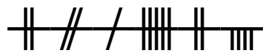


# OGMIOS



Recent demonstrations on Mother Tongue Day  
by speakers of minority languages in Peshawar, Pakistan.

(The picture shows representatives of the Hindko language, one of many featured on the day. Hindko is a minority language in the country, with a population of 3,000,000 speakers, as recorded for 1993).

(Picture by courtesy of Fakhruddin, FLI, Peshawar)

See article on p. 4.

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## 1. Editorial

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As many of you will have heard, our President, who has also been the Editor of *Ogmios* up to know, has left these shores for six months to take up a teaching position in Japan. To ensure the continued presence of your favourite linguistic journal in your letterbox or on your computer screen, he has left the editorship in the hands of your FEL Treasurer.

I hope you won't detect any drop in the quality of the product, dear reader, but I do apologise for the lateness of this issue; I've been finding my feet in the editorial post.

I want to thank my assistant editors, especially Serena D'Agostino, for helping me fill up these pages with the usual interesting and varied assortment of news from the Endangered Languages scene; it is they, not I, who deserve the real editorial credit.

And don't forget that contributions are always more than welcome from the members of FEL. I know that you all have many interesting tales to tell, which the rest of us would like to hear. Send your contribution to me, either by email to [chrismoseley50.at.yahoo.com](mailto:chrismoseley50.at.yahoo.com)\*

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England RG4 7HD. The FEL office address  
remains as before.

*Chris Moseley*

\*We make a habit of publishing e-mail addresses in human-readable, rather than machine-readable, form, in order to avoid unwanted solicitations for our readers, contributors and editorial staff.

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## 2. Development of the Foundation

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### FEL X: Vital Voices - Endangered Languages and Multilingualism: Draft Programme for this year's conference in Mysore, India (25-27 October 2006)

The Foundation for Endangered Languages, in association with the **Central Institute of Indian Languages**, will hold its annual 2006 conference in India, home of more than a thousand languages and dialects, and a consciously multilingual policy stance by the Government of India.

Although many of these languages enjoy political and economic patronage, others are struggling to survive. Among these strugglers are the languages of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, where communities are not only tiny, but also some of the most anciently

independent tribes on the planet. The viability of many such small languages is threatened.

This year's conference concerns the effects of multilingualism on smaller languages. A crucial question for this conference is how far poorly-conceived language planning policies may actually contribute to environmental imbalance and instability, dangers that are often very little understood. As we understand the effort to revitalize languages, this is no more than the support they need to develop in the face of new demands, including the increased bi- and multi-lingualism coming from globalization, urbanization and language contact.

Contributions selected for the conference range across all the continents of the world, with a healthy emphasis on the problems local to the Indian Subcontinent.

<b>25 October 2006</b>	
<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Outlining the Danger</b>
Haobam	Multilingualism Endangered
Sipos	On the Possibilities of Revitalising the Synya dialect of the Khanty language
Yadav	Endangerment of Nepal's indigenous languages
<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Development and Changes</b>
Stockton	Carving both sides: globalization in education reform and language politics
David	Language maintenance or language shift? A sociolinguistic study of the Temuan in urban Kuala Lumpur
Monaka, Kamwendo	Linguistic minorities and marginalization in Botswana: prospects for survival
<b>Session 3</b>	<b>Effects of Contact</b>
Som	Multilingualism and the Great Andamanese
Puttaswamy	Contact and Convergence in Malto
Ansald, Lim	Globalization as a means to empowerment for minority voices – Malay in Sri Lanka
<b>26 October 2006</b>	
<b>Session 4</b>	<b>Roles for Religion</b>
Echeverria	Speaking in tongues, saving souls
Benedicto, Dolores, Fendly, Gomez	Language loss to a non-existent enemy: the case of the Tuahka
Hough	Beyond linguistic documentation: giving new breath to indigenous voices
<b>Session 5</b>	<b>Literacy Choices &amp; Documentation</b>

InamUllah	Future of Torwali-speaking migrants in the urban areas of Pakistan.
Morey	Small languages in a polylingual situation - the case of Turung
Avtans, Abbi	Language documentation in Andamans: highs and lows
<b>Session 6</b>	<b>Extreme Endangerment</b>
Naik	Vanishing Voices
Cardoso	Challenges to Indo-Portuguese across India
Monaghan	Wirangu and Gugada – the survival chances of two neighbouring Australian languages
<b>Session 7</b>	<b>Majority-Minority Relationships</b>
Elangaiyan	Strategies proposed for arresting different types & degrees of language endangerment in India
Mallikarjun	Karnataka, India – a case study
Schaefer, Egbokhare	On profiles of use for majority languages in Southern Nigeria
<b>27 October 2006</b>	
<b>Session 8</b>	<b>Emerging Complexity</b>
Jacquesson	History, languages, and populations: a broader context for endangered languages
Modi	The complexity and emergence of Hindi as Lingua Franca in Arunachal Pradesh
Dobrushina	Multilingualism in Archi: communication, self-identification and social prestige.
<b>Session 9</b>	<b>Cooperation with Neighbour Languages</b>
Khadim	Language shift in the minority Swat Kohistani community--the case of Ushojo
Coelho	Betta Kurumba: prospects for native language education
Elnazarov	Multilingualism in Pamir: challenges of preservation and revitalisation
<b>Session 10</b>	<b>Community Response for Language Support</b>
Rastogi	Challenges and responses to the survival of a tribal language Raji
Schreyer	Re-orientations in planning: a "language-as-cultural-resource" model from a Canadian First Nation
Sena	Minority languages must be safeguarded, despite the difficulties, in a globalising world

Abstracts of selected papers, and much other relevant information, are available at the CIIL website

[www.ciil.org/Main/Announcement/Abstracts/Index.htm](http://www.ciil.org/Main/Announcement/Abstracts/Index.htm)

### The Conference Venue

The **Central Institute of Indian Languages**, Mysore, (CIIL) was set up by the Government of India in July 1969. It is a large institute with seven regional centers spread all over India, and is engaged in research and training in Indian languages other than English and Hindi. It helps to evolve and implement India's language policy and coordinate the development of Indian languages. **Mysore** is a city in the Southern Indian state of Karnataka. The former capital of the princely state of Mysore, ruled by the Wodeyar dynasty since the 14th century, it is now the administrative seat of Mysore District, the second largest in Karnataka, 135 km from Bangalore, the state capital. The city is known for its palaces and many other attractions. One of these is the Brindavan Gardens laid out beside the Krishnarajasagar dam (19km), particularly beautiful at night. There are also the Royal Palace, the Chamundi Hills, Srirangapatnam Temple, Ranganthittu Bird Sanctuary, Oriental Research Institute, and Museums of Folklore, and of Art and Archeology. The conference dates (25-27 October) will allow participants, if they wish, to witness Diwali (the festival of lights) on 23 October before coming to Mysore. A language-related excursion is planned for 28-29 October after the conference.

### Transport

**Bus:** Mysore has inter-city and sub-urban public bus transportation.

**Rail:** Mysore is connected to Bangalore to the northeast via Mandya, and to Hassan to the northwest, to Chamarajanagar via Nanjangud to the southeast.

**Air:** The nearest accessible airport is at Bangalore.

For more details about the conference's local arrangements, please contact Dr B. Mallikarjun at CIIL <[mallikarjun.at.ciil.stpmv.soft.net](mailto:mallikarjun.at.ciil.stpmv.soft.net)>. Address other queries to the Chairman at <[nostler.at.chibcha.demon.co.uk](mailto:nostler.at.chibcha.demon.co.uk)>.

### No FEL Grants in 2006

The Foundation is not issuing any new research grants in 2006, while we review our grant-giving policy for future years.

Reports have been coming in from last year's grant recipients on the work they have completed with our financial help, and we hope to feature some of these in future issues.

## 3. Endangered Languages

### in the News

#### Mother Tongue Day Celebrated in Peshawar in Northern Pakistan

*Fakhruddin, Frontier Language Institute (FLI)*

Mother tongue day was celebrated here in Peshawar, Pakistan, hosted by Gandhara Hindko Adabi Board, Pakistan. Scholars, researchers and common people of eleven languages participated in it. Before the workshop a walk was made, led by the deputy speaker of the NWFP Assembly Mr. Ikram Ullah Shahid. The MNA, Maulana Abdul Akber Chitrali was the Chief Guest.

The Speakers of eleven languages, Khowar, Palula, Dameli, Kalasha, and Gawar-bati, languages spoken in Chitral district, Torwali, Gawri, and Gojri, languages of Swat, Ormuri of South Waziristan and Pashai of Afghanistan along with Pashto and Hindko speakers jointly celebrated the mother tongue day. They made a short walk holding banners demanding the development of the lesser-known languages spoken in the area.

Following the walk participants were invited to join a meeting hosted by the Gandhara Hindko Adabi Board, Pakistan. Many of the participants made speeches in their mother tongues with translation in Urdu. Due to rough weather and blockage of road many representatives could not come from the mountaneous regions but they sent their messages through others living nearby.



The people who delivered their speech were Prof, Khatir Ghaznavi, Dr, Zahoor Ahmad Awan, Maj. (r) Qazi Saeed, Rozi Khan Burki, Zia ud din, M. Shareef Shakib, Inam Ullah, Jahangir Khan, Qari Abdul Salam, Shamshi Khan Kalami, Qazi Inayat Jalil, Asmat Ullah, Abdul Hakim Sailab, Fanoos Gujar, Muhammad Awais Qarni and Mutahir Shah.

In their speeches the participants made a variety of demands. They demanded time in the media, especially on TV, and the appointment of local teachers in the schools. "Our children are facing a great difficulty

because the teachers come from other languages and our children do not understand their language" said Mr. Asmat Ullah of Chitral, who is doing language research on Dameli, his own mother tongue.

At the end, a joint resolution was passed demanding establishment of a government centre for training people from the lesser-known languages and development of orthographies for these languages at the University of Peshawar.

"We should hold meetings three or four times in a year to discuss our mother tongues" said the Chief guest, MNA Maulana Abdul Akber Chitrali. He also promised to deliver the messages to the speakers in the National Assembly of Pakistan.

This was the first time that a great number of speakers of different languages gathered here in the provincial capital and made speeches on universal mother tongue day. The people hope the government will change its language policies to benefit all of the language communities.

Following this event, several newspapers of city published news, articles, editorials and pictures about the mother tongue day meeting which had taken place.

The daily Aaj ran the following headline: "Demand for the establishment of languages development Centre."

The article was very positive and said that representatives of 20 languages participated in a seminar in City University. It also gave the names of the languages represented in the Mother Tongue Day function. It pointed out that the participants called for the development of some educational materials in their languages. It criticised the government for its lack of support for these local languages, and demanded time in electronic media for local languages.

The daily Mashriq Peshawar also spoke positively about the event. It quoted Ikramullah Shahid, Deputy Speaker as saying that the development of local languages is the responsibility of the government. The linguists have shown the importance and benefit of local languages. Every one should given the right of mother tongue education.

Daily Express Peshawar called for the establishment of a center for all languages and appointments of mother-tongue teachers in villages. It pointed out that in many parts of the world, much is being done to preserve and to promote people's languages and cultures, but nothing is happening here. This province has a number of languages but the government does not give any attention to them. TV and Radio has airtime available for only a few languages spoken in Pakistan.

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<http://www.fli-online.org>

### **Bill would boost efforts to retain Penobscot language**

31 January, 2006: The Associated Press  
<http://www.indiancountry.com/content.cfm?id=1096412342>

AUGUSTA, Maine (AP) - The days in which Penobscot children were admonished for speaking their native language in school are long gone. But the Penobscots still need to do more to rebuild a language that was nearly lost forever, a tribal lawmaker says.

Michael Sockalexis, who represents his tribe in the Legislature, has introduced a bill that would add \$300,000 to a Penobscot Language Preservation Fund operated by the state Department of Education. The money would be matched by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Many Penobscots know some words or phrases, but few are fluent. Precise figures are hard to come by, but Sockalexis said there are only a handful of "traditional speakers" among the tribe's more than 2,300 members, more than 1,000 of whom still live in Maine.

Sockalexis said he was part of the last generation to be immersed in the Penobscot language at home. But even he is no longer fluent. "I lost it," he said.

With the language "at a tipping point," the goal is to continue to instill the language in the tribe's children and to turn it back into a conversational language, he said.

The tribe, which has a reservation on Indian Island, is working hard to do just that, using an after-school program that serves all students in the K - 8 school, as well as an immersion summer camp at which students speak nothing but Penobscot.

The state funding and the matching funds would allow the tribe to move the language program back into the regular classroom, Sockalexis said.

Maine's four Indian tribes - the Penobscot Nation, Passamaquoddy Tribe, Houlton Band of Maliseets and Aroostook Band of Micmacs - speak languages that are closely related. Those tribes and the Abenakis comprise what is known as the Wabanaki Confederacy.

Wayne Newell, a Passamaquoddy language coordinator and an authority on all of Maine's tribal languages, said he prefers to speak Passamaquoddy. "When we were kids, that's all you spoke. That's all you had. That's all you saw," he said.

Now, Newell said, children of all tribes are unlikely to become fluent in their native languages, or to speak them at all, unless they learn them at school.

### **"The Last Speakers": UK premiere**

The UK premiere of the film "The Last Speakers" took place in London at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) on 17 May 2006. The film is slated for US release in the fall of 2006, on PBS.

More information can be found at:

<http://www.hrelp.org/events/thelastspeakers/>  
and a preview at  
<http://www.ironboundfilms.com/lastslides.html>

<http://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/dharris2/>

### **Virginia Algonquian raised from the dead for "The New World"**

Terrence Malick, director and writer of New Line Cinema's recent Release "The New World," hired our fellow FEL member, Blair Rudes, (i/c FEL inc., and chair of our 2000 Conference, FEL IV - EL & Literacy) to lend historical realism to the movie by coaching the cast in Virginia Algonquian, the language spoken by Pocahontas and other Native Americans that were encountered in the founding of Jamestown. Malick had first tried to hire a native speaker, only to discover that the language had been extinct since around 1785. Rudes is an authority on the surviving material on Virginia Algonquian.

"Originally they wanted the language revived for one scene and done by the end of the month, in keeping with the production schedule," said Rudes. "But the records of the Virginia Algonquian language are, shall we say, limited."

Rudes, who teaches at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, "re-built" the language from a list of about 500 words transcribed by William Strachey in 1609, and a few more words recorded by John Smith. With the vast majority of the vocabulary missing, along with its syntax, Rudes had to fill the gaps with material from other Algonquian languages and his knowledge of comparative Algonquian linguistics.

The product of Rudes' work was so convincing to the director and actors that Virginia Algonquian, originally intended to be spoken in only one scene, grew to become an integral part of the film's world and was used in about a third of the movie, with English subtitles. The translation, which had to be done on-location, turned into a massive and intense project for Rudes. "I spent a month holed up in a hotel room, translating like crazy," he said.

The production company is turning over the scripts and language CD's to the descendants

of the Powhatan Confederacy, five state-recognized tribes in Virginia. Rudes expects to be working with the tribes on language reclamation programs and is working on a dictionary of Virginia Algonquian with Helen Rountree, an authority on the history of the Powhatan people.

For the full press release, visit the UNCC publicity site below.]

[http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2006-01/uonc-ucl011906.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2006-01/uonc-ucl011906.php)

### **Himachal Pradesh scholars trying to revive ancient Tankri script**

By Rajiv Kimta

Kullu, Feb.9 (ANI): Tankri, once a full-fledged script of the Pahari language, spoken by people residing in the mountains, is being revived by the natives of Kullu. Many of these people are taking lessons to familiarise themselves with this ancient script. Many scholars are trying to revive the script and also salvage whatever they can of the ancient manuscripts.

"This Tankri script has suffered due to the 'language policy' of the British who accorded the status of official script and language to Urdu in their official administration. This made everyone clamour for the Urdu script schools and that was justified then as learning in Urdu language and script meant an assurance of a job. Soon after the introduction of Urdu in 1846 policy of the British, the Tankri script using schools closed down and people forgot this script," says Khub Ram Khushdil, a teacher at the workshop. Recently, a 10-day workshop was organised to acquaint people with the Tankri script and expose them to the ancient manuscripts, which use the script.

The students were informed about the language and how it has been neglected. The Tankri script once held sway in the mountains. Pahari, the extensively spoken language of Himachal Pradesh, especially in Kullu, Lahaul, Spiti, and Kangra, is of Sanskrit origin. Studies have revealed that people living in mountain areas in Himachal Pradesh, who are also known as "Pahari" used Tankri or Thakari. During the Muslim rule, later on, the Persian script came into fashion. Much later these dialects adopted the Devanagari script.

Linguists also say that during feudal times, Kullu literature was written in Tankri script and reached its peak in the 17th century. Khushdil says that in the pre-British times when the valley was still under princely rule, Tankri was the script of the royal courts. Tankri inscriptions are also found on slabs, temples and sculptures. One of the students, who delved deep into the history of the script has evolved a road-map for Tankri's revival.

"From the old course we have books and records which are related to the Ayurveda, herbs and medicines apart from many other things. Lots of these books are scripted in Tankri and so that makes the preservation and revival of this script so essential. We are planning to approach the Government of India's Mission Pandulipi (manuscript) project with our resources and for further promotion we shall adopt the Guru-Shishya (the ancient Teacher-Disciple equation) Parampara (tradition)," says Shashi Sharma, one of the students. For the students the 10-day long classes was a highly gratifying experience.

"I am so impressed that I have promised myself that I would peel every crust of disuse that has accumulated on this heritage script of ours and will try to help it to regain and keep it to its glory," said Deepak Sharma. There are 400 registered languages in India but Hindi in the Devanagari script is the official language. The Indian Constitution recognizes 17 regional languages, of which the most widely spoken are Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada and Urdu. (ANI)

### Lakota on Path to Recapture Language

PINE RIDGE, S.D., March 15 (AScribe Newswire) -- The Lakota Sioux language, made famous through its portrayal in the 1990 film "Dances with Wolves," is now one of only a small handful of Native American languages with enough remaining speakers to survive into the next generation, announced a major language organization. Lakota is currently one of the last major Native American language hold-outs in what is a worldwide crisis of linguistic extinctions.

To keep the Lakota language from disappearing completely, an ambitious revitalization campaign has been organized by a group of tribal leaders and linguists. The campaign is spearheaded by the nonprofit Lakota Language Consortium, which develops the Lakota-language teaching materials used in 23 area schools and which trains language teachers. The organization's goal is to encourage the use of the language by a new generation of speakers. Children using the group's language materials become proficient in Lakota by the fifth year of use.

The group plans to have a fully sequenced curriculum that students can follow from first grade through college.

The consortium's latest Level 2 textbook is currently being distributed to schools across Indian country. For Leonard Little Finger, the great-great-grandson of Chief Big Foot and one of the group's co-founders, the textbooks symbolize an important milestone for the Lakota. Little Finger notes that, "the effects of government policies were profoundly destructive to our language and our ability to

pass it on to our children. These materials are so important because they are the first ever designed to raise children to speak Lakota. Not since before our great-grandparents were confined to the reservations, have we been allowed to raise our children speaking the language. As Lakotas, we will not let our language die, and these books give me hope that my grandchildren, at least, will have the privilege to speak their language."

Tribal elders and traditional leaders have made it a priority to keep the language alive for future generations. 81-year-old Clarence Wolf Guts, the last surviving Lakota code talker from WWII, points out that, "our people need to know that Lakota had an important position and to learn to be proud to speak Lakota. It is good that the kids are now learning Lakota in the schools." Oglala Sioux Tribe Vice-President, Alex White Plume, shares this opinion and explains that through the group's efforts, "we are finally making some progress in teaching the language to the children."<sup>2</sup>

The group recently received the nation's leading language revitalization award, the Ken Hale Prize, from the Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas. The consortium was distinguished for its outstanding community language work and deep commitment to the promotion and revitalization of Lakota. Still, the group's Linguistic Director, Jan Ullrich, points out that "revitalizing a language is no easy task and much more needs to be done to educate the public about the state of endangered languages and the needs of indigenous peoples." Ullrich concedes that Native American language loss is an enormous though silent crisis. "The fact is, few people know about the seriousness of the language crisis - that there are perhaps only a dozen languages that have a chance of surviving in the United States out of the original five hundred. When a language disappears, we lose an important record of our human experience - our linguistic heritage. Languages encompass a people's unique and irreplaceable songs, prayers, stories, and ways of seeing the world. Ninety percent of these repositories of knowledge will pass into oblivion unless we do something about it."

The organization's goal is to expand its revitalization efforts beyond the classroom and to more actively bring the language back into use within the community. They aim to provide incentives for young people to speak the language, to develop Lakota-language television programming, and to expand the literature available in the language.

They model their actions on the best practices of other successful language revival efforts from around the world. However, the group's Executive Director, Wilhelm Meya says that funding continues to be the primary obstacle to the return of the language, "government aid is almost nonexistent and there are very few

grants available for endangered languages. Individual donations seem to be the only hope endangered languages like Lakota have."

Luckily, there are other people besides the Lakota themselves who want to see the language preserved. Meya explains that support for the group's effort has come from a number of less common sources such as German nonprofit organizations like the Tatanka Oyate Verein. "We have had to be creative to garner support for our efforts. It's very important that we succeed," Meya says. He also cites several other unique donors to the Lakota language, including the Washington Redskins Charitable Foundation and Sioux Tools. Meya notes that the sports franchise, in particular, "is committed to helping the Lakota language and is a very proud supporter of our cause." Meya explains that individual donors have also played a significant role in helping language rescue efforts. One such donor, Jim Brown of Bemidji, Minnesota, is ardent about the need to support Lakota. He emphasizes, "it is my duty to do whatever I can to help Native American cultures survive. I'm very pleased to be part of this effort to keep the Lakota language alive and available to all of us."

The remaining Lakota speakers are acutely aware of the high cost of the potential loss of their language. Elmer Bear Eagle, a resident of Wounded Knee, remembers with fondness when most people still spoke Lakota and laments the current state of the language. As an extra in "Dances with Wolves," he was very glad to be able to speak Lakota in the film but observes that, "if we can't save our language soon, all of our children will need to read the subtitles in the movie, just like everybody else, to understand what it being said in Lakota. Then, we will have truly lost our uniqueness as Lakota people."

More details on the Lakota Language Consortium are available at: <http://www.lakhota.org>

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### Haunting songs of life and death reveal a fading world

by Nicolas Rothwell  
[www.theaustralian.news.com.au/common/story\\_page/0,5744,18146439%255E5001986,00.html](http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/common/story_page/0,5744,18146439%255E5001986,00.html)

- o **Songs, Dreamings and Ghosts: The Wangga of North Australia.** Allan Marett, Wesleyan University Press, 292pp, \$27.50

A GENERATION ago, when musicologist Allan Marett was beginning his fieldwork on the Aboriginal song-cycles of northern Australia, he was asked an intriguing question by a young indigenous man.

Why was traditional Aboriginal music - music of endless subtlety and beauty - not as highly valued as the Aboriginal paintings that Australians have come to view as potent emblems of national identity?

This book is Marett's attempt to provide an answer and to redress that imbalance. The most profound and detailed study of an indigenous musical genre yet attempted, it has been two decades in the making, and even before publication acquired a kind of legendary status among the small circle of experts addicted to the sounds of indigenous song. It is a specialist volume, yet it is written with a clear, cool passion.

It sets out the overwhelming evidence for the finesse and compositional craft of the Top End's song cycles and brings the master-singers of the region and their beliefs and experiences to vivid life. It deserves the widest possible attention, not just because Marett is the doyen of Australian ethnomusicologists, and this is his masterwork, but because the art form he seeks to anatomise is dying.

Aboriginal song is, of course, elusive: in its traditional form, it is sung in language, it is brief, coded, meshed with dance. It tends to be ceremonial in nature, and this has kept outsiders from disseminating its splendours to the wider world. For what do everyday Australians know, in truth, about indigenous music, other than the noise of the didge and the guitar chords of Treaty?

Marett turns his attention on the Aboriginal songmen of the Daly region, who live today gathered in the remote community of Wadeye, close to the Bonaparte Gulf, and at Belyuen, on the Cox peninsula opposite Darwin. Their key song cycles, the Wangga, take the form of sharp, jewel-like chants, accompanied by clap-stick and didgeridoo. Poetic in the extreme, filled with rhythms that summon up, like Western leitmotifs, whole worlds of association, these are musical slivers that make up a dictionary of the singer's world. Their core is religious: the Wangga are sung at times when the living and the dead draw together. They are often learned in dreams; and they plunge deep into the entwined fabric of the traditional domain. Marett picks apart several songs and unfurls the aspects of life they express: "The essential interconnectedness of the living and the dead through ceremony; the mutual responsibilities of the living to look after each other in everyday affairs; the exigencies of everyday life; and the intimate relationship that the living and the dead maintain with a sentient landscape".

The world revealed is one of infinitely varied songs and rhythms, swift, succinct, full of conviction.

Marett gives his readers a glimpse of the urgency with which these themes are

perfected and performed: there are vignettes where he is scolded for using the wrong words in a practice singing session; at one point he turns in amazement from his chapter-length analysis of a single, minute-long snatch of music, staggered by the amount of submerged information it contains.

In his field years Marett became very close to several great song-masters from Belyuen, and he was planning to devote himself to the study of one of these figures, Bobby Lambudju Lane, a man at once gentle and voluble, Western-trained, literate, a fluent speaker of English and of his own traditional languages. Lane "had the rare capacity to speak the texts of songs and give their translations the moment he had finished singing".

He was, in short, the Homer of Wangga song, the man at the end of the tradition who could fix and read the music's mobile shards. But Lane died at 52, and, as Marett says bluntly, even though other singers have taken up his duties, "the tradition will probably never recover from this blow".

Much of Marett's book is devoted to examinations of Lane's work, above all a haunting, evanescent song from Badjalarr, a low-lying sandy islet that has become, in the imagination of the Belyuen people, a far-off, generalised land of the dead, although on our maps it is merely North Peron Island, a favourite weekend sports-fishing haunt for Darwin's boat-going class.

Lane's death has been duplicated many times across the north: the old songmen are dying in the Kimberley and in Arnhem Land, a curtain of silence and mass-consumption music is coming down. Hence the vital importance of this book as a guide to the power and fluidity of a traditional form.

Marett covers much ground: he shows how singers shift their songs to explain their relationship to country; how melodies relate to certain ancestor figures; how songs and dances set out social themes.

An astonishing idea lurks glinting in the closing pages of his work as he considers the depth and scale of the musical system being uncovered. Like many music scholars, he is intrigued by the ultimate questions: where did the music come from and what connections may exist between Aboriginal and Southeast Asian traditions?

The role of the Macassan traders who visited north Australia in contact times may well have been critical in spreading musical models. But, more broadly, Marett speculates that deeper study could well reveal "something startling" about north Australian music, namely that it forms a continuum, in its rhythmic organisation, with the music of the Middle East, Southeast Asia, India and Indonesia.

Such elusive, attractive ideas: but how can they be tested when the material is dying out? Marett is centrally involved in a new recording project, which is strongly supported by the surviving traditional songmen of the north. "My own experience," he says briskly, "is that most Aboriginal communities, at least in the north of Australia, want their music to be more widely disseminated and better understood."

At the recent Garma culture conference in northeast Arnhem Land, a clarion call was sent out in headline words: "Indigenous songs should be a deeply valued part of the Australian cultural heritage. They represent the great classical music of this land. These ancient traditions were once everywhere in Australia, and now survive as living traditions only in several regions. Many of these are now in danger of being lost forever. Indigenous performances are one of the most rich and beautiful forms of artistic expression, and yet they remain unheard and invisible."

It is this trend of eclipse and cultural extinction, tragically immediate and fast-advancing, that Marett's meticulous, pioneering work - at once tribute and testament - has been written to resist.

#### **'Tis True: Irish Gaelic Still Charms** by Patricia Bellew Gray

The New York Times, March 12, 2006

EVERY Thursday afternoon in a chalk-dusty classroom at Yale University, seven students gather to learn Irish Gaelic, a language thought dead more than a century ago. Today's lesson is a flowery bouquet of endearments.

"Mo mhuir in" and "A chuisle mo chroi" translate to "love of my heart" and "O pulse of my heart" in English, and the class stumbles a bit over the unfamiliar phrases, but presses on.

"These are my commandos," Pat Whelan, their teacher, said with obvious pride. "The Irish language will never die so long as there is one person left in the world who yearns to hear the voices of our ancestors come alive."

The Irish language is enjoying a renaissance in the United States, part of an upsurge of interest in the music, history, dance and culture of Ireland. Connecticut is contributing to that revival, in part because of the thousands of residents whose parents, grandparents and great-grandparents emigrated from Ireland.

Longing for a link to their past, and undaunted by the challenges of a language more closely related to Breton - spoken in western France - than English, scores of people are attending weekly language classes in Fairfield, Milford, New Haven, Danbury and Glastonbury.

Indeed, so strong is demand that "our biggest challenge is in finding a qualified teacher," said Kathleen Thopsey, who organizes the language class at the Gaelic-American Club in Fairfield. Her club has been seeking a teacher for more than a year. Meanwhile, a half-dozen or so students there struggle to teach themselves pronunciation and shades of meaning from books and tapes.

So, like the itinerant teachers who roamed Ireland in the 1700's, Pat Whelan travels from city to city in Connecticut, teaching teenagers and adults Irish, along with a smattering of history, culture, politics, folklore, poetry and, if the mood strikes him, music.

Mr. Whelan has had little formal schooling. Born in Dublin, he dropped out of school at 14 and eventually emigrated to the United States. Now 69, he is semi-retired and living in Glastonbury.

He also isn't a native speaker of Irish. He learned the language as a boy at school. (Irish language studies are mandatory for school children in Ireland up to age 18, though the language is in common daily use only in a few isolated spots in the West, namely in Galway, Kerry and Donegal.)

Several years ago, Mr. Whelan took up the language again on a whim and found a calling.

"The language is very seductive," he said. "It is soft and musical, the language of romantics, and, if you are very lucky, it burrows right into your soul."

Gaelic Irish is among the most ancient of languages in Europe. Many scholars regard Irish-language literature as among the oldest continuous literary traditions in Western Europe; they trace its beginnings to the fifth century.

Thousands of manuscripts in Irish from the Middle Ages were preserved in monasteries and provide an extraordinary window on medieval times.

After Ireland was conquered by the British in the 1600's, the language began to fall from grace. English was the language of the bureaucracy.

Famine killed 1 million, mostly Irish speakers, in the 1840's. Millions more left for the United States, where the language was seen as a badge of shame, a vocal marker of the ragged, uneducated poor. Today, according to Irish government estimates, the number of native speakers in Ireland range from 100,000 to 250,000, most of them in the Gaeltacht, a term for Irish-speaking communities in western Ireland.

Among the students in Mr. Whelan's class, which is part of a community program held at Yale, is Victoria A. Farrell, 17, a high school junior from Beacon Falls. She began studying

Ireland's legends and myths a few years ago for various school projects and, as a result, developed a keen interest in the language. This is her first year of lessons. "Irish is harder to learn than French or Spanish, but I love it for what it tells me about my culture," she said.

On this bitter winter afternoon at Yale, Mr. Whelan's students will learn a great deal about the culture. For instance, Mr. Whelan said, the Irish language has no simple word for "yes" or "no," though it does have negative sentence constructions.

"I have a theory about that," Mr. Whelan said. "Think of it: Nothing shuts down a conversation faster than a flat 'no' or a 'yes,' and there's nothing quite so beautiful as the music of good conversation to the Irish."

So, a student challenged Mr. Whelan, how would a girl tell an unwelcome suitor that she will not marry him? She would say, in Gaelic, of course: "'Tis a fine husband you would make, I am sure, but I will not marry you," he said.

Nor do older Irish usually use a greeting as abrupt as "Hello." Mr. Whelan has a theory about that, too. Not only does the English word sound too short to be amiable, it makes no mention of God.

Gaelic Irish is a very spiritual language, he said. In greeting someone, the Irish speaker might say "Dia dhuit" or "Bail o Dhia ar an obair," which translate to "God be with you" and "God's blessing on the work." Irish is "a language with a very optimistic view of the world," Mr. Whelan said to his students. Therefore, he said, "in Irish, 'I am sad' would be 'Ta bron orm' or, more literally, 'I have sadness upon me.' That's because we believe that our sadness can and will be lifted from us. It is not necessarily a part of us."

Mr. Whelan's students are part of a trend that is also gaining momentum across the country. The poet Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill of Dun Laoghaire, County Dublin calls the language "the corpse that sits up and talks back."

These days, that corpse is engaged in coast-to-coast chatter. Daltaí na Gaeilge, a non-profit advocacy group for the language in Elberon, N.J., estimated that about 30,000 speak the language in the United States, up from a few thousand when the organization was founded in 1981.

Irish is also turning up at some colleges. At the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind., 297 students are enrolled this winter in classes to learn Irish, up more than sixfold since 1998. Dozens more were turned away because the classes had become too large.

Sacred Heart University in Fairfield is developing an Irish studies minor that will include language classes. Two years ago, the university opened a satellite campus in

Dingle, Ireland, where it sends students for immersion in the language and culture.

The federal government's Fulbright Program also recently announced it would invite three Irish-language instructors to teach at universities starting in the fall.

The once-abandoned language is now seen as very trendy, said Brian O'Conchubhair, assistant professor of Irish language and literature at Notre Dame. "Ethnicity is in vogue."

For some students, though, learning the language is less a novelty and more a journey. Steve Hultgren, 53, a computer engineer from Middletown, has been taking classes for a year at the Irish American Community Center in New Haven. His last name is Swedish, but deep in his past he is quite sure there are some Celts.

"I feel at strangely at home in this language," he said. "It is difficult to learn, but I feel I am reconnecting with my heritage in a very meaningful way."

### Indigenous Languages in Final Throes

by Diego Cevallos

Published on Friday, April 14, 2006 by Inter Press Service <<http://www.ipsnews.net/>>/

MEXICO CITY - Hundreds of languages disappeared from Latin America and the Caribbean over the past 500 years, and many of the more than 600 that have survived could face the same fate in the not-so-distant future. United Nations agencies and many experts maintain that it is an avoidable tragedy, but there are those who see it as the inherent fate of all but a few languages.

Faced with Western culture and the dominant presence of Spanish, Portuguese and English in the Americas, indigenous languages like Kiliwua in Mexico, Ona and Puelche in Argentina, Amanayé in Brazil, Záparo in Ecuador and Mashco-Piro in Peru, are just barely surviving, the result of their continued use by small groups of people -- most of whom are elderly.

But there are others like Quichua, Aymara, Guaraní, Maya and Náhuatl whose future looks a bit rosier, because overall these languages are spoken by more than 10 million people and governments support their survival through various educational, cultural and social programmes.

Around the globe there are some 7,000 languages in use, but each year 20 disappear. Furthermore, half of the existing languages are threatened, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). This agency, which promotes the preservation and diversity of the world's languages, maintains that the disappearance of even one language is a



tragedy, because with it go a unique culture and cosmo-vision.

But not everyone sees it that way. "The extinction of languages is a phenomenon inherent in their very existence, and it has been happening since humans emitted their first sound with a linguistic meaning," José Luis Moure, a University of Buenos Aires philologist and member of the Argentine Academy of Letters, told *Tierramérica*.

In contrast, Gustavo Solís, a Peruvian linguist with expertise in vernacular and author of language studies of the Amazon region, says "there is nothing in the languages that says one should disappear and another should continue."

"Every disappearance of language and culture is a great tragedy to humanity. When it occurs, a unique and irreplaceable human experience is extinguished," Solís said in a conversation with *Tierramérica*.

There are cases, says this expert, that show it is possible to plan the revitalisation of languages so they won't die, but such efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean fall short. When the Europeans arrived in the Americas in the 15th century, there were 600 to 800 languages in South America alone, but with the colonisation process "the vast majority disappeared. Today there are languages on their way to extinction because of the unequal contact between Western society and some indigenous societies," Solís said.

Fernando Nava, director of Mexico's National Institute of Indigenous Languages (INALI), said languages disappear through natural evolution, which is understandable, or through cultural pressure and discrimination against its speakers, which is preventable. It is the second cause that many governments, international agencies and academics are fighting, because it is considered an unacceptable phenomenon, Nava told *Tierramérica*.

In this area, Latin America and the Caribbean are just in the stage of raising awareness, he added.

According to UNESCO, half of the languages existing in the world today could be lost within "a few generations", due to their marginalisation from the Internet, cultural and economic pressures, and the development of new technologies that favour homogeneity. In May, the UN agency will publish an extensive study about the languages of the Amazon region, many of them spoken by very few individuals. The study is a bid to draw international attention to their plight.

Surviving in the Amazon jungles are isolated indigenous groups, who refuse to have contact with the Western world and its "progress". They total around 5,000 people belonging to various groups of the Amazon Basin, among them the Tagaeri in Ecuador,

Ayoreo in Paraguay, Korubo in Brazil and the Mashco-Piro and Ashaninka in Peru.

According to Rodolfo Stavenhagen, UN special rapporteur on the situation of human rights and basic freedoms of indigenous peoples, these groups are facing "a true cultural genocide". "I fear that under current circumstances it will be difficult for them to survive many more years, because so-called development denies the right of these peoples to continue being peoples," he said.

Although the list of languages and dialects in use worldwide is very long, the vast majority of the population speaks only a handful of languages, like English, Chinese, and Spanish. To ensure that linguistic diversity is maintained, the international community agreed in recent years on a series of legal instruments, and experts hold regular meetings to discuss the issues.

One such meet took place Mar. 31 to Apr. 2 in the western U.S. state of Utah, where officials and academics from across the Americas studied ways to prevent the disappearance of dozens of languages in this hemisphere. Since 1999, through a UNESCO initiative, Feb. 21 is celebrated as International Mother Language Day. There are also agreements in the UN system, like the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and its Action Plan, from 2001, and the Convention on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage, signed in 2003.

Also dating from 2003 is the Recommendation on the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace, and from 2005 the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Diversity of Cultural Expressions. The Argentine expert Moure says it is important to work towards preserving languages, even when the number of speakers is small, because "they are markers of identity that merit maximum respect and scientific attention."

But "I am not so sure that the death of a language necessarily means the disappearance of the associated cosmo-vision, because its speakers never stop talking (unless they themselves disappear through disease or genocide), but rather, after a period of bilingualism, they adopt another language that is more useful to them because of its greater insertion in the world," he said "This a fact of reality, and I believe it should be recognised without turning to excessive conspiracy theories," said Moure. Copyright © 2006 IPS-Inter Press Service

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#### 4. Appeals, News and Views

##### from Endangered Communities

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## Strategy to Revitalize First Nation, Inuit and Métis Languages

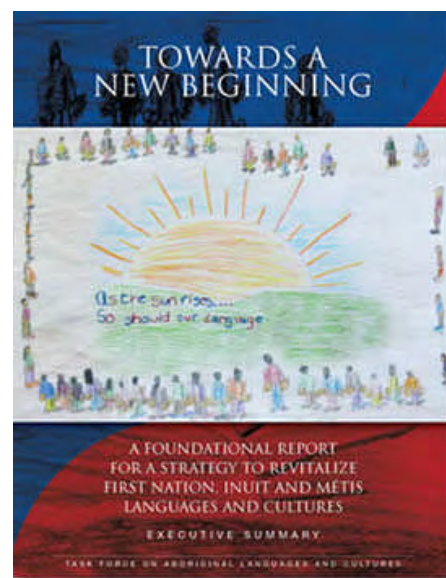
Dear friends of Language Revitalization

I and my fellow Task Force members have just completed a comprehensive report to the Canadian government as requested laying out a comprehensive basis for a long term strategy for enhancing our 60-70 endangered languages in Canada. You can view, download or order copies for free by going to <http://aboriginallanguagestaskforce.ca/>

and scrolling down to *Foundational Report*.

Please pass on the info. We need to insure Canada implements the recommendations. Your help is needed.

Thank you  
chair, Task Force on Language And Culture  
Ronald Ignace



## What is happening in Hospitalito Santiago Atitlán?

Friends and colleagues: We believe those who study people of the past also have obligations to people in the present. The ancient Maya have fascinated archaeologists and the public for generations, but living Maya descendants, often ignored in the shadow of their storied ancestors, now face a disaster of immense proportions. You can see what is happening in Hospitalito Santiago Atitlán, the latest video feature on our nonprofit streaming-media Web site, *The Archaeology Channel* (<http://www.archaeologychannel.org>).

As keepers of what they believe is the very navel of the world, people in the highland Guatemalan town of Santiago Atitlán hold the cosmos itself in balance by performing rituals (see TAC video *Balancing the Cosmos* [<http://www.archaeologychannel.org/content/Vidmap/Guatemala.html>]) echoing the ancient traditions of their prehispanic Mayan

ancestors. Closed by civil war, the town's hospital, or "Hospitalito," reopened after 15 years with great hopes in April 2005. On October 5, 2005, tropical storm Stan sent a six foot wall of mud that struck the Hospitalito and buried alive 1400 town residents. This video documents the disaster, the recovery effort and the ongoing plea for help.

This and other programs are available on TAC for your use and enjoyment. We urge you to support this public service by participating in our Membership and Underwriting programs.

<http://www.archaeologychannel.org/member.html>  
<http://www.archaeologychannel.org/sponsor.shtml>  
 Only with your help can we continue and enhance this nonprofit public-education and visitor-supported service. We also welcome new content partners as we reach out to the world community.

Richard M. Pettigrew, Ph.D., RPA, President and Executive Director, Archaeological Legacy Institute

### Drop the language bill!

<http://www.muskogeephoenix.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060531/OPINION/60530004/1014>

We should have pride in our country and in the things that make us Americans, including our common language. But America has never been a country in which only English has been spoken, so it's with regret that the Senate passed a bill earlier this month proclaiming English the national language.

The Senate measure, which was approved 63 to 34, wants to "preserve and enhance" the role of English by restricting federal communications or services to English without altering current laws that require some documents and services in other languages.

We don't need a language law, though, for a few good reasons.

For one, English is the predominant language in the United States, and nothing in more than 200 years of nationhood has threatened its unofficial status. Up until the 1980s, few even thought about the need for a national language declaration.

The proposal, if it becomes law, also is an affront to this country's diversity.

Many Native Americans still speak their native languages. They are proud of their languages, as they should be, and it doesn't make someone less of an American if they do not speak English.

But the simple fact of the matter is that most people naturally will assimilate and lose their native language, and if not them, their children. Again, that's something that has been happening throughout our history and is

happening right now at a rate greater than ever.

But English-only supporters raise unfounded fears that somehow things are different today and English will be squeezed out of existence. It won't, even given the diverse world we live in. Just because the merchandise signs at Lowe's are in English and Spanish and product assembly instructions are printed in four or five languages, it does not mean suddenly the Senate will become bilingual.

And lastly, opponents to the national language bill are correct - if made law, the Senate's bill could eventually negate executive orders, regulations, civil service guidances and other multilingual ordinances not officially sanctioned by acts of Congress.

We are and have been a big country, big enough to accommodate many people with many ideas and languages. Their presence doesn't affect the status of English - it never has - but the Senate's national language bill does make us look small-minded.

*Originally published May 31, 2006*

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## 5. Allied Societies and Activities

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### Northern California Indian Development Council

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or go to:  
<http://www.topica.com/lists/IndigenousNewsNetwork/subscribe/?location=listinfo>

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## 6. Reports from the Field

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[None in this issue.]

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## 7. Overheard on the Web

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### Ray Kiogima, co-author of "Odawa Language and Legends," from the Odawa Bands Governmental Center in Harbor Springs

by Craig McCool

[<mccoolrecordeagle@sbcbglobal.net>](mailto:mccoolrecordeagle@sbcbglobal.net)

HARBOR SPRINGS - Ray Kiogima rarely gets a chance anymore to talk with others in his native language.

The number of people who speak Odawa has dwindled over the years. Now, Kiogima said, you could count on a single hand the number of locals who are fluent in the old language.

"In the tribe, we've probably got four people besides me," Kiogima said. "I used to enjoy talking Odawa to people who were fluent in it, but they die off."

Kiogima, 73, an elder with the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, has done something about it, recently publishing a book containing Odawa/English translations of more than 1,000 common words and hundreds of phrases. The book, "Odawa Language and Legends," is the culmination of decades of work.

It is the only known instance in which the regional Native American language has been translated to English. Kiogima broke down the Odawa words - historically spoken but rarely written - to their syllable sounds, then transcribed them, phonetically, into English equivalents.

Ah-nee, for example, means "Hello." There is no Odawa word for Goodbye, Kiogima, said. The closest thing is Bah mah pee: "Later."

The language of the Odawa people is apparent everywhere in northern Michigan. The word Cheboygan, for example, comes from the Odawa phrase Zhah boo guhn, or "The way through."

But while traces of the language are ever-present, the heart of the language is dying, said Carla McFall, who runs the Little Traverse Bay Band's language preservation and revitalization program.

"Ray's generation is the last generation that is fairly fluent," McFall said. "This is the very last chance" to preserve the language.

Kiogima - Ki means 'land'; Ogima means 'boss' or 'ruler' - lived as a teenager in Harbor Springs with his grandmother, who spoke little English and insisted her grandson become fluent in Odawa.

"She told me right out that if I was going to live with her and talk to her, I was going to talk Odawa," Kiogima said.

His five brothers also learned Odawa, but only Kiogima retained the knowledge into adulthood. He taught his own children a few words, but realized that, by-and-large, the younger generation would never learn the language.

"I thought, if we can write it, we can preserve it, and that's what I want," he said. "It's always

been a dream of mine, to have it written down. We want to get it to the younger crowd."

Preserving and resurrecting the language is important, said McFall.

"A people is defined by its language," she said. "Without it, we lose a lot. Not just the language, but culturally as well."

Kiogima offered an analogy: "It would be like a person without a home or a man without a country," he said. "He would be lost."

Translation? "Kah mah-buh duh yah zeen gojibi wah daht." "This man has nowhere to live."

<http://www.record-eagle.com/2006/may/14native.htm>

### Venezuela Revitalizes Indigenous Culture - Anu

<http://venezuelahoy-europe.blogspot.com/2006/05/venezuela-revitalizes-indigenous.html>

*Caracas, 10 May 2006 (Prensa Latina)*

Venezuelan experts and officials supported by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) will meet in Maracaibo on Thursday to revitalize the "Anu" culture and language.

Indigenous communitarian promoters, teachers and other officials of the Education Ministry and the Venezuelan Central and Zuli universities will converge at this important meeting.

The preservation and recovery of the "Anu" culture and language are part of the great national efforts in the field of Bilingual and Intercultural Education.

This process of revitalization includes the development of actions to contribute with the linguistic training of professionals and the creation of didactic aids and methods to be used at classrooms.

Thus, the process becomes perfect opportunity to open new spaces for the interchange among the communitarian factors, main promoters of the initiative.

### 'Language Planning Challenges and Prospects in Native American Communities and Schools' (Feb 2006)

Mary Eunice Romero Little ([m.eunice.at.asu.edu](mailto:m.eunice.at.asu.edu)) of Arizona State University and Alex Molnar ([eps1.at.asu.edu](mailto:eps1.at.asu.edu)), of Education Policy Studies Laboratory share the result of their study on *'Language Planning Challenges and Prospects in Native American Communities and Schools'* (February 2006)

The authors point to the advantages of learning heritage language:

- Heritage-language immersion is a viable alternative to English-only instruction for Native students who are English-dominant but identified as limited English proficient.
- Time spent learning a heritage/community language is *not* time lost in developing English, while the absence of sustained heritage-language instruction contributes significantly to heritage-language loss.
- It takes approximately five to seven years to acquire age-appropriate proficiency in a heritage (second) language when consistent and comprehensive opportunities in the heritage (second) language are provided.
- Heritage-language immersion contributes to positive child-adult interaction and helps restore and strengthen Native languages, familial relationships, and cultural traditions within the community.
- Literacy skills first developed in a heritage language can be effectively transferred to English, even for students with limited proficiency in the heritage language upon entering school.
- Additive or enrichment language education programs represent the most promising approach to heritage- and second-language instruction.
- The aforementioned LPP efforts are fundamental to tribal sovereignty and local education choice.

[www.asu.edu/educ/eps1/EPRU/documents/EP-SL-0602-105-LPRU.pdf](http://www.asu.edu/educ/eps1/EPRU/documents/EP-SL-0602-105-LPRU.pdf)

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#### 8. Places to Go -

#### On the Net and in the World

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### Endangered Languages of the Indigenous Peoples of Siberia



Dmitrij Funk <[d\\_funk@iea.ras.ru](mailto:d_funk@iea.ras.ru)> wrote to us:

By the way, we were able to organize our round table and... you are welcome to look at some results presented at the web-site

<http://lingsib.iea.ras.ru/en/>

In addition to the materials from the Round table, we placed the following info on our information Internet portal:

- descriptions of 28 Siberian languages as well as bibliographies on the present languages with a search option;
- data on the current and completed documentation projects of the languages of Siberia and on foundations providing funding of education and research projects;
- presentation of technical devices for work with the data of different languages including those applicable to the field work held by linguists and anthropologists.

Best warm regards from the totally frozen Moscow,  
Dmitrij

### Voices of Mexican Languages

We invite you to visit the web page

<http://lef.colmex.mx>

This is the page of Laboratorio de estudios Fónicos del CELL, at El Colegio de México. You will find some voices of Mexican Languages under the link "El viento del norte y el sol (versión en varias lenguas)". Comments are welcome!

Sincerely

Dra. Esther Herrera Zendejas  
Centro de Estudios Lingüísticos y Literarios,  
El Colegio de México,  
Camino al Ajusco 20, Col. Pedregal de Santa Teresa, México, D.F

### Two web resources on Romani language and linguistics:

The Romani Linguistics Page operated by the Romani Project at the University of Manchester offers background information on the language, bibliographies, a sample of audio files with transcriptions, maps of isoglosses, a database of phrases in various dialects (searchable by wordlist, by grammatical category, and by free choice of phrase), downloadable publications, and other resources:

<http://www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/Research/Projects/romani/>

The Romlex project, a co-production of the Romani projects at Graz University, Aarhus University, and the University of Manchester, is a lexical database covering some 25 different varieties of Romani, translated into 15 different target language:

<http://romani.kfupigraz.ac.at/romlex/>

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[http://www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/SubjectAreas/LinguisticsEnglishLanguage/AcademicStaff/YaronMatras/Romani project:](http://www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/SubjectAreas/LinguisticsEnglishLanguage/AcademicStaff/YaronMatras/Romani%20project)  
<http://www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/Research/Projects/romani/>

### My Name is Yu Ming - Yu Ming is Ainm Dom



Many Irish teachers know of this movie, but may not know that it is available online at the following URL

[http://www.atomfilms.com/af/content/yu\\_ming](http://www.atomfilms.com/af/content/yu_ming)

Louis Janus  
 Celtic Language Teachers Mailing List  
 CELTIC-T.at.LISTS.UMN.EDU

A bored Chinese shopkeeper learns Gaelic and moves to Dublin only to find the locals no longer speak their mother tongue. Follow Yu Ming as he pursues his dream of life in the Celtic world. (13 minutes.)

"An affecting - if incredible - tale of cultural naiveté combined with fearsome language learning skill! Fun, Fast, & Free to view. *Comhghairdeachas doibh*, Atomfilms!"  
 Nick Ostler

### Teaching Indigenous Languages

<http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jar/TIL.html>

This web site is an outgrowth of a series of annual conferences started in 1994 at Northern Arizona University focusing on the linguistic, educational, social, and political issues related to the survival of the endangered Indigenous languages of the world. The first two conferences were funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (as of 2002 Office of English Language Acquisition) to help achieve the goals of the Native American Languages Act of 1990, which makes it government policy to promote, protect, and preserve the Indigenous languages of the United States.

At the heart of this site are 97 full text papers from the 1997 through 2003 Stabilizing Indigenous Languages conferences as well as the 2000 Learn in Beauty and 1989 Native American Language Issues conferences

### Preserving and promoting American Indian languages

From <http://www.native-languages.org>

Welcome to Native Languages of the Americas! We are a small non-profit organization dedicated to the survival of Native American languages, particularly through the use of Internet technology. Our website is not beautiful. Probably, it never will be. But this site has inner beauty, for it is, or will be, a compendium of online materials about more than 800 indigenous languages of the Western Hemisphere and the people that speak them. »

### Native Languages of the Americas Online Resources

1. *Alphabetical master list of Native American languages*, with links to specific information about each language and its native speakers.
2. *Linguistic family groupings* showing the relationships between Amerindian languages.
3. *Vocabulary word lists* in various American Indian languages.
4. List of *Native American peoples* featured on our site.
5. *Kids Menu* of Native American information presented for younger readers.
6. List of *Native American books* and other resources by and about American Indians.
7. Links to *general American Indian language resources* available online.

Don't skip the «How you can help section», where of the ten ways suggested to promote native languages only the last one has to do with money!

Laura Redish, Director Native Languages of the Americas PO Box 130562 St. Paul MN 55113-0005

### Native greetings online

Kids can visit the site of the Canadian Ministry of Indian and Northern Affairs to find 9 native languages audio files of greetings and basic conversation:

[www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ks/5000\\_e.html#body](http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ks/5000_e.html#body)

### Archivo de Lenguas Indígenas de México

From Yolanda Lastra

([ylastra.at.servidor.unam.mx](mailto:ylastra.at.servidor.unam.mx)) 4 Feb 2006:

I would like to announce that the first eleven volumes of the Archivo De Lenguas Indígenas can now be consulted on the Web at:

<http://www.colmex.mx/alim/>

The volumes available include:

1. Zapoteco del Istmo (Velma Pickett)
2. Trique de San Juan Copala (Fernando y Elena Hollenbach)
3. Mixteco de Santa María Peñoles (Jon Daly y Margarita Holland de Daly)
4. Chocho de Santa Catarina Ocotlán (Carol Mock)
5. Mazateco de Chiquihuitlán (Allan Jamieson)
6. Zoque de Chimalapa (L. Knudson)
7. Chontal de la Sierra (Viola Waterhouse)
8. Mixe de Tlahuilotepic (Don D. Lyon)
9. Chinanteco de San Juan Lealao (John Rupp)
10. Náhuatl de Acaxochitlán (Yolanda Lastra de Suárez)
11. Huave de San Mateo del Mar (Glenn y Emily Stairs)

Yolanda Lastra, Coordinadora

Archivo de Lenguas Indígenas de México

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### 9. Forthcoming Meetings

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### Northwest Indian Language Institute (NILI): "From Language Learner to Language Teacher", Univ. Oregon, July 5-21, 2006,

From: Jesse Blackburn Morrow

The Northwest Indian Language Institute (NILI) will be holding its Summer Institute "From Language Learner to Language Teacher" at the University of Oregon July 5-21, 2006, including a Master-Apprentice workshop led by Leanne Hinton, July 6-8.

Since 1998, NILI's Summer Institute has offered training in teaching methods, applied linguistics, curriculum and materials development to those involved with the teaching of Native languages here in the Northwest. The Institute is a setting where the unique situations of the region's various Tribal language programs are respected, and we seek to provide skills and materials that will enhance your own language revitalization efforts. Participants have said they attend partly for the knowledge they gain from other participants, and the enjoyment of spending time with others involved in the same quest for language revitalization. See below for more details of the Institute and Master-Apprentice Workshop. Please let us know as soon as possible if you're interested in attending either the Workshop or full Institute (and tell us a bit about your situation with teaching/learning a NW language) so that we may send you a registration form, and plan with you in mind.  
 Hope to see you in July!

MASTER-APPRENTICE WORKSHOP  
 (JULY 6-8)

Led by Dr. Leanne Hinton (UC-Berkeley), who was instrumental in development of the successful California Master-Apprentice

Program in 1993. This method of language learning is a great way to create new speakers of a language when only a few Elder speakers remain, and to pass along traditional values and customs in a natural setting.

#### INSTITUTE COURSES (JULY 5-21)

\*Methods, Materials, and Technology for NW Indian Language Teaching

- content will be shaped to fit the needs of registrants [3 credits]

\*Sahaptin Language Class [1 credit]

\*Chinuk Wawa Language Class [1 credit]

\*Intro to Linguistics for Teachers and Students of NW Languages [1 credit]

\*Advanced Linguistic Study (of the language of your choice) [1 credit]

#### RATES

\*Tuition for the full NILI Summer Institute July 5-21 (a total of 5 UO credit hours) is \$1300. This includes the 3 day Master-Apprentice Workshop, textbook, and a computer lab fee.

\*For those wanting to attend ONLY the Master-Apprentice Workshop July 6-8, the workshop fee is \$250, which includes the cost of the textbook. The cost of campus housing/meals for 3 nights (or hotel costs) and parking are additional.

For housing/meals and parking rates, a registration form, or more information, please contact NILI Director Janne Underriner, or Assistants Jesse Blackburn Morrow or Racquel Yamada.

Northwest Indian Language Institute  
1290 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR  
97403-1290

Email <[nwili.at.uoregon.edu](mailto:nwili.at.uoregon.edu)>

Voicemail 541.346.3199

Fax 541.346.5961

<http://babel.uoregon.edu/nili>

### Immersion in Conversational Shoshoni

Learn to speak the Shoshoni language in Shoshoni Country!

Idaho State University, located in Southeastern Idaho, eight miles South of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation, is offering the Shoshoni Summer Language Institute during the summer of 2006. This language immersion workshop will be taught in a two-week block from July 31 to August 11, 2006. Workshop participants can either take it for university credit or choose our non-credit option simply to learn about Shoshoni language and culture. The course is designed for complete beginners, but people who have some knowledge of the language are also welcome. The course is perfect for professionals (especially in education, social work and health care) who interact with Native Americans in the performance of their professional duties. The course will include exposure to Shoshoni culture, including

topics like the Shoshoni kinship system, visiting a Shoshoni house, and what to do at a give-away, etc. With the course ending on the same weekend as the annual Shoshone-Bannock Festival, one of the biggest powwows in the Northern Rockies, this is a unique opportunity to learn the Shoshoni language while experiencing Shoshoni culture!

For more information and to sign up contact:  
ISU Division of Continuing Education & Conference Services  
1-800-753-4781  
208-282-3155  
[extendedlearning.at.isu.edu](mailto:extendedlearning.at.isu.edu)  
or visit us on the web at  
[www.isu.edu/conteduc/](http://www.isu.edu/conteduc/)

From SSILA Bulletin number 234: February 14, 2006 c/o [delancey.at.uoregon.edu](mailto:delancey.at.uoregon.edu)  
234.4

### Forum Theatre: Reclaiming Our Aboriginal Languages, June 28-July 4 2006, Vancouver, British Columbia.



*Patricia Shaw writes, on 17 June 2006:*

*Just in case there's a chance that any of you or your friends could be in Vancouver here for the week of June 28-July 4, it would be great to have you involved in this VERY exciting project that we're doing on endangered languages in collaboration with Headlines Theatre. We would love to have representation from Aboriginal people elsewhere in the province or beyond.*

UBC Aboriginal Languages and Literacy Institute (ALLI 2006) and Headlines Theatre are seeking 20 Aboriginal people to participate in a unique process where they will work with theatrical games and exercises to bring out the core stories of their struggles with the loss of their traditional Aboriginal languages, and the challenges of reclamation and revitalization of their linguistic heritage.

#### What is Forum Theatre?

Forum Theatre is a unique type of participatory theatre. The play that develops out of the workshop is usually quite short -- perhaps 5 or 10 minutes in duration. It is run once, all the way through, so the audience can see the situation and the problems presented. The play builds to a crisis and stops there, offering no solutions. The play is then run again, with audience members able to "freeze" the action at any point where they see a character struggling with a problem. An audience member yells "stop!", comes into the playing area, replaces the character s/he sees in a moment of struggle, and tries out his/her idea..

Workshop Dates: June 29-July 3 9am-5pm  
July 4 12noon-11pm  
UBC Theatre rehearsal space, HUT M-17, Room 128

**Performance: July 4 8pm UBC FNHL Longhouse**

No acting experience is necessary. BUT: If you are interested in being involved in this project, you must have the time and energy to commit to the whole schedule. Participants will be given lunch each day and will receive an honorarium for their involvement in this process.

To become a workshop participant or for further information, please contact:  
Michelle La Flamme +1-604-872-0611  
<[laflammeiam.at.hotmail.com](mailto:laflammeiam.at.hotmail.com)>

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#### 10. Recent Publications

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#### A Grammar of Mina

Zygmunt Frajzyngier, Eric Johnston, in cooperation with Adrian Edwards,

December 2005. 16 x 24 cm. XX, 512 pages. Cloth. Euro [D] 148.00 / sFr 237.00 / for USA, Canada, Mexico US\$ 207.20. \* ISBN 3-11-018565-2 MOUTON DE GRUYTER

A Grammar of Mina is a reference grammar of a hitherto undescribed and endangered Central Chadic language. The book contains a description of the phonology, morphology, syntax, and all the functional domains encoded by this language. For each hypothesis regarding a form of linguistic expression and its function, ample evidence is given. The description of formal means and of the functions coded by these means is couched in terms accessible to all linguists regardless of their theoretical orientations.

The outstanding characteristics of Mina include: vowel harmony; use of phonological means, including vowel deletion and vowel retention, to code phrasal boundaries; two tense and aspectual systems, each system carrying a different pragmatic function; a lexical category 'locative predicator' hitherto not observed in other languages; some tense, aspect, and mood markers that occur before the verb, and others that occur after the verb; the markers of interrogative and negative modality that occur in clause-final position; the conjunction used for a conjoined noun phrase in the subject function that differs from the conjunction used for a conjoined noun phrase in all other functions. In addition to the coding of argument structure, adjuncts, tense, aspect, and mood categories, Mina also codes the category point-of-view. The language has a clausal category 'comment clause' used in both simple and complex sentences, which overtly marks the speaker's comment on the proposition. The discourse structure has the principle of unity of place. If one of the participants in a described event changes scene, that is coded by a special syntactic

construction in addition to any verb of movement that may be used. Because of these unusual linguistic characteristics, the Grammar of Mina will be of interest to a wide range of linguists.

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Fax: 303-492-4416  
<http://spot.colorado.edu/~frazjyng/>

### A Grammar of Jahai

Niclas Burenhult PL 566

This book is a linguistic study of Jahai, a language belonging to the Northern Aslian subgroup of the Aslian branch of the Mon-Khmer language family. The language is spoken by groups of foragers in the mountain rainforests of northern Peninsular Malaysia and southernmost Thailand, its total number of speakers estimated at around 1,000. This study describes the grammar of Jahai, including its phonology, processes of word formation, word classes, and syntax. It also includes a word-list. While primarily aimed at linguistic description, the study makes use of suitable theoretical models for the analysis of linguistic features. In particular, models of Prosodic and Template Morphology are employed to describe the language's intricate processes of affixation. Typological comparisons are made at times, especially with other Aslian languages.

2005 ISBN 0 85883 554 1 xiv + 245 pp.  
Prices: Australia AUD\$64.90 (incl. GST)  
Overseas AUD\$59.00

The many faces of Austronesian voice systems: some new empirical studies  
I Wayan Arka and Malcolm Ross, editors  
PL 571

The Ninth International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics and the Fifth International Conference on Oceanic Linguistics were both held at The Australian National University in Canberra during January 2002. Rather than publish a single very diverse collection of conference papers, the organisers favoured a series of smaller compilations on specific topics. One such volume, on Austronesian historical phonology, has already been published by Pacific Linguistics as *Issues in Austronesian historical phonology* by John Lynch.

The present volume represents another such compilation. It contains an introduction by the editors and ten papers on voice in Austronesian languages which provide both fresh data and some new perspectives on old problems. The papers touch on the many faces of Austronesian voice systems, ranging geographically from Teng on Puyuma in Taiwan to Otsuka on Tongan, typologically from voice in agglutinative languages in Taiwan and the Philippines to voice in isolating languages (Arka and Kosmas on

Manggarai and Donohue on Palu'e), and in approach from Clayre's areal/historical survey of Kelabitic languages in Borneo to single-language studies of voice like Davies on Madurese, Quick on Pendau, and the Andersens on Moronene. Katagiri and Kaufman each take a fresh look at an aspect of Tagalog voice.

2005 ISBN 0 85883 556 8 v + 278 pp  
Prices: Australia AUD\$69.30 (incl. GST),  
Overseas AUD\$63.00

### A Grammar of Gayo: a language of Aceh, Sumatra

Domenyk Eades PL 567

Gayo is a regional language of Indonesia spoken by some 260,000 people in the central highlands of Aceh province, at the north-western tip of Sumatra. The Gayo people have historically had close ties to the majority Acehnese of the coast, while maintaining their distinct cultural and linguistic heritage. Gayo remains the first language of most ethnic Gayo to this day, and it is the vehicle for a rich oral literary tradition. The language belongs to the Malayo-Polynesian branch of the Austronesian family of languages. It is typologically unlike Acehnese, but shares certain features such as voice with the Batak languages of the neighbouring province of North Sumatra. Gayo features a voice system of the type that has been referred to as symmetrical, whereby neither actor nor undergoer voice can be considered the basic or unmarked alignment. The language also features valence-increasing affixes, and a range of verbal affixes that mark intransitive verbs to indicate information about various different semantic types of events. This grammar is the first detailed descriptive account of the phonology, morphology and syntax of Gayo. The analysis draws upon data that reflect the cultural context in which the language is spoken, and in the appendices two Gayo texts with their translations are included.

2005 ISBN 0 85883 553 3 2005 xii + 350 pp.  
Prices: Australia AUD\$83.60 (incl. GST),  
Overseas AUD\$76.00

The Bookshop, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, ANU Canberra ACT 0200 Australia  
Tel: +61 (0)2 6125 3269 Fax: +61 (0)2 6125 9975 e-mail [Thelma.Sims.at.anu.edu.au](mailto:Thelma.Sims.at.anu.edu.au)

### UC Publications in Linguistics

Full-text downloadable PDF versions of the latest volumes in the University of California Publications in Linguistics series are available for no charge at the California Digital Library's "eScholarship" website:

<http://repositories.cdlib.org/ucpress/ucpl/>  
The volumes available in this format are:

### UCPL 135: James A. Matisoff, "Handbook of Proto-Tibeto-Burman: System and Philosophy of Sino-Tibetan Reconstruction" (2003).

[This 800-page Volume is a clear and readable presentation of the current state of research on the history of the Tibeto-Burman (TB) language family, a typologically diverse group of over 250 languages spoken in Southern China, the Himalayas, NE India, and peninsular Southeast Asia. The TB languages are the only proven relatives of Chinese, with which they form the great Sino-Tibetan family.]

### UCPL 136: Jane H. Hill, "A Grammar of Cupeño" (October 18, 2005).

[Hill's grammar reviews the phonology, morphology, syntax and discourse features of Cupeño, a Uto-Aztecan (Takic) language of California. Cupeño exhibits many unusual typological features, including split ergativity, that require linguists to revise our understanding of the development of the Uto-Aztecan family of languages in historical and areal perspective.]

### UCPL 137: Alice Shepherd, "Proto-Wintun" (December 15, 2005).

[A reconstruction of Proto-Wintun, the parent language of a group of California Indian languages. It includes a grammatical sketch of Proto-Wintun, cognate sets with reconstructions and an index to the reconstructions. The book fills a need for in-depth reconstructions of proto-languages for California Indian language families, both for theoretical purposes and deeper comparison with other proto-languages.]

### Saving Languages: An Introduction to Language Revitalization

Lenore A. Grenoble & Lindsay J. Whaley,  
Dartmouth College  
Hardback: ISBN: 0521816211. £ 45.00  
Paperback: ISBN: 0521016525. £ 17.99  
Cambridge University Press, 2005  
<http://us.cambridge.org>

Language endangerment has been the focus of much attention over the past few decades, and as a result, a wide range of people are now working To revitalize and maintain local languages. This book serves as a general reference guide to language revitalization, written not only for linguists and anthropologists, but also for language activists and community members who believe they should ensure the future use of their languages, despite their predicted loss. Drawing extensively on case studies, it sets out the necessary background and highlights central issues such as literacy, policy decisions, and allocation of resources. Its primary goal is to provide the tools for a successful language revitalization program.

# Foundation for Endangered Languages

## Manifesto

### 1. Preamble

#### 1.1. The Present Situation

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

The most authoritative source on the languages of the world (Ethnologue, 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 movements 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:-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

