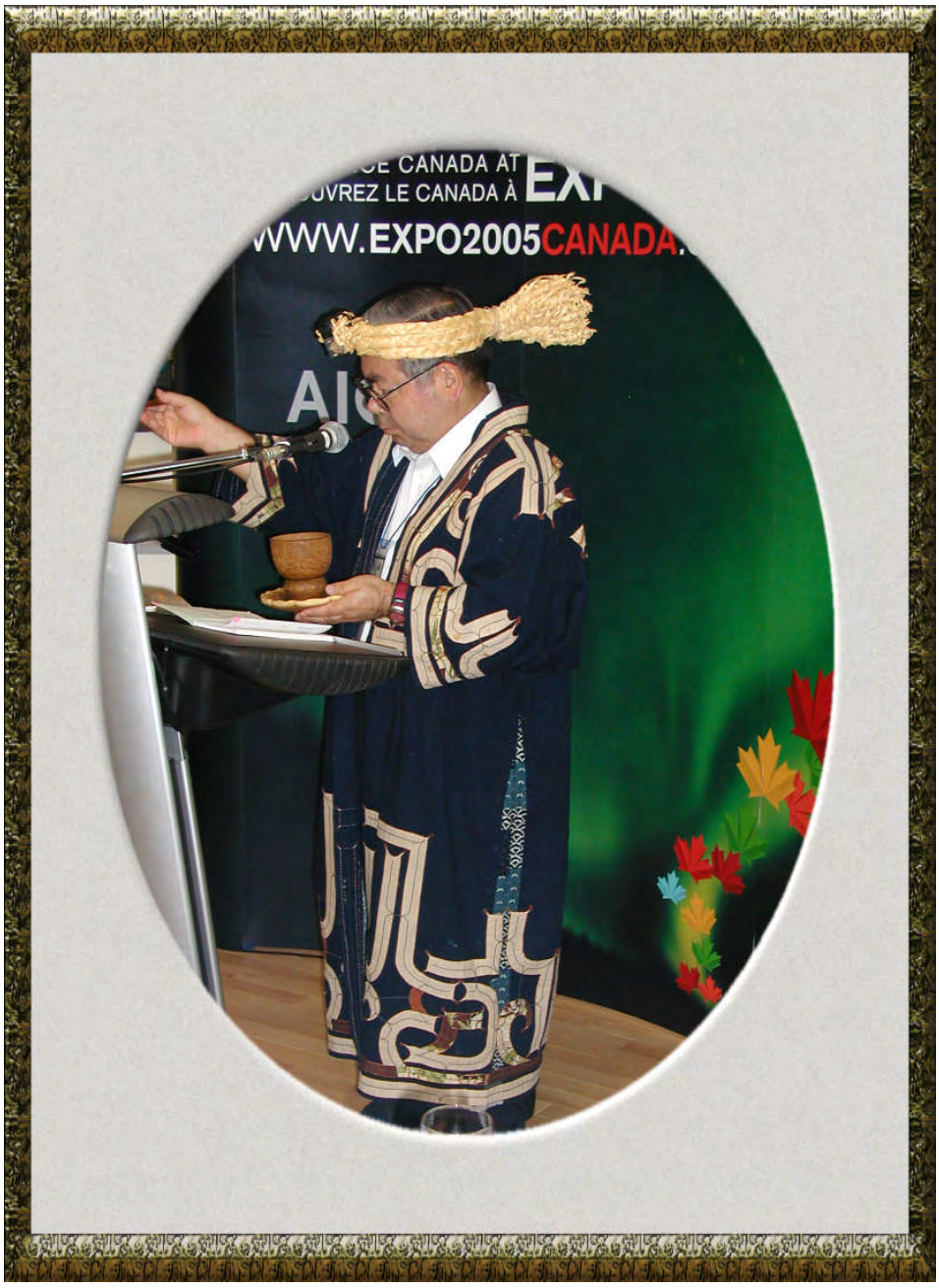
FOUNDATION FOR ENDANGERED LANGUAGES

OGMIOS



Ainu prayers, spoken by Yupo Abe at the International Symposium on the World's Indigenous Languages (*Coming Together in Diversity*) at the Canada pavilion, Exposition 2005, Aichi, Japan: 9-11 Aug. 2005.

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FEL IX

FEL's Ninth Conference 'Creating Outsiders: Endangered Languages, Migration and Marginalization' will be held at the Language Centre, Stellenbosch University, Western Cape, South Africa, from 18 to 20 November 2005. The Programme Chairman is Nigel Crawhall, and the Local Organizer Leon de Stadler.

Information is appearing on at

http://academic.sun.ac.za/taalsentrum

There are currently links to information on

- Foundation for Endangered Languages homepage
- Conference fees and registration
- Special events
- Accommodation
- Registration form

The conference programme appears within.

We hope to see many of you there.

An Out-of-season Fruit

or the Makings of Bibles?

Three meetings: Linguistic & Cultural Diversity (Icelandic Government: Reykjavik), Language Documentation (Linguistic Society of America: Harvard), The World's Indigenous Languages (Canadian Government: Aichi)

Nowadays, there seems to be a profusion of meetings that emphasize the value of the diversity among the world's languages, and try to arrive at some policy response to language endangerment. I am certainly privileged in my access to these meetings, and you – dear reader – are kind enough to pay a subscription to be kept informed of how these issues are shaping up. The result is is something of an obligation on me to make some sense of all these discussions, and let you all know what is being said, what is being thought, what is being planned.

Since the last issue of Ogmios was written, I have attended an invitational workshop in Reykjavik to honour ex-president Vigdís Finnbogadottir with a meditation on Linguistic & Cultural Diversity, within a programme of five concurrent conferences on the theme of Dialogue of Cultures – this is how ex-presidents are honoured (14-15 April); an open (but well-focused) conference on Language Documentation – Theory, Practice and Values, within the vaster framework of a two-month-long Linguistic Institute summer school in Cambridge, Massachusetts (9-10 July); and an International Symposium on the World's Indigenous Languages, organized as a cultural event in the Canadian Pavilion at the World Exposition EXPO 2005, where the overall theme was The Wisdom of Diversity (9-11 August).

They provided three different perspectives on this common global predicament.

The Icelandic meeting (http://vigdis.hi.is/id/1010365#Linguistic) attempted to provide some guidance to diversity and language history in each different continent, with a background question: what to make of Iceland's experience, where an admittedly small language community has managed to maintain some control over its destiny, resisting outside influence and apparently even linguistic change? Can this be reconciled, or even become a model, for communities that typically have to share their national governments with many other languages, and must in practice seek survival amidst a profusion of change and external pressures?

The American meeting (http://www.lsadc.org/languagedocumentation/) was an orderly attempt to address six aspects of documentation, on the presumption that "the quality of documentation available for an endangered language can determine the success of its revitalisation". So it tried to tell attendees the requirements of field training, the concerns of heritage communities, the kind of documentation that is adequate, the uses that have been made of the documents in communities, the role of field linguistics in linguistic careers and the ethics and practical guidelines for archiving. None of these could be treated exhaustively, of course. But there was a sense of 'covering the ground'.

The Canadian meeting (http://www.pch.gc.ca/iswil-silim/) was less intellectual and policy-oriented, more aimed at building contacts among activists in different language communities. As such it brought together not just a range of Canadian and Japanese aboriginal language activists, but also language workers from Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii and southern Africa. There was no way in which such a meeting could be considered exhaustive, it did endeavour to construct a dialogue among the community workers and less locally rooted people such as government civil servants, writer-journalists and linguists (such as me).

* * *

At Reykjavik, amid much learned recounting of the language situation on different continents, it was interesting to see the uneasiness of many linguists in the face of the rather straightforward – and apparently successful – long-term policy of language purism pursued in Iceland. For whatever reason, there was little linguistic change in Iceland throughout the 2nd millennium AD, and they don't intend to start encouraging it now. But small languages above all, David Crystal felt, must avoid prescriptive attitudes, which set one generation against another and may put youth off the language all together: this was symbolized by the plight of the Welsh pop group Manic Street Preachers, who in 27 Sept. 1998 tried to advertise their album *This is My Truth - Tell Me Yours.* in Welsh as *Dyma'n ngwirionedd - Dwêd un ti.*, but were met with a putdown: "pidgin Welsh and grammatically incorrect ... It should be *Dwêd dy un di*." The Icelanders in the audience, including the country's President, and the Minister of Education, Science and Culture, seem to have remained unconvinced, even if they received more enthusiastically David's somewhat whimsical suggestion that it was time for a new prize, for progress in linguistics, that might be named – after their ex-President (and now UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Languages) – the *Vigdís*.

Meanwhile Jens Allwood attempted to tease out some practical content for idea of Iceland as "Home of the World's Languages". He suggested that the ability to mobilize state resources behind a small language might be generalized symbolically: Iceland could act as a promoter of appropriate technology to back languages, such as globalized TV, solar energy panels to power education systems, mobile phones and a network of distributed databases, perhaps archived in Iceland too. Some of the responses served to emphasize how hard it is for any nation to attempt to lead, even in benignity, such a non-aligned movement as the endangered language communities of the world. But those developing corpus networks and language archives might like to remember that there is in Iceland an as yet unfulfilled desire to put out some effort – and perhaps some finance – for the benefit of such language work.

In Harvard, there was a far greater number of practising linguists, all looking for guidance – historical, ethnographic, practical, ethical – on how to record languages in a way that would benefit in the long-term both science and the language communities themselves. As might be expected, the answers on offer were extremely diverse, but this is inevitable in a field where, truly, "all human life is there": scientific goals range from grammatical analysis to sociotherapy, and communities may want the data to inform simple language primers or intricate court cases on which their future livelihoods depend. It is amazing that the blessed trinity of "grammar, dictionary and text corpus" has proved so widely useful to linguists as a minimum requirement in documenting a language. Now that it is possible to record so much digitally, whether auditory or visual, without analysis, it is unsurprising that minimum requirements for adequacy of excellence are much less clear; it is easier to say simply that materials should varied, and they should be big.

Standards for 'best practice' are emerging (e.g. http://emeld.org/tools/ontology.cfm), but in such a varied environment, all documenters are going to have to make some radical decisions on what aspects are of interest, and hence which are not, at least for their primary purposes. The scholars of today are finding that even the greatest documenters of yester-year left out some things that we should like to have had: Laura Buszard-Welcher pointed out that Charles Hockett had missed the conversational morphosyntax of the north-eastern American language Potawatomi, since he had only collected its narratives. It seems unlikely that we shall do much better.

The conference was followed by one of the major events of the Linguistic Institute, namely the Inaugural Ken Hale lecture on 10 July, given by three Australian linguists (and students of Ken) Mary Laughren, David Nash and Jane Simpson. The theme was "Let it emerge": Ken Hale's approach to field linguistics*. Emotional – and musical – evocations of Ken by friends and family members were followed by recordings of his informant sessions, where the chief problem was to understand who was the linguist and who the informant in what seemed like a monolingual chat, and sometimes one Australian language was being examined through questions put in another, e.g.*

Warlmanpa and Warumungu through Warlpiri. It all showed an intellect channelled outward, to bring others' language consciousness to full flower. As well as these echoes of language life in Australia, there were tales and traces too of Ken's enthusiasm for language recovery closer to home, when Jessie Little Doe told of Wampanoag revitalization since 1993, while dandling the first soon-to-be native speaker of the language for over 250 years on her knee. This had been the language of Eastern Massachusetts when the Pilgrims arrived in 1620.

A month later, at Aichi's Expo 2005 World Fair on the opposite side of the world, there was another reunion of enthusiasts for language revival among North America and Australia, but with noted representation from Japan, south Asia, the Pacific and southern Africa to boot. The effect of Ainu, Michif and Secwepemcin (Shuswap) prayers was to create an atmosphere of shared reverence in which each day's contributions were pondered.

Here are some quotes from those three days: so many reactions to the plight of endangered languages:

"We don't share our gods, or our mother: why should we share our language?"
"There's been more effort to save the Florida manatee than the American Indian."
"When the words of all people become one, that will be the end of the world."
"If we lost our language, we should be taught another, but we'd crave for it sometimes, like an out-of-season fruit." (Siraiki)
"We mustn't expect people to hold down a day job, and then work on language transmission in the evenings, on their own time."
"*Success* is a word only in the English language." – violently opposed.
"Language death does not happen in privileged communities."
"Artists are the true leaders, but they must be given space."
He mana ko ka 'olēlo – "there's power in the language". (Hawai'ian)
"Language appropriation was a tool of conquest, turning our languages into Bibles."
"Where's the Government accountability for 200 years of low outcomes?"
"We don't want our languages to be captives of schools."
On the Californian Master-Apprentice program: "It really works; but you have to work it, to make it work."
When I went through and became a fluent speaker of my language, it was the best gift I ever gave myself."
"You need to show off who you are."
"This is a new kind of pride, in forgetting one's mother tongue." (India)
"Our eldest son was murdered… "It was so hard; we thought that he would carry on our work." (Secwepemc, British Columbia)
On greeting Christopher Columbus: "One day they saw big old soap bubbles out at sea: the next day they were the ships."
"Writing in Yiddish is an act of witness that the Nazis failed."
"Firebombs distinguish the conceptions of Provençal and Occitan."
"So much depends on the stories we tell."
"Don't just believe: announce it!"
"We have an obligation to the seventh generation, whose faces we see coming towards us."
"Most of us don't really know what we know; we've forgotten what we did with grandfather."
Words of a louse: "Don't crush me: I'm a grandmother."
"Education in the mother-tongue may be the most effective remedy against extreme poverty."

2. Development of the Foundation

Announcement of AGM; call for Officer and Committee nominations

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

1. The 9th Annual General Meeting of the Foundation will take place on 10:30th November, 2005 at the Language Centre, Stellenbosch University starting at 10:30 am.

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

2. The Agenda will comprise:

1. Minutes of the 8th AGM
2. Matters Arising
3. President's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Election of Officers for the year beginning 19th November 2005

Any additional items for the agenda should be sent to reach me by 1 November, 2005

3. The membership of the Executive Committee for the year following 19th November 2005 will be chosen at this meeting.

Nominations for election to Offices (Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary) and the Executive Committee should be sent to reach me by 1 November 2005.

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

Kipnyango Seroney

Secretary, FEL

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Programme for FEL IX: Creating Outsiders - Endangered Languages, Migration and Marginalization

Stellenbosch, 18-20 November 2005

DAY 1
Registration
Official Welcome

OUT MIGRATION & EL
Hakim Elnazarov – Pamiri speakers in Tajikistan
Tomasz Wicherkiewicz: Kairam, Roma, Tatars in Europe

Yevgeniy Golovko: 'Mixed' groups in Siberia
Tjeerd de Graaf: Platdietsch in Siberia
Patrick Heinrich: Ryukyu in Japan

IN MIGRATION & EL
Laura Bennetts Tourism & Mosuo (China)
Mary Esther Dakubu: Urban migration and Ga (Ghana)
Lamine Sanogo & Ouattara: Tiefo & immigration in Burkina Faso

POLICY POWER & EL
Thamar Gindin: Judaeo-Yazda in Israel
William Fierman: Revival of Kazakh
Mekonnen Alemu Gabreyohannes: Ethiopian language policy

DAY 2
BORDERS & POWER
Tohira Baiduloeva – Kirghiz in Uzbekistan
Galina Dyrkheeva – Buryat in 3 Central Asian states
Finex Ndhlovu: Minority languages in Zimbabwe

FEL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
FIRST PEOPLES I
Nigel Crawhall: the story of !Ui
Michael Walsh and Jaky Troy: SE Australia
Herman Batibo: ‡Hoa in rural Botswana

K.C. Monaka & Andy Chebanne: RDA and San languages in Botswana
Jennifer Koinante & Maarten Mous: Yaaku in Kenya

DAY 3
NETWORKS & EL
Raj Mesthrie: Indic and Makhuwa languages in KZN
Maya David: Minorities in Malaysia

HISTORY/PREHISTORY, MIGRATION & EL

Brigitte Pakendorf: Prehistoric Siberia
Ronald P. Schaefer et al: Edo in Nigeria
Wilson McLeod: Gaelic and Scotland

FIRST PEOPLES II
David Naude: //Anikhwedam, Botswana
Kipnyango Seroney: Terik, Kenya

PANEL ON MIGRATION AND ENDANGERED LANGUAGES
Elnazarov
Dakubu
Mesthrie
David
Short panel inputs about the sessions lessons and reflections on the conference

3. Endangered Languages in the News

Local MP swears oath in Cornish

May 12, 2005
BBC News

An MP from Cornwall has used the Cornish language during the swearing of allegiance to the Queen in Parliament.

The St Ives MP, Andrew George, has fought a long campaign to get the language officially recognized. As a result of the campaign, in 2002, the European Union granted Cornish official "minority language" status. In 1997 Mr. George became the first MP to use the Cornish language in the Commons as part of his maiden speech.

The swearing-in must be done before an MP can take their seat. It reads: "I swear by Almighty God that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, her heirs and successors, according to law. So help me God."

In Cornish, that translates as: "*Me a le gans Dew Ollgallojak del vedhaf len ha perthy omryans gwyr dhe hy braster an vyternes elisabet, hy Erys ha Sewyoryon, herwyth an laha. Ytho Dew re'm gweressa.*"

Speaking after the ceremony, Mr. George said: "Although we acknowledge that there are few speakers of the language, there is symbolism in using a tongue which has been widely spoken during the lifetime of our Parliamentary democracy. "It is right that we should both recognize and celebrate the diversity of cultures, languages and histories of the country in the Houses of Parliament. "This small but significant action helps to put Cornwall on the map for the right reasons."

All MPs are obliged to first swear the oath - or affirm their allegiance - in English but some choose to repeat it in Welsh or Gaelic as well. Labour's Ann Clwyd (Cynon Valley) and Liberal Democrat Lembit Opik (Montgomeryshire) were among those who proclaimed their loyalty in Welsh.

BBC NEWS, 2005/05/12:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/england/cornwall/4540887.stm

Spelling Row could see Cornish Go West

Steven Morris, The Guardian, 23 July 2005

The government money is on the table and the political will in Whitehall and Europe is apparently growing to help Cornish speakers turn their native tongue into a viable, living language. But there is one stumbling block: Cornish speakers cannot agree on how their language should be spelt.

Three main groups who have driven forward the revival of Cornish are at loggerheads over how the language should be written. The issue has become so divisive that yesterday two of the groups called for an independent panel of linguists to be appointed to referee the row.

A conference is being organised in September at which the warring factions will again try to agree on how Cornish - or, depending on your fancy, Kernewek, Kernowek, Kernuak or Curnoack - should be spelt. Until a single system is agreed, it will be difficult to launch a credible language programme across Cornwall. Disputes over issues such as road signs and place names will also continue to slow the spread of the language.

Last month the government announced that it would fund the language by up to £80,000 a year for three years[1] - but the worry is that the cash flow will dry up if agreement over spelling cannot be found.

Paul Dunbar, a director of a Cornish bookshop in Liskeard which stocks dictionaries, Bibles and children's books in one version of Cornish, said the development of the language was important at a time when many local people argue that they should have more independence from England.

"The language has tremendous importance for Cornwall," Mr Dunbar said. "It's an icon of identity. It's the one thing that is uniquely, undeniably Cornish." He expressed frustration that the spelling problem was holding the language back: "There's certainly more heat than light in the debate." His feelings about the champions of rival systems? "It varies from murderous to totally pissed off."

The revival of Cornish began to gather pace in the 1920s when a version which came to be known as Unified Cornish was reconstructed using language found in medieval miracle plays and borrowing from related Celtic tongues such as Welsh and Breton. Forty years ago, as interest grew, the Cornish Language Board was formed. Some members felt Unified Cornish was inaccurate and came up with a new system, with different spellings, Common Cornish. In the mid 1980s, another splinter group set up the Cornish Language Council and championed a third system, Modern Cornish, based not on medieval manuscripts but the way the language was last spoken in the 1700s.

The row over whose system was best began in earnest. It has not yet come to blows, but the quality of debate has not always been scholarly. The factions understand each other when they speak Cornish, but do not seem to comprehend why their rival groups insist that their spelling system is correct.

Ray Chubb, secretary of *Agan Tavas* (Our Language) which supports Unified Cornish and an updated version of it called Unified Cornish Revised, accused the supporters of Modern Cornish of "mucking around with historical sources" and claimed that Common Cornish speakers had the arrogant attitude that their system was perfect.

George Ansell, a supporter of Common Cornish, said that version was easiest to teach. "If people can't agree, it will become a Darwinian situation - the survival of the fittest." Mr Ansell, who chairs a language strategy group set up by Cornwall county council, said the debate often became overly personal. "People have invested a lot of time and effort in the various forms and do not like to see their work challenged."

It is nigh on impossible to judge which group is best placed to survive, as nobody agrees on how many people use each version. In all, it is thought that several hundred people speak Cornish reasonably fluently and a few thousand have some knowledge of it. Two secondary schools and a handful of primary schools have begun to teach Cornish.

Neil Kennedy, who is in the Modern Cornish camp, said: "It may sound absurd that a language which not many people speak has several different spellings, but that is what we face. We have to find a way of working together to sort it out."

The groups supporting Modern and Unified Cornish issued a statement yesterday saying that there was a "historic" opportunity for the movement to build a "thriving Cornish language", and called for an independent advisory panel.

[1] In a press release on 5 June, Phil Woolas, UK Minister for Local Government, had said: "Languages are part of our history, our culture, and our identity. It is right that we should nurture the Cornish language. The Cornish Language Strategy provides a realistic and reasonable vision for the development of the language over the next 25 years, commensurate with the capacity of the language movement to grow. I am pleased to endorse the strategy as providing the framework for implementation of the Charter (European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages), and to be able to confirm funding to support the application for EU Objective 1 funding."

Professor Philip Payton, director of the Institute of Cornish Studies, said the dispute threatened long-term support from Westminster. "Some sort of agreement is necessary. Otherwise it gets confusing at best and at worst faintly ridiculous."

Origins in history of Celtic Britain

In 1935, listeners to the BBC were puzzled but interested by a music programme from Plymouth. When the BBC explained that the St Austell choir was singing in Cornish, it was bombarded by requests to know more. Even the Cornish seemed to have forgotten about their historic tongue.

Cornish is a direct descendent of the language spoken by Celts who settled in Britain before the Roman conquest. As Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Norman invaders confined the Celts to Cornwall (as well as Wales, Scotland and Ireland), the language developed regional dialects. By the 9th century, certainly, there is concrete evidence of a distinctive language in Cornwall, and it is believed that by 1200 it was spoken by most of its people. But simultaneously, use of English was spreading into the east of Cornwall; the Reformation sped up the decline when Edward VI decreed that the Book of Common Prayer be used in Cornish churches; rebellions by the Cornish were put down. By the start of the 17th century there were few monoglot speakers left, mostly in the far west. The reputed last one, Dolly Pentreath, died in 1777. Bilingual speakers could be found until the late 19th century, but the region's sinking economic fortunes were mirrored by its language's continued decline.

Asked why the Cornish should learn Kernewek, the father of the revival movement, Henry Jenner (1848-1934), had a simple answer: "Because they are Cornish."

Nheengatú, first language of Portuguese Brazil, rising again

(Based on material Larry Rohter's article in the *New York Times*, 28 August 2005, with historical corrections and clarifications from the editor Nicholas Ostler.)

When the Portuguese arrived in Brazil five centuries ago, they found a language known as Tupinambá already widespread as a *lingua franca* among more than 700 language-communities in what became the territory of Brazil. With an admixture of Portuguese and African words, Tupinambá became their *língua geral*, or "general language".

In 18th-century Brazil, changing views of Portugal's imperial role, together with a collapse in support for Jesuit missions, led to the promotion of Portuguese, and the banning of the *língua geral*, which largely died out. But in São Gabriel da Cachoeira, a remote and neglected corner of the Amazon where Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela meet, the language has not only managed to survive, it has made a comeback in recent years.

"Linguists talk of moribund languages that are going to die, but this is one that is being revitalized by new blood," said José Ribamar Bessa Freire, author of *Rio Babel: a História das Línguas na Amazônia* and a native of the region. "Though originally brought to the Amazon to make the colonial process viable, tribes that have lost their own mother tongue are now taking refuge in *língua geral* and making it an element of their identity," he said.

Two years ago, in fact, Nheengatú, as the 30,000 or so speakers of *língua geral* now call their language, reached a milestone. By vote of the local council, São Gabriel da Cachoeira became the only municipality in Brazil to recognize a language other than Portuguese as official, conferring that status on *língua geral* and two local Indian tongues.

As a result, Nheengatú, which means "good talk," is now a language that is permitted to be taught in local schools, spoken in courts and used in government documents. People who can speak *língua geral* have seen their value on the job market rise and are now being hired as interpreters, teachers and public health aides.

In its colonial heyday, *língua geral* was spoken not just throughout the Amazon but as far south as the Paraná River basin, more than 2,000 miles from here. Tupinambá is a close relative of the Guaraní language, which still enjoys official status in Paraguay in the far south.

It lingered in the Amazon after Brazil achieved independence in 1822, but was weakened by decades of migration of peasants from north-east Brazil to work on rubber and jute plantations and other commercial enterprises.

The survival of Nheengatú has been aided by the profusion of tongues in the Upper Rio Negro, which complicates communication among tribes; it is a long-held custom of some tribes to require members to marry outside their own language group. By the count of linguists, 23 languages, belonging to six families, are spoken in this region.

"This is the most plurilingual region in all of the Americas," said Gilvan Muller de Oliveira, director of the Institute for the Investigation and Development of Linguistic Policy, a private, nonprofit group that has an office here. "Not even Oaxaca in Mexico can offer such diversity."

But the persistence and evolution of Nheengatú is marked by contradictions. For one thing, none of the indigenous groups that account for more than 90% of the local population belong to the Tupí group that supplied *língua geral* with most of its original vocabulary and grammar.

"Nheengatú came to us as the language of the conqueror," explained Renato da Silva Matos, a leader of the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro. "It made the original languages die out." But in modern times, the language acquired a very different significance. As the dominion of Portuguese advanced and those who originally brought the language instead sought its extinction, Nheengatú became "a mechanism of ethnic, cultural and linguistic resistance," said Persida Miki, a professor of education at the Federal University of Amazonas.

Even young speakers of *língua geral* can recall efforts in their childhood to discourage the language. Until the late 1980's, Indian parents who wanted an education for their children often sent them away to boarding schools run by the Salesian order of priests and nuns, who were particularly harsh with pupils who showed signs of clinging to their native tongue.

"Our parents were allowed to visit us once a month, and if we didn't speak to them in Portuguese, we'd be punished by being denied lunch or sent to sit in a corner," said Edilson Kadawawari Martins, 36, a Baniwa Indian leader who spent eight years as a boarder. "In the classroom it was the same thing: if you spoke Nheengatú, they would hit your palms with a brazilwood paddle or order you to get on your knees and face the class for 15 minutes."

Celina Menezes da Cruz, a 48-year-old Baré Indian, has similar memories. But for the past two years, she has been teaching Nheengatú to pupils from half a dozen tribes at the Dom Miguel Alagna elementary school here.

"I feel good doing this, especially when I think of what I had to go through when I was the age of my students," she said. "It is important not to let the language of our fathers die."

To help relieve a shortage of qualified *língua geral* teachers, a training course for 54 instructors began last month. Unicef is providing money to discuss other ways to carry out the law making the language official, and advocates hope to open an Indigenous University here soon, with courses in Nheengatú.

And though *língua geral* was given its currency by Roman Catholic priests, modern evangelical Protestant denominations have been quick to embrace it as a means to propagate their faith. At a service at an Assembly of God church here on a steamy Sunday night this month, indigenous people from half a dozen tribes sang and prayed and preached in *língua geral* as their pastor, who spoke only Portuguese, looked on approvingly and called out "Hallelujah!"

But a few here have not been pleased to see the resurgence of *língua geral*. After a local

radio station began broadcasting programs in the language, some officers in the local military garrison, responsible for policing hundreds of miles of permeable frontier, objected on the ground that Brazilian law forbade transmissions in "foreign" languages.

"The military, with their outdated notion of national security, have tended to see *língua geral* as a threat to national security," Mr. Muller de Oliveira said. "*Língua geral* may be a language in retreat, but the idea that it somehow menaces the dominance of Portuguese and thus the unity of the nation still persists and has respectability among some segments of the armed forces."

milaythina nika milaythina-mana - Rebirth of Tasmanian language

By Simon Bevilacqua
Sunday Tasmanian, 19 Jun 05

NEW life has been breathed into the Tasmanian Aboriginal language. After more than five years' research and analysis, the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre has given the Tasmanian community a glimpse of its language, known as *palawa kani*.

The language has been used on interpretation boards on the summit of Mt Wellington, or *kunanyi* as the mountain is known to Aborigines. One panel states, *milaythina nika milaythina-mana*: "This land is our country".

In the late 1990s, the TAC embarked on a bold attempt to rejuvenate an Aboriginal language. Researchers scanned historical references, including journals of the d'Entrecasteaux expedition. There were thought to be a dozen or more Aboriginal languages in Tasmania and even more dialects. The language program has produced an amalgam of the languages.

TAC spokeswoman Trudy Maluga said the Aboriginal community decided to release parts of the new language only when it benefited the Aboriginal community.

"We have taken ownership of our language," Ms Maluga said. "This is a way of beating assimilation." Ms Maluga said many within the Aboriginal community could speak *palawa kani* fluently.

Many Tasmanian towns feature Aboriginal names including Murdunna, Taroona, Teepookana and Nubeena.

Breakthrough in EU status for 'official' lesser-used languages

Brussels 14 June 2005: Davyth Hicks

Following the Spanish proposal of December 2004, the European Council of Foreign Ministers decided yesterday in Luxembourg to allow the usage of all official lesser-used languages in European institutions. The decision stands as a Council 'conclusion' and marks a breakthrough in status for many of Europe's lesser-used languages. It means that they can be used at Council meetings, by the Commission, that legislation will be translated into the lesser-used language, and that speakers can write using their own language to EU institutions.

The decision also paves the way for the languages to be used in the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions. For languages such as Catalan this will be quite straightforward as many of the Spanish state interpreters speak Catalan as well.

The move stops short of giving these languages Treaty status, previously accorded to Irish, as campaigned for by the Catalans and Basques. While EU legislation will be translated into these languages, in contrast to Treaty status, it will not have legal value. Under the agreement, citizens writing to the EU institutions will receive a reply in their own language as well as in the official state language. Costs will be met by the member state concerned.

Two further shortfalls are that only languages that have some official status in their member state can have this provision. The Council conclusions state that it is those "whose status is recognized by the Constitution of a Member State on whole or part of its territory or whose use as a national language is authorized by the law."

In addition, it is entirely up to the member state to decide whether or not to implement the new provisions. Therefore, languages such as Scottish Gaelic and Welsh having official status in part of the UK should benefit, while Breton, Occitan and Corsican, unless France changes its current policy, will be completely left out.

Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos called the decision "an important step in the acknowledgement of the multiculturalism and linguistic diversity".

In contrast Catalan MEP Bernat Joan (EFA) described the move as "a very small step – but not enough".

The Council conclusions continue that, "within the framework of the efforts made to bring the Union closer to all of its citizens, the richness of its linguistic diversity must be taken into account more. The Council estimates that the possibility for citizens to use additional languages in their relationships to the institutions is a significant factor to reinforce their identification with the political project of the European Union." A timely comment considering the recent 'No' votes against the constitution.

The new linguistic landscape following the Council decision throws up some interesting possibilities. For example, when the new provisions are implemented in the European Parliament a Basque or Catalan-speaking French MEP will be able to avail themselves of the new translating facilities even though their member state, France, has given no formal agreement.

In France's case greater pressure now arises for this state to recognise all of its 'regional' languages considering that some of them, Catalan and Basque, are co-official in Spain and can now be used in the EU institutions. It will appear highly discriminatory to say the least not to afford access to the new linguistic rules for France's other 'regional' languages such as Occitan, Corsican and Breton.

Significantly the Luxembourg text makes no mention of the Lingua programme being accessible to Catalan, Basque and Galician (or any other languages), which was originally specified in the Spanish text. On this point Catalan academic Miquel Strubell told Eurolang that : "There are still hopes in Catalonia that the agreement signed between Andorra and the European Commission in the autumn of 2004 will provide the way forward for Catalan in the context of Lingua. Basque and Galician, though, can hardly benefit from Andorra's position, of course." (Eurolang © 2005) ,

Now you're talking . . . Nyungar and Pitjantjatjara

Victoria Laurie, *The Australian* 12 Sep 2005

A city audience is invited to learn a Central Australian language in order to fully appreciate a theatrical production. The staff of a leading arts festival sign up for lessons in a southwest Aboriginal language. An Aboriginal linguist is asked to turn actors' lines into an indigenous language from regional Victoria. Is "language" gaining favour in Australia's cultural circles? And does it move beyond token interest into a real conversation between black and white Australia? Lindy Hume, artistic director of the Perth International Arts Festival, thinks it can. For several months, she and her staff have taken lessons in the southwest Aboriginal language of Nyungar. During last week's launch of indigenous highlights of her 2006 festival, she put a few words of her newly acquired vocabulary to use.

When Perth's festival begins next February, its centrepiece will be Ngallak Koort Boodja, a large canvas painted by six artists who are among 90 Nyungar elders consulted by the festival. Hume mocks her own tongue-tied attempts at speaking Nyungar, but believes that even a tiny smattering is a proper basis for dialogue with Western Australia's southwest indigenous culture. "For one thing, it's incredibly long overdue," says Hume. "This festival has been sitting on Nyungar land for over 50 years and we haven't ever done something like this. So it's something that needed to happen. Who are these people

around us now and how do they perceive their relationship to country?"

Speaking "language" is being embraced in the arts, and no longer in purely symbolic ways. Welcome-to-country ceremonies are now an accepted gesture at many cultural and government events. And indigenous language has long featured in music and visual arts in song lyrics, on canvas and in bilingual catalogues. But even the 20 most robust indigenous languages - out of an original 250 - have made little mark on Australia's cultural scene, perhaps unsurprising in a country that spends eight times more on educating children to speak Indonesian than Aboriginal languages in schools.

Now decades of indifference may be ending. Rolf de Heer's forthcoming Ten Canoes is the first Australian film to be made entirely in an Aboriginal language. And in Walkabout, a recent stage version of the famous 1971 film, director Richard Frankland sought out linguists to translate an actor's lines into the Gunditjmara language of southwestern Victoria. But a far more ambitious idea is to co-opt an entire theatre audience into taking a short course in Pitjantjatjara language. This is the aim of Ngapartji Ngapartji, an emerging work that will be staged in pilot form at the Melbourne Festival in October. Created by indigenous West Australian performer Trevor Jamieson and director Scott Rankin, the show is billed as an attempt "to help protect, preserve and share an endangered indigenous language".

"There is no national indigenous language policy and that is a kind of cultural genocide," says Rankin, adding that Australia is home to "the most fragile" languages in the world. "We should be aghast at the way we're letting languages go." Ngapartji Ngapartji's audience members will be invited to take a series of language lessons via the web, or in person through a language kiosk set up at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image in Melbourne. Over five nights of a trial season, they will attend a short performance by Pitjantjatjara young people and elders; next year, the performances will be extended to a two-hour show, by which time Rankin hopes the audience will have opted to participate in a longer online language course. He is thrilled that this October's festival shows have already sold out: "It shows there's a definite interest out there."

Cynics might query the point of middle-class white Australians tackling a desert language. "It's a desire to add to one's own life experience; one could say it's selfish, but I think it's healthy," Rankin says. The Perth festival's close partnership with Nyungar elders has been a life-changing experience for general manager Wendy Wise. "I grew up in Nyungar country on a farm, and during those years I had absolutely no knowledge of the culture. Aboriginal people - I didn't even know the word Nyungar - lived out of town on a reserve, but I didn't know why.

"This project has made me look at the whole community in a completely different way. It's more unified than people give them credit for, and the fact that we're trying to learn Nyungar is a really important thing." Almost any well-meaning use of language seems acceptable to indigenous speakers. Events manager Sarah Bond was contacted early this year by Melbourne's Moomba Waterfest to provide original music in an indigenous language to accompany a gymnastics float. She happily obliged, ushering Walkabout director-songwriter Frankland and indigenous speaker Joy Murphy into a studio to record a song in Murphy's Woiwurrung language. Bond says her only non-negotiable rule was that a key participant in any project comes from the language group concerned.

Her next aim is to invite indigenous artists from across the nation to translate into their own languages a single English verse from popular songs such as We Have Survived by No Fixed Address and Shane Howard's Solid Rock. Linguistic expertise is increasingly being sought by arts agencies. In Victoria, they knock on the door of the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages, set up in 1984 to maintain and promote Aboriginal language. "Quite often we are asked to give an indigenous name to a project," says manager Paul Paton. He says Arts Victoria, Ausdance and the National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Assocation recently asked for help in naming a new training program for indigenous dancers.

"We'll come up with [several language] options and refer them to the particular communities to endorse the use of their language," says Paton. "Sometimes it doesn't get the go-ahead." Paton strongly rejects the notion that merely naming something is a trivial use of Aboriginal words. "It stimulates the use of language every time anyone talks about the project. It becomes more everyday in its use." Vicki Couzens is a VACL board member, artist and community language worker from the Western District of Victoria. Her native language, Keerray Wurrong, was nearly silenced forever until last-minute efforts revived it. "We had no living speakers, only a tape in Canberra," she recalls of the language's lowest moment. "We referred to it as a 'sleeping' language, not a dead one. Dad researched and retrieved it and had it published into a dictionary."

These days Couzens titles all her paintings in Keerray Wurrong; she swaps phone calls and email messages in the language with a linguist cousin. "If I learn a new word, I think, 'This'll challenge him'," she says gleefully. "His son is four and is being raised bilingual, so I've got to get my grandkids bilingual." Couzens found language sharing linked up indigenous, migrant and refugee women in a weaving project she and another artist ran in the southwest Victorian town of Warrnambool. "I'd say, 'What's your word for basket?' and we'd weave the words with the fibres into the baskets." The result, an exhibition called Woven Land, was so striking that Craft Victoria transferred the regional exhibition to Melbourne in May.

Couzens is now involved in a project for the 2006 Commonwealth Games. "It will acknowledge the 36 languages remaining in Victoria and give them some involvement," she says. "Aboriginal people are taking back control of their language. Language is central to identity and culture and relationship. It's about strengthening the people."

http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/common/story_page/0,5744,16567467%255E16947,00.html

4. Appeals, News and Views from Endangered Communities

Pavel V. Zheltov: Minority languages and computerization. The situation in the Russian Federation.

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Computers are becoming an inseparable part of human life all over the planet. Computerization penetrates all areas of human life's activity, including not only professional and educational areas, but also communication, entertainment and service. Since the interaction of computer and user is realized with the help of user interface and through natural language, computer environment is becoming part of language tradition and policy, along with printed media and other mass media. Moreover it is coming to occupy the main place in this list, as the others are often mediated through it.

As is well-known, English has spread worldwide not only because of the leadership of English speaking countries in economy and politics, but also as a language for software interface, computer production and programming.

As the greatest part of software production is widely used and sold in various foreign countries beyond USA and the British Commonwealth, software producers are taking the responsibility of integrating into their software the support of regional languages and standards. Microsoft software production, the widely spread operational system Windows XP and its applications for example, supports almost all national languages, as well as some others which are widely used among large populations (for example Yi, Punjabi, and Kashmiri).[2] Many of them are supported only partly.

[2] You can view the list of languages supported by Microsoft Office 2003 as input and text services languages by choosing in the Start menu of Windows XP the option All Programs/Microsoft

As for minority languages,[3] very few have been included in the list of Microsoft Windows multi-language support (text services and input language): for example Cherokee, from US native minority languages, and Tatar and Bashkir from minority languages of Russian Federation, the last present only in Russian version of Microsoft Windows XP.

Other minority languages of Russian Federation,[4] which in spite of being endangered by Russian, sufficiently enough serve their ethnics in press, elementary education and mass media, have been left out.

Thus Russian language conserves the monopoly in the process of Russian Federation's computerization, which endangers the existence of minority languages.

This attitude of many software companies towards the support of minority languages is probably due to economic considerations and the lack of trained personnel, skilled in minority languages. Software customers from populations using minority languages are so few in comparaison with the common quantity of all potential customers that the expenses for minority languages support would not not recovered. Moreover minority-language users often know their states' official language (for example Russian) better then their native ones. A second factor is the difficulty of finding and employing minority peoples representatives, with qualifications in programming and their native languages, to organize such language support.

We must note though that some Russian and foreign software companies, aware of this fact, have begun to produce multi-language support of their production for Russian Federation's minority languages, which is an encouraging tendency. For example the well-known ABBY, which produces the widely used scanning software FineReader, has included in its character-set many national symbols (Chuvash, Komi and even Chukot [Chukchi]), so that as of FineReader's trial version 7.0 you can scan texts in those languages.

The company ParaWin also produces fonts and Windows XP/ME/98 keyboard layouts for many minority languages of Russia. But this makes them only languages of applications text input and not system text input, because system fonts, such as Tahoma, don't include these character-sets and you are not able to give a file a Chuvash name.

So, unless they cease to rely on Microsoft or Russian software companies' help, and instead undertake their own work-arounds for this problem, minority people won't be able to computerize their languages. That is why most minority languages in the Russian Federation are far from being used for user interface and computer environment (games, entertainment and automated working places).

The fact is that minority languages of the Russian Federation (except for Tatar, and to a lesser extent Chuvash), have no tradition of scientific and technical use beyond being employed in schools for mathematics, physics, chemistry and biology lessons (until the 1960s for Chuvash). Nowadays most of them are used only in areas of popular culture.

This problem for the Russian Federation is a very complex one, and so we consider it here in some detail.

Of the 75 native minority peoples of Russian Federation 31 have their own national territorial subdivisions, 21 of them being republics – autonomous national states, parts of Russian Federation with their own government structure, analogous to federal structures. They have two official languages – national and Russian,[5] a chief or president, a constitution, [which can never contradict federal law], state symbols, ministries and boards [many of them directly subordinate to federal analogues]. Surprisingly, in many subdivisions of Russian Federation minority languages are second official ones just nominally, functioning in reality only as languages of family communication and preliminary education (kindergartens and elementary grades of secondary schools, taught as the subject "native language" in higher grades), as well as at radio, TV and press, lagging considerably behind Russian in these areas. In graduate schools and universities they are used for education in national philology departments, if any. They have, as a rule, a limited use in government, some but not all bills being bilingual. Some national regions run budget deficits, which are covered by support from the federal centre, a situation which limits their autonomy. Some of them have a rather weak industrial base and low scientific and technical potential, being only the source of raw materials or out-of-date agricultural regions.

Despite the initial attempt at legislative support and functional expansion for minority languages made in the 1990s, many native languages of the Russian Federation are in very unfavorable conditions, which may lead to their gradual extinction. These mostly concern subdivisions, where the native nation is traditionally Orthodox Christianity, a religion adopted from the Russians. People from Orthodox minority communities have mainly Russian names (personal and surnames) and are strongly influenced by Russian language and culture. In many cases, their self-awareness and self-organization are rather weak, and their national elites and business class are also likely to lack influence. Most minority peoples have a traditional agricultural set-up and culture, and have only a recent tradition of urban life (beginning in the 20th century). Yet in urban conditions, even in the family, Russian will supersede minority languages. This has to do with the fact that minority peoples nowhere dominate in the cities, and city districts are not separated by nationality.

Industry and urban life were traditionally considered Russian culture's property, so minority people's representatives, once migrated to the city, are surrounded by a Russian-speaking environment. Thus in many national regions the typical situation is for a married couple, coming from country to city, to continues to communicate with each other in their native language, but communicate with their children from their early childhood only in Russian.

Moreover when people traditionally profess the same religion as Russians and have Russian names and last names, they are not always distinguishable from them by appearance. This forms a tradition, so that the number of people, speaking minority languages in the cities remains constant only due to the influx from countryside. The city-born minority people's representatives mostly prefer to speak Russian in all areas of their activity, even if they can speak their native language. That is why national village remains the base of existence of almost all orthodox minority peoples and their languages.

Office/Microsoft Office Tools/Microsoft Office 2003 Language Settings or by choosing Control Panel/Regional and Language Options.

[3] We consider a language a minority one if it is spoken by a comparatively small amount of population of a country. Minority languages are as a rule regional ones, and their native speakers are bilingual, using their native language in a limited number of their activity's areas, mostly using the majority official one (for example Russian). In Russian Federation all languages except Russian are minority languages. In our article we speak only about minority native languages of Russia. It means that their ethnics live nowadays mostly on the territory of Russia, their native territory being also there, and they don't have an independent national state somewhere else. Armenians, Azeris, Ukrainians, Belarusians and Kazakhs, though live in Russia and in the given aspect are minority peoples, are not considered by us as native ones, because they originate from other territories, which have nowdays the status of national independent states, their native languages with official and majority status there (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan).

[4] For example the Chuvash language, which is a native minority language of Russian Federation, has an ancient literary tradition, with Gospel and Bible translated into it (the only one among other minority languages of Russia). It occupied a fourth place in the former Soviet Union by the number of its speakers, but nowadays the number of Chuvashes (and Chuvash-speaking population) has fallen. (See table.)

[5] In most national subdivisions, the status of the national language is only nominal, despite laws enjoining their widespread use.

But computerization penetrates almost any village (for example all village schools of Chuvash Republic were computerized by the end 2004), bringing Russian and English apart from the native languages, and is affecting the younger generation, potentially a dangerous development. Children begin to use computer as an object for entertainment and games almost from the age of five.

Thus the future of many minority peoples, whose languages are already endangered, may depend on whether they could be able to introduce their languages into computer environment or not.

It mostly affects Orthodox minority peoples, who traditionally merge with Russians and affects less Moslem and Buddhist ones.

That is why Tatarstan and Bashkortostan Republics as the most rich, economically and industrially developed national regions (Tatar and Bashkir nations professing mainly Islam), which have a considerable scientific and technical potential, have joined the process of their languages and culture computerization from the very beginning, from the 1990s, when MS Windows (the trial 3.x) was spread in Russia only in English and was being russified in Moscow, as Microsoft didn't support Russian language at those time. Tatars began to develop computer support for their language themselves: they had created a scientific laboratory in 1993 in Kazan on the basis of Kazan State University and Tatarstan's Academy of Science, with the support of Tatarstan's government, to work on problems of Tatar language computer support (http://www.snilpii.antat.ru) and have elaborated a long-term strategy for spreading their culture and language through computer, using computer as means of mass influence.

In a short time they tatarized Windows, standardized Tatar computer fonts, created text editors with spell-correctors for Tatar, computer games in Tatar and with elements of Tatar culture, automated workstations for agronomists, linguists and accountants with Tatar language as the language of the user interface and text input. After an official application from Tatar representatives, Microsoft has included Tatar language in the list of Microsoft language support for free. Moreover the Tatar language, by its number of speakers (5.55 millions), cannot be considered as endangered. (In Russia it is second only to Russian).

Bashkirs have chosen a different strategy. Accordingly, computer support of Bashkir is realized by Moscow software companies (including Russian representatives of Microsoft). That is why one can find Bashkir only in the russified version of Windows XP, sold by Russian representatives of Microsoft.

As for the other native minority languages of Russian Federation, we can only note the fact that current situation about their computer support and functioning is very unfavourable. What we have for most of them now is:

1) sets of non standardized fonts (most Russian and foreign software companies produce national fonts only if ordered), made by different publishers and private persons, national symbols having different encoding in different fonts, thus a text typed in one national font becomes unreadable when you change it to another[6];
2) keyboard layouts for Windows 98/05/2000/XP, which also don't correspond to the occurrence of alphabet symbols and their combinations. National symbols in them are often set onto outlying keys, as an implementation of Russian keyboard layout.[7]

So we can use them as input languages in a limited number of software applications (text and graphical editors mainly). We cannot use them for file names and we cannot even utter a word about using them as user's interface languages (in applications and system menus and messages).

So we need to:

1) standardize national fonts on the basis of Unicode standard and replace the non standardized old fonts with new ones; Microsoft reserved places for almost all Cyrillic additive symbols in its Unicode fonts, but didn't fill them yet;

2) create text converters for conversion of texts typed using old fonts into the new standard;

3) create an accurate national keyboard layout for each language, which would correspond to the occurrence of its alphabet symbols and their combinations;

4) create correctors for text services (for MS Office and MS Word for example), which would find spelling and syntax errors in texts;

5) include national languages into MS Windows user's interface, by translating menus and messages.

These five options realize the so-called national computer environment for Windows. The first four options make a language an input language, supported by system and text services while the last option makes it a language for user interface. For the realization of the last two options we must obtain the permission of Microsoft to modify and expand its software or appeal to its representatives for intrusion of our national language into Microsoft Office list of supported languages for free and help them by making correctors and translating all menus and messages. The last option requires the existence/creation of special computer terminology (existing nowadays only for Tatar, Bashkir and Chuvash). In case of Microsoft's refusal we can only realize 3 options from the list and spread the environment after having registered it and obtained a license.

The author of this article has been occupied with the problem of national-language computerization since 1998. We have created an environment for Chuvash language, which includes 3 options from the list above and have created a dictionary of Chuvash computer terminology (not printed yet). But the absence of financial support prevents us from buying a license. The author appealed also to Microsoft's Moscow representatives and filled a special application for including Chuvash in the list of Microsoft Office language support, but my application was left without consideration. We have also elaborated a project of creation of Chuvash language computerization laboratory on the basis of Chuvash Republic's Academy of Science, which was supported by the Academy's president, but declined by the head of Chuvash Republic's Informatisation Department due to the lack of finances.

The situation described above is typical for most minority languages of Russian Federation. That is why we have only a social way of solving this problem: founding a popular organization on minority languages computerization. But the absence of primary capital, needed for its registration and obtaining licensed software tools creates obstacles to this.

There is a way out of this situation however. I propose to FEL with the help of interested software companies to organize a department/company for computerization of minority languages. Software companies can help us if not by donations, then by passing for free the right to use their software production license and licensed software

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6 Pavel V. Zheltov and Valerian P. Zheltov. "*The encoding of Chuvash character set*" in the 5th proceedings of "*Mathematical models and their applications*" conference. Cheboksary: Chuvash University editions, 2003, pp. 159-162.

7 All minority native languages of the Russian Federation use the Russian Cyrillic alphabet (the basic set includes 33 symbols), implemented by special letters for their phonemes. But a computer keyboard, created primary for the Latin character-set, has only 26 keys for letters, so Cyrillic characters are placed on auxiliary keys, while Cyrillic additional characters can hardly be placed at all. At the same time many letters of Cyrillic alphabet designate phonemes absent from many minority languages; but because of loanwords from Russian that are written without adaptation to their phonetic systems, they cannot be dropped. The Tatar Worldwide Congress adopted a resolution for Tatar-language conversion to the Latin character-set, but the State Duma of Russian Federation adopted on 15 November 2004 amendments to the bill "About languages of RF" which sets up the Cyrillic alphabet as a graphical base for the languages of all republics of Russian Federation and thus prohibits the use of Latin or some other character sets.

tools. This department/company would coordinate and organize the free work of enthusiasts all over the world, passing them for free software tools, licensing and spreading the production for minority language computerization they make. It would also make environments for fees if ordered. This department/company could gain profit by trading minority people's computerized culture online (the latter is not possible without creating environments, which won't give much profit themselves) and use it for minority languages computerization needs by giving grants to enthusiasts, as well as for paying the salary to its staff.

Trading minority people's computerized culture online means:

1) creating and trading computer games on national subjects;
2) creating and selling films and e-books in culture and traditions of minority peoples;
3) organizing sponsored conferences and collection of contributions.

As all this is in conformity with FEL's activity it is very reasonable to organize it exactly on the basis of FEL. Having a worldwide status it would be easier for this department to negotiate with Microsoft and with local governments on the subject of receiving financial aids and spreading its production.

In conclusion we must note that the problem of such a department's foundation requires a special detailed consideration, possibly with the organization of an FEL subcommittee, with the participation of all interested parties. The author of this article welcomes all interested people and organizations. Suggestions can be sent to tchouvachie@narod.ru, please note the subject MLC (minority languages computerization).

	Thousand of people		*Year 2002 as % of year 1989*	*as % of total population*	
	Year 1989	*Year 2002*		*Year 1989*	*Year 2002*
All population	**147022**	**145167**	**98,7**	**100**	**100**
Russian	119866	115889	96,7	81,5	79,8
Tatar	5522	5555	100,6	3,8	3,8
Bashkir	1345	1673	124,4	0,9	1,2
Chuvash	1774	1637	92,3	1,2	1,1
Chechen	899	1360	150	0,6	0,9
Mordvin	1073	843	78,6	0,7	0,6
Avar	544	814	150	0,4	0,6
Udmurt	715	637	89,1	0,5	0,4
Mari	644	604	93,9	0,4	0,4
Kabardian	386	520	134,7	0,3	0,4
Ossete	402	515	128,0	0,3	0,4
Dargin	353	510	144,4	0,2	0,4
Buryat	417	445	106,6	0,3	0,3
Yakut	380	444	116,7	0,3	0,3
Kumyk	277	422	150	0,2	0,3
Ingush	215	413	150	0,1	0,3
Lezgian	257	412	160	0,2	0,3

The size of most numerous native nationalities of Russian Federation (after the official site of Russian Federation's Federal Service of Statistics at http://www.perepis2002.ru)[8]

South Africa May Cut Seven Tongues Out

25 April 2005 Millicent Merton, (SA)

The possibility of four official languages instead of 11 was raised at a discussion over the weekend on mother-tongue education. Dr Neville Alexander, director of the Project for the Research of Alternative Education in South Africa (Praesa), said if the correct approach was used, people would not feel threatened or think that it was wrong to have only four official languages.

He said this could happen within the next 10 years. A concept document, drawn up by a group of language experts, suggested that national government departments accept a minimum of four official languages. These languages were Sotho, Afrikaans, English and an Nguni language (Zulu or Xhosa). Other languages would be phased in systematically to encourage multi-lingual skills.

Language experts said it was unpractical to have 11 official languages. The languages spoken by fewer people often lagged behind as a result of the enormous costs of advancing all languages. Alexander welcomed the government's decision to appoint people to the public service only if that person could speak an indigenous language. He said this would help increase the market value of African languages.

Referring to Mikro Primary School in Kuils River, he said the court case brought by a public school over language could hamper the multi-lingual approach in education. The governing body of this Afrikaans-medium school turned to the court to contest a decision by the Western Cape education department that the school should enrol English-speaking pupils.

Alexander said he was not sure whether the provincial minister of education knew it could take years to overturn the decision should the Appeal Court decide in favour of Mikro. He said smaller languages should not be marginalised and parallel-medium education should be the norm in urban areas.

Mohawks wary of Microsoft: Some fear computer giant is out to make money off language and culture with software

30 April 2005, Sue Montgomery, Montreal Gazette

Several Kahnawake residents suspect computer giant Microsoft Corp. is out to make money off their language and culture by developing software allowing people to use Windows in Mohawk."They own the whole world. Why would we want them owning us?" said Selma Delisle, one of the critics.

But band council members, who recently reached a tentative deal with Microsoft to develop the software, say they see it as just another way of immersing people in a language they're trying to preserve. Everyone, especially young people, uses computers, they say. "You can tell (the critics) the reason it's sunny out is because there's no clouds and they wouldn't get it," council member Keith Myiow said. "They're ignorant." Tom Scott,

[8] Looking through this table we see that all minority peoples which profess mainly Orthodox religion (Chuvashes, Maris, Udmurts, Mordvins as well as the majority Russian nation) have declined in size, whereas nationalities largely professing Islam (Tatars, Bashkirs, Chechens, Avars, Dargins, Kumyks, Ingushes, Kabardians and Lezgians) and Buddhism (Buryats) have all grown in size. The only exception among Orthodox nations are the Ossetes (surrounded by Moslem peoples of Caucasus and having adopted Orthodox religion from Georgians) and the Yakuts (forming the main nation of a very rich national republic, the Yakutia-Sakha). We don't possess a table of population speaking these languages, but it must show the same tendency, with the only difference that the number of minority languages speakers is often less then their population. This difference is due to urban representatives of minority peoples, who often don't know their native language.

director of community information technology in Kahnawake, contends people are making a fuss for nothing. "This would just be another facet of the language's preservation," he said. "In this day and age, why not use the tools available?"

Microsoft contends the whole kerfuffle is an unfortunate misunderstanding. "We don't have any intention of buying the language," said Mina Garbi, Windows international program manager. "You can't own a language. Our intention is to work with the community for the community."

Two years ago, Microsoft began developing software compatible with less widely used languages. The company has developed software for 13 such languages, including Inuktitut. The next frontiers include obscure African and Latin American languages, so people in remote communities can use Internet cafes, for example. The software can be downloaded free but must be used with the Windows operating system.

"I know it sounds like something we're doing for revenue, but we're not," Garbi said. Asked whether the point is to get the entire world using Windows, Garbi wouldn't comment. She agreed to pass the question onto a public relations person, but an answer never came. "(The Mohawks) have genuine concerns, like why are we doing this and are we making money off it, and I respect that," she said. "We're trying to address those."

But people like Delisle see it in the same light as pharmaceutical firms trying to patent traditional aboriginal medicinal plants. Scott said the project will cost the band council $57,000. Microsoft is donating the technology.

Kahnawake's Cultural Centre, which has led the way in preserving and teaching Mohawk - or Kanienke'ha - is also leading the charge against the agreement. The centre's director, Donna Goodleaf, was out of town yesterday and couldn't be reached for comment. But in interviews with the community's local paper, the Eastern Door, she pointed out that the seven other Mohawk communities weren't consulted on the deal. In addition, the contract stipulates that once developed, the software belongs to Microsoft and can't be fiddled with. "But language can change," said one opponent, who didn't want her name used. "Language isn't standardized across communities, so newer words can differ."

Setu people against new Estonian-Russian border treaty

May 17, 2005
Alexander Shegedin, Eurolang

Tomorrow on May 18th in Moscow, Estonia and Russia will sign a border treaty. Up until now the border between the two countries has not been fully agreed upon. In 1940 Estonia was annexed into the Soviet Union, while the previous Estonian-Russian border was defined by the Tartu peace treaty of 1920. According to the new treaty the border is the same as it was in Soviet times between the two then Soviet republics, Estonia and Russia. It means that the historic region East Setumaa, or, in Russian, the Pechori region, the land of the Setu ethnic group, will stay as part of Russia. In 1920-1940 it was a part of the Estonian Republic. The Estonian Setu want a return to the border defined in the Tartu treaty where all Setu lands were in Estonia.

The Setu people speak a unique dialect of Estonian, which has been influenced by Russian. Unlike Estonians, they are mostly Orthodox. At the moment Setu are living on the both sides of the border, but mostly on Estonian territory. In the Russian East Setumaa/ Pechori region live around 200 to 400 families.

Many Setu who live in Estonia have made claims for their ancestors' farms in East Setumaa and demand their restoration under the terms of the Tartu peace treaty. Some Estonian right-wing politicians have used this as part of their campaign against the new border treaty.

On May 9th the Setu Congress organization conducted a picket near the Riigikogu, the Estonian parliament, protesting against the new border treaty. They handed over an appeal with 7,000 signatures to Ene Ergma, the parliaments speaker.

Setu Congress leaders have pointed out that the Setu language and culture are in danger in Russia. However, commentators have noted that protest comes from the Setu who live in Estonia with little sign of protest from the Setu in Russia.

Radio shows bridge Guatemalan languages Mam, Q'anjob'al and Quiche

June 14, 2005
Tania Valdemoro
http://www.palmbeachpost.com/localnews/content/local_news/epaper/2005/06/14/s1b_imradio_0614.html

Melodies first heard more than 1,500 years ago filled a broadcast studio Sunday morning when Herlinda Francisco changed compact discs.

A caller from Jupiter had just requested a "marimba autoctona" song. The genre is one of Guatemala's oldest forms of music, dating back to pre-Columbian times. Its steady marimba is usually played at village dances, Francisco said.

Between sets of marimba and cumbia music, Mayan activists on WPSP-1190 AM discussed farmworker rights, local job opportunities and locations for sending cash remittances to Guatemala in Mam, Q'anjob'al and Quiche — indigenous Guatemalan languages rarely heard across the Florida airwaves.

The two-hour weekly program is one of three radio shows in the state broadcasting music and discussion about the culture and experiences of Guatemalan immigrants in America.

Through its partnership with Sterio Nebaj in Guatemala, the West Palm Beach-based show reaches an audience of 15,000 to 20,000 listeners in Guatemala and Florida, Francisco said. The show's broadcast extends locally from Martin to Broward counties.

In the western part of the state, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers broadcasts a two-hour show in Mam and Q'anjob'al on Saturday and Sunday afternoons on WCTI-107.9 FM, known as Radio Conciencia. The shows are limited to the Immokalee area and reach about 5,000 people, said Rolando Sales, who hosts his show in Mam.

There are 372,487 Guatemalans in the United States, according to the 2000 U.S. Census. Of the 28,650 Guatemalans in Florida, 6,576 live in Palm Beach County.

The radio programs aim to preserve Mayan language and culture primarily by speaking in various dialects and playing native music, Francisco said.

"We are not Hispanic," said Miguel Angel Chiquin-Yat, who founded the show in 1998 with Francisco and three others from the Lake Worth-based Organization of Maya People in Exile. "We speak Spanish, but we are Mayans."

With 22 indigenous languages spoken in Guatemala, communicating to a wide audience can be a tall order. Out of necessity, Chiquin-Yat and Sales introduce songs and music segments in Spanish. The majority of Guatemalans, however, speak one or more Mayan languages; several do not speak Spanish at all, Chiquin-Yat said.

Since February, the two groups have teamed up to broadcast a Mayan radio show every month, Sales said. He came to West Palm Beach from Immokalee Sunday to host the morning radio show with Chiquin-Yat.

As a result, listeners in Palm Beach, Martin and Broward counties learn more about Guatemalans living in Immokalee, and vice versa. Sales and fellow farmworker Roberto Mendez spent several minutes after every music set discussing the Coalition of Immokalee Workers' mission to lobby for higher wages and promote farmworker rights.

Among labor groups, the coalition is well-known for its three-year boycott of Taco Bell, which ended in March when the company

agreed to pay a penny-a-pound increase to farmworkers picking tomatoes.

The weekly Mayan language shows have proven to be a hit, radio hosts said. Many listeners send CDs of marimba and cumbia music to the radio stations, thereby boosting the shows' music selections and keeping them up to date with the latest songs.

Sales said locals have tuned in to his show because they know they can hear marimba for an hour. Unlike the West Palm Beach show, the Immokalee shows devote their second hour of programming to translating discussions from Spanish to Mam and Q'anjob'al and vice versa.

Still, radio hosts said they must work diligently to attract and retain listeners. The target audience for all three shows are people who already listen to a myriad of Spanish-language stations. Radio Conciencia and WPSP both play Latin-American music. The key to engaging listeners is to provide them with relevant information and use the radio to help them solve problems, said Lucas Benitez, the coalition's executive director.

Radio Conciencia is obligated to serve the needs of its local community in exchange for its broadcast license, which the Federal Communications Commission granted two years ago after a lengthy application process. The station is one of Florida's 106 low-power FM stations.

In 2000, the FCC began granting broadcast licenses to community-based groups that serve low-income communities. There are 600 low-power FM stations nationwide. Federal lawmakers are considering whether to expand the program further.

Chiquin-Yat said his group is researching ways to get its own radio station like their Immokalee brothers. The group pays $15,000 a year to use WPSP's facilities, he said.

In what is expected to be an active hurricane season, both groups said they would use the airwaves to make sure farmworkers and others are prepared for the storms.

"Many people were spooked by the hurricanes," said Benitez, referring to the majority of farmworkers who return in September to pick tomatoes and oranges for several weeks. Their return coincides with the time when hurricanes often increase in size and strength.

This year, Benitez will broadcast hurricane information in Mam, Q'anjob'al and two Mexican dialects, Zapotec and Mixtec, as well as in Creole. Chiquin-Yat also plans to provide farmworkers in Palm Beach and Martin counties with hurricane news.

But Sunday's show made no mention of the hurricanes despite the passing of Tropical Storm Arlene Saturday over Florida's Gulf Coast. Thousands of Mayans in Lake Worth lost power and safe drinking water last year after Hurricane Frances struck.

The radio programs have become indispensable, Mayan activists said, because they enable Guatemalan immigrant communities to survive economically and culturally.

"We are proud to be able to speak in our own languages and reach a mass audience," Benitez said. "It helps farmworkers learn the laws of the United States and their responsibilities as residents here."

I dial it in and tune the station

kusteeyí Programme is 'nest' for Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian

June 16, 2005
Eric Fry
http://www.juneauempire.com/stories/061605/loc_20050616014.shtml

Learning Tlingit has changed the lives of the 10 or so young adults in Juneau who have dedicated themselves to the language, one student says. "We had fairly life-changing experiences when we took it to heart to keep the language going, because of the Tlingit concept of respect," Vivian Mork said.

Mork said Tlingit wasn't spoken fluently in Wrangell when she grew up there.

She began to study Tlingit after moving to Juneau in 2002 to enroll in a summer language program, *kusteeyí*, sponsored by Sealaska Heritage Institute. She also enrolled at the University of Alaska Southeast, which has a Tlingit program.

Sealaska Heritage Institute is a private nonprofit that administers cultural and educational programs for Sealaska Corp., the for-profit Native corporation in Southeast Alaska.

Classes in the Kusteey Program, now in its seventh year, begin this year as early as June 20 in Ketchikan and Aug. 1 in Juneau.

kusteeyí, pronounced [q^{h}usteeyi] with high-final tone, means 'way of life', or 'culture'. The *kusteeyí* Program helped instill the importance of learning Tlingit, Mork said. She called the program a "nest" for languages.

"When you lose the language, you lose an entire way of looking at the world," she said. Now some of the Tlingit-language students are beginning to teach it. That was one of the program's goals.

This past school year, Mork and Jessica Chester taught Tlingit as an elective to about 90 students at Dzantik'i Heeni Middle School. The middle school students, about half of whom were Native, were required to study their family history and learn to introduce themselves in Tlingit by referring to their ancestors.

"The really neat thing is when Native students start to learn the language and start to learn about themselves," Mork said.

In about 10 years, the elderly fluent speakers of Tlingit will be gone, Mork said. To save the language, it has to become the language of children, she said.

"For a language to survive, it must have a mother-tongue acquisition," she said. "It must be spoken in the home and learned at a young age, and used every day."

Sealaska Heritage will offer language classes in Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian this summer. Students can receive college credit for completing the classes, which are co-sponsored by UAS.

All three languages will be taught in Ketchikan. The Juneau program offers courses in Tlingit, second-language teaching methods and developing Tlingit-language materials.

Tlingit-language immersion retreats are scheduled for Angoon and Haines, as well.

The summer program attracts students who are committed to learning a Native language through a variety of ways, such as university courses in the regular school year and community discussion groups, said Yarrow Vaara, a language specialist at Sealaska Heritage.

"This is just another opportunity for them to explore that," she said, but in a concentrated way.

The summer courses use a teaching method called total physical response. The idea is that the students, who are mostly adults, will learn a second language the way a baby learns its first language: by being spoken to in the language and responding with actions that show understanding.

Students become comfortable with the language before they speak it, Vaara said.

This is the third and final year for the immersion retreats, which have been funded through a federal grant, Sealaska Heritage officials said.

Students speak only in Tlingit during the retreats, which are scheduled for July 5-14 in Angoon and Aug. 15-24 in Haines. The retreats are best-suited to intermediate students, Vaara said.

"The first couple of days it's just like trying to learn how to talk all over again," she said. "It's reprogramming your brain."

Language programme preserves Acoma's Keresan language

June 29, 2005
Will Kie
http://www.cibolabeacon.com/articles/2005/06/28/news/news1.txt

ACOMITA - Six boys sit around a table with leather and metal tools piled in front of them.

Across the room, five girls gather around another table topped with sewing machines and a rainbow of fabric. In this makeshift classroom at the Acoma Senior Citizens Center, the Acoma Language Retention Program brings together young and old tribal members in traditional activities that will enable Acoma culture to be preserved and passed on to future generations.

A little over eight years ago, the Acoma Language Retention Program was started as a way of teaching the Keresan language to several generations of non-Keresan speaking Acoma children. Ninety youngsters enrolled.

Acoma tribal member and director of the language program, Vina Leno, said her past four years with the program have been the best of her 33 years serving the Acoma people. "This program has been the most rewarding, and I truly enjoy working with our community members," she said.

Leno said the program began back in 1997 when two women, Dr. Christine Simms from the University of New Mexico Department of Linguistics, and Donna Boynton, a certified teacher from Acoma, got together with a group of elders and discussed what losing the Keresan language might mean for the future of the pueblo.

"The elders agreed that if we do not teach the language to the young ones, we will eventually lose our language and then we will not have a culture," said Leno. She said the first group of students was assembled in what was called an "immersion camp."

Leno said the feedback from the students that first summer was extremely positive, and the students asked if they could study Keresan again every summer.

According to Leno, the following year the two women submitted their first planning grant to the Administration for Native Americans. The tribe was awarded $50,000 to survey the Acoma community about the importance of developing a language-retention program.

Leno said the tribal members responded favorably to a community-based language program. "The results showed that a lot of our young people wanted to speak the language," she said.

The program has continued to hold an immersion camp every summer, said Leno, focusing on a different age group each year. She said some children came back to the program and told their teachers that when they tried to speak Keresan at home, their parents did not understand the language. "Our program director at the time felt that there was also a need to teach the parents," said Leno.

The director went on to explain that the program had to educate the elders about new language teaching methods that were being used to teach the Acoma students. "Our people used to learn the language by talking to their parents or grandparents, but now things are different," said Leno. She added that not all parents and grandparents could speak the language fluently enough to teach other family members.

Acoma language teachers are now certified by the pueblo and have access to the Cibola County school system where they teach classes at Laguna-Acoma and Cubero, and also at the Sky City Community School. "We also discovered that one group that was not being helped was the high school aged student," said Leno.

Leno said the program has had tribal members come to the program wanting to teach Keresan, but they discover that just being able to speak the language does not mean they can teach it. "They find out there are lesson plans to develop, and they say that is not how we were taught the language," Leno said.

Leno said it was a little difficult to get the elders to understand that the kids of today are learning in a classroom setting and that new methods can be applied when teaching an ancient language.

The Acoma Retention Program currently has 11 students and is conducting classes in moccasin making for the boys and traditional dress making for the girls. From 2-4:30 p.m., the students - with their Keresan names pinned to their shirts - take instruction from Acoma elders, learning the names of their "tools" in the Keresan dialect.

"I like it, it is fun and I get to make my own dress instead of asking someone else to make me one," said Doreena Howeya, a student in the program. Howeya said making the dresses is not hard because the teachers have been making it fun to learn.

Leno said some elders were also concerned that the students would not benefit from learning the old ways when they venture beyond the reservation. "Here is the western way and the traditional way. The students don't need either way, they need both ways in order to survive and identify themselves as Acoma people," Leno said.

"Nihina'nitin baa'diil diih"? Navajos move to take control of classrooms from states

ASSOCIATED PRESS Tues, 06 September 2005 - 12 noon

PHOENIX -- Navajo Nation leaders have taken an initial step toward taking over control of their classrooms from the state, saying they'd be better off to run schools on their territory.

Schools on the reservation are currently overseen by the Arizona, Utah and New Mexico Departments of Education as well as the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Parochial schools are under the purview of the Diocese of Gallup in New Mexico. But in July, Navajo Nation legislators exercised sovereign powers to change their education code, creating an 11-member board and a superintendent of schools to be in place by 2017.

"It would be a department equal to or better than the three where our children attend schools," said Leland Leonard, director of Navajo Nation's Division of Dine Education. "The current academic approach is a borrowed concept from BIA and the state. We want to close the achievement gap by building our own standards."

Navajo leaders say creating their own department of education and instituting their own testing and learning standards would be better suited for Navajo students. That could mean Navajo students would not need to take state-mandated tests, such as Arizona's AIMS test, to receive a high school diploma or even glance at the national standardized test.

However, Navajo leaders say they're not interested in assuming financial control of the state's $140 million budget for the schools, which educates 21,000 students.

State officials seem open to the concept if transferring control of schools to Native American governments but say it's a difficult prospect. The Navajo Nation has eight large public schools, many located in urban residential areas like Tuba City, Kayenta and Chinle.

Tom Horne, superintendent of Arizona Public Instruction, said he agreed to be "open-minded" about the Navajo Nation's plan and had met with tribal leaders in June. However, district employees, governing school board members and parents from Navajo district school are already inquiring about how realistic the Navajo Nation plan is, Horne said.

Percy Deal, a member of the board of supervisors in Navajo County, is ecstatic about the tribe's philosophy to exert sovereignty. What troubles him is the elimination of Arizona standards and the high-stakes tests like AIMS and TerraNova.

"That is to say, we have our own standards and we only learn about our little world and

we don't want our students to compete on the national level. That is wrong," Deal said. "Our children's world, their future, is not within the Navajo Nation. It is outside the reservation. So they have to compete nationally."

National test scores at reservation public schools fall below the 50th national percentile mark in language arts, math and reading. Navajo students improved on AIMS 2005, a test which was made easier to take than in previous years.

"I'm still responsible for the academic performance of the schools. If they (Navajo Nation) want to take over that responsibility, they have to convince Congress to pass a law transferring that responsibility from me to them," Horne told The Arizona Republic.

Leonard, former chief executive officer of the Phoenix Indian Center, believes Navajo-crafted curriculum, standards and testing would benefit Navajo children. For example, he said school districts could require that the Navajo language be taught as part of the curriculum.

Horne said the state does not object to the teaching of Navajo language and culture with one exception -- students must still become proficient at English.

Cyndi Thompson, a parent at Chinle Unified School District, said many parents are unaware of the tribe's plan to consolidate all schools under its own department of education.

She said she's satisfied with her children's schools but admits she overhears the community repeat, "Nihina'nitin baa'diil diih," or "our oral Navajo philosophy and instruction is fading."

This story appeared in The Daily Herald on page D4. The URL for this story is:
http://www.newutah.com/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=63684

5. Allied Societies and Activities

Call for participation in *Voices of the World* - an international media project on endangered languages

Voices of the World (VOW) aims to build international awareness of the diversity of mankind through a world-wide documentary film and media project. We want to portray the peoples of the world, giving face and voice to each culture and empowering every language community to speak.

The goal of VOW is to strengthen our global mutual belonging. VOW is an international non-profit initiative of UNESCO's Goodwill Ambassador for Languages Mrs. Vigdis Finnbogadottir, based on an original idea by the internationally acclaimed filmmaker Janus Billeskov Jansen, supported by the Danish Government, the UN and by leading linguists from all over the world.

AMBITIONS AND VISIONS

Our first task is to create a media event in connection with UN's 60th anniversary in October 2005.

All the Nordic public service TV stations are committed to this broadcast. We are presently working on similar arrangements with other international TV-stations. In order to make this a truly global event we want to invite YOU to participate in creating key elements of the central documentary film – Voices.

Voices will tell the story of the linguistic loss the world is suffering from the threat of language endangerment. The film takes its point of departure in a personal talk with UN Sec.-Gen. Mr. Kofi Annan, in his own mother tongue Fante, expressing his concerns for cultural and linguistic diversity. But the main elements of the film are to be based on YOUR contributions. We seek case stories, which pinpoint the stages from language endangerment to language death. We look for storytellers who can explain what it feels like to loose one's language.

"VOICES" NEEDS YOUR HELP

We aim to include material from as many different languages as possible inthe film, but we have a limited budget. Thus we are looking for local contributions.

You can participate in three different ways.

1. you can submit new material.
2. you can submit material already recorded.
3. you can send us contacts to speakers of endangered languages. We are looking for charismatic storytellers who can tell moving personal stories to the world in their own language. The issues to be covered are:

1. The language generation gap – how does it feel to live in a family where grand parents and grand children find it hard to communicate, because the language of the older generation was not passed on?

2. The last speakers – how does it feel to be among the last few speakers of a language?

3. Language suppression (economic, social, political, cultural) – how do people cope with situations, when their language is not given space in the public sphere? What does it mean to a community, if their language is forbidden or drained of resources?

4. Language and technology – how are speakers of endangered languages affected by globalization and the new information technology?

We are also looking for success stories such as:

5. Language revitalization – how did a particular endangered language community manage to turn the situation around and revitalize their language?

6. Other vital language issues? – YOU might come up with something brilliant, which we were not even able to conceptualize – given the limitations of our language…

If you want to participate in "Voices", please start by sending us an email introducing yourself, your language or the language you are engaged with. Please also describe your contribution and in what way you would like to collaborate with us. We will then send you more information about the project, more specifications of what we are looking for and technical requirements.

Contact: Voices of the World
Project manager: Signe Byrge Sørensen
<mailto:byrge@final-cut.dk> byrge@final-cut.dk
Forbindelsesvej 7; 2100 Copenhagen, Denmark
Tel: +45 35 43 60 43, Fax: +45 35 43 60 44

Request for Course Syllabi: Language Death, Endangerment and Revitalization

Date: 29-Jul-2005
From: Chiara Frigeni <cfrigeni@chass.utoronto.ca>

As part of a project being carried out by the LSA Committee on Endangered Languages and their Preservation, we are collecting information on courses on language death, language endangerment, and language revitalization.

If you have taught a course in these areas in recent years and are willing to share your syllabus, we would greatly appreciate it. If you agree, your syllabus will become part of a website of teaching resources on these topics. Please send this information to Tanya Slavin at tanya.slavin@utoronto.ca

New courses in Language Endangerment at Monash University

A number of new postgraduate courses in Language Endangerment Studies will commence in the Monash University Linguistics Program in 2006.

The courses are designed for people who are involved in, or aspire tobecome involved in work with minority endangered language groups. They offer professional development at four levels, ranging from a Masters in Linguistics to a Postgraduate Diploma and

Graduate Certificate. Interested applicants who have not completed high school may commence study at Faculty Certificate level. Students in Language Endangerment are required to be affiliated (or develop an affiliation) with a language community or organisation which is engaged in language maintenance. The newly developed units in each course aim to provide linguists, language maintenance practitioners and speakers of minority languages with specialist training in both the theoretical and applied aspects of language documentation and language maintenance for endangered languages in the particular social and political contexts in which they are spoken.

Australian and international applicants are welcome to apply. The courses can be taken full-time or part-time, either on campus or off-campus by distance education via web based study.

Further information is available at <http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/ling/pglangen/> or by contacting Margaret Florey (the Course Coordinator) by email at <Margaret.Florey@arts.monash.edu.au> or by phone on +61 (0)3 9905-2237.

Trafford Publishing pledges $1.6 million for endangered languages

(Victoria, Canada / Oxford, UK / Gaborone, Botswana) Over 6,500 indigenous languages around the world are severely endangered. With the last remaining native speakers of many dialects dying each year, one publishing company is pledging over $1.6 million to help in the global race to document and teach these languages to youth.

The donation by Trafford Publishing is being announced today to over 800 delegates from over 80 countries gathering at WITFOR 2005, a UNESCO- and European Union-sponsored conference in Botswana, convened to discuss ways to give access to technology to those in the developing world.

Have them write books, urges Trafford Publishing. Now over 3,000 independent authors publish their books each year with the company whose main offices are in Victoria, Canada and Oxford, England. Books are printed 'on-demand' one at a time to fill orders from bookstores and individuals, with most orders placed on the Internet.

Trafford is pledging to underwrite approximately $1,600,000 in publishing costs over the next ten years. The programme will make available primers for school children, dictionaries and local stories -- one book will be published in each of 650 endangered languages.

Trafford has already published primers in 10 Canadian aboriginal endangered languages, and is sponsoring urgent work to document an endangered language in Namibia.

Batchelor hopes the magnitude of Trafford's pledge will bring attention to the situation and encourage donations in equipment from hi-tech manufacturers.

"Some communities really need a few key tools to document their language and then plug into the best revival practices. An iBook, iPod, microphone, digital camera, solar battery charger, a week's on-site technical training -- those would be part of the most basic linguistic rescue kit," says Batchelor, listing the sponsorship possibilities.

Trafford's gift was prompted by a request by Bothas Marinda of Namibia to have a book published in his community's language. Peter Brand of First Peoples' Cultural Foundation, a Canadian non-profit which will be helping Marinda, passed along the idea to Batchelor who didn't want to limit this to only a few first nations or tribes.

Brand and FPCF Executive Director Tracey Herbert are making the pledge announcement on Trafford's behalf at the conference during a presentation about **FirstVoices.com**, pioneering language revitalization technology developed by the foundation. Aboriginal groups from 5 continents are using or preparing to use web-based dictionaries that hyperlink to pictures and the sound of each word being pronounced. Brand's team can convert standard PC keyboards for typing aboriginal characters which can be printed on most laser or inkjet printers in the international Unicode font standard.

FirstVoices.com is a set of web-based languages archiving and teaching resources, developed by First Peoples' Cultural Foundation -- a Canadian-based Indigenous non-profit society, based in British Columbia. Recent exposure for FirstVoices.com at international conferences in Canada, Japan and now Botswana are raising the profile of the unique language tools, originally developed for the 198 First Nations in BC. The invitation to showcase FirstVoices.com in Africa acknowledges the successful development and implementation of a made-in-Canada technology solution developed by Indigenous people, for Indigenous people.

Based on retail pricing applicable to the various currency zones, Trafford's pledge is worth approximately $1,656,850 Canadian dollars or $1,266,850 US or 1,202,500 euro or 876,850 UK pounds.

Indigenous language teams can access publishing services by contacting Peter Brand at peter@fpcf.ca. The First People's Cultural Foundation is developing criteria to determine which groups will benefit from Trafford's donation of 65 publishing packages per year for 10 years.

Bruce Batchelor, Trafford Publishing, 2333 Government Street, Suite 6E Victoria, BC, Canada V8T 4P4
+1 250-383-6864
bruce@trafford.com www.trafford.com

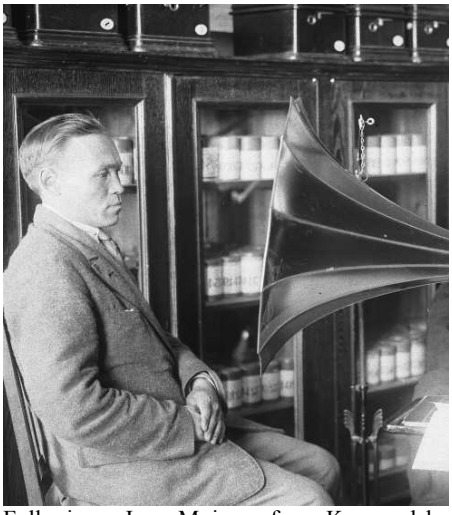
6. Reports on Field Research

Voices from the Past: the use of Sound Archives for the Study of Endangered languages in Siberia

Tjeerd de Graaf & Vincent Wintermans

In Russia a very important collection of sound recordings can be found in the Museum of Russian Literature (the Pushkinsky Dom) in St Petersburg. These sound archives contain about 10,000 wax cylinders of the Edison phonograph and more than 500 old wax discs. In addition, an extensive fund of gramophone records exists and one of the largest collections of tape recordings of Russian folklore.

Scientific interest in the languages and cultures of the non-Russian peoples of the Empire had developed in the XIXth century, often prompted by the work of people who had been banished to Siberia by the czarist regime. But by the time of the first recordings – the oldest materials in the Pushkinsky Dom date from the first decade of the XXth century – Russian linguists and anthropologists were professionals who used state of the art equipment. They managed to take their bulky phonographs and heavy wax rolls on long expeditions to Russia's extreme North and East. The recordings formed the basis for good descriptions of small languages like Ostyak, Nivkh, Aleut and many others. These descriptions were indispensable for the development of alphabets for these hitherto unwritten languages, but they also enriched linguistic science in general: Trubetzkoy's *Grundzüge der Phonologie*, a book that established the new discipline of phonology, could not have been written without the numerous examples derived from the languages of Russia's North and East.



Folk singer Ivan Moiseev from Kargopolsky district of Archangelsky Province, in session with Eugene Gippius, Zinaida Evald (1930).

The recordings were stored in St Petersburg, and survived all turmoil that swept over the city in the eventful and often destructive XXth century. The collections were however subject to the usual dangers: the wax cylinders and discs were wearing out, the hardware became obsolete and the collections were no longer used.

However, thanks to technological progress, that makes it possible to transport the information on the cylinders to digital sound carriers, and to political changes that have made forms of scientific cooperation possible that would have been unthinkable before the end of the cold war, many of the Petersburg recordings have been brought back to life. The digital version of the records can be made easily accessible to everyone with a connection to the internet. The interested reader is referred to the huge collection of North Russian songs, narrative poetry and tales at http://www.speech.nw.ru/phonetics/.

The value of the materials thus retrieved is evident; a considerable portion of the audiovisual materials kept in the Museum of Russian Literature has never been made available in scientific publications. Some of the collectors took up other scientific interests; some emigrated to the West and were thus separated from their recordings. The famous scholar W. Jochelson, for example, took his notes on the Kamchadal language with him to the United States, where they were published posthumously in 1961, while his recordings obviously were left behind in Russia. The digitalisation of his recordings would bring the written and recorded data together again, which undoubtedly would further the study of a language that has changed drastically since the time it was recorded by Jochelson.

In July 2005, the project group for the Russian-Dutch research project *Voices from Tundra and Taiga* has published a book on the *Collections of the Peoples of the North in the Phonogram Archive of the Pushkinsky Dom*. The project results reported there and the rich material in the published catalogue indicate that many voices from the past will be heard all over the world.

UNESCO inscribed the St Petersburg collections in its prestigious Memory of the World Register in 2001.

About the authors:

Tjeerd de Graaf is research fellow at the Fryske Akademy (Netherlands Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences), and honorary doctor of St. Petersburg University.

Together with Russian colleagues he initiated and coordinated the projects *The Use of Acoustic Data Bases and the Study of Language Change* and *Voices from Tundra and Taiga* with the support of the organisation INTAS of the European Union and the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research NWO. More information can be found at http://www.mercator-education.org, where the projects on Endangered Languages are described. He is board member of the Foundation for Endangered Languages and member of the working group for Culture, Communication & Information of the Netherlands National Commission for UNESCO.

Vincent Wintermans is a Slavist who works as project coordinator at the Bureau of the Netherlands National Commission for UNESCO.

UNESCO promotes the preservation and dissemination of valuable archive holdings and library collections all over the world via the Memory of the World Programme: http://portal.unesco.org/ci.

The UNESCO Endangered Languages Programme supports endangered languages and linguistic diversity as an essential part of the living heritage of humanity: http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=8270&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

For information on TAPE see: http://www.tape-online.net/

7. Overheard on the Web

"All" Languages or Any Language?

http://native-lang.openoffice.org/
Mark P Line

Lucas Hüsgen said: It may be interesting to know that free office suite project Open Office.org is warmly interested in developing this open source product for all (that is: all) languages.

Well, they mean "all" languages in the special sense of at most 676 languages which either have a 2-letter ISO code or can be informally given an unassigned one.

Even if you're not an ethnologue-style splitter, that's not a very significant proportion of the world's languages, much less "all" of them.

No question, of course, that it would be quite an accomplishment if they *did* get their software localized in that many languages, but I guess it's the case that they're interested in localizing in _any_ language, not literally in _all_ languages.

So that would mean that there is an opportunity here for some endangered and other minority languages to gain visibility and utility by plugging into this project. I reckon it'll be a first-come, first-serve affair, hough, so I expect to be seeing Saami, Tok Pisin, Scots and Plattdeutsch before we see Wutung, Yupik or Arapaho.

Of course, they might also be thinking that they'll eventually try to switch to 3-letter ISO codes if they really do start to saturate the 2-letter space -- in which case just forget everything I said here

Dahaalik: bid to save 'lost' language off the coast of Eritrea

May 10, 2005

http://www.news24.com/News24/Africa/News/0,,2-11-1447_1702495,00.html

Nearly a decade after accidentally discovering a previously unknown language on an Indian Ocean archipelago off the Eritrean coast, a French linguist is fighting to save the unwritten, untaught tongue.

"Dahaalik is part of humanity's heritage and must be preserved," said Marie-Claude Simeone-Senelle, who with colleague Martine Vanhove, found Dahlak island fishermen conversing in the unusual vernacular nine years ago.

Puzzled by words and usage that did not correspond to the two main languages of the region - Afar and Arabic - the pair at first thought it was a dialect of Tigray, but later ascertained it was a distinct entity, she said.

Although close to Arabic and Tigre, Dahaalik was determined to be a language in itself due to its markedly different phonetics, morphology and syntax, but had languished in obscurity on the isles off the port of Massawa.

"Before 1996, no one had heard of Dahaalik," said Simeone-Senelle, an Afro-Asiatic language specialist at the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS).

"We have to find out how it appeared," she said. "For the moment, we don't know when it emerged."

Now spoken by only about 3 000 people on the three islands and not currently taught in schools, Dahaalik, whose origins remain a mystery, is in danger of dying out, she said.

"The understanding of this language, which has an oral but no written tradition, will provide us with a better knowledge of Eritrean history and its human components," said Simeone-Senelle who recently returned from another research trip to the islands to study the language.

In her bid to preserve Dahaalik with the help of Eritrean authorities, Simeone-Senelle has been collecting "tales, poems, riddles, stories of traditions and vocabulary concerning daily life, animals, boats and fishing techniques."

With these snippets, she has begun to compile a Dahaalik dictionary and grammar book, creating a written version of the language in the Roman alphabet by mimicking its sounds.

"It's a long job," Simeone-Senelle said. "I have already listed 1 500 words, but in all it will take several years."

The nascent dictionary is currently limited to Dahaalik into French, but she hopes the as-yet unfinished lexicon will become more multilingual, from Dahaalik into English, Arabic and Tigre.

Because it was not discovered until 1996, after Eritrea outlined its policy of linguistic pluralism, Dahaalik is not now taught in Dahlak schools, but Eritrean officials say they intend to introduce it into the curriculum, adding it to Arabic.

"The plan is that one day Dahaalik will also be taught in schools," said Zemehret Yohannes, head of Research and Documentation at Eritrea's sole political party, the People's Front for Democracy and Justice.

Scarce Resources Hobble Dené Native Language Efforts

May 18, 2005
Rudy Troike, University of Arizona

What Mia is doing sounds fascinating. Since you are using Lakoff & Nunez's embodied perspective, I imagine you know about the big ethnoscience project of Ozzie Werner some years ago on the atlas of Navajo terminology for the human body. That seems relevant to this approach.

One caution in general about adapting or translating materials from English/Spanish/French etc. to native languages is that these Eurocentric materials assume a universal categorization of the world that needs to be problematized and subjected to ethnographic examination for each case. A couple of examples are pertinent. Some years ago when Muriel Saville-Troike was working on a Navajo kindergarten curriculum, she found that although Navajo has a term for the hexagonal shape of the hogan 'house' (how many English speakers are readily familiar with 'hexagon'?), there was no term for Plato's supposed universal triangle, which available math and reading-readiness materials took for granted. In visiting schools on the reservation, she found that teachers had had to make up their own term for 'triangle' (after all, the code-talkers made up terms for tanks and airplanes), but each teacher had come up with a different expression. If off-the-shelf materials are to be used which presuppose the universality of certain categorizations, it should be checked and established first whether there are native categories and recognized labels which correspond to these, or whether these will have to be introduced as "foreign" categories/concepts, and labels invented and standardized for them.

One cannot always be sure that just because native speakers are developing or consulting on materials development, their intuition will securely flag problems such as this. The difficulty here is that most native consultants or developers have themselves been educated largely through the dominant language, and have unconsciously internalized the categories of the dominant language/culture and have accepted the (unrecognized) ethnocentric assumption that these categories are 'natural' and universal. Thus an ethnographically oriented examination of the native lexicon may be necessary/desirable to raise consciousness as to the differences between native conceptualizations and Eurocentric ones. (Even fluent bilinguals are rarely conscious of comparative differences between their own language and the second language, and most speakers of most languages are largely unaware of the structure and categories of their own language. Someone -- perhaps on this list – recently remarked on the surprise of a German speaker when it was pointed out to him that the German word for 'glove', Handschuh, was literally "hand-shoe", i.e. shoe for the hand.)

A few years ago when I was consulting on a project to develop materials for Mayan languages in Guatemala, I found that native speakers were taking the standard Spanish-language materials and, without changing illustrations, supplying Mayan (Mam, Quiche, Kekchi, etc.) labels for them. In one lesson devoted to practicing recognizing groups and giving appropriate numbers for them (three trees, two houses, etc.), I found that the categories presumed by the Spanish texts were not being questioned by the developers, who were themselves all elementary school teachers who had been teaching the materials in Spanish. After some discussion, it emerged that the distinction between 'arbol' (tree) and 'arbusto' (bush) did not fit the native categorizations of types of plants, and that to apply the native labels in teaching sets (without distorting the application of these labels by mapping them onto the Spanish ones), it would be necessary to come up with different pictures.

Especially labels for parts of the human body, which might seem self-evident, need to be questioned. The 'foot', for which we have a lexicalized distinction in English, is often not separated terminologically from the 'ankle' or 'lower leg'; even English 'ear' does not distinguish by itself the outer ear and the inner ear, lexicalized separately in Spanish as 'oreja' and 'oido'. Thus whereas "My ear hurts" is ambiguous in English, in Spanish it would not be. Since most traditional math educators are predisposed to accept without question the universality of mathematical concepts, they need to be sensitized to the cultural embeddedness of instructional media, and the need to examine ethnographically the appropriateness of categories usually taken for granted in instruction.

Additional Comments from Susan Penfield

I'd like to add offer a similar reminder concerning the construction of dialogue-based language lessons. The temptation and all-to-common approach is to take English conversational patterns and plug in native language lexical items. This ignores what might be important cullturally-determined rules for conversation -- for instance, something as simple as 'How's the weather?" (introducing a conversation with a question) would not be the norm among many of the elders I have worked with.

Report on Indigenous Languages in South African Higher Education

Press Release Issued by Tommy Makhode, Ministerial Spokesperson, Dept Education, Republic of South Africa

http://education.pwv.gov.za/mainmedia.asp?src=mvie&xsrc=828

The Minister of Education, Mrs Naledi Pandor, has received the framework report on the development of indigenous African languages in higher education. This report was put together by a team of specialists in the area and led by Professor Njabulo Ndebele, Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Town.

The other members of the Ministerial Committee were, Professor R Finlayson (University of South Africa), Professor R Madadzhe (University of the North), Professor S E Ngubane (University of KwaZulu-Natal), Dr M Nyamende (University of Cape Town), Ms N Tsheole, (former Member of Parliament) Ms T. January-McLean (Deputy Director-General: Department of Arts and Culture) and Dr C. Lubisi (Department of Education).

The Language Policy for Higher Education, promulgated in November 2002 commits to the long-term development of indigenous African languages for use as languages of teaching and learning in higher education. In line with this policy, the Ministerial Committee to advise on the development of indigenous African languages as mediums of instruction in higher education was established in September 2003.

The Committee conducted research to investigate amongst others, the South African historical and legislative contexts and conditions that nurture language growth. The Report expresses a view that “a crisis is looming in the country regarding the preservation, maintenance and associated identity of our indigenous African languages”. The anticipated crisis is attributed to the preference for English instead of African languages in formal communication in the private and public sectors as well as in general social practice. The Report also points to the declining numbers of students who wish to study African languages, which has

resulted in the closing down of African language Departments in a number of higher education institutions.

In order to prevent further decline, the Report recommends that there should be a well-coordinated, long-range national plan to provide adequate resources and support for indigenous African languages. Similarly, the existing language development infrastructure such as the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB), the National Language Services (NLS) of the Department of Arts and Culture and African Language Associations should be supported, maintained and monitored.

Additionally, the Report makes a point that the objective to develop official indigenous languages as mediums of instruction in higher education requires systemic undergirding by the entire schooling system and the enhanced public and social use of these languages in the daily lives of South Africans. It also recommends that each higher education institution should be required to identify an indigenous African language of choice for initial development as a medium of instruction. Higher education institutions could adopt a regional approach by taking collective decisions on areas of speciality to be targeted for teaching and learning in a specific indigenous African language. The Ministry is studying the Report and will, in due course, indicate the key areas to be pursued. The Report will shortly be distributed to the institutions and made available on the Department's website. (http://www.education.gov.za)

Endangered Languages Documentary

Josep Cru notes that some friends in Barcelona (Milana Bonita) produced a nice documentary (48') on three endangered languages of Mexico (Lacandon, Mayo and Popoluca) entitled 'Última palabra-Last Word'. More info at:
http://www.linguapax.org/congres/taller/ultima-palabraeng.html

The video tape can be purchased at:

http://www.ciemen.org/botiga.htm

CSUSM Professor Helps Preserve Guatemalan Language

By David Garrick, Staff Writer
North County Times

http://www.nctimes.com/articles/2005/08/16/sports/professional/81505195306.txt

SAN MARCOS ---- A group of women who lost their husbands and fathers two decades ago in Guatemala's violent civil war are one step closer to telling the world their stories thanks to help from a cultural linguistics professor at Cal State San Marcos.

The language skills of the women have atrophied over the years because they spend virtually all of their time providing sustenance for themselves in a remote village in the hills of Guatemala, but Cal State assistant professor Jule Gomez de Garcia helped secure a $160,000 grant this summer that will help change that.

Gomez de Garcia helped persuade the National Science Foundation to provide enough funds to allow the women to spend nine hours per week honing their speaking, reading and writing skills in Ixil, an endangered Mayan language. The aim is to preserve the language and to allow the women to tell the world what happened to them and what their lives are like today.

"These women know that people have heard about the genocide and atrocities, and they know that some don't believe," said Gomez de Garcia, who has visited the northern Guatemala village several times. "They really want to tell their stories."

A component of the grant project will be a Web site featuring voice and video files of narratives that will be provided by 30 women in the village. The multimedia database is part of the Documenting Endangered
Languages project, a new multi-year effort to digitally archive 70 at-risk languages before they become extinct.

Pat Worden, Cal State's interim vice president for student affairs, said this is exactly the type of project that the university encourages professors to tackle.

"One of our very important goals is having faculty involved in cutting-edge research," said Worden, who helped with the grant in her previous job as assistant vice president for research and international programs. "This project is a great example of the kind of research model we want here at Cal State."

Gomez de Garcia said the grant is already paying dividends, because the women have begun to study their language from 3 to 6 p.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. This work comes after the women spend most of the day creating and selling traditional weavings and raising vegetables to sell at the local market.

"The women had been spending all their time on sustenance," said Gomez de Garcia, who joined the Cal State faculty in 2001. "They were refugees in the mountains who should have been learning to write, and because they didn't keep up the language, it has become endangered."

They have also realized that the world is bigger than they thought, and that the Internet will allow them to tell their stories to millions of people without leaving their small village, she said.

Gomez de Garcia, 54, said that it is crucial for native speakers of a language to preserve it themselves, without interference from others who might alter the language.

"Revitalization of a language can't come from outside," she said. "So we had to figure out the best way for them to do it themselves."

The grant will cover compensation for the audiovisual specialist who is creating the Web site and travel expenses for Gomez de Garcia and her two collaborators: Melissa Axelrod, a linguistics professor at the University of New Mexico, and Gomez de Garcia's daughter, Maria Luz Garcia, a graduate student at the University of Texas who has lived
with the Guatemalan women on and off since 2001.

There are expected to be many thousands of dollars left over, and the women plan to buy something that will help sustain the group long-term, such as land or a business, Gomez de Garcia said.

Some people might not think it is a big deal to preserve endangered languages, Gomez de Garcia said, but languages help us understand how people live and how they think.

"Language is the window we have into how the mind works," she said.

Frontier Language Institute working to save script-less languages in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province

By Ghafar Ali
http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=story_15-9-2005_pg7_34
15 Sep 2005

PESHAWAR: Languages do not merely serve the purpose of communication. They carry and transmit the culture and history of their native speakers. The language a person speaks essentially determines the worldview of a person. Languages therefore are a primary source of identity. A huge diversity in the regional languages of a country may pose many challenges.

More than two-dozen languages of Indian-Aryan, Iranian, Tibetan and Nuristani origins are spoken in the NWFP and the Northern Areas, most of which do not have a script. Henrik Lijegran, a research consultant at the Frontier Language Institute (FLI) told Daily Times about his institute's efforts to preserve and promote the mother tongues of various language communities of northern Pakistan. He said one of the main objectives of the organisation is to document languages and cultures and to promote the educational use of these languages.

"The FLI facilitates local researchers by educating them in linguistics, literacy, anthropology, lexicography, translation,

language planning, phonology and research methodology" he said. He said the training would allow individuals to preserve oral traditions, poetry, proverbs, folk tales and other aspects of their cultural heritage. This would also aid the development of bilingual or trilingual dictionaries and glossaries. The efforts aim to improve reading and writing skills to produce literature in the national, regional and vernacular languages of the region. He said the institute has facilitated the development of scripts of 20 regional languages.

"We want to offer a local language network that allows cultural exchange," the researcher said. He said the FLI would support a local project for the development of three languages - Gawri, Torwali, Palula - spoken in Chitral. Each of these languages has 10,000 to 100,000 speakers.

Indo-Aryan languages:
Bateri Indus Kohistan: >20,000
Chilisso Indus Kohistan: >2,000
Dameli Damel valley (Chitral): >2,000
Domaaki Hunza (Gilgit): >200
Gawar-Bati Arandu (Chitral): >200
Gawri Swat, Dir Kohistan: >20,000
Gowro Indus Kohistan: >200
Gojri Throughout the region: >200,000
Hindko Azad Kashmir, Kohat, Peshawar: >2,000,000
Indus Kohistani Indus Kohistan: >200,000
Kalasha Chitral: >2,000
Kalkoti Dir Kohistan: >2,000
Kashmiri Azad Kashmir: >20,000
Khowar (Chitrali) Chitral, Gilgit: >200,000
Kundal Shahi Azad Kashmir: >200
Pahari-Potwari Murree hills, Azad Kashmir: >2,000,000
Palula Chitral: >2,000
Shina Gilgit, Kohistan: >200,000
Torwali Behrain (Swat): >20,000
Ushojo Madyan (Swat): >200
Iranian languages:
Ormuri South Waziristan: >2,000
Pashto Throughout the region: >2,000,000
Wakhi Gilgit, Chitral: >2,000
Yidgha Lutkoh valley (Chitral): >2,000
Tibetan language:
Balti Baltistan: >200,000
Isolated language:
Burushaski Hunza, Nagar, Yasin: >20,000
Nuristani language:
Kam-Kataviri Chitral: >2,000

8. Places to Go -

On the Net and in the World

Endangered Languages on Film and Video

On May 5 I (Ole Stig Andersen) posted the following query

"I am looking for TV documentaries and films about Endangered Languages, or where language endangerment or revitalization is part of the story told."

The query yielded some 80 films, ranging from 2 minute TV spots over many classic half-hour documentaries to a handfull of full-length feature movies that may not be documentaries proper as much as revitalization projects in their own right.

Most of them portray the situation of a single language and/or a variety of revitalisation efforts. A few tell the history of the destruction of a particular language.

A third of the films are part of a a single impressive production: the Canadian Finding Our Talk series of 26 half-hour films, all available in four languages. There are some ten further films from the Americas, about a dozen on Finno-Ugric languages of Norteastern Europe and similarly for Australia.

Except for the Archives of Babel series of small TV spots the query did not elicit a single pointer to films about endangered African or South Asian languages. In general, the list leaves the unoffshakable impression that (some) endangered languages of the Rich are somewhat better off, publicitywise at least, than the Rest, which is of course no wonder.

About a quarter of the films are (also) available online. Others are on VHS, DVD and 35 mm film. A few are probably not available.

I have put up a webpage with detailed information as far as I have it now - on the 80 films: a tiny presentation of each, the language(s) featured, language versions available, format, duration etc. There you'll also find links and contact information on the film, the producer or distributor.

http://www.olestig.dk/endangered-languages/films.html

I believe this overview lists the majority of available TV/Film-documentaries on endangered languages. I'm looking forward to corrections, additional information, further films etc.

I thank those who responded to the query and have credited them on the web page.

Sixth Native American Symposium

November 10-12, 2005
Southeastern Oklahoma State University in Durant, Oklahoma.

Our featured speakers this year will be Buffy Sainte-Marie and Winona LaDuke. The symposium's theme is Native Women in the Arts, Education, and Leadership, but papers and presentations welcomed on all Native American topics and issues, including history, literature, autobiography, film, cultural studies, education, religion, politics, the social sciences, and fine arts. For more information, write to Dr. Mark B. Spencer, Department of English, Humanities, and Languages, Box 4121, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Durant, OK 74701-0609, mspencer@sosu.edu.

Endangered Voices

Endangered Voices is an exhibition exploring the themes of language endangerment. The installation features 7 boards traversing issues and instances of Language and Culture, Languages in Competition, Language and Literacy, Language and Technology, Language Revitalisation (Revitalization) and Language Documentation. The exhibition will be held at the Brunei Gallery in London from 28th June - 23rd September 2005, Monday to Friday 10.30am - 5pm, Free Admission. For more information visit:
http://www.hrelp.org/events/endangeredvoices/

Archive of Choctaw Language Classes

An archive of Choctaw language classes is available online here:

http://www.choctawschool.com/FlexWeb/Section.aspx?sec=7

Aboriginal Studies Electronic Data Archive

http://coombs.anu.edu.au/SpecialProj/ASEDA/ASEDA.html

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) holds computer-based (digital) materials about Australian Indigenous languages in the *Aboriginal Studies Electronic Data Archive* (ASEDA). ASEDA has materials including dictionaries, grammars, teaching materials, and represents about 300 languages. ASEDA offers a free service of secure storage, maintenance, and distribution of electronic texts relating to these languages.

The Archive is available to language community members and to researchers in the field of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

Virtual Library for Australian Aboriginal Languages Update

David Nathan

The WWW Virtual Library for Australian Aboriginal Languages has undergone a major update, with about 100 updated listings (40 new items, about 60 moved sites re-traced). It now lists 224 resources for about 70 Australian languages. Interestingly, the proportion of sites from Indigenous authors or publishers is now about 33%, up from about 25% in 2003. It's at:

http://www.dnathan.com/VL/austLang.htm

Frisian Academy Research on Endangered Languages

Work on endangered languages (phonetics and ethnolinguistics) at the Frisian Academy focuses on the study of language contrasts, language contact and language change. The phonetic aspects of languages and dialects of minority and indigenous languages, in particular those of the Russian Federation and neighbouring countries, are investigated. This portal features websites related to the diverse range of research:

http://www.mercator-education.org/sjablonen/3/default.asp?objectID=3550

Wordcorr: Demo Software for Archiving Comparative Data

Joseph E. Grimes, SIL International and University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

http://www.wordcorr.org/

This software is available for free download at http://www.sourceforge.net/projects/wordcorr

Some metadata for linguistics are fairly simple. Metadata for collections of many word lists and their analyses, however, are not so simple. **Wordcorr** is a computational tool for managing word list data for comparative phonology, in both research and teaching. It also takes in annotations that reflect linguists' or students' judgments about the data, and from them tabulates and organizes all the correspondence sets implied by those judgments. It provides for different views of the same data to permit investigating conflicting hypotheses.

Members of the Wordcorr community will soon be interacting with each other by emailing files with the aid of the Wordcorr.org Web site. Currently they email them without help from the site, and also interact through the Wordcorr forum on SourceForge and personal messages. Since analyses are in continual flux, and data get expanded or corrected from time to time, the actual data sets are distributed rather than centralized, and are in the hands of the originator of each collection. But the metadata for each collection that has been made public will be on the Web site and can be searched through regular OLAC protocols.

Let's Speak Kumeyaay

"My name is Samuel Brown. I am reservation born and bred. I am a resident enrolled member of Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians and I look like an Indian…"

http://www.kumeyaay.org/

This is a web-site for the Kumiái language of Southern California east of San Diego, previously often known as Diegueño.

9. Forthcoming Meetings

Cornell Conference on Language and Poverty, 14-16 October, 2005

This conference, organized by the linguistics department at Cornell University, USA, has two central objectives: (1) to highlight the complex interconnections of language and poverty for a general audience, and (2) to promote exchange among scholars of language and of culture and poverty as well as community-based language activists on work with endangered languages in impoverished communities. Day one pursues the first objective of outreach and general education; days two and three are primarily devoted to the second and more specialized effort.

There is no registration fee but those planning to participate are asked to register at http://ling.cornell.edu/language_and_poverty/

Day 1, Friday, October 14, 2005

Poverty as a Factor in Language Maintenance and Language Death

Keynote speaker: Leanne Hinton
Commentator: Kathryn S. March

Panel Discussion by Herman Batibo, Matthias Brenzinger, and Ofelia Zepeda on the effect of access to resources on the maintenance of minority languages.
Commentator: TBA

Language and Access to Resources

Keynote Speaker: John Baugh
Commentator: Stephen L. Morgan

Panel Discussion by Neville Alexander, Ofelia Garcia, and Ajit Mohanty on the relation between the languages people speak or do not speak and their economic status.
Commentator: Ravi Kanbur

Day 2, Saturday, October 15, 2005

oWorkshop on *Community -Based Language Maintenance Programs*, with Nora Marks Dauenhauer, Richard Dauenhauer, and TBA.
Commentator: Audra Simpson

oWorkshop on the *Role of the Linguist in Language Maintenance and Revitalization: Documentation Training and Materials Development*, with Lenore Grenoble, Norvin Richards and Keren Rice
Commentator: Amanda Miller

Minority Languages in Economic and Social Context

Keynote Speaker: Suzanne Romaine
Commentator: Benedict Anderson

Panel Discussion with Bruce Mannheim and Peter Whiteley on the implications of political economy, social structure, and culture for language in an age of globalization.
Commentator: David Wippman

Day 3, Sunday morning, October 16, 2005 (concluding by 1:00pm)

o Workshop on *Technology as a Tool in Language Modelling, Documentation and Preservation*, witth Helen Aristar-Dry and Ian Maddieson.
Commentator: Mark Turin

o Workshop on *Funding for Language Documentation and Revitalization Initiatives*, with Arienne Dwyer, Barry Supple and Doug Whalen

The conference is funded by grants from the National Science Foundation and Cornell University's Poverty, Inequality and Development Initiative.

Language Law and Language Rights: the Challenges of Enactment and Implementation, Galway, Ireland, 14-17 June 2006

The Tenth International Conference on Language and Law of the International Academy of Linguistic Law will take place (Wednesday-Saturday), in Galway, Ireland in co-operation with Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge (Academy for Irish-medium Studies), the Irish Centre for Human Rights and the Dept. of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. The Conference will be on campus at the National University of Ireland, Galway.

The working languages of the Conference will be Irish, English and French.

The Scientific Committee of the Conference is formed by Prof. Bill Schabas, Dr. Joshua Castellino, Joe Mac Donnacha, Dr. Peadar Ó Flatharta and Dónal Ó Riagáin (Ireland) and Profs. Denise Daoust, Angéline Martel, André Braen, Joseph-G. Turi and José Woehrling (Canada).

For more information concerning registration, accommodation and to send abstracts of proposed papers, please contact directly as soon as possible the Galway Committee: iall-confer@nuigalway.ie
tel.: +353 91 495217; fax: +353 91 495568.

A copy of each abstract must also be sent to the Canadian Committee at the following address: IALL-AIDL; suite J-4; 6000, chemin Deacon; Montréal (Québec); Canada H3S 2T9. E-mail: academy.all@attglobal.net; website: www.iall-aidl.org; tel.: +1(514)345-0718; fax: +1(514) 345-0860.

Abstracts of papers (200-400 words) should be sent before 31 Dec 2005. The topics of the conference shall include:

- Linguistic rights and legislation.
- Language rights in the constitutions of the world
- Language planning & human rights
- The politics of languages and rights
- Linguistics rights as third generation rights
- Multilingualism and linguistic rights - the right to language diversity
- Indigenous languages and minorities' rights
- Linguistic minorities, lesser-use languages, endangered languages and human rights
- Language rights before the courts and the law
- Language rights in education
- The language of law

The registration fee (in euros) is €150 for participants registered before 31 Jan 2006 and €200 for participants registered later. The fees for students will be likewise €100, later €150.

10. Recent Publications

John Enrico - Dictionary preserving the language of the Haida

By ERIC FRY, JUNEAU EMPIRE
http://www.juneauempire.com/stories/062605/sta_20050626030.shtml

Scholar John Enrico has compiled the first comprehensive Haida dictionary, the fruit of years of living among the last generation of people who spoke the language regularly at home.

About 40 people speak Haida today, not all fluently, Enrico said. The Haida Dictionary was recently published by Sealaska Heritage Institute in Juneau and the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

At $279, the two-volume, 2,180-page set is not the sort of book you pull off the shelf when you want to know the Haida word for "dog."
It's a scholarly work from which academic linguists may further examine the relationship of Haida to other language families, a point of dispute.

Educators also can develop teaching materials from it, said Tom Alton, editor at the Alaska Native Language Center.

Warumungu picture dictionary

http://www.nit.com.au/thearts/story.aspx?id=5231

IAD Press, has published the fifth title in its valuable Picture Dictionary series - this time in the Warumungu language, spoken in Tennant Creek and its surrounding communities.

"Children and learners should sit down with old people and learn to speak language from them," said the Warumungu contributors to the picture dictionary.

"Old people hold this language, Warumungu, for the young generations. Ourchildren will learn our language and then keep it strong. Language teachers can use the picture dictionary in their classes. Learners can learn words for all sorts of things: family, country, plants and animals. Later they will know their language."

Warumungu people have worked together with linguists since 1982 to develop a spelling system that matches the sounds of the Warumungu language as closely as possible.

A CD of readings by Dianne Nampin Stokes of a broad selection of the words and sentences in the Warumungu Picture Dictionary is included with the book.

Compiled by Samantha Disbray with Warumungu speakers ($29.95 including CD, IAD Press).

Jon Reyhner - Education and Language Restoration

“Education and Language Restoration” published by Chelsea House, for high school and college students, briefly traces the history of education from Indian boarding schools to the present-day and includes information on language revitalization.

It has chapters on assimilation and the Native American, community-controlled schools and tribal colleges, Native American identity, language and culture revitalization, language policies and education goals, language teaching, language and reading, and teaching and learning styles. It is a 143 page hardback with black and white photographs, sidebars, chronology, bibliography, further reading, web sites, and source notes. It is part of a new“Contemporary Native American Issues” series that includes books on economic issues and development, media images and representations, political issues, sacred sites and repatriation, and social life and issues.

http://www.chelseahouse.com/c/@Nqk3t1dK5ogmk/Pages/product.html?nocache@6+record@P38375

You can find out about other books on language revitalization and American Indian education, including the 2004 University of Oklahoma book “American Indian Education: A History,” at

http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jar/books.html

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The World Atlas of Language Structures

Martin Haspelmath, Matthew S. Dryer, David Gil and Bernard Comrie
Price: £275.00 (Hardback)
0-19-925591-1
Publication date: 21 July 2005
710 pages, Colour illustrations throughout, 360X248mm

A research and reference resource for every branch of linguistics

Making results of comparative linguistics accessible to students and non-linguists

Aims to revolutionize comparative linguistics

Highlights the world's linguistic diversity

Giving renewed visibility to endangered languages

The World Atlas of Language Structures is a book and CD combination displaying the structural properties of the world's languages. 142 world maps and numerous regional maps - all in colour - display the geographical distribution of features of pronunciation and grammar, such as number of vowels, tone systems, gender, plurals, tense, word order, and body part terminology. Each world map shows an average of 400 languages and is accompanied by a fully referenced description of the structural feature in question.
A pdf sample of the book may be found at http://www.oup.co.uk/isbn/0-19-925591-1

Foundation for Endangered Languages

Statement of Purpose

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, Gordon 2005) lists just over 6,900 living languages. Population figures are available for just over 6,600 of them (or 94.5%). Of these 6,600, it may be noted that:

- 56% 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 100 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.