FOUNDATION FOR ENDANGERED LANGUAGES

OGMIOS

Another Englishman reaches Cheboksary:
FEL chairman and Ogmios editor Nicholas Ostler in the Chuvash State Institute for the Humanities, in front of N. Sverchkov's picture of the visit by Anthony Jenkinson to this Volga port-city —which he called *Sabowshare* or *Schabogshar*— in 1558. Jenkinson, sent by the City of London's Muscovy company, was *en route* to Bukhara. He reported Mordvin people to be living on this stretch of the Volga, although they now live further to the west. Cheboksary is now capital of Russia's Chuvash people, and called by them *Shupashkar*. Here is today's view.

Chuvash is not reckoned as endangered in Russia: it is official in Chuvashia, spoken by 1.47 million in an ethnic group of 1.77 million. But half live outside this republic. And only 30% of the children now go to school in Chuvash.

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EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE:

"On the Margins of Nations: Endangered Languages and Linguistic Rights"

In association with Institut d'Estudis Catalans (Cátedra Unesco de Llengües i Educació)

The conference will take place in central Barcelona, 1st - 3rd October 2004

There will also be excursions:
29-30 September
Aranese-Occitan in the Val d'Aran
4 October
Catalan in French Catalonia

The website for the conference is at:
http://www.iecat.net/recerca/centreslabs/8FELConference/8FELConference.htm
also accessible via our own web-site
http://www.ogmios.org/

The site includes conference & registration information, the programme, details of excursions and the original call for papers.

If you are planning to come, please register as soon as possible.

If you intend to register on site (despite the surcharge), please inform us in advance by SENDING AN E-MAIL NOW to:
<Catedra.Unesco@iecat.net>

This is particularly important if you are hoping to come on one of our excursions.

Prof. Joan Albert Argenter

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Ens veiem a Barcelona.

Editorial:

Welsh for Russia's Muslims

I tuğan tel, i matur tel, ətkəm-ənkəmneŋ tele!
Dønyada küp nərsə beldem sin tuğan tel arkılı.

Iŋ elek bu tel belen ənkəm bişektə køyləgən,
Annarı tønnər buyı əbkəm xikəyat søyləgən.

I tuğan tel! Hervakıtta yardəməŋ berlən sineŋ,
Keçkenədən aŋlaşılgan şatığım, kayğım minem.

I tuğan tel! Sində bulgan iŋ elek kıylgan doğam,
Yarlıkagıl, dip, üzem həm ətkəm-ənkəmne, xodam!

Native language, lovely language,
Language of my parents dear,
Many things I've learnt in this world
Through this language of my birth.

At the outset, in my cradle
Mother sang me lullabies.
With my granny in the evenings
Fairy tales were our delight.

Native language, you were always
There to help me through my life.
Since my childhood I have known you
As my sorrow and my joy.

Native language, it was in you
That I first made prayer to God:
"Please have mercy, Lord, upon me
and upon my dad and mum."

Tuğan Tel "Native Language", by Gabdulla Tukay. (Translation mine, with help from Alsu Valeyeva, Güzel Fazdalova and Suzanne Wertheim.) Tukay (1886-1913) is generally accepted as the Tatar language's classic poet. This poem, set to a mournful tune that can be heard at

http://akidil.net/tatar/tatarsongs.htm ,

serves as an unofficial anthem. I have set it down here in the proposed new Roman alphabet for Tatar, distinct from the Cyrillic script that has been used since 1939. Tukay himself used the Perso-Arabic script which was the vehicle for Tatar literacy for a thousand years before being replaced under socialism with a first Roman alphabet in 1920.

In June this year I visited Kazan, the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan, and its neighbour to the west, Cheboksary, capital of Chuvashia, another ancient Turkic nation which has been part of Russia for even longer than the Tatars.

Chuvash is more distinctive than Tatar as a form of Turkic (being the only survivor of Turkic's western branch), and probably goes back to the speech of the Volga Bulgars, who reached this area in the 7th century AD. However, Chuvash are Christians, while the Volga Bulgars as a group were converted to Islam in 922. Mongol Turks rode right across Asia to smash the Great Bulgar state in 1236, but this led to the predominance of Kipchak Turkic in "the Golden Horde", this north-western quadrant of the great Mongol Empire. This has developed into modern Tatar (as well as Bashkir, Kazak and Kyrgyz). Unlike Chuvash, these Kipchak languages are almost mutually comprehensible with Oghuz Turkic in modern Turkey, and the Chaghatay Turkic of the Uzbeks and Uyghurs in Central Asia.

For all these savage intra-Turkic wars, the "Tatar yoke" of Turkic dominance over the Russians was not shaken until Ivan the Terrible issued from Moscow and subdued Kazan, the Tatar capital, in 1552. (He had accepted Chuvash submission en route.)

With an introduction from the editor of the newspaper *Tatar World*, I went as the President of the Foundation for Endangered Languages; of course, I was concerned above all to see how they were sustaining and propagating their languages. But while I was there, I spoke to linguists, historians, and the editors of the Tatar encyclopaedia. I met poets, dancers and singers (classical and modern), as well as the owner of the chief compressor factory in Tatarstan.

What I found, in both republics, was a situation tantalizingly similar to that of modern Welsh: lands on the very edge of Europe, where children struggle at school with lessons in a language they never hear in their favourite TV programmes; where fossil fuel exploitation (oil, at least in Tatarstan) has traditionally played the biggest part in the economy; which, after so many centuries, has still has a lively idea of cultural difference from its dominant big neighbour. (Nevertheless, this region produced the man who became that neighbour's charismatic ruler from the end of the First World War into the 1920s -- not David Lloyd George, but Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, who was attending Kazan State University when he first fell foul of the Tsar.)

The intelligentsia of Tatarstan and Chuvashia resist the idea of their languages as endangered: as in Wales, they have the full force of their regional governments behind them (for whatever official support is worth to language revival); the 1990 Chuvash 'Law about Languages' and the 1992 Law 'About the Languages of the Peoples of Tatarstan' give them parity with Russian. But there is still much to be striven for and achieved if this is to be made a reality. According to the authoritative *Pis'mennye Yazyki Mira - Yazyki Rossiyskoy Federatsii* (MacConnell, [Solntsev] and Mikhal'chenko, Moscow, 2 vols. 2000 and 2003) only 30% of Chuvashia's children go to school in Chuvash; and according to Suzanne Wertheim (UC Berkeley PhD thesis on language contact with Tatar 2003 — available at http://ling.northwestern.edu/~wertheim/), an 1989 survey stated that only 36% of urban Tatars in Tatarstan used Tatar as a home language. This of course was before the re-establishment of Tatar-teaching schools, which have since the collapse of the Soviet Union been expanded to be universal, even for Russian children, in Tatarstan.

The two languages Chuvash and Tatar are interesting too, to compare the roles of absolute vs relative numbers in language survival. Chuvash has many fewer speakers than Tatar (1.8 million as against 5.7 million), but in Chuvashia the Chuvash people are an overwhelming majority, 67.8%. By contrast, the Tatars are not quite a majority in Tatarstan (48.5%). (Source - 1989 census.)

The examples of these languages, I believe, need to be brought into our general analysis of language plights, and policies to combat language endangerment. The Russians usually distinguish such languages as these, among the 33 *pis'mennye yazyki* "literate languages", which do after all have non-national governments to defend them, from *yazyki malochislennykh narodov Rossii* ("languages of ethnic minorities of Russia"), 67 of which have been reviewed in considerable detail in the recent "Red Book" (*Yazyki Narodov Rossii - Krasnaya Kniga*), edited by V. P. Neroznak - Moscow 2002: ISBN 5-87444-149-2). It seems then that Russia can style itslef "Land of a Hundred Languages".

Among the new policies being originated for post-Soviet conditions, a proposal for script revision is the most evident, an attempt to row back from Stalin's imposition of Cyrillic. But by an unfortunate irony, Atatürk's 1920s success in establishing a Roman alphabet for Turkish has made any move to romanize the writing system appear as a potentially seditious step towards pan-Turkic unity. For the Tatars, the leading linguist M.Z. Zakiyev is all in favour, not least as a way of combatting the pernicious effects on pronunciation which come about when people who hardly know the language (as the modern generation) come to it through Russian spelling. But at the moment, though ratified by the Tatar parliament, it is stymied in Moscow.

In fact, there is some guidance to be had from another of Tukay's famous creations, the forest sprite or Shuralé.

The main danger from a Shuralé lies in his long fingers, with which he loves to tickle people to death. In Tukay's famous poem, a woodcutter tricks a Shuralé, escaping from his

clutches by catching those long fingers in a half-split log. As Odysseus did to the Cyclops, though, the woodcutter makes sure of his escape by giving a false name: as he leaves, he tells the powerless sprite that he is called *Bıltır*, "Last Year".

Kıçkıra: Kıstı, xərap itte yavız "Bıltır" mine,
Ah, üləm bit, bu bəladən kem kilep yolkır mine?
Irtəgesen Şuraleler bu fəkıyrne tirgiler:
- Sin cülərseŋ, sin kotırgan, sin tilergənseŋ - diler.
Əytəler: "Kıçkırma sin, tiz yaxşılık berlən tıyel!
I cülər! kıskanga bıltır, kıçkıralarmı bıyel?!"

Crying "Pinched and ruined by that
rascally Last Year I am!
Oh, I'm dying! Who will come and
free me from this painful jam?"
Then at dawn his brothers come, but
roundly curse the suffering dupe:
"You're a fool, possessed, a madman"
heartlessly they call and whoop.
"Stop your crying, for your own good
we beseech you, stop it now!
Fool, if you were pinched last year,
why today make all that row?"

(Translation again mine, with help from Alsu Valeyeva.)

[Picture  ©

Baynazar Al'menov, Kazan 1999]

There must be some message here for Tatar, as other languages struggling to survive, and even thrive. Yesterday created the problems, it is true; but if solutions are to be found, we have to live in the present, and for the future.

2. Development of the Foundation

Announcements 2004: AGM and Election nominations

As Secretary to the Executive Committee of the Foundation for Endangered Languages I hereby give notice that:

1. The 8th Annual General Meeting of the Foundation will take place on 2nd October, 2004 at Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Barcelona starting at 18:00

All members are entitled to attend and vote at this meeting.

2. The Agenda will comprise:

1. Minutes of the 7th AGM
2. Matters Arising
3. President's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Election of Officers for the year beginning 2nd October 2004

Any additional items for the agenda should be sent to reach the President by 21 September, 2003

3. The membership of the Executive Committee for the year following 2 October, 2004 will be chosen at this meeting.

Nominations for election to the Executive Committee should be sent to reach the President by 21 September 2004.

There are up to 15 places on the Committee and should nominations exceed vacancies, election will be by ballot.

Nigel Birch
Secretary, FEL
55 Severn Avenue, Swindon Wilts SN25 3LL
United Kingdom
<bassbirder@ntlworld.com>

FEL inc becomes US tax-exempt

As of August 12, 2004, FEL Inc. (the US arm of FEL) is officially a 501(c)(3) tax exempt public charity. Our tax-exempt status is retroactive to the date of the FEL Inc.'s incorporation in North Carolina (i.e. September 25, 2003) and remains in effect until August 2007 (at which time IRS will review our status to make sure we are still eligible). US donors can now receive full tax credit for gifts to the Foundation.

Please contact our US representative, Blair Rudes, if you would like more details, or to make a donation to FEL inc.

Blair A. Rudes, 8300 Paces Oakes Boulevard #111, Charlotte NC 28213, USA.
<BARudes@aol.com>

Cheques should be made out to "Foundation for Endangered Languages Inc.", and receipts will be mailed by return.

A Vision for FEL's Future

Nicholas Ostler, the Chairman (also the Editor of Ogmios), wrote to the Executive Committee on 11 July 2004, a week before the Committee meeting on the 18th.

1. Our current situation

In addition to our traditional activities (grants, conferences, proceedings sales, newsletter, web-site - all under England charitable status) we have currently three new items close to ready, which should enable some new departures for FEL:

a. a fund-raising document, including costings for a small, part-time, but permanent, administrative operation

b. a fundraising website in the USA, linking donors to projects

c. tax-free exemption (under 501c3) in the USA, allowing us proper financial status in the USA as well as UK

2. Our immediate plans for new support activities

a. have an administrative assistant, to put our regular activities on a more regular footing

b. begin campaign to raise funds for the Foundation from established funders

c. catalogue language communities (each with representative with whom we have links) to create network of Foundation projects

3. New Long-Term activities aimed at linking people directly with particular language communities

a. "adopt a language", through the US website (1b) and established links (2c)

b. "language volunteers", placing in touch with communities those (concerned outsiders) who want to get involved in documenting, protecting or promoting a language

The overall intent of this new stage is to make FEL a more "hands-on" organization, extending the personal involvement which is such a feature of our conferences to the actual experience of FEL members. Henceforth, besides being generally positive to EL through joining FEL, people would have the opportunity for real contact with endangered language communities, whether through providing a more personal (and persistent) funding stream for work in them, or through actually getting experience in field linguistics and projects bound up with language/literacy/publishing.

4. Concrete moves to initiate the new phase

a. write job description for the new assistant, and appoint him/her

*(**Important question:** can this appointment precede the securing of new funds (via 2b)? Thanks to the latest Crystal gift, we do have a small tranche of unallocated funds for this. And if so, it would be possible for the assistant to speed progress in 4b and 4c, systematically contacting funding sources, and our background of language communities.)*

b. correspond with established funding organizations (already listed by Salem Mezhoud)

c. correspond with all previous grant-recipients

d. confer with sources of language-documentation training (esp. Rausing fund at SOAS) - a necessary prerequisite to placing "language volunteers"

e. integrate 3a "adopt a language" programme, advertising in the first instance to FEL members

f. integrate 3b "language volunteers" programme

5. Overall points

The result would be a much more active organization, though not as such (politically) activist.

FEL would be building on its perceived strengths as an organization that provides useful links between people of good will and language communities, and secondarily as a channel for funds to useful EL work of various kinds.

No other EL organization is doing anything like "adopt a language", or "language volunteers", essentially building a permanent global network.

I am already getting (usually young) volunteers of the type required and have nowhetre to channel the good will involved.

Such a volunteer network might give a more focused idea of where FEL funds (or members'/donors' funds) should be usefully applied.

Note:
The document was well-received at the Executive Committee meeting; and action was agreed on point 4a.

The Editor requests the opinions and suggestions of FEL members on any of these points.

Barcelona Conference: Provisional Programme for FEL VIII

On The Margins Of Nations
Endangered Langs & Linguistic Rights

Fri. 1 October

Salvador Giner, Vice - president of IEC
Joan A. Argenter, Conference Chairman
Nicholas Ostler, President of FEL - Welcome
Antoni Mir, Secretary General, Language Policy (Catalan Government)
Leanne Hinton - Using endangered lgs in North America
Salem Mezhoud - Linguistic Rights and Endangered Languages
Patrick E. Marlow - Bilingual Education, Legislative Intent, and Language Maintenance
Galina Dyrkheeva - New lg policy and small lgs in Russia: Buryat
Zelealem Leyew - The Fate of Endangered Languages in Ethiopia
Gregory Hankoni Kamwendo - Lg Planning from Below: Towards the Development/Promotion of a Marginalised Lg in N. Malawi
John Hobson - Learning to speak again: towards the provision of appropriate training for the revitalization of Australian lgs in New South Wales
Shelley Tulloch - Grassroots Desires for Lg Planning in Nunavut
Alejandra Arellano Martínez
Almandina Cárdenas Demay - Hacia la definición de una política del lenguaje explícita en México
Monica Ward - Building from the Bottom - up: Linguistic Rights for Extremely Endangered Languages
Sue Wright - Lg rights: the difficulty of defining what is to be protected
Marta Moskal - Lg Policy and Protection of Endangered Lgs in Poland

Sat. 2 October

Patxi Goenaga - Fronteras que separan, fronteras que dividen
Yun-Hsuan Kuo - Lg, Identities, and Linguistic Rights in Taiwan
John P. Hawkins - The Impact of Religious Change on Language Use Among the K'iche' Maya of Guatemala
Elena Benedicto - Ling. Rights in the Nicaraguan Atlantic Coast: Actions on the Ground within the Legislative Framework of the Estatuto de Autonomía
Belen Uranga, Estibaliz Amorrortu, Andoni Barreña, Esti Izagirre, Itziar Idiazabal - What do linguistic communities think about the official recognition of their languages?
Alok Kumar Das - Linguistic Practices and not just Linguistic Rights: Endangered Languages in New Europe
Mariana Bara - Arman Endangered Language
Ernesto Díaz - Couder Cabral - The Broken Pot. The role of language in the reconstruction of indigenous identities.

Sun. 3 October

Tjeerd de Graaf - EL in the Border Areas of Japan and Russia
Stephanie Inglis - Teaching Mi'kmaq (Micmac) to the next generation: pedagogical effects of lg death
Verónica Grondona - Lg Policy, Ling Rts & Lg Maintenance in Arg.
Carme Junyent - Linguistic diversity in Catalonia: towards a model of linguistic revitalization
Nataliya Belitser - Endangered Lgs in Crimea/Ukraine: Crimean, Tatar, Karait, and Krymchak
Ivelina Kazakova
Maria Miteva - The Future of Bulgarian: The Road to Extinction or Paradise Regained
Luke O'Callaghan - Lg Policy in Kazakhstan, Norway and Ireland
Siobhan Casson - "Living the Lg": Balancing Australian Aboriginal and Western knowledge systems
Roger Blench - Endangering Languages: policies for intentional language endangerment

Posters

Akim Elnazarov - EL and Education. Badakhshan Province of Tajikistan
Eva Savelsberg - Kurdish (Kurmancî) as minority lg in the Federal Republic of Germany
José Antonio Flores Farfán - Illustrations of lg and culture revitalization maintenance and development in Mexico
Mary Jane Norris - Assessing the Status Use and Accessibility of Canada's Aboriginal Lgs within Communities and Cities: Some Proposed Indicators
Michael Prosser van der Riet - Promotion of minority lg script in Southwest China. A relative success or complete failure?
Mikael Grut - The Endangered Celtic Lgs
Richard John Hawkins - Probit Modeling Lg Attrition
Rudy Osiel Camposeco - El idioma maya Popti' y los Derechos Lingüísticos
Victorio N. Sugbo - The literary response: claiming rights in three Philippine lgs
Ya-ling Chang - Lg Policies in an Aboriginal Primary School in Taiwan
Bartomeu Melià - Las lenguas indígenas en el Paraguay. Una visión desde el Censo 2002
Arnfinn Muruvik Vonen - Linguistic Rights Paving the Way Towards Lg Endangerment? The Case of Norwegian Sign Lg
Nariyo Kono - Developing partnerships between universities and lg communities: Top - down and bottom - up integration
Annelie Geyser - Manipulative strategies and lg equality: the case of isiZulu

3. Language Assertion:

some differing official approaches

Learning in Their Native Tongue Mexican Cities Join Experiment in Bilingual Education

By Mary Jordan Washington Post Foreign Service Tuesday, May 11, 2004

MEXICO CITY -- Jose Roberto Cleofas depends on red lights to make a living. As soon as cars brake for the stoplight in front of the PizzaHut on Insurgentes Avenue, Cleofas, 14, moves in on dirty windshields and starts wiping.

"How else can I eat?" said the fifth-grader, one of the hundreds of thousands of indigenous people who have migrated to Mexican cities in search of work as agriculture has failed in their dying villages.

The federal government is struggling to educate migrant children here and in other Mexican cities. The Education Ministry has

opened more than 2,000 bilingual schools for speakers of 62 indigenous languages in the past 10 years.

In part, the initiative is a response to the armed Zapatista movement in southern Mexico in the 1990s, which embarrassed the government by bringing worldwide attention to its neglect of indigenous people. Most of the new schools are in rural areas where indigenous children are in the majority. Now, the challenge is to accommodate their growing numbers in cities where they are a minority.

Like 300,000 other Mexicans, Cleofas's first language is Otomi. There are 10 million indigenous Mexicans in a population of 103 million. During the Spanish conquest 500 years ago, indigenous people fled to remote desert and mountain areas and remain among Mexico's poorest, marginalized by racial prejudice and inferior schooling.

Cleofas attends the Alfredo Correo school, a two-story brick schoolhouse, where about 100 of the 124 students are indigenous, according to the principal. The school was chosen last year to be one of 76 city schools in a vanguard bicultural project, because nearly all students speak the same language and are from Santiago Mexquititlan: a farming village 100 miles north of Mexico City. The schools' computers are programmed in both Spanish and Otomi, and teachers are required to learn Otomi so they can communicate more easily with students who are not proficient in Spanish. The national anthem is even sung in Otomi.

Cleofas, who began speaking Spanish five years ago at age 9, said he no longer feels bad in class for not knowing a certain word in Spanish. Rather, he said, he enjoys helping others pronounce Otomi words. Science concepts are clearer when explained in his native language, he said, and when he sings the Mexican national anthem in Otomi "it rings with more meaning."

Cleofas has already attended school longer than many indigenous students, who typically don't finish primary school. He said no one in his family had ever finished fifth grade. He said he had moved to Mexico City last year, aspiring only to earn money cleaning windshields. But he now likes school, especially maths.

The soaring number of indigenous children in urban Mexico is being compared by education officials to the situation in the United States. In both countries, the influx of migrant children is prompting schools to introduce native languages in the classroom.
And in both countries, multicultural education is facing some resistance.

"Yes, there are parents who don't like it," said Nancy Miranda, head of the parents association at the Alfredo Correo school. She said some parents believe assimilation and speaking Spanish are the way to get ahead in Mexico.

Some parents said the cost of training teachers in indigenous languages and creating special bilingual textbooks was a wasteful expenditure for an already thin education budget. Rather than have their children learn Otomi, some parents interviewed said they would prefer their children learn English or French, the languages wealthier Mexicans study.

Sylvia Schmelkes, coordinator of bilingual and intercultural education for the Education Ministry, said some of the opposition is based on discrimination against indigenous people.

"Racism is very profound in Mexico," she said. "You can ask any Mexican whether he or she is a racist, and they'll say, 'Of course, not.'... Nevertheless, in direct interaction, it exists."

Miranda, the parent association head, said some parents object to the growing number of indigenous children in their neighbourhood school. She said some parents unfairly complain that the newcomers "are slower to learn, don't know how to speak, are lower class."

Miranda, who is not indigenous, said she feels it is "neither positive nor negative" that her son Donovan, 9, comes home singing songs in Otomi. But she said there are practical benefits for him to be part of this experiment: The school receives additional funds, computers, and attention. President Vicente Fox visited recently to see the new program, considered a blueprint for integrating indigenous languages and customs in additional urban schools next year.

Students in the program receive scholarships of a few hundred dollars a year to make up for the cash that children might earn if they dropped out of school.

As Miranda spoke, the recess bell rang in the tidy school in the upper middle-class Roma neighborhood. Boys and girls wearing the school's blue uniform ran onto the concrete playground, some laughing and telling jokes in Otomi.

Most of the indigenous children at Alfredo Correo live in shacks haphazardly built in alleyways in a neighbourhood of ornate homes and expensive apartments. Life is harder for them, said school principal Juan Valente Garcia Lopez. Nearly all are so poor they quality for subsidized lunches of oranges, bananas, peanuts and milk, which were stacked in boxes outside his office.

Garcia said his job was to create an environment that raises self-esteem: "School represents a place where they are treated equally, where they aren't discriminated against, where they are happy."

When classes end for the day, Cleofas walks two blocks to the busy street corner where he earns, on a good evening, about $6 for eight hours washing windshields. Nearly all his classmates also work after school. Most of them sell handmade dolls from their village, or gum and candies.

"Usually their mom is working in one spot, but they are off on their own," said Rosalba Esquivel Fernandez, a first-grade teacher. She said most of her students, who are as young as 6, work on the streets until after midnight.

The migration of indigenous families to such major cities as Tijuana, Monterrey and Mexico City is more visible every year, in large part because of the women and small children it is bringing to urban street corners. The mothers commonly wear colourful traditional dresses and carry a baby strapped to their back. Children knock on car windows selling homemade handicrafts for the equivalent of $1. It is a business born of desperation.

"All that is left is a ghost town," said Domingo Gonzalez, a town official in Santiago Mexquititlan, Cleofas's village. So many people have left, he said in a telephone interview, because there is "no food, no jobs, nothing here."

The price of Mexican corn, the staple many indigenous people have grown on small plots for generations, has been undercut by less expensive U.S. corn that has flooded the Mexican market in the 10 years since the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

A shy boy with black wavy hair, Cleofas said that his mother died last year and that he survived on a little corn and the edible parts of cactus plants until he left his village for Mexico City.

"There is nothing left at home. It's better here," he said, wearing new tennis shoes and sport clothes he bought with his earnings from washing windshields.

He now lives with his sisters, who had previously migrated to Mexico City. Cleofas said school has given him goals and that he is now thinking about studying medicine, because, "I'd like to help others."

Language training for Welsh early years staff

Sally Kirkland in The Guardian, 5 Aug, 2004

The Welsh assembly has announced £4.87m of funding to improve Welsh language training for those working with under-fives.

The minister for education and lifelong learner, Jane Davidson, today approved £4.87m of the £7m for the provision of training for early-years staff as part of Iaith

Pawb, the national action plan for a bilingual Wales.

The funds are earmarked for Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin (MYM), the Association of Welsh Nursery Schools and Playgroups, and Trinity College, Carmarthen, the university sector college of west Wales.

"These resources will mean that 450 early-years practitioners will be trained over the next two to three years," Ms Davidson said. "This is three times as many as we had originally envisaged.

Calls are also being made to increase access to Welsh-taught subjects higher up the education ladder, as Welsh students came together this week for the National Eisteddfod at Tredegar park, outside Cardiff, and demanded the right to a Welsh-language education in Wales's universities.

The Eisteddfod is an annual event in Wales which has descended from a Celtic tradition. "Over the years, it has become a political event," explained James Knight, the president of the National Union of Students Wales. "Many organisations, such as political parties and the Welsh assembly have a stand. It's like a huge Freshers' fair for Wales."

He added: "NUS Wales's view is that it's a basic human right to have education in the language of their [Welsh students'] nation. As we're a bilingual nation, this should be provided," said Knight.

Over the course of the week, students from NUS Wales, and UMCA and UMCB (Aberystwyth and Bangor's Welsh Students' Unions), have called for equal opportunities for bilingual students, as well as increased student funding, and continue to campaign to keep top-up fees out of Wales.

"Welsh language, literature, history and drama are really the only subjects currently taught in Welsh in higher education institutions, so someone studying a physical science for example, can't study it in Welsh," explained Knight.

Aboriginal Languages onto the Curriculum in New South Wales

ABORIGINAL language studies will become a major part of the school curriculum in an Australian first that takes indigenous education to a new level across New South Wales. The formal lessons in Aboriginal languages will be driven by demand from local communities, but it is hoped thousands of non-indigenous students will support the program.

NSW Education Minister Andrew Refshauge today will launch a new syllabus for mandatory and elective courses in Aboriginal languages for students from Kindergarten to Year 10. Students in Government and independent schools will be able to study an Aboriginal language subject in primary school, for their School Certificate and for the HSC.

Initiatives to teach and revive the state's 70 indigenous languages will be spearheaded by specialists who will help teachers in the classroom. Under the new policy:

- A kindergarten to year 10 syllabus will be introduced from 2005, enabling any student in the state to study an Aboriginal language;
- More than $1 million already has been spent establishing an Aboriginal languages research and resource centre providing technical support to indigenous communities;
- An Aboriginal languages database will become available to schools and communities from 2005; and
- New guidelines will help Aboriginal communities trying to revive or teach their local language

Education sources indicated yesterday that primary schools could spend at least half an hour a week on Aboriginal language lessons.

At Darlington Public School, children already are learning how to count, sing and identify body parts in the Wiradjuri language. Teachers said reaction had been positive, but they were careful not to "tread on the toes" of community members who were not supportive.

Primary principal Cheryl McBride said the syllabus would give Aboriginal pupils a sense of pride and recognition.

Opposition spokeswoman Jillian Skinner also supported the plan, as long as core subjects were not neglected.

It is understood about 80 schools have applied for resources to run the programs; about 25 are being funded.

Dr Refshauge said learning a language helped improve comprehension and literacy.

Follow-up on Linguistic Minorities "GO" in Mysore State

Star of Mysore 16 May 2004
http://www.starofmysore.com

Through Harold F. Schiffman
haroldfs@ccat.sas.upenn.edu
"Last week I forwarded a message copied from the newspaper Star of Mysore, about a Government Order to communicate with the citizenry in minority languages; this has now been rescinded: (Note the wonderful reference to the use of English reaching only the "creamy layer."
lgpolicy-list@ccat.sas.upenn.edu

Controversial order

In summarily withdrawing the Government Order (GO) ordering the issuing of notifications, orders and rules in minority languages in addition to Kannada and English, the Mr. S.M. Krishna regime has opted for the easiest and safest course of action in the face of mounting opposition.

From the very day it was mooted by the Department of Personnel Administration and Reforms (DPAR), it was clear that the controversial GO was headed for trouble. The GO had stipulated that in areas where the population of linguistic minorities constituted a minimum 15 per cent of the total population, government notifications, orders and rules should also be issued in the language of the said minorities. It could have been Marathi in Belgaum, Tulu/ Konkani in Mangalore, Telugu in Bidar, Kodava in Kodagu. But many of these languages are dialects which use Kannada script. So in any case, they can read Kannada.

Viewed through the prism of an ordinary common man in these places, the GO could have been construed as a patently progressive move, and one that behoves an increasingly cosmopolitan State. By making arcane government notifications available in their tongue, it could have been argued that the government was empowering the very people who had put it there. In addition, the GO would also have gone some distance in removing confusion and eliminating middlemen who thrive in such conditions.

However, a host of Kannada writers and activists, and the Kannada Development Authority (KDA), urged the government to withdraw the move. They feared that the GO would go against the spirit of Statehood of Karnataka, and might spoil the harmony between Kannadigas and linguistic minorities. There is merit in their argument.

It can be argued that the needs of the linguistic minorities are met by publication of notifications in English. But that only reaches the creamy layer, and the Krishna governments bid to assuage the simmering discontent at the grassroots has come unstuck.

One thought Mr. S.M. Krishna, who incidentally was the Dy. CM in Mr. M. Veerappa Moily's cabinet, would have learnt a lesson after seeing the problems created following Moily's decision to broadcast news in Urdu, apparently to please Muslims. Following protest, this decision was withdrawn. Sure, Mr. Krishna has not learnt his lesson.

4. Appeals, News and Views from Endangered Communities

European News Shorts

Agency for the Friulan Language Launched

Udin 8/6/2004 by Max Mauro

A new weapon of protection for the Friulan language will be soon in place with the birth of the new *Agjenzie regjonal lenghe furlaneä* (Regional Agency for the Friulan Language), whose statute was approved yesterday by the regional government of Friuli Venezia Giulia, Italy.

EU Calls for Russian Help to End Language Pogroms in Transdnistria

San Diego 8/5/2004 by James Fife

European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Javier Solana, wrote to Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov last week calling for Russian cooperation to help end the attacks on Moldavian speakers in the break-away Transdnistria area of Moldova.

Sorbian Newspaper Threatened by Cutbacks

Brussels 8/4/2004 by Brigitte Alfter

The Sorbian newspaper *Serbske Nowine* is threatened by cutbacks. The editor fears for the future of the paper. Meanwhile other Sorbian activities will have to save money and bilingual German-Sorbian road signs in one town were destroyed.

Iñaki Uria from the Basque Newspaper Egunkaria Released on Bail

Brussels 8/4/2004 by Davyth Hicks

Iñaki Uria, journalist and manager with the banned Basque language newspaper Egunkaria was finally released on bail on Monday night, reports the Basque newspaper Berria, after being held in jail for nearly two years.

A New Linguistic Climate for the Welsh Language and a £1m Gift

Abergele 8/4/2004 by Huw Morgan

In the week that the Welsh Language Board announced its twelfth annual report - and the last by the present chairman Rhodri Williams, the language received a financial boost when a benefactor left a £1m to help the language in his will. This interest from this money - likely to be around £50,000 a year - is to be spent on furthering the language amongst the young and to help the unique Welsh language cultural gatherings, the *eisteddfodau*.

You will find the complete text at: http://www.eurolang.net

Greetings from the Secretary of the Tribal Media Group

From: "Tribal Media Group" <tribalmedia@rediffmail.com>

Aizawl is the State capital city of Mizoram, one of the states of India that border Myanmar. That is why refugees from Myanmar are mostly based here. Tribal Media Group wishes to highlight the abuse committed by the ruling junta in Myanmar and emphasise protection of our rights. In Myanmar there is no charter of rights to protect us, our languages are endangered. A ban has been imposed on our languages being studied as subjects in the school curriculum. We can provide clear evidence of this if you require, as we have documents to prove that the military ordered such prohibitions.

Please help us!

Patrick SP, Secretary, TMG
Aizawl GPO, Aizawl-796001, INDIA

Launch of the Resource Network for Linguistic Diversity

The Resource Network for Linguistic Diversity (RNLD) is a new initiative which aims to network practitioners who are working to record, retrieve and reintroduce endangered languages. The RNLD will focus on language maintenance activities in the region broadly bounded by Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, East Timor and Melanesia. The goal of the Network is to target a comprehensive approach to language maintenance, develop a network between language maintenance practitioners, and support linguistic diversity by maintaining a website of resources, together with occasional symposia and conferences in the region.

The Resource Network for Linguistic Diversity will be launched at the Australian Linguistic Society Annual Conference at the University of Sydney on Wednesday 14 July at 5pm.

For further information, visit our website at `http://www.linguistics.unimelb.edu.au/RNLD.htm` or contact the convenors — Margaret Florey (margaret.florey@arts.monash.edu.au) and Nick Thieberger (thien@unimelb.edu.au).

The Tiéfo Language falls apart in a year's time !

Sun, 13 Jun 2004

Ouattara Ibrahima <ibsifr@yahoo.fr

The present article is designed to draw attention on the collapse of a language and the desolation of its helpless people who witness this unbearable situation. This language shares the same fate as many minority languages in a state of extinction in the face of the expansion of bigger languages and the silence of language decision-makers. Language being the codification and the vehicle of any culture, its extinction inevitably brings about the loss of the cultural identity of the people and also the reduction of the cultural diversity in the world.

Tiéfo is a Senufo language spoken in western Burkina Faso. The language is spoken in the region of Comoe Province, east of Toussiana, in Daramandougou Tiéfo. There are ethnic Tiéfo in about 20 villages. Compared to their neighbours, the Tiéfo people have almost lost their language. They all speak Jula with a particular accent. Today the language is only spoken in the isolated village of Daramandougou located under the cliffs south of Bobo and 44 km North East of Banfora in the department of Tiefora in the province of the Comoe. In Nyagafogo we have very few speakers and most of them are old. The Tiéfo dialect of Noumoudara is extinct. Tiéfo speakers can thus be considered to be less than 1000. The language survives in Daramandougou because the village is isolated. What is alarming is the dynamism with which the Jula language is advancing. It has already eaten up one-third of the village of Daramandougou (Sounougou, Sangogo), leaving two thirds (Djinidjan, Masaso, Biton, Bofofoso, Flaso). Young people are always migrating to neighboring towns or countries to make a better living. Today old men (50 to 75 years old) are the ones who understand and speak the language very well. As for the remaining younger people (7 to 40 years old), they understand the language, but use it in a less natural way. According to the Ethnologue the ethnic population is 12,000 to 15,000, but speakers were only 1000 in 1995. The language was supposed to be extinct, but is still spoken in the village of Daramandougou, according to German linguist Kerstin Winkelmann (1998). The people of Daramandougou still maintain their language. What has protected Daramandougou so far is its isolation: in fact, the village is not open to the outside, there is no easy access, no market, no good road. They seem to know that they are the only Tiefo speakers left and do not want to go the way the rest of their ethnic group. Since the Tiéfo language is in such a situation, we have found it necessary to ponder over it, in order to find out strategies to come to its rescue, for its people lament its imminent disappearance. Furthermore, the local government intends to remove (probably next June, but for the time being nothing is definite) the people from the one remaining village where the language is spoken (Daramandougou) and scatter them in the region because a mining business is being developed (there seems to be an important source of gold underneath the village).

The Tiéfo people are generally considered to be the first settlers south of Bobo Dioulasso (economic capital of Burkina Faso), in the departments of Peni, Tiefora and Sideradougou. They live in about twenty villages under the famous cliffs of Banfora (Capital of the province): Noumoudara, Péni, Finlande, Matruku, Daramandougou, Mousobadougou, Derege, Dege-Dege, Samogan, Tien, Kodala, Nyagafon, Lanfiera). Their linguistic neighbours are Bobo (Mande), Toussian (Gur), Cerma (Gur) and Jula (Mande). This peaceful and courageous people has been seriously decimated by wars in the past, which remain a nightmare for them. They have witnessed their linguistic space being steadily reduced to less than one

village (Daramandougou), for there are about three speakers of the language in Noumoudara, and twenty-four in Nyagafogo.

Today it is difficult to know the exact number of Tiéfo speakers; but what is sure is that the number of real speakers has been seriously reduced. If this state of affairs continues, the Tiéfo language will disappear or the language will be in a critical situation; even if it still exists, it will creolise with Jula. Culturally they remain isolated and they have a matrimonial system. But the day this isolation goes, the Tiéfo language will be in danger of total disappearance. This has already begun with the new mining business (which started a year ago). Today, one can find different ethnic groups in the village (Mossi, Dagara, Gouin..)

It is not only a linguistic problem, but also a problem of identity. The loss of their language brings about the loss of their culture and identity, they feel they are neither Tiéfo nor Jula. They feel they can no longer have a secret, even strangers will understand what is said in Jula. Some Tiéfo people express themselves in the following sad words: 'We have been decimated and scattered by war, we have lost our identity and now our language is being destroyed and nobody intends to help us: now we are lost for ever.'

Today, most Tiéfo are ready to attend school to learn their language because for them it is a real shame not to understand one's language, it epitomizes the total failure of their culture. Many a Tiéfo is frustrated because of this situation. A Tiéfo boy confided in me that 'at school I don't want people to know that I am a Tiéfo. If they know they will laugh at me because I don't understand my native language.'

As an individual I am doing what I can but a handful help from any one will be welcome. No help is too small, provided that it contributes.The main goal of this article is an SOS to whom may be concerned in helping to undertake an intensive collection and recording of any data about this really endangered language. I hope that this dream will become a reality sooner rather than later.

My research is planned as follows :

Historical background of the language and its people

Here we shall present the language and its people.

The language research

Phonetics, phonology, grammar and lexical research will be conducted by collecting, tape recording and transcribing words, sentences, stories and songs.

Lexicon data collection (approximately 1000)

With the help of SIL computer software, we plan to develop a lexical database of all words that have been collected, and with the help of native speakers, determine the meanings of each one, including also an illustrative phrase for each, if possible.

Indigenous Languages and Technology: Introduction and request for assistance

Date: Thu, 3 Jun 2004 15:15:02 -0500
From: Language Laboratories and Archives <language-labs@UCHICAGO.EDU
<ILAT@LISTSERV.ARIZONA.EDU

Greetings! My name is Barbara Need and I am a manager of the University of Chicago Language Laboratories and Archives (LLA). I have been an interested eavesdropper on this list from some months now, being both computer support and archivist for the Labs. Part of the LLA's collection is nearly 350 hours of recordings of Meso-American languages done in the 1930s and 1950s. Much of this material is on open-reel tapes, which, of course, are deteriorating. Last year the LLA submitted a proposal to the NEH to digitize this material and make it available on-line to researchers and interested members of the communities where the recordings were made. Our proposal was turned down, but we are trying to revise it to submit again. I am hoping that this community can assist me with addressing some of the concerns expressed by the reviewers.

1) One of the concerns expressed was the lack of letters of support from outside the University. If any of you would be willing to write such a letter, please let me know. I can certainly provide you with more information about the collection

2) Another concern related to the fact that we have no field notes (or none that I know of--I have some queries out) accompanying the recordings. one reviewer asked how researchers unfamiliar with the original interviewer make use of "often highly personal" interviews fifty years (or more) after they were done. Our PI will be addressing this from the perspective of a phonologist/phonetician, but if any of you have any suggestions, it would be much appreciated.

Barbara Need
Manager (LLA)
University of Chicago
Language Laboratories and Archives

International Journal Of Bilingual Education And Bilingualism - Special Issue On Indigenous Language Bilingualism: Call For Papers

Guest Editor: Norbert Francis, Northern Arizona University

Manuscripts are being requested for the upcoming special issue of the *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* on Indigenous Language Bilingualism. The focus of the special issue will be on research reports from field studies of bilingualism and language learning, aspects of language use and language competence, and research applied to both educational contexts and language development in general involving indigenous language communities and indigenous cultures. Papers should be reports on an actual empirical study, or a theoretical discussion or review of literature that references empirical work in the field. A broad range of theoretical and methodological approaches is to be included, from: educational linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, anthropological studies of language and education, and work from experimental, controlled-descriptive, and ethnographic approaches. Aspects of language development and language use focused on either the indigenous language or the national language or both, children and/or adults, in school and/or extracurricular-community settings are being solicited.

Authors may, if they wish, send an abstract and introductory section of a proposed paper to the guest editor to receive initial observations regarding suitability for the special issue theme, final acceptance subject to a full review of the completed paper.

Submission Format

Papers should be original, previously unpublished research, approximately 6,000 - 7,000 words, in English. Guidelines for authors can be found at http://www.multilingual-matters.com/
Then click: Journals info → International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism → General Guidelines for Authors of Journal Papers.

Interested persons should feel free to send any inquiry related to this project to the guest editor.

Send your submission (preferably as a Word file attached to an email message), prepared for anonymous review, to:
norbert.francis@nau.edu
or by post to:
Norbert Francis
College of Education, P.O. Box 5774
Northern Arizona University
Flagstaff, Arizona 86001, USA

Please indicate a return address and/or email, including institutional affiliation, of the primary author. An electronic version of your paper, if accepted, will be required.

Important Dates

Paper submissions:	May 1, 2005
Notification of acceptance:	Aug 30, 2005
Final versions due:	Nov 30, 2005

5. Allied Societies and Activities

The Association for the preservation of minority languages in the Czech Republic

from Diana Kosslerova 23 May 2004 14:34

OSTRAVA, North Moravia, May 23 (CTK) - The Association for the preservation of minority languages in the Czech Republic, that was founded in Cesky Tesin on Saturday, wants to protect the language rights of citizens who use other than the official language in their everyday life, Jozef Szymeczek said today.

The same associations function in further EU countries and the headquarters' seat is in Brussels, said Szymeczek, chairman of the Congress of Poles in the Czech Republic.

One of the countries where a similar association exists is Poland, and new ones are to be founded in Slovakia and Hungary soon as well.

The association wants to hold cultural and educational events to help preserve ethnic minority languages in the Czech Republic.
The association will for the time being be based in Cesky Tesin, but it could move to Prague later on. The organisation will apply for money from EU funds. Szymeczek said that a total of 12 ethnic minorities are officially recognised in the Czech Republic: Bulgarian, Croatian, German, Greek, Hungarian, Polish, Romany, Russian, Ruthenian, Serbian, Slovak and Ukrainian.
The numerically strongest is the Slovak minority with 184,000 people according to the 2001 census. It is followed by Poles and Germans according to the census.

Documenting Endangered Languages (NSF/NEH/Smithsonian partnership)

The National Science Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities recently announced "Documenting Endangered Languages," a multi-year funding partnership supporting projects to develop and advance knowledge concerning endangered human languages. Made urgent by the imminent death of an estimated half of the 6,000-7,000 currently used human languages, this effort aims also to exploit advances in information technology. Funding will support fieldwork and other activities relevant to recording, documenting, and archiving endangered languages, including the preparation of lexicons, grammars, text samples, and databases. Funding will be available in the form of one- to three-year project grants as well as fellowships for up to twelve months. At least half the available funding will be awarded to projects involving fieldwork. The Smithsonian Institution's National Anthropological Archives will participate in the partnership as a research host, a non-funding role.

Principal Investigators and applicants for Fellowships may propose projects involving one or more of the following activities:

1. Conduct fieldwork to record in digital audio and video format one or more endangered languages.

2. Carry out later stages of documentation including the preparation of lexicons, grammars, text samples, and databases.

3. Digitize and otherwise preserve and provide wider access to such documentary materials, including previously collected materials and those concerned with languages which have recently died and are related to currently endangered languages.

4. Further develop standards and databases to make this documentation widely available in consistent, archivable, interoperable, and Web-based formats.

5. Conduct initial analysis of findings in the light of current linguistic theory.

6. Train native speakers in descriptive linguistics.

7. Create other infrastructure, including workshops, to make the problem of endangered languages more widely understood and more effectively addressed.

Proposed projects may range from a single investigator working for six months to a group of investigators working for three years. DEL will give the highest priority to projects that involve actually recording in digital audio and video format endangered languages before they become extinct.

Academic institutions and non-profit, non-academic organizations located in the United States are eligible for project funding. U.S. citizens are eligible to apply for fellowships, as are foreign nationals who have been living in the United States or its jurisdictions for at least the three years prior to the proposal deadline.

The anticipated funding amount is $2,000,000 annually, pending the availability of funds. It will be distributed among 18 to 22 awards, approximately 12 of which will be fellowships of either $40,000 (9-12 months) or $24,000 (6-8 months).

The first proposal deadline will be November 1, 2004. For full program information and proposal guidelines visit:

http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2004/nsf04605/nsf04605.htm

General questions and questions about project grants should be directed to Joan Maling, Linguistics Program Director, NSF (tel: 703/292-8046, fax: 703/292-9068, e-mail: jmaling@nsf.gov).

Questions about fellowships should be directed to Helen Aguera, Acting Deputy Director, Preservation & Access Program, NEH (tel: 202/606-8573, e-mail: haguera@neh.gov).

6. Reports on Field Research

The situation of endangered languages in the Sudan and some notes on Kufo: Roger Blench

Mallam Dendo Ltd.

Sudan has recently been much in the news, despite the situation in Darfur having been plainly apparent since 2003. The tragedy unfolding for the people there is also a tragedy for minority languages, many of which may never recover from the dislocation and dispossession that follows, as its inhabitants are turned into refugees in their own land. In February and March I spent some time in Sudan assessing the situation of minority languages, as far as possible from the perspective of Khartoum and I hope to present a more extended version of my findings in a future Ogmios. Broadly speaking, however, many groups have been scattered from their home area and now exist only as refugees in large Sudanese towns. Although the older members of the displaced communities are very committed to their language, the Sudanese government is equally committed to the destruction of minority languages and the enforced adoption of Arabic. As a consequence, many ethnolinguistic groups are finding it difficult to maintain language competence among their children. This is particularly true in the case of the peoples of the Nuba Hills in Kordofan, where violent attacks on these communities during the 1990s caused many villages are deserted and their inhabitants scattered or killed. The Nuba peoples were always small in number by comparison with peoples such as the Fur and Zaghawa, and their languages correspondingly more fragile.

The Nuba are most well-known in Europe as icons, flamboyant body-painters in the photographs of Leni Riefenstahl (1976a,b), and it is a particular irony to meet these peoples today, dressed in traditional white Sudanese robe and turban, culturally transformed in a generation. Even if the Nuba eventually return to their villages much of the government's aims will have been achieved, the destruction of the distinctive culture of the Nuba peoples. The Nuba have been caught by the paradoxes of the war with the South; although they appear physically similar to southerners, they live in the north and have little in common with them. As a result, it has proved difficult to harmonise their goals with

the general aims of the southern movements and the question of the Nuba Hills is so far unresolved in the continuing peace talks.

Nonetheless, many Nuba groups have language committees and are active in promoting writing and orthography. Many also have musical performance groups and these are important in keeping musical traditions alive. In February, the first Nuba musical day in many years was permitted by the government and Nuba groups from all over the Khartoum region came to perform their traditional dances. However, resources are limited, and often language and culture committees break up as their members disperse seeking work.

Sudan probably has as many endangered languages as any country in the world and the long-running civil insecurity has generally meant they are very poorly documented. The situation is made worse by the fact that they are 'intentionally endangered', actively discouraged by government policy. The absence of attention by the various endangered languages funds is therefore all the more striking. As far as I could see, there is no work at all going on funded by the various foundations that purport to be interested in documentation. Perhaps the languages are not deemed 'theoretically' interesting enough?

Kufo

The Kufo language is being energetically promoted by Mr. Abdalla Mongash, with whom I have been working on a draft dictionary. It is therefore a useful case-study of the situation of a typical endangered Nuba language. Kufo [=Kufa] was spoken originally in some six villages of the Nuba Hills, but today is spoken principally by dislocated communities in Khartoum and Kosti.

Kufo is closely related to Kanga, one of the Kadu languages, usually considered to be Nilo-Saharan. Information on these languages is found in Meinhof (1915-1919), MacDiarmid and MacDiarmid (1931), Stevenson (1956-57), Schadeberg (1994) and Dafalla (2000). The only specific reference to Kufo is in Hall & Hall (2004) where the phonology is described and a proposed orthography set out.

Table 1 shows the nomenclature of Kufo. Morphophonemic changes of initial consonants require the velar to be voiced after another velar or an open syllable, hence the 'k' sometimes appears as 'g'.

Table 1. Nomenclature of Kufo

IPA	Orthography	Gloss
kʊʊfɔ	Kufo	person
kudu maa GʊʊfɔGʊʊfɔ		people
kʊʊfɔ	Kufo	location
tɪ̰ŋ gʊʊfɔ	Ting Gufo	language

Table 2 shows the main settlements and recognised dialects of Kufo, with their IPA rendering, orthographic spelling and common (map) spelling. Broadly speaking, official spelling converts ɔ→a and supplies final open –a with a superfluous velar nasal. The orthography represents +ATR vowels with a following -x, which gives words a strange appearance, but seems to work for speakers.

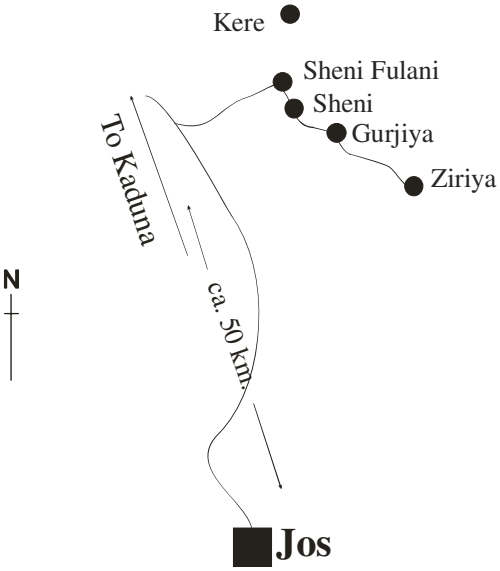
Most of these settlements are now deserted and there are reckoned to be perhaps a hundred Kufo speakers still resident in the hills. The numbers of refugee communities are hard to reckon, but there are probably less than a thousand and some of these are now semi-speakers.

The first efforts of literacy in Kufo began in 1994, with the production of a primer and work on the language has continued ever since. There is a small community of interested readers in Khartoum, but the demands of migration for work have meant that it is difficult to teach the language to the next generation. Unless the Kufo return to their home villages soon, the language will be lost for ever.

Table 2. Kufo settlements

IPA	Orthography	Common spelling	Gloss
kʊ̀fɔ	Kufo	Kufa	
lìmɔ̀	Lixmox	Lima	
màsà	Maxsax	Masang	
lɔ̀gɪ	Logi	Abu Sinun	
dɔ̀gáfé	Dogafe	Al Ahwal	
kɔ̀ŋɔ̀	Kongo	Kanga	
ʧìlè	Tixlex	Mashayish	forest

Figure 1. Location of Seni



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The ɛBoze [Buji] language and the movement for literacy: Roger Blench

Mallam Dendo Ltd.

Introduction

The ɛBoze (Buji) language forms part of the 'Jere cluster' and is in turn part of the Northern Jos group of the East Kainji languages spoken north and west of Jos town in Central Nigeria (Crozier & Blench 1992).

The Boze live east and west of the Jos-Zaria road which runs northwest of Jos, in Bassa Local government area. ɛBoze is often called Buji in earlier literature. The only published data on ɛBoze are some hundred words in the Benue-Congo Comparative Wordlist (Williamson and Shimizu 1968; Williamson 1973). Limited historical and sociological data can be found in Temple (1922), Gunn

(1953) and Nengel (1999). The following information represents the results of surveys conducted by Roger Blench and John Nengel in December 2003 and January 2004. Apart from linguistic work, significant videos were made of traditional Boze music, which have been lodged with the British Library.

http://www.bl.uk/collections/sound-archive/wtmafrica.html

ɛBoze is the language of the AnaBoze people. The correct name for one Boze person is unaBoze and for the people anaBoze, while the name of the language is ɛBoze. The Boze are divided into two main dialects, ɛGorong and ɛKɔkɔŋ, as well as a third rather divergent speech form, ɛFiru. The 'original' Boze are considered to be the anɛKɔkɔŋ.

Table 3. Nomenclature of the Boze peoples

Language	One person	People	Short form
ɛBoze	unaBoze	anaBoze	B
ɛKɔkɔŋ	unaKɔkɔŋ	anɛKɔkɔŋ	K
ɛGorong	unaGorong	anaGorong	G
ɛFiru	unoFiru	ànoFíru	F

Main settlements where ɛBoze is spoken are:

Table 4. Boze settlements

Original name	Modern name	Etymology of name	Gp.
Ugbìrì ɔ̀gɔ̀mɔ̀		settlement of chief	F
Àbɛnjɔlɔ		name of nearby hill	F
Ànujà		people of farmland	F
Ànó Téwɔ̀ Tebɔ		people of the black hills	F
Kiraŋgo	Tumbakiri		F
Abɛ̀njɛ̀ɛl			G
Ádɔ̀ŋkɔrɔŋ			G
Ásèrsiŋ	Minta		G
Bicizà	Mista Ali		G
Bìdiri	Kongo	sticky soil	G
Gɔ̀rɔɔŋ I	Gurum	River name	G
Gɔ̀rɔɔŋ II	Gurum		G
Lìndàŋ			G
Màlèempe	Jejin Fili		G
Owòyɔyɔ̀	Owoyoyo		G
Rɛ̀shɔkɔ̀	Reshoko	shrub sp.	G
Rɛ̀wɔɔ	Rafin Gwaza		G
Ùrɛkuùŋ	Urakun		G
Àmarujà		behind farmland	K
Àmarujà dizì			K
Àturu	Ulu Aturu		K
Bìntìrí	Bintiri		K
Boolò	Zabolo		K
Bɛhɔ̀lɛ̀	Bihol		K
Bəri	Sarari		K
Bèsɔɔ	Beso		K
Gbàndaŋ			K
Icizà	Fadan Gwamna		K
Màkuŋ	Makun		K
Ògbènàkùrá	Mairaga		K
Ógwara	Ugwara		K
Ɔ̀peègo			K
Pepeeŋ	Tila		K
Rìbàmboze			K
Ridapɔɔ	Ridapo		K
Tìpɔ́ɔ̀ I		barren rocks	K
Tìpɔ́ɔ̀ II		barren rocks	K
Tùùmu	Sarari ?		K
Ukweshi	Ukwashi		K
Zəəlàki	Zallaki		K
Zùku	N.N.P.C. Depot		Mixed

Many of these settlements are very small and dispersed and often adjacent to one another. Hence numbers of speakers are smaller than might at first appear. The number of ɛBoze speakers is hard to gauge, as Hausa has made inroads in many areas. But taking all three groups together, there must be 6-7000, not all of whom will be fully competent.

ɛBoze is usually considered part of the Jere cluster of languages, which includes;

ɛBoze, iZele, iSanga. iBunu with iLɔrɔ, iPanawa

Most ɛBoze speakers can understand these languages with only minor adjustments, although some other languages have very different tone systems.

Among the Goroŋ is a core population, the *Ananyi ma Goroŋ* or 'people of the inner Gorong' who are said to be the original inhabitants of the Boze area, but whose language has now been assimilated. This assimilation of the original inhabitants took place following the migration of the Boze into the area, probably during the fifteenth century (Nengel 1999:48-52). The evidence is very limited as to the original language of the *Ananyi ma Gorong* who lived at Aturu settlement. Descendants of the original group now exist only as the Akwərə clan of the Boze. This ancient speech has been preserved by the Akwərə clan only in a set of remembered numerals (Nengel 1999:69). The table shows these numerals, which are clearly duodecimal, like Plateau languages.

	Akwərə	Boze
1	Sibo	Dinka
2	Goŋgoŋ	Repo
3	Aninchu	Taro
4	Camakon	Naze
5	Karkate	Shibi
6	Garne	Tasa
7	Oho	Sunare
8	Caroko	Uuru
9	Nyembete	Torei
10	Tisharnə	Bituru
11	Ayigoto	Bereŋ
12	Ehi	Rikuri

Intriguingly, there are no obvious external parallels for the Akwərə numerals. Either they represent a nonce system, or else they are the last survivors of a very different type of language on the Plateau prior to the East Kainji expansion.

Literacy and revival of the language

ɛBoze has no written literature and there have been no attempts to write it in the past. In a paradox that will be familiar to many endangered language enthusiasts, as ɛBoze is spoken less and less, enthusiasm for writing it has increased. In December 2003, preliminary discussions began on developing an orthography, and a meeting at Rafin Gwamna, Sunday 4th January 2004, attended by many senior ɛBoze speakers, a preliminary discussion paper written by the present author was presented. Further data collection is underway with a view to producing an agreed writing system and a preliminary dictionary and primers.

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Notes on the Seni people and language with an addendum on the Ziriya: Roger Blench and John Garah Nengel

Mallam Dendo Ltd., Jos University

The Seni (=Sheni, Shaini, Shenne) language is an East Kainji language spoken north of Jos town in Central Nigeria. The earliest reference to this language is Temple (1922:18) who links the Sheni with the Srubu and mentions their presence in Dan Galadima District of Zaria Emirate. Charles Meek, the Nigerian government anthropologist, evidently visited, because his notes are reprised in Gunn (1956:44). He left a manuscript wordlist, found in his 'Linguistic

Notes', Vol. 2, Pt II: 509-516. He noted that the Sheni were divided into three clans and that they totalled just 216. He also mentions their links to the 'Kɛrrɛ' and 'Njiria' (=Ziriya). All subsequent references repeat the same information until the 1974 visit by Shimizu (1982:104 ff.), who recorded a somewhat muddled wordlist from two elder speakers in Gurjiya. Nengel (1999) includes some historical information on Sheni based on a visit in the mid-1980s.

Given this record, it seemed likely that the Sheni language was completely moribund or extinct. Interestingly, this is not the case, although any work on the language should be undertaken soon. This note makes further information available on the status of the language. The survey was conducted on 30th December 2003.

The Seni live east of the Jos-Zaria road which runs north of Jos, in Lere Local government area, Kaduna State, although still on the Jos Plateau. Figure 1 is a sketch map of the location of the Seni. There are three Seni settlements;

No.	Name	Location
1	Sheni-Fulani	N10˚ 23, E 8˚ 45
2	Sheni	N10˚ 22.6, E 8˚ 45.9
3	Gurjiya	N10˚ 21.5, E 8˚ 45.2

The first village is largely inhabited by Fulani and Hausa, and although some residents identify themselves as Sheni, none speak the language. Sheni village itself has but one remaining speaker and the remainder are in Gurjiya. There are at present, six fluent speakers of Seni and perhaps 10-15 semi-speakers. The six speakers are: Musa Sheni, Doya Sehni, Idrisu Tinu, Musa Idi, Abdullahi Tinu, Habila Yunana. Most of the speakers are over 60, but the youngest, Habila Yunana, is in his 40s.

The Seni people have essentially switched to becoming Hausa-speaking and are broadly Muslim. They now call themselves the Shenawa and their language Shenanci. The loss of the language is taken as a *fait accompli*. There is no interest in reviving it and its continued existence is simply a curiosity to most residents. Nonetheless, the remaining speakers are reasonably fluent and it seems that Shimizu was probably unlucky with his informants.

The following are the correct names for people and language in the Seni language;

one person	**ònòSeni**
people	**anaSeni**
the language	**tìSeni**

The Seni language

A list of some 200 words of tiSeni was compiled in a group elicitation session. Shimizu suggests that the tone system of Seni is High, Low, Downstep; this would be atypical but possible for this group. I began by recording tones but found they were rather unstable between speakers. I think there is significant interference from other languages and that if speakers spent more time interacting, the tones would 'settle down'. Shimizu did not record plurals and Meek only gives the plurals for only a few words; these indicate that tiSeni has prefix alternations resembling other East Kainji languages. However, tiSeni appears to have a quite exotic plural morphology which rather suggests interference from an unknown but typologically quite distinct language. Some examples are given below;

Gloss	sg.	pl.
seed	**ùgbɛ́rù**	**ùgbɛ́gbɛ́rù**
forest	**ùshìrím**	**ùshìríshím**
neck	**iyâw**	**iyâwyâw**
ear	**ùtùway**	**tutuwáy**

The first element of the stem is reduplicated according to a variety of patterns. Contrast this with the more conventional plurals;

Gloss	sg.	pl.
mouth	**ùnù**	**tunù**
leaf	**ùba**	**màba**
mother	**nɛɛnɛ**	**kanɛɛnɛ**
cow	**ùná**	**màná**

This system where a quite distinct new plural morphology has come in and restructured the conventional Bantu-like plurals is quite remarkable and should be of considerable typological interest. Something similar has occurred in the Plateau language Hasha, although this is sufficiently remote to be unrelated.

Note on Ziriya and Kɛrɛ

The Ziriya language seems to be first referred to in Shimizu (1982: 108 ff.) where a brief wordlist is given. Our Sheni informants insisted it was the same language as Ziriya; the wordlists in Shimizu seem to differ from one another, probably as a result of faulty recall. We were able to visit Ziriya on 30th December 2003 and to interview Sarki Abubakar Yakubu, probably the last person with any recall of the language. Ziriya village is situated at N10˚ 22.6, E 8˚ 50 (Figure 1). Ziriya was divided into a number of wards as follows: Ziriya, Salingo, Kajakana, Wurno, Ungwar Marika, Funka and Farin Dutse.

The language has definitively disappeared, and even Sarkin Yakubu had only spoken it as a child, some sixty years ago. He could recall some greetings and some numbers, all of which corresponded to Seni, suggesting that the assertion that they were the same language is correct. There is a third village, Kɛrɛ, somewhat further north where the language was dropped even longer ago.

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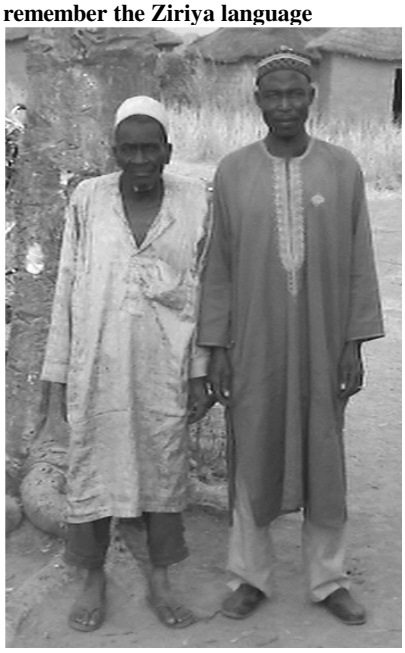
Sarkin Yakubu (left), the last person to remember the Ziriya language



7. Overheard on the Web

John Peabody Harrington: the clue to lost Native American languages: Mike Anton

LA Times Staff Writer

Few understood the true significance of John Peabody Harrington's work when he died at age 77. For some 50 years, the linguist and anthropologist had crisscrossed California and the West, cheating the grave by finding the last speakers of ancient Native American tongues and writing down their words and customs. Secretive and paranoid, Harrington was a packrat who stuffed much of his work into boxes, crates and steamer trunks. After his death in 1961, the papers turned up in warehouses, attics, basements, even chicken coops throughout the West and eventually made their way to his former employer, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

"Six tons of material „ much of it worthless," recalled Catherine A. Callaghan, now 72, a linguist who sorted through the Harrington

papers when they arrived at the Smithsonian. “There was blank paper, dirty old shirts, half-eaten sandwiches. The low point came when I found a box of birds stored for 30 years without the benefit of taxidermy ƒ. But mixed in with all of that were these treasures.”

Forty-three years later, Harrington's massive legacy is regarded as a Rosetta stone that unlocks dozens of all-but-forgotten California Indian languages. But the work of deciphering it is far from over. Researchers at UC Davis, backed by a National Science Foundation grant, are transcribing Harrington's notes, a million pages of scribbled writing, much of it in code, Spanish or phonetic script, into electronic documents that can be searched word by word. The job is expected to take 20 years. “I very much doubt I will see the end of it,” said project co-director Victor Golla, a 65-year-old professor of linguistics at Humboldt State. “Like Harrington's original project, you do this for the future benefit of other people.”

Harrington's work has been used by California's Indians trying to establish federal tribal recognition, settle territorial claims and protect sacred sites from development. It has also played a crucial role in reviving languages. The Muwekma Ohlone tribe in the Bay Area, for instance, is using a dictionary compiled from Harrington's research to teach its members the Chochenyo language, which had been dead for more than 60 years. “They've gone from knowing nothing to being able to carry on a short conversation, sing songs and play games. Now they're starting to do some creative writing,” said UC Berkeley linguistics professor Juliette Blevins, who works with the tribe. “We are reconstructing a whole language using his material.”

Scholars of Indian anthropology are drawn to Harrington's archive as the definitive work of its kind. There's only one problem: His handwritten notes are as comprehensible as Aramaic. “It's impenetrable,” said Martha Macri, director of the UC Davis Native American Language Center and co-director of the effort to computerize Harrington's papers. “It's too hard to read his handwriting. Few people can tolerate looking at it for long periods of time.”

The significance of Harrington's work lies not in individual great discoveries, but in the preservation of millions of words and customs. His archive is a detailed inventory of the everyday. He pumped his subjects „ often the last speakers of their languages „ for everything they knew on topics ranging from astronomy to zoology. His papers describe centuries-old ceremonies. Medicinal cures. Songs, dances and games. Family histories. Even gossip. “You've got a RICH lot of information there. Just record them all DRY. Get all that each one knows,” Harrington wrote to one of the many assistants he hired, often with his own money, to record Indian elders. “Get all the old people, get ones I never heard of and all who are about to die.”

Consider the thousands of pages Harrington devoted to the Luiseöo Indians of Southern California. Some of the material, gathered in the 1930s, is straightforward. “Hu-ka-pish,” reads one entry, “a pipe ƒ made of clay, and has no stem, it is necessary for a person to lie on his back to smoke it.”

More typical are the rambling, hard-to-read descriptions of games, stories and sacred rites. One of Harrington's informants, Maria Omish, told him about two smallpox epidemics that ravaged the tribe. “When the smallpox came 1st time,” Harrington wrote, “the Inds. were having a big fiesta at Sjc. [San Juan Capistrano], and a man came who had smallpox, & the people were talking of making him go away, but he threw a cloth that had small pox matter on it into the fire, & then all of them got it, pretty near all of them died.”

There's the description of a religious ceremony involving two men who slowly dance while quickly playing flutes made from the shin bones of a deer. The legend of a dying man who asks not to be buried and who returns to life as an elk. The behavior of a particular black beetle that crawls away quickly when placed in the hand of a generous man „ and plays dead in the hand of one who is stingy.

“For Harrington, it was all about getting the information down on paper, and he lived in fear that he couldn't get it done in his lifetime,” Macri said. “He wasn't heavy on analysis. His gift was to record what he heard.”

When Gloria Morgan, a member of the Tejon tribe in Kern County, read that UC Davis was seeking Native Americans to help computerize Harrington's work, she jumped at the chance. Morgan discovered that Harrington had recorded her great-great-grandmother Angelita singing songs in the Kitanemuk language, of which there are no fluent speakers today. “I didn't grow up exposed to my own culture, so this is such a huge thing,” said Morgan, 30, a 911 dispatcher. “I had never even heard of Harrington before this.” Typing Harrington's notes into a spreadsheet is tedious work. But with each page, Morgan has learned something. A description of a death ceremony. How paint was made using deer marrow. That her ancestors had words for 40 different native grasses but didn't know what a shark was. “A hundred little things that wouldn't mean anything to anyone,” Morgan said. “Except if you're a Tejon.”

Harrington, born in 1884 and raised in Santa Barbara, studied classical languages and anthropology at Stanford University and graduated at the top of his class in three years. He turned down a Rhodes scholarship and studied anthropology and linguistics at universities in Europe. Professors marveled at his flawless ear. He also had the ability to write down every word said to him. “He was able to take phonetic dictation at conversation speed, like a court reporter,” Golla said.

He returned to California to teach languages at Santa Ana High School. But Harrington had a wanderlust. He wanted to follow the ethos of anthropologist Franz Boas, who promoted the then-radical idea that “primitive” societies were as complex as those in Europe. As modernity overtook the West, advocates of Boas saw the preservation of Indian cultures as nothing short of a rescue mission.

In 1915, Harrington landed a job as a field linguist for the Smithsonian's Bureau of American Ethnology. Over the next 40 years his travels took him from California and the Southwest to Canada and Alaska as he immersed himself in a world that was evaporating before his eyes. “I thought he was a little nuts at times. But I never met anybody who was so devoted to his work,” said Jack Marr, an 83-year-old retired Fullerton engineer who worked for Harrington as an assistant, beginning as a teenager. “He'd travel into a remote area by bus and get off and walk miles by himself to a trading post and ask, 'Where can I find the Indians?' “ Harrington was a recluse who didn't care about money, dressed in tattered clothing and slept on the dirt floors of his interview subjects' homes. He rented Marr's grandmother's home in Santa Ana and used it as a base for several decades, turning it into a warren of papers and boxes that left little room to walk. He had no phone and would routinely not answer the door.

While in the field, Harrington routed letters to his bosses in Washington, D.C., through Marr'smother, so they would bear a Santa Ana postmark and would not reveal where he was. Marr was instructed never to tell anyone where he or Harrington were going or what they were doing. In contrast to others in his field, Harrington was not the least bit eager to publicize his discoveries. Quite the opposite. Marr said Harrington once told him of a tribe in the Sierra that had discovered the skeleton of a Spanish conquistador in full armor in a cave. Fearful that the find would attract reporters and other anthropologists, Harrington told Marr he had the Indians bury the body and swore them to secrecy.

Harrington's life was full of contradictions. He was sensitive to the nuances of native cultures but revealed himself in his private letters as a fervent anti-Semite. He was a workaholic who never quite finished a project. A social misfit who had no close friends but could charm suspicious strangers into divulging their most profound secrets. “He preached it to me over and over: If we didn't do this, nobody else will, and these languages will be lost forever,” said Marr, who hauled a 35-pound recording machine powered by a car battery around the West during the late 1930s and early 1940s, sometimes through mountains on horseback.

"We'd be gone for a month or two at a time, living off cases of dried beef and chili and crackersƒ. It was quite an adventure for a 17-year-old guy."

When Marr took trips on his own, Harrington wrote long, rambling letters exhorting him not to come back empty-handed. When one of his aged subjects took ill, Harrington exhibited sheer panic. "Tell him we'll give him five dollars an hour, it'll pay all his doctor bills and his funeral and will leave his widow with a handsome jackpot," he wrote Marr regarding a sickly Chinook Indian elder in Washington state. "DON'T TAKE NO. Hound the life out of him, go back again and again and again." When another subject, a Chinook man nearly 100 years old, suffered a stroke, Harrington was heartbroken „ for himself. "Have just gotten over crying ƒ this is the worst thing that ever happened to me," he wrote Marr. A few sentences later, though, Harrington encouraged him to remain optimistic. "You know, a paralysed person often GETS OVER the first stroke, it is the third stroke that carries them off. And between strokes they get well and sit up and talk."

Harrington was married once, to a linguistics student. He immediately turned Carobeth Tucker into an assistant, dragging her from one dusty outpost to another, even late in pregnancy and with their newborn daughter in tow, she recalled in a 1975 memoir. She divorced him after seven years and went on to become an accomplished linguist and ethnographer.

Harrington's bosses at the Smithsonian accommodated his eccentricities because of the quality of the reports he sent back. It was only after his death that the extent of his material became known. It took the better part of the 1960s to bring most of the stuff together. Managers of storage units shipped boxes of notes to the Smithsonian seeking unpaid rent. Forgotten stockpiles turned up in post offices that were about to be razed. The material eventually filled two warehouses. In the mid-1970s, Gerald R. Ford was president when work began to transfer the written collection to 500 reels of microfilm. When the job was completed, Ronald Reagan was leaving office. The size of the archive makes a mockery of time. Spend a month plowing through what took a lifetime to compile, and you haven't even scratched the surface. A Smithsonian editor who worked for years to commit the archive to microfilm wrote, in a 10-volume overview of the collection: "One can easily fall prey to the 'Harrington Curse': obsession."

After six months of separating Harrington's papers from his dirty laundry, Catherine Callaghan had an epiphany. "I could see myself becoming more and more like Harrington. I had wanted to devote my life to pure research as he did," she said. "But I realized I could not survive as a human being that way."

For a man who worked so desperately to save something, Harrington gave surprisingly little thought to how his stuff would be used, or whether it would, in its vastness, simply be admired. "He thought these languages were dying off so rapidly that he could not afford to take the time to publish any of his findings," said Macri of UC Davis. "I don't think he envisioned [his archive] being used by Indian people. I don't think he thought Indian people would be as resilient as they've been."

Joyce Stanfield Perry, a Juaneöo tribal leader in Orange County, discovered the depth of Harrington's legacy in 1994 as she and others searched the Smithsonian for documentation to support federal recognition for their tribe. On a dusty shelf, they found a box of recordings one of Harrington's assistants made in the 1930s. On them was the voice of Anastacia de Majel, a tribal elder then in her 70s and one of the last speakers of the Juaneöo language. Her words were preserved as if in amber. "We wept," Perry said. "It truly was like our ancestors were talking directly to us."

Perry, who also runs a nonprofit Indian education and cultural foundation, estimates that 10,000 pages of Harrington's notes refer to her tribe. As they are entered into the database, a dictionary of her native language is emerging. So far, it contains 1,200 words. Through Harrington, Perry has made discoveries about her ancestors' way of life that have affected her profoundly. "I didn't know that animals would talk to my ancestors and that my ancestors understood them. I didn't know that the stars communicated with my ancestors or that when a crow flies overhead that I'm supposed to say certain words to them," Perry said. "It was humbling to acknowledge how much our ancestors knew."

Perry's backyard garden is full of rocks that represent people in her life, a tradition she learned from Harrington's archive. Every room in her house has something in it that her ancestors told Harrington it was important to have „ sacred items that Perry won't reveal to outsiders. "Harrington is our hero," she said. "There's something magical about his work. It changed how I pray and how I see the world."

TONGUE-TWISTERS. Linguists writing down Aboriginal languages create more problems than they solve.

PAUL TOOHEY) The Bulletin Thu, 8 Jul 2004 http://bulletin.ninemsn.com.au

"Linguists to blame again!." comments Doug Marmion <dem@coombs.anu.edu.au>
to australian-linguisticsl@cairo.anu.edu.au

New road safety signs are being posted throughout central Australia in different languages, and local Aborigines have not been forgotten in the campaign. One of the signs warns, in big letters, "Ngkwarnge arrenelhetyeke", which means "seat belt". Now you know why Aboriginal children have such profound literacy problems. English is a daunting enough language for new Australians but our own first people face mountainous obstacles trying to write and make sense of their own. Take "Ampilatwatja", which describes a community north-east of Alice Springs. It's actually pronounced "Um-blood-a-watch".

Take, on the other hand, "Anindilyakwa", which describes people from Groote Eylandt, off Arnhem Land. The word looks to be hard going but, with patience, a pronunciation will reveal itself. That's because there's really no other way to write it.

It's the Arandic languages of central Australia (Aranda people these days go by the name "Arrernte") as interpreted by linguists where real trouble rears. "The problem with linguists is they perceive minute differences in languages," says a Northern Territory government person who doesn't want to be named because he works with linguists. "Maybe the differences are there. But most people don't hear them. No human does. Except for linguists."

In the easy-going Warlpiri (or is that Walpiri?) language of the north-western NT desert, a person who dies loses their name and becomes known as "kumanjayi". Linguists have decreed that in Arrernte it should be spelled "kwementyaye" - even though both pronunciations are identical. And if you're ever bogged in central Australia, try telling your Aboriginal rescuers you're hopelessly "mwernelheme". They won't know what you're talking about but with luck they'll have a tow-rope.

Keepers of a Lost Language: Mountain Maidu

By Dashka Slater
http://www.motherjones.com/news/feature/2004/07/06_400.html

After devoting his life to understanding the mechanics and music of languages, William Shipley speaks fewer than you might expect. The 82-year-old linguist studied Latin and Greek as a youth, learned Mandarin during World War II, and is fluent in Spanish and Portuguese. But the language Shipley is most proud of knowing, the one that has shaped his career and much of the course of his life, is understood by less than a dozen people on earth. It is Mountain Maidu, and it was once spoken by some two to three thousand California Indians who lived in the northern Sierra Nevada.

Shipley learned the language 50 years ago, from a half-Maidu, half-Dutch woman named Maym Benner Gallagher. As a 32-year-old graduate student in linguistics at the University of California-Berkeley, Shipley

had arrived at Gallagher's door in Maidu country, roughly 200 miles northeast of San Francisco, one snowy December afternoon in 1953. Armed with a tape recorder the size of a footlocker, he explained that he was looking for someone to teach him Maidu. Gallagher's husband, Lee, was concerned that Shipley had traveled a long way for nothing. “I've always heard it told,” he explained, “that white people couldn't learn these languages.”

Maidu is certainly unlike anything most white people are likely to have encountered. It has eight cases and no prepositions and contains an arsenal of sounds not found in any European language—glottalized k's and g's, imploded b's and d's. Like many Indian languages, it is polysynthetic, meaning that what we would express in a sentence the Maidu express in a single word containing a long string of suffixes.

Yet Shipley thought he might be able to manage it. Languages came easily to him—as a child he used to invent his own, a pastime his father considered a sign of impending lunacy. After studying anthropology and linguistics at Berkeley, he joined a kind of linguistic salvage operation funded by the California Legislature. Each summer five graduate students were provided with a car, a tape recorder, and enough money to hire a native teacher. The goal was to document California Indian languages before they disappeared.

Maym Gallagher was 64 when Shipley met her, although she looked and seemed much younger. She had wavy black hair, a talent for the violin, and a raunchy sense of humor quite unlike anything Shipley had ever encountered in a woman. She had grown up both bilingual and bicultural, speaking Maidu with her mother and English with her father, a Dutch settler who had come to the Mount Lassen foothills from Wisconsin by covered wagon as a child. Her formal education had ended after high school, but she was a natural scholar. Within a few weeks of working together, the two had dispensed with the traditional relationship between academic and informant and began collaborating as colleagues, thus commencing what Shipley describes as “one of the great friendships of my life.”

Over the course of the next two summers, the pair developed a routine. They worked on the language three or four afternoons a week, knocking off around five to drink beer and talk. Some days they'd go driving around Maidu country, looking for old-timers who could still speak the language and stopping off for a drink at a local tavern on the way home. Gallagher loved to sit there smiling pleasantly at the overweight white clientele and then lean over to ask Shipley in Maidu, “Did you ever see anything fatter and more disgusting?”

Shipley still has the pale turquoise eyes and easy grin he had as a young man, and it sometimes startles him to realize that those backcountry rambles are a half-century in the past. Throughout his career as a linguistics professor at the University of California, Maidu has been his enduring passion, and Gallagher—who died in 1978—has been the blithe spirit inhabiting his work. He developed a system for writing the language and has published a grammar, a dictionary, and a lyrical translation of Maidu myths and stories. He is now one of the last living speakers of the language, and he sometimes worries that there is no one left among the tribe who can teach it with Gallagher's level of particularity and care. “I have all this language in my head and I want to get it down,” he explained recently. “Because if I don't do it, nobody else can.”

But lately, Shipley has been worrying less than he used to. Two years ago he acquired a roommate, a young Maidu of mixed blood with an uncanny ear for language, a sweet and openhearted view of the world, and a firm desire to return the Maidu language to his people. His name is Kenny Holbrook, and he is Maym Gallagher's grandson

From: Andre Cramblit <andrekar@NCIDC.ORG ENDANGERED-LANGUAGESL@listserv.linguistlist.org

Honduran island risks losing Garífuna

Wilson Ring, Associated Press
Saturday, June 05, 2004 -

PUNTA GORDA, Honduras -- When Reina Martinez speaks to her 14-year-old granddaughter she uses Garífuna, the language of her youth in this colorful island village. But when Cassandra Ballesteros answers, it's not in Garífuna.

"I understand, but I don't speak it," she said. "I can't."

Instead, she responds in Honduran Spanish, the language she learns in school, and the one she's more likely to hear on the dirt roads that run through her centuries-old village tucked between dense mangroves and vast coral reefs on the island of Roatan.

Martinez, 52, and her companion Celso Zapata, 59, are two of the older residents of Punta Gorda. Over the years, the couple has watched their Garífuna traditions fade into memory as the world has reached into their community of about 1,000.

Now they are watching their language disappear, too. Children "don't want to speak Garífuna anymore," said Zapata, who runs Punta Gorda's public water system. "You've got to blame the parents. We parents, we've got to teach the kids."

When he wanders through the community on the north side of the 40-mile-long island, Zapata is as likely to speak Spanish or even a dialect of English Creole to his neighbors as he is Garífuna. "Even the old people, you find many of them who don't want to speak Garífuna," he said.

Linguist Genevieve Escure laments what is happening to "a complicated and beautiful language," with roots in the Amazonian tongues of Arawak and Carib still spoken in parts of northeastern South America. So she is recording the Garífuna, hoping to spark their interest so they will work to keep their language alive.

Still, some of Roatan's leaders argue it isn't the language that is in danger. "It's not disappearing," said Arad Rochez, a Garífuna who is vice mayor of Santos Guardiola, including Punta Gorda. "What is disappearing is how we used to live in the past."

When Martinez and Zapata were young the Garífuna lived in mud houses with thatched roofs. Men fished from dugout canoes and steamed, rather than fried, their catch. Traditional folk dances were set to the rhythm of African-styled drums.

Slowly Garífuna men started leaving Roatan to find jobs on the Honduran mainland or to work on freighters and cruise ships.

Dugout canoes that once sustained the community were abandoned on shore. The Garífuna are no longer dependent on the fish, lobster and conch that are plentiful in the coral reefs.

In the late 1980s, the Honduran government started developing the island, bringing tourists, retirees and developers attracted by the balmy temperatures year-round. A main road now runs across the spine of the island, from the western end of Roatan, with its luxury beach hotels and exclusive waterfront homes, past Punta Gorda to the still, nearly pristine east end.

The hurricanes that belt the island every generation or so -- Fifi in 1974 and Mitch in 1998 -- also brought change, blowing away the thatched-roof homes of the Garífuna. The villagers rebuilt, first with wood and then cement blocks with tin roofs.

Thousands of Central American Garífuna now live in the United States and the money they send home helps their families buy luxuries like televisions and refrigerators that would otherwise be beyond reach.

"We don't hardly live how we used to live," Martinez said. And their language is receding along with their old lifestyle. Linguists estimate 190,000 people across the western Caribbean speak Garífuna. But when a language isn't being used by young people, the numbers can drop fast.

"Everybody agrees we are going to lose half of the world's languages. Some say 90%," said Lenore Grenoble, a Dartmouth College professor and chair of the Linguistic Society of America's Committee for Endangered Languages and their Preservation. Linguists estimate the world at one time had about 10,000 languages. Today, there are about 6,800, Grenoble said.

Four years ago, Escure gave tape recorders to some Punta Gorda residents and asked them to record family and friends as they spoke Garífuna. Most of her work is with older people because few Garífuna under 40 speak the language. Even when they do, more and more English and Spanish words find their way into the conversation.

"Spanish is dominant. It is the language you need to be successful in life," said Escure, who is based at the University of Minnesota. "That's how a language disappears. The speaker doesn't see any benefit in speaking it. They'd rather switch to Spanish or English Creole."

One afternoon earlier this year Escure and Martinez had a discussion about the Garífuna word for cassava, the root crop that is a dietary staple throughout Latin America and much of the developing world.

" 'The pot with which I cooked cassava,' OK, how do you say that...?"' Escure asked.

"O-yay lay idabway nobowa yucca," Martinez answered. The hard Bs, Gs, Us and Ps make it easy to distinguish Garífuna from Spanish, English and even the lyrical sweetness of French, all of which make up significant elements of Garífuna. Escure repeats and dissects every phrase, looking for the origins of the words, the way the verbs are conjugated and how the sentences are put together. She's also trying to assemble a vocabulary, get a better understanding of the way the Garífuna use prefixes and suffixes, the way plurals and possessives are formed and how it all fits together.

These are ancient sounds. The Garífuna are an extraordinary mix of Arawak Indians who migrated from the Amazon to the Caribbean 1,500 years ago, and Africans who escaped when two Spanish slave ships wrecked off the island of St. Vincent in 1635. Their language is a kind of living history, studded with relics of their encounters with other peoples.

Now, it seems to be slipping away. Escure says she alone cannot keep Garífuna alive. "I am trying to describe the language as it is now," she said. "You cannot impose a language. It has to come from the community."

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

Archiving indigenous oral traditions

(mark.thiel@marquette.edu)
22 Jul 2004:

No doubt some FEL members will find these recent articles to be of interest from *Comma*, the International Journal on Archives. The issue 2003.1 is exclusively devoted to archives and indigenous peoples with an emphasis on documenting oral traditions worldwide. Of particular interest is this Canadian example, "Archiving Actualities: Sharing Authority with Dane-zaa First Nations," by Robin Ridington and Jillian Ridington, pp. 61-68.

The issue 2004.1 follows with this related linguistic article, "Respect for Fonts: Linguistic Documentation and Lesser-Used Orthographies" by Brian Doyle, pp. 77-86.

Aboriginal Oral Traditions (Halifax, April 21-23, 2005)

From Robert M Leavitt (rleavitt@unb.ca)
July 2, 2004:

A conference on "Aboriginal Oral Traditions: Theory, Practice, and Ethics" will be held at the Gorsebrook Research Institute, St. Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, on April 21-23, 2005

The increasing emphasis on traditional Indigenous knowledge in a number of academic disciplines calls for new ways of understanding how Aboriginal communities produce and preserve knowledge. Contemporary environmental, social, and cultural studies of collective knowledge communicated through oral tradition encourage collaboration between researchers inside and outside aboriginal communities. While these partnerships are important in the sharing of knowledge within and beyond communities, they also present challenges. Who should interpret and disseminate such knowledge? For what purpose?

This interdisciplinary conference will explore theory and practice, as well as aspects of research ethics, regarding oral traditions in an Aboriginal context. We welcome proposals from all disciplines on diverse topics, including:

- archival research on collections of oral narratives
- intellectual property rights and the repatriation of stories
- the importance of oral traditions in contemporary Aboriginal literatures
- storytelling in Aboriginal communities today
- the role of electronic media in the dissemination of oral narratives
- partnership between community and university researchers
- the role of stories in environmental studies
- the role of stories in economic development

The conference will be held at the Gorsebrook Institute, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in partnership with the Native Studies Department of the University of Manitoba and the Mi'kmaq-Maliseet Institute of the University of New Brunswick, and with the participation of the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq.

The Gorsebrook Institute is dedicated primarily to promoting and sup- porting interdisciplinary research on Atlantic Canada. While we welcome proposals on a range of topics on Aboriginal oral traditions in any community, a special focus of the conference will be work being done by, with, and in the Aboriginal communities of Atlantic Canada, especially Mi'kmaq communities. The program will include invited Mi'kmaq speakers, a trip to the archives of Acadia University (Silas T. Rand collection), as well as a workshop on Silas Rand's "Legends of the Micmac."

If you are interested in participating, please e-mail a proposal (250-300 words), an abstract (50 words), and a short biographical note (100 words) by September 10, 2004 to:
gorsebrook@smu.ca

9. Reports on Meetings

Language, history and culture top Inuit Studies Conference

Nunatsiaq News, 20 August 2004

How to communicate research results and information to Inuit: that's what brought 100 or so academics, researchers and bureaucrats to the 14th International Inuit Studies Conference this week in Calgary.

The conference at the Arctic Institute of North America, which wrapped us last week, focused on Bringing knowledge home: communicating research to the Inuit.

Participants from Canada, the U.S., Greenland, Russia and France, discussed how knowledge can cross from one culture to the next, the ways Inuit and Qallunaat communicate and how to make sure the results of community-based research reach communities.

Research papers presented at the conference included a look back at the Watkins Gospel Selections, the first book published in Inuktitut syllabics.

Iqaluit businessman, author and historian Kenn Harper spoke about the missionaries' early efforts to develop literacy for missionary purposes among Inuit.

Harper tells how the syllabic writing system invented for the Cree was first introduced to

the Inuit in 1855 by Rev. E.A. Watkins at Fort George and Little Whale River on the James Bay and Hudson Bay coasts.

In that same year, Watkins prepared a small book of gospel selections in syllabics and sent it to Rev. John Horden in Moose Factory who printed it on his mission press.

This small book, says Harper, is one of the earliest items printed on Horden's press and the only one that was printed in Inuktitut. Only one copy is known to have survived.

The use of Inuktitut languages as a means of communication in today's North was also on the conference's program, with Eva Aariak, Nunavut's official languages commissioner, speaking about "How will Nunavut speak to the future? Changes to Nunavut's Official Languages Act."

Several Greenlanders, including Carl "Puju" Olsen, were at the conference to speak about Greenland's language policy review and the need for more Greenlandic terminology, that is, more specialized, modern words.

Bolatta Vahl from the Greenland Language Secretariat says Greenlandic needs to develop more terminology because many Greenlanders, who study in Danish, can "better express their knowledge of the subject in Danish, even though they have Greenlandic as their mother tongue."

Representatives from ArcticNet, the new environmental ship-board research project, the Nasivvik centre for environmental health and the Nunavik Research Centre also told how they communicate information to Inuit.

Several researchers highlighted their experience using the Internet and new technology as communication tools for projects including "Healthy living in Nunavut," a new on-line nutrition course for health workers in Nunavut, an Alaskan CD-ROM called the "People Awakening Project," which encourages sobriety, and "When the weather is Uggianaqtuq," Shari Fox Gearheard's CD-ROM that uses interactive, multimedia technology to document and communicate Inuit knowledge about the environment in two Nunavut communities.

Norman Cohn and Zacharias Kunuk from Igloolik Isuma Productions spoke about the art of community-base filmmaking and its role in communication.

"We create traditional artifacts, digital multimedia and desperately-needed jobs in the same activity."

From the Siberian Far East region of Kamchatka, Nina Belomestnova gave an impassioned defence of how newspaper articles promote the culture, language and well-being of the small indigenous population of Evenks.

10. Recent Publications

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

Instant Hawaiian Immersion **- audio CD package**

(Topics Entertainment, $29.95)

Pat Gee <pgee@starbulletin.com>

Beyond "aloha" and "mahalo," the common tourist knows about as many Hawaiian words as do most residents of this state, unless they are the names of local food or streets. But with the growing sovereignty movement and continuing controversy over Native Hawaiian rights, cultural awareness has prompted some *kamaaina* and *malihini* to learn the language for their own enrichment.

To others, the pursuit of the language goes even further. Kaliko Beamer-Trapp, a Hawaiian language teacher, is among those who think Hawaiian should be on par with English -- spoken all the time at work and play, and used more commonly in legal documents. He has developed an audio CD series to keep the language "surviving in today's world."

"We represent a lot of young people trying to get the language spoken to each other all the time. If you don't believe in it this way, why do this at all?" he asks.

"We" includes Kiele Akana-Gooch, who translates historic Hawaiian documents into English for Alu Like (an education-oriented Hawaiian nonprofit agency), as does Beamer-Trapp.

He and Akana-Gooch provide the two voices on an eight-disc audio "Instant Hawaiian Immersion" course produced by the Seattle-based Topics Entertainment. The smiling face of the pretty, young woman who is "one-eighth Hawaiian and nine different things" graces the box. "I see my face all over the place," she says, covering her face with her hands in modesty. Bookstores and other outlets carry the Instant Immersion product line that offers courses in Spanish, Japanese, French and English.

Akana-Gooch said many people don't know that Hawaiian is an official language of the state, along with English; and that Hawaii is the only state with two official languages. So much has changed since a time when speaking Hawaiian "used to be forbidden" -- when Hawaii was subjugated to rule of the United States in 1898, she said.

"People can write checks in Hawaiian, testify before the Legislature in Hawaiian (with an interpreter), and write land deeds -- all the major functions ... I'm really proud that the Hawaiian language is being embraced. It's about time," she said.

"I'd like to see Hawaii become more of a bilingual state, like in Canada (where, on all store merchandise) one side is written in French and the other side in English," she said.

Tricia Vander Leest, the Topics project coordinator who approached Beamer-Trapp to work on the project, said the CD series, as well as a three-disc audio-visual interactive software package, are "doing really well," totaling 25,000 in sales a month.

Most of the sales have originated in Hawaii, followed by Washington state, California and Las Vegas, since the set went on the market in January. The mainland states are the ones where many former Hawaii have relocated, and they're interested in going "back to their roots," she said.

HOW Beamer-Trapp came to make a Hawaiian language teaching tape is a good example of how Hawaii creates and is created by melting boundaries between people of diverse cultures. His name sounds as though it belongs to a local boy, rather than someone born as Simon Trapp in England.

His first name, "Kaliko," which means "the young leaf of the *'ohia lehua* tree," was given to him by *kumu hula* Patrick Makuakane in the early '90s when he was dancing in a San Francisco Polynesian revue. The Beamer surname was bestowed on him after the legendary entertainer Aunty Nona Beamer adopted him several years ago.

"I was very honored. ... I was very, very fortunate" to be adopted by someone who has become an icon of the *aloha* spirit, he said, adding the only other student she has adopted is Maile Beamer-Loo of Oahu, who has preserved *hula* in the Beamer style of teaching.

When he arrived in Hawaii from California in 1994 with Beamer's help, "I was interested in reinventing myself" and focusing on the Hawaiian language and culture. He taught Hawaiian for six years in a Hawaiian Language Immersion School in Keaau on the Big Island, under the auspices of the University of Hawaii at Hilo.

In 2002 he started Kili'apu Services, which has three branches: DrMacNut, a repair service for Apple Macintosh computers; 11th Avenue Filmworks, which makes educational videos and does freelance production work; and translating and editing services in Hawaiian, Marquesan and French languages.

Topics Entertainment wanted him to make the CDs without written text, as is the style of their other CDs. Topics' idea is that people can learn a language by listening to it as they are driving or doing housework.

"I know how difficult that is," he said, recalling how he couldn't pronounce Hawaiian words without seeing the way they were spelled.

One day he had a "breakthrough" idea to divide a word into "component parts," each with its own definition, he said. For instance, the word "Kaimuki," he broke into Ka (meaning "the"), imu (underground oven), and ki (ti leaf).

He told Topics he would publish some text on his own Web site for free, because "I can't imagine people trying to learn with out it. The name of the site is panpolynesia.net, which is mentioned on the first CD of the series in the introduction, but not on the box.

"It must've helped a lot of people," he said. After ignoring the site after setting it up at Christmas, he returned to discover 1,777 hits.

Akana-Gooch said the CDs are organized so that she and Beamer-Trapp act as guides, taking the student on a tour of the Hawaiian islands so they learn not only the language, but a little about the history, cultural stories, place names, music and more.

The program's goal is to teach basic sentence patterns, words and phrases, and help students apply the vocabulary and build sentences for practical conversation practice. At the start of each section, music introduces each island, followed by a story about each island and a list of vocabulary words to be used in the CD. There is no English translation, so student start to recognize key words and memorize phrases right away.

Beamer-Trapp said the language is still relevant in the modern world, even though there are words for objects unknown in ancient Hawaii, such as "computer" and "chemistry."

Since 1996, he has been a member of the Hawaiian Lexicon Committee, "Ke Komike Hua 'Olelo," that translates modern words into Hawaiian. The lexicon has been published every two years since 1987, and projects like the Instant Hawaiian Immersion course guarantee the language will continue to grow and maintain relevance in the 21st century.

***Spreading the Word: the Welsh Language 2001*, John Aitchison and Harold Carter**

Y Lolfa at £ 6.95.

News Wales, 8 March 2004
http://www.newswales.co.uk/

The strength of Welsh-speaking communities continues to be undermined in the traditional core areas of the language, say the authors of this new book.

After suffering a century of persistent decline and neglect, they say the Welsh language has seen a reversal of previous trends, thanks to increased support for its preservation and revival. But there are problems that still need to be addressed.

To survive, a language needs a core region of first-language speakers where it is the mother tongue, says co-author Professor Harold Carter. Successful promotion of the language can only be achieved by convincing all of the people of the centrality of the association of Welsh identity with the language. There are extremely challenging issues that need to be addressed.

Traditional Welsh-speaking communities, already frail and threatened with extinction, are still being undermined, at the expense of some growth in the strongly-Anglicized urban regions of south-east Wales,he added.

These thought-provoking revelations are contained in an incisive new analysis of the state of the Welsh language, made at a crucial turning point in its long history. *Spreading the Word: the Welsh Language 2001*, published by Y Lolfa, was researched using data from the Office of National Statistics, from the 2001 census.

Some will regard the results of the 2001 census as heralding a veritable renaissance of the language at the start of the new millennium. Others, however, will still harbour doubts as to the meaningfulness and sustainability of the advances that have been made.

Authors John Aitchison and Harold Carter are *Professores Emeriti* at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. They have written widely on matters relating to rural and environmental issues and the language and culture of Wales.

**** Towards a Multilingual Culture of Education*, ed. Adama Ouane**

UNESCO 2003: ISBN 92 820 1131-3
UNESCO Institute for Education, Feldbrunnenstr. 58, 20148 Hamburg, Germany

"This book, bringing together contributions from many different parts of the world, seeks to demonstrate the normality of multilingualism and to question the teaching/learning systems which are grounded on the principle of monolingualism. Investigations carried out in 30 African, Asian and Latin American countries bear witness to the often striking failure of linguistic policies inherited from the colonial era."

*Note: Aside from chapters on India and South America, this book is overwhelmingly focused on language use and educational policies in **Africa**, especially south of the Sahara.*

Contents:

Part One: An Analysis of the Issues - Adama Ouane and D.P. Pattanayak (156 pp.)

Part Two: Case Studies - 12 chapters, 12 authors (320 pp.)

Appendices: Tables and a map giving linguistic overviews of Africa; Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights, issued by Francisco Gomes de Matos (Recife 1987).

***Language in Danger*, Andrew Dalby**

London: Penguin Books 2002
ISBN: 0-140-29064-8 329 pp.

Andrew Dalby's powerful study shows why language loss affects us all. He explores how languages become extinct: through political power, in the case of Latin engulfing the Ancient Mediterranean; through brute force, such as that used against Native Americans and Australians; and through economics – as the phenomenal rise of English as the language of business and mass communications shows. This linguistic globalization means not just a loss of cultural identity and diversity, but also of the unique world-view and acquired local knowledge enshrined in the way we speak. The consequences, Dalby argues, will be devastating – not just for language, but for the future of humankind itself.

He recommends some interesting books, especialy about Celtic languages of Britain and Cherokee, at:
http://books.guardian.co.uk/top10s/top10/0,6109,736896,00.html

**** Enelhet Apaivoma: Guía para el aprendizaje del idioma materno toba*, Ernesto Unruh, Hannes Kalisch and Manolo Romero**

Asunción: Ya'alve-Saanga 2003
ISBN: 99925-3-258-0 348 pp.

This is a teaching grammar of Toba, a Guaicuruan language of Paraguay which according to SIL Ethnologue, is spoken by 700 people, 60 km. northwest of Asunción. Written in Spanish, it is intended for use within the Enenlhet community.

11. Book Reviews

Review of *Austin ed. 2003: Language Documentation and Description*: Nancy Dorian

Peter K. Austin, ed. 2003. Language documentation and description, Volume 1. London: Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project. Paperback; 178 pp.

Significant in the title of this book is the order in which the terms *documentation* and *description* appear. Adequate description has for some time been considered the foremost

goal of fieldwork projects, with coverage considered comfortably complete if a project produced a grammar, a dictionary, and a collection of texts (the GDT triad). The contributors to this volume subscribe instead to the more recent definition of adequate coverage signaled by the term *documentation*. This new objective includes a very full and very broadly usable record of the language under study, the ideal record requiring more cooperation among specialist researchers and also more cooperation between researchers and community members than descriptive projects typically have called for. If both forms of cooperation are successful, then the expertise of a variety of specialists is brought to bear on the project and the depth of documentation provides even for future and currently unforeseen needs on the parts of both the scientific community and the local community.

The commitment of all participants to goals as ambitious as these is one of the admirable and encouraging aspects of this collection, which presents David Crystal's public lecture at the launching of the Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project (HRELP) at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London in early 2003 and revised papers from the workshop which followed it. Austin, in his introduction, points to just how much remains to be worked out for the emerging field of language documentation: how to acknowledge and balance the interests of the many relevant parties to a documentation project (e.g. funding agency, archivists, research team, speaker community, general public), how to train research teams with all the requisite linguistic and technical skills, how to keep intense involvement in documentation projects from impeding the academic careers of young researchers, how to arrive at responsible and ethical standards for documentation work and how to ensure the observance of any standards agreed upon. All of these problems are dealt with to some extent in the volume's contributions, and both the complexity of the challenges and the dedication of the researchers are very much in evidence. Though the papers differ a great deal in focus and scope, each one contains hard-won knowledge and experience from which both seasoned and prospective fieldworkers can benefit.

Those who have been engaged with the issue of language endangerment for some decades may be inclined to feel that considerable progress has been made in bringing the issue to the fore. Increasingly over the last two decades dissertations and articles have been written, conferences have been held, and especially in the past few years books of interest to a more general reading public have been published. Now, as the very occasion celebrated in this collection demonstrates, significant amounts of money are also being devoted to the study and support of endangered languages. But Crystal's keynote talk for the HRELP launching ('Endangered languages: What should we do now?') punctures any premature sense of self-congratulation about the distance traveled in this respect, as he compares the general public awareness of threats to biological species with the minimal or absent public awareness of threats to small languages. Crystal urges vigorous use of the media, the arts, the internet, and the schools to engage the public with the issue of impending language loss, concentrating in his talk on the arts, with their unique potential for imaginative and empathic impact. Surprised by the current lack of artistic engagement with a subject as powerful as loss of an entire human language, he suggests a number of measures aimed at improving the situation, from creating an endangered-language databank or archive that broadcasters, journalists, filmmakers, even poets or dramatists, could consult when considering a project related to endangered languages, to establishing a prize for artistic achievement in literature or film bearing on language endangerment or loss.

Anthony Woodbury's contribution, 'Defining documentary linguistics', highlights differences between the documentary and the descriptive approaches. Whereas in descriptive work the texts and dictionary were intended as support for the grammatical analysis, naturally occurring discourse is itself the primary object of documentary work; out of discourse documentation then emerge description and analysis, open always to change as documentation proceeds and broadens. Woodbury envisions a theorization of data itself in the pursuit of documentation, with appropriate debate over sampling and its adequacy and consideration of what the nature of the record of a language can and should be. Text curation is central to this enterprise, with a carefully accumulated trove of natural discourse data drawn on to illuminate the range of possible uses to which discourse can be put in a particular language community.

Colette Grinevald, in a paper entitled 'Speakers and documentation of endangered languages', discusses the implications of the various prepositions used in describing fieldwork *on*, *for*, *with*, and/or *by* speakers of endangered languages, noting that documentation projects increasingly focus, when conditions permit, on fieldwork *with* and *by* speakers of the languages being documented. The very reasonable working assumption is that such projects will be superior in terms of the comprehensiveness and quality of the data and the reliability of the analysis, and that sustainability of the documentation process is more likely to be secured. Arrestingly, in a volume devoted to documentation and description, she also considers the possibility that it may be wiser in some cases to confront the self-referential nature of the "scientific" imperative and forebear to undertake fieldwork at all in communities where the intrusion might "obliterate the essence of the link that holds between languages and their speakers, in particular speakers of unwritten, un-standardized languages who may display a sense of ownership unknown to speakers of dominant languages" (61). In the latter part of her paper Grinevald considers the implications for documentation efforts of the fact that endangered-language fieldwork often entails working with imperfect speakers of the language in question. Her brief but sensitive account, in a section on 'Adapting methods of linguistic elicitation and analysis', of the degree to which standard field methods of the sort typically taught in academic courses fail to meet the conditions found in many endangered-language communities, and her suggestions for working around these conditions, should be invaluable to anyone newly embarking on a documentation project.

Another particularly insightful paper, William A. Foley's 'Genre, register and language documentation in literate and preliterate communities', considers the consequences of linguists' bringing their own language ideology into preliterate communities. As products of literate societies with powerful standard-language traditions, linguists favor certain types of texts as sources of data, valuing "narratives over conversations, ritual language over gossip, songs over curses" (85-86). Foley sees in the sometimes almost exclusive selection of texts that parallel literate texts of the linguists' own cultural traditions a significant cultural bias, one that is then bolstered when linguists embody the features of these texts (again, sometimes almost exclusively these texts) in inevitably normative grammars and dictionaries. He demonstrates by means of two speech samples from first-language speakers of Watam, an unwritten Papua New Guinean language, that any intrusion of methodology reflecting the literate end of the oral-literate continuum is likely to bias the analytic outcome. A Watam speaker who provided a Watam narrative based on the text-less picture book *Frog, Where Are You?* produced a narrative with certain linguistic features quite different from those of a traditional oral narrative provided by a second Watam speaker, and Foley enumerates the false generalizations that would arise from the use of the former as a data base (e.g. that word order was rigidly verb-final, that elision of noun phrases was rare, etc.). Though he considers the whole of linguistics (perhaps incorrigibly) normative, Foley makes several concrete recommendations for improving the situation: recognizing the full range of data without privileging particular types; searching out native viewpoints on the material of study and their rationales for their views; acknowledging the variation, including inconsistencies and contradictions, that is the rule in the actual discourse of any community.

Two papers, Daniel L. Everett's and E. Annamalai's, look at language documentation needs and efforts in particular regions. Everett, in 'Documenting languages: A view from the Brazilian Amazon', offers a very brief history of research on the languages of the region, from the colonial era to the

present, including the work of missionaries and missionary linguists. He identifies shift to Portuguese or Spanish, largely for socioeconomic reasons, as one common reason for language extinction in the region, and the death of all speakers as a second. He offers examples of findings from various languages of the Brazilian Amazon that indicate the losses to linguistic theory that would have resulted if these languages had not been recorded and studied -- a point of view that both describers and documenters can appreciate, though it is often the end-point for describers but a contingent point for documenters. While Everett reports an upsurge of interest in the documentation of endangered languages in Brazil, and in training programs for the task, Annamalai describes a much less favorable situation in India ('The opportunity and challenge of language documentation in India'). The relatively small number of Indian students attracted to the field of linguistics find subfields that demand less knowledge of additional languages more appealing (the Chomskyan approach in which they can be both analyst and informant, or the Labovian approach in which variation in a well-known language, again including their own, can be the object of analysis), and neither academic training nor government funding are geared to the documentation of endangered languages. Several reasons for low public awareness and lack of concern about language loss are suggested: the popular assumption that material progress inevitably entails the loss of native languages; the widespread belief that native culture can remain more or less intact even when the associated language is lost; the notion (Annamalai calls it a "hope") that giving up small languages will facilitate communication among different groups within the society. Individual linguists working on small languages in India choose for description languages which have gone undescribed previously ; the fact that some so chosen are also endangered is not a primary consideration in making the choice.

Nicholas Ostler, in his paper 'Desperate straits for languages: How to survive', draws from European history two instructive cases of currently thriving languages which were threatened with possible loss at critical points in their history. He reviews the political developments which brought Portuguese and English into jeopardy when a different language came to be used by those who constituted the apex of a hierarchically organized society, and the subsequent political conditions which restored the use of each language in the uppermost social reaches and so restored their standing and their prospects for survival. Brief sketches of other languages similarly socially displaced but not fortunate enough to come into use again among a social elite supply an equally instructive contrast. Ostler identifies a number of factors which can operate in favor of a language's survival: exceptional isolation; political status (some degree of political autonomy as opposed to none or to distribution across several different polities, none of which accord the language official status); the physical survival of group members (especially with some degree of population concentration); a literary corpus and literacy; a self-conscious tradition fostering awareness of the language and also of the identity and history of the people who speak it. Of the greatest potential value to threatened languages, therefore, are whatever measures may promote some of these factors: improving the status of the language (legally, educationally, etc.), taking steps that foster resistance to intrusion (e.g. supporting property rights), documenting and publishing linguistic materials, and building solidarity not only among local community members but between community members and speakers of similarly placed languages and between community members and concerned speakers of unendangered languages. Considering outcomes and prospects in terms of basic factors such as these, with reference to actual cases, has the useful effect of rendering the seemingly overwhelming forces that underlie language endangerment more familiar and making them appear in their familiarity more amenable to change.

The more programmatic and technical contributions included in the volume -- Éva Á. Csato and David Nathan's 'Multimedia and documentation of endangered languages', Johanna Nichols and Ronald L Sprouse's 'Documenting lexicons: Chechen and Ingush', Peter Wittenburg's 'The DOBES model of language documentation' -- will each without doubt find highly interested constituencies, and the inclusion with the volume of a CD-Rom presenting an introduction to the Karaim language of Lithuania (a geographically improbable Turkic outlier) offers an alluring look at the possibilities offered by current documentation technology. My computer and I had only limited success in sampling the contents of the disk, but I'm unable to say whether that reflects the computer's limitations or mine. What was viewable and audible was remarkable, offering more sense of a community and its language use than would be remotely imaginable without such a disk.

The contact address given for the volume's publisher is as follows: Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project, Department of Linguistics, School of Oriental and African Studies, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H OXG, U.K.; Fax: +44-20-7898; www.hrelp.org. The collection has much to offer any *Ogmios* reader. It will be thought-provoking for current fieldworkers and invaluable to prospective fieldworkers.

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Review of *Thangani Bunuba: Stories from the Bunuba Elders of the Fitzroy Valley*: Chris Hadfield

ISBN: 1-875167-10-2
Kimberley Language Resource Centre 1998: PMB 11, Halls Creek, Western Australia.

Aesop's fables, La Fontaine's tales, Nasreddin's anecdotes: we are surrounded by stories that tell us something about a certain culture; about how to live, think or eat better, stories with parables, allegories or mysticism.

These stories from the Bunuba in the Fitzroy Valley, North-western Australia are no exception. The stories are categorized into chapters: there are tales about the Dreamtime, about bushtucker, about the early days and finally about the first contact with Europeans. It is exquisitely illustrated by Bunuba artists using both bright colours in a naïf style, and black and white lithographs.

From them, we learn how the Elders hunted, carried their children, cooked kangaroo and even gave birth. They are short, concise insights into another way of living. At the beginning of the book we are told who the authors of these tales are and, perhaps more poignantly, that four of these last speakers have died since publication.

It would be easy to write a simple review of this book, but that would be missing the point. We have been given these stories (in both English and Bunuba) in order to learn not only about a particular way of life which seems intriguing or "different" but also to *realize* what is happening to many of the world's languages. As mentioned in the Foreword: "If language is lost then knowledge is lost – knowledge of law, songs, dances and bushtucker. If young people don't speak their languages, they will lose the knowledge of the old people. Our languages need to be recorded and renewed for the next generation – they must be kept going."

The wonder of any language is the extra nuance that it conveys; like different types of honey, names for holes in the ground, shrubs, or words to express feelings, like absences, happinesses, loves – both first and last, and experiences.

The stories are not different from some of the others with exemplum tales or anthropomorphic fables. But where they differ is in the fact that this is not only a language but a whole culture. If we lose it we will have failed.

On a practical note, there is a phonetic guide at the back – albeit non-IPA, but exemplified to aid the reader with the Bunuba words and pronunciation.

The stories are written in English but more importantly, in Bunuba with a literal translation underneath. You won't learn

Bunuba by reading them but you may be tempted to take it further.

Yaninja, as the Bunuba would say.

Brief Note on R.M.W. Dixon and A. Aikhenvald ed. *The Amazonian Languages* and F. Queixalós and O. Renault-Lescure ed. *as línguas amazônicas hoje*: Nicholas Ostler

ISBN: 0-521-57021-2
Cambridge University Press 1999

ISBN: 85-85994-06-1
São Paulo: Instituto Socioambiental 2000

"A separate point is that the standard of scholarship in South America is not high. Much of the amateur data from before about 1950 has only a limited usefulness, with the transcription often being poor. Many of the missionaries have had inadequate training and produce 'cookbook' descriptions (in the 1950s and 1960s these were often cast within the impenetrable formalism of tagmemics) that cannot do justice to the genius of a language. Linguists from universities may employ other kinds of formalisms, that will soon pass out of fashion. Having made these general observations, we must add that there are notable exceptions on both sides – a number of descriptive studies that achieve a high standard of clarity and explanation."

These passingly damning words, occurring near the beginning of Dixon and Aikhenvald 1999, had a damning effect on the relations between these two eminent linguists of La Trobe and almost the whole academic establishment in their then newly adopted field of research, South America in general and the Amazon in particular. The effect was a telling lesson that courtesy, or at least abstention from sweeping claims about a whole peer group, is advisable even in an apparently technical work intended for a specialized audience.

But in fact this work is a compilation, and contains work by a number of South American linguists. The book contains chapters on major language families (Arawak - Aikhenvald, Tupí and Macro-Jê - Aryon Rodrigues, Tucano - Janet Barnes, Pano - Eugene Loos, Makú - Silvana and Valteir Martins, Nambikwara - Ivan Lowe, Arawá - Dixon, with Mary Ruth Wise and Aikhenvald writing mop-up chapters on the remaining minor languages. One curiosity is a separate chapter from Tupí specifically on its most populous branch Tupí-Guaraní. Another is a couple of areally-oriented chapters, Aikhenvald on the Içana-Vaupés basin and Lucy Seki on the Upper Xingu.

And ironically, within a year, a work would appear from these same "South American linguists" which gives the lie to the flip negative judgment.

Q&L-R have produced a less systematic and focused volume than D&A. In its first section, *Uma visão mais abrangente*, it has chapters by H. Russell Bernard and Jesús Salinas Pedraza on the Mexican CELIAC initiative in indigenous literacy, Paulus Gerdes on culture, language and mathematics in Mozambique, Manuel Pruñonosa on Catalan, and even David P. Wilkins on pitfalls in the fight for cultural and linguistic survival drawn from his Australian experience. But all the contributions are interesting in their very different ways; and this introductory section also includes a fascinating overview of language spread in the Americas by Willem Adelaar, which notes that just as there is a zone of greater diversity along the Californian seaboard of North America, there is also a zone down the centre of South America from the Colombian-Venezuelan border southward as far as Bolivia. Could these be the central areas of early settlement from which the later break-out to the rest of the continent occurred?

The organization of the rest of the volume is by country - curiously ordered alphabetically from Bolivia to Venezuela - essentially with a chapter on each of the countries which have an Amazonian zone, each written in the official language that prevails there: so in fact, most of this multilingual volume is written in Spanish. There is also a colour-coded language map for each country, in a separate envelope of supplements.

The content of the chapters in each of the books is unsystematic, and in fact very various; but D&A predominantly contains structural analysis of the languages, whereas Q&L-R is focused on sociolinguistic and geographical descriptions. The two, therefore, are quite complementary.

12. And Finally…

Taken in Vain

Quoted from Fairfax Presbyterian Church, Sermon by Henry Brinton, 25 July 2004) http://www.fairfaxpresby.com/worship/sermons/2004_sermons/7-25-04_sermon.htm

Manx. It's the language of the Isle of Man, and on December 27, 1974, it was officially pronounced dead. Its last native speaker died at the age of 97. Words like "coghal," meaning a large chunk of dead flesh in an open wound, are now lost and out of use. That seems like a real pity, doesn't it? I don't know what I'm going to do when I need a word for a large chunk of dead flesh in an open wound.

There are 6,800 spoken languages today, and experts believe that at least half will be dead by the end of the century. Nicholas Ostler is president of a foundation for endangered languages, and he is concerned about the large number of rare languages that are now in danger of becoming extinct. He points out that languages die for a number of reasons -- war, genocide, disease, low birth rates, government policy. But globalization is probably posing the biggest threat of all. As the global village spreads and various economies become more intertwined, many people who speak minority languages will stop using them. For very practical reasons, they will switch to majority languages such as English, Chinese, or Hindi-Urdu.

Australia is a good example. English came to this continent through British colonization, just as it came to North America, and it became the language of government and commerce. As a result, 138 of Australia's 261 native languages are now nearly extinct. (Nicholas Ostler, "A Loss for Words," Foreign Policy, Nov-Dec 2003, 30-31)

You have to wonder if we are experiencing the same problem with the language of prayer. Is this a minority language that is used by fewer and fewer people, leaving it with a cloudy and uncertain future? Have we allowed the dominant languages of government and commerce to take over our lives, edging out the lesser-known speech patterns that can connect us in a life-giving way to our Lord? Have we pushed the language of prayer to the verge of extinction, making it a tongue that has just a handful of speakers, most of them elderly?

In short, when it comes to prayer, are we at a loss for words? …

Words fail me. - Ed.

The Decent Obscurity of a Minority Language

Mon, 28 Jun 2004
Courtesy of Steve Ostler, via: uk.people.dead - on usenet.

Edward Gibbon wrote in his autobiography: "My English text is chaste, and all licentious passages are left in the decent obscurity of a learned language."

Comedian Spike Milligan has finally got the last laugh, more than two years after his death. An Irish citizen, he was buried in England, close to his home in Udimore where he died, aged 83, from liver failure in February 2002.

His grave is at St Thomas's Church in Winchelsea, East Sussex. Visiting fans had found his grave was marked only by some plants and a small statue, because his family had been unable to reach consensus on what should be on the headstone. Now at last his relatives have agreed his epitaph.

However, to be approved by the Chichester Diocese, the inscription had to be written in Irish Gaelic. It reads:

"*Duirt me leat go raibh me breoite*"
— "I told you I was ill."

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.

Membership of the Foundation is open to everyone. If you would like to join, and do not have a membership form, please contact the Editor at the address given on page 2.