer opportunities for deep engagement and meaningful practice. Each presentation and experience must

have a cultural base, show how the past is bridged into the present, and have a proven impact on your people. We ask presenters not to rehash the validity of indigenous educational/knowledge/ learning structures of philosophy. We want to focus on past, present and future projects; ideas that strengthen our beliefs and practices and offer direction and guidance as we enter the new millennium. We are asking for presentations that are culturally based and connected to the people and land they are intended to serve. **We encourage speakers to deliver their presentation in their native tongue -- please be ready to interpret.**

Proposal deadline:
December 31, 1998. Presenters will be notified by 30 March 1999.

Some categories of presentation:
Indigenous Spirituality, Indigenous Literature, Indigenous Philosophy, Educational Programs, Indigenous Theater, Indigenous Teacher Education, Cultural Immersion Programs, Indigenous Learning Centers, Rights Movements/Indigenous Movements, Media and Education, Indigenous Colleges/Universities, Traditional Practices (Life-Cycle, Sports, etc), Sustainable Communities, Language Perpetuation, Games, Dance, Music, Food Story-Telling, Cultural Crafts (weaving, carving), Other.
Contact address for the 1999 WIPCE HAWAI'I Coordinators are:
Phone: +1 (808) 934-7722
Fax: +1 (808) 969-7932
Email: wipc@hawaii.edu
Postal address: P.O. Box 6159, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720-8923 USA

Lenguas Indígenas de Sudamérica: Lima, Perú, 4-6 Agosto 1999
Comisión Organizadora: Mabel Muñoz (Presidenta), Luis Miranda (Secretario), Amanda Orellana (Tesorera)

Comunicaciones
Los interesados en presentar comunicaciones al Congreso deberán enviar el original de su trabajo antes del 30 de mayo de 1999.
Las comunicaciones tendrán como máximo una duración de 20 minutos.
El escrito de las comunicaciones no sobrepasará las 10 páginas (DIN-A4, 4000 palabras como máximo).
Las comunicaciones serán evaluadas y seleccionadas por una comisión científica.
Se publicarán todas las comunicaciones seleccionadas por la comisión científica que se lean en el Congreso (se deberán entregar en papel y en soporte informático: Word Perfect o MS Word).

Secciones
1.Fonología
2.Gramática
3.Semántica y Lexicografía
4.Análisis del Discurso
5.Sociolinguística y Dialectología
6.Educación Bilingüe Intercultural y Política Lingüística
7.Estudios Históricos-Comparativos
8.Lenguas en Contacto
9.Filología Amerindia
10.Onomástica

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E-mail: Lmiranda@Li.urp.edu.pe

9. Book Reviewed

Chris Moseley reviews: Lenore A. Grenoble & Lindsay J. Whaley (edd.), Endangered Languages: Language Loss and Community Response

Cambridge University Press, 1998, 361 pp.

`Endangered languages' seems to have become a recognized term within linguistic science, and this very welcome new volume serves to reinforce its validity and place the concept in the public consciousness. The two editors, who work in the Program in Linguistics and Cognitive Science at Dartmouth College in the USA, have drawn together the work of theoretical linguists, field workers, and members of minority speech communities to examine the process of language loss, as they claim, "from sociological and economic as well as from linguistic perspectives".

The volume might have run the risk over over-concentrating on language attrition in the North American continent to the exclusion of other language situations, but while a strong and justifiable emphasis is laid on the Americas, a narrow bias is successfully avoided.

The book is divided into four sections, each concentrating on a different aspect of language endangerment and loss. The sections are titled `General issues', `Language-community responses', `What is lost: Language diversity' and `Mechanisms of language loss'. This order of presentation brings coherence and logical progression to a rather disparate set of texts.

Nancy Dorian's paper, in the first section, argues that `Western language ideologies' need to be taken into account in trying to understand patterns of language loss in Europe and the Americas. The chief `ideology' that Western culture has brought, she argues, is monolingualism. She contrasts the situation in the European Union, where minority languages are actually protected in accordance with prevailing ideology, with that in most of Latin America, where even once-dominant indigenous languages (Quechua, Nahuatl) now have low social status.

The editors' own contribution, `Toward a typology of language endangerment', is a valuable attempt to clarify and prioritize the issues that confront the language specialist in assessing the overall viability of languages. Having identified the

internal and external variables at work in an endangered language situation, they point out three overriding issues that they regard as crucial, namely economics, access and motivation. While this analysis may not break any new ground, it is important in separating issues that are otherwise apt to become confused in this relatively young branch of linguistic science.

Part II, `Language-community responses', presents four detailed analyses of reactions by speakers of threatened languages to the attrition process, from Southeast Alaska (Richard and Nora Marks Dauenhauer), the Mayas of Central America (Nora C. England), Mohawks of Quebec (Kaia'titahkhe Annette Jacobs) and South America generally (Colette Grinevald). The four papers vary greatly in scope, and the concentration on the Americas may detract a little from the book's balance of interests, but the thorough survey presented in Grinevald's paper is absolutely excellent, a mine of information and a model of its kind.

Part III, `What is lost: language diversity', features papers by some of the most eminent specialists in the field. Using North American examples from her own research, Marianne Mithun argues persuasively for the morphophonemic uniqueness of languages such as Central Pomo which are on the verge of disappearance; her contentions on behalf of these fascinating thought-worlds are as eloquent as Whorf's. Ken Hale casts his net wider, drawing mainly on examples from Australia and the Americas to prove the vitality and diversity of human verbal expression. The other two papers in this section (by Christopher Jocks and Anthony Woodbury) provide close-up analyses of particular obsolescent languages of North America and the subtlety of expression of their remaining speakers – the English language is sometimes stretched to its limits in some of the complex glosses provided here!

The book concludes with a section on `Mechanisms of language loss'. Three widely divergent papers are yoked together under this heading: an analysis of language maintenance among speakers of a Swahili dialect in Shaba, Zaire (André Kapanga); a formidably technical but wide-ranging study of `the Matrix Language turnover hypothesis (Carol Myers-Scotton); and a fascinating account of the `resurrection' of Copper Island Aleut (Nikolai Vakhtin), proving that it is not all inevitably downhill for endangered languages.

Inevitably in a book of this nature, some papers are more digestible to the casual reader than others. Equally inevitably, perhaps the subdivision of the papers into sections was a little arbitrary. If a criticism can be levelled at it, it is that whole regions and continents are virtually ignored in the book's coverage. But the contibutors have concentrated on areas where attrition is at its most extreme and the situation most urgent, and the editors are to be congratulated on producing a volume that is sure to advance the cause of endangered languages and place them ever more firmly on the agenda of twentieth- and twenty-first-century linguistic science.

10. Publications of Interest

New Akha Cultural Reader

On Fri, 24 Jul 1998, Matthew McDaniel <akha@loxinfo.co.th> wrote from Thailand:

We have now finished our new Akha Reader (Akha Book of Knowledge). All of the contents are written by Akha writers. This is the culmination of our first book after seven years' work.

It is in the new script and is 212 pages long. It is copyrighted preventing use for commercial gain but may be duplicated by as many people as would care to otherwise. It is currently only available in file form as a microsoft word document as an attachment. If you would like a copy emailed to you please send me your email address.

The Akha workbook to go with it will be done as soon as the art work is all finished.

Then both books will be waiting for publication for distribution in the villages.

The Reader contains the following chapters:

1. Culture Page
2. Alphabet
3. Exercises for Children
4. Children's Stories
5. A Nyeehf Pahv's Story
6. Culture
7. Ancestor Ceremonies
8. Peehf Mah, Boeuhf Mawv
9. Nyeehf Pahv
10. Sahv Kauhf Bpahxv Urh
11. Dzoeuhv Mah
12. About Western Religions and their Defects
13. Two Old Classical Songs
14. Ballads
15. Genealogies
16. Herbal Medicine
17. Grammar
18. Mathematics
19. Telling Time

We will have this in English as we have time.

Sincerely,

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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, are living at the point in human 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;

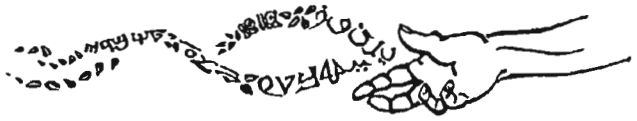
(ii) To support the use of endangered languages in all contexts: at home, in education, in the media, and in social, cultural and economic life;

(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.



Foundation for Endangered Languages

If you wish to support the Foundation for Endangered Languages or purchase one of our publications, send a copy of this form with payment to the Foundation's Treasurer and Membership Secretary:

Margaret Allen 14 Newland Park Close Hull Road York YO10 3HW England
e-mail: *JOSALLEN@compuserve.com*

Those who find difficulty (technical or financial) in sending subscriptions in one of the ways suggested should contact the President (Nicholas Ostler, Batheaston Villa, 172 Bailbrook Lane, Bath BA1 7AA, England, *nostler@chibcha.demon.co.uk*) in the hope an accommodation can be reached.

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Please enrol me as a member of the Foundation for Endangered Languages. I enclose my subscription fee, as indicated below, for the year beginning with the current quarter. In return, I expect to receive the newsletter Ogmios, with details of the Foundation's meetings and other activities in that year.

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