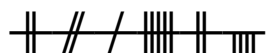


FOUNDATION FOR ENDANGERED LANGUAGES

OGMIOS



David Nathan (trainer), Felix Ameka (organiser and trainer), and Samuel Atintono (organising committee) at the West African Summer School on Documentary Linguistics, University of Education, Winneba, Ghana, 16-26 July 2008.

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Ljouwert 2008 - a characteristic view at FEL XII
[taken by Nicholas Ostler]

1. Editorial

The 12th FEL conference in Ljouwert/Leeuwarden, Friesland, was a great success, as reported below; and in the course of it FEL held its Annual General Meeting. Your committee was re-elected *en bloc*. Each year our conference venue is on a different continent, and as a consequence, our membership becomes more widespread. Our committee, too, has become more international over the years. Of course it makes it hard to hold committee meetings, but a core of the committee is able to meet regularly here in Britain.

The UNESCO *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Disappearing*, which first appeared in 1996 and in a second edition in 2001, is about to appear again in early 2009, due for launch on International Mother Tongue Day (21st February). This third edition, much more comprehensive than the previous two, will be available on-line for the first time, as well as in print. There is a strong FEL involvement in it, not only because the general editor is your Editor, but also because two of our committee members, Salem Mezhoud and Hakim Elnazarov, are regional editors of it.

Please note that the **membership rates** for the coming year, which you can see on the inside back page, have been revised for the coming year, not only to accommodate our own expenses but also to reflect substantial changes in the exchange rates between the pound sterling, dollar and euro in recent months. We think that membership of the Foundation still represents excellent value.

Chris Moseley

2. Development of the Foundation

FEL XII – The 12th annual conference of the Foundation for Endangered Languages

This year, 2008, the Foundation for Endangered Languages was back on European soil for its 12th annual conference, after a long succession of conferences on continents more far-flung from its British base. This was possible thanks to the collaboration of our hosts the Fryske Akademy in Ljouwert/Leeuwarden, and the Mercator European Research Centre, also based there. The common element in these three organising bodies was the presence of Tjeerd de Graaf, a long-standing member of the FEL committee. The task of editing the Proceedings volume was also a collaborative effort between the three bodies: it fell to Tjeerd, to Nicholas Ostler of FEL, and Reinier Salverda of Fryske Akademy.

This year's conference theme was 'Endangered Languages and Language Learning' and as always it drew on the skills of a very widely-spread team of contributors. It is always gratifying and amazing to see from how far afield the submissions of papers for our conferences come. The task of winnowing the contributions to fit into a fairly tight three-day programme was as hard as ever this year, as the standard of the papers was very high.

Our Keynote Speakers dealt first with a Frisian theme – the case of institutional support for North Frisian in Germany, by Alastair Walker, and secondly with an international comparison of language teaching policies, with Prof. Maya Khemlani David (organiser of the FEL conference in Malaysia in 2007) contrasting the situations in Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines. Lastly the keynote speakers looked at European minority languages generally (Durk Gorter) and a further set of examples reviewed in terms of "language documentation and pedagogy" by David Nathan and Meili Fang.



Fryske Akademy, Ljouwert

Interspersed between these keynote speakers was a crammed programme of papers dealing with the learning and teaching of minority languages in countries as diverse as the USA, Cyprus, Siberian Russia, China, Tajikistan, Scotland, Morocco, the Basque country, the Channel Islands, Italy and Canada, among others. But what was most striking on the programme was the amount of attention devoted to languages spoken in diaspora communities, whether it be Yiddish, Kurdish, Malayalam or Rotuman. As a FEL member I found this contrast between home-country education of minorities and language maintenance in expatriate communities especially stimulating.

Despite the tight schedule of papers, there was time for the participants to get to know Friesland as well. We had two enjoyable excursions, which neatly broke up the indoor proceedings, firstly to Snits, a Frisian maritime town with a fine seafaring museum, which culminated in a very pleasant evening boat cruise; and, for those staying on after the conference, a visit to the Frisian Museum in Ljouwert followed by a trip to the town of Workum, which housed the rather quirky Jopie Huisman museum and where a delicious lunch was laid on for us.

All in all a very well planned and executed conference, and on behalf of FEL I congratulate our hosts – who were also thoughtful in suggesting and providing excellent local accommodation in Ljouwert, and kept us well fed and watered between sessions – as well as thanking their sponsors, Friesland Bank and the Province of Friesland.

Chris Moseley

FEL XIII: Endangered Languages and History

Organisers: The Foundation for Endangered Languages, in association with the Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan and The Institute of Humanities, Khorog

Place: Institute of Humanities, Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan, Khorog Tajikistan

Dates: 24-26 September, 2009

Abstract deadline: March 1, 2009

Call for Abstracts:

Endangered languages are often the remnants of old nations and civilizations. Many of these languages have been widely used in vast territories for centuries before giving way to more powerful and influential languages over a period of time for various social,

economic, literary, political, and natural reasons. It is often precisely in the endangered languages of minorities and indigenous peoples that scholars seek answers to the historical developments of nations, their values and ethics, agricultural activities, habitat, way of life, migration patterns, arts and crafts, religious traditions, archaeological findings, etc. Endangered languages can serve to legitimise the sovereignty of the dominant nations, or to reaffirm their identity and authority over the territory, often at the expense of other languages. In the process, the endangered languages themselves may be strengthened or weakened as the past of the nation becomes a bone of contention. History also has value in the life of a community and can foster and promote a sense of identity among its members, thus perhaps playing a crucial role in the preservation or revitalisation of the endangered languages.

The conference will discuss the complex interaction of Endangered Languages and History and how the study of history can encourage the preservation and promote the revitalisation of endangered languages. The following are some of the aspects of this interface which could be discussed at the conference, certainly not an exclusive list:

The role of endangered languages in the writing of history. Endangered languages as a medium for history writing, a source of historical data, and a basis for the buttressing of the historiography of a nation, region, empire, etc.

Methods and tools used to relate history to endangered languages, including the effects of imperialism and nationalism on their perceived status. The impact of conquest, political annexation, economic ascendancy or cultural dominance on languages and their resulting endangerment; conversely, the contributions of endangered languages to the evolution of the language of empire.

Use of endangered languages in the study of literary sources and archaeological findings. Oral history, myth and oral literature as instruments of decipherment of sources.

The use of endangered languages in strengthening historic community identities, at any level from family to nation. Endangered languages as a symbol of homogeneity, an instrument of unity and a vehicle of identity.

What history tells us about the causes and trends of language attrition, including the role of language contact as a result of trade, war, conquest and missionary religion.

How historical studies can contribute to the revitalisation of endangered languages.

A historical perspective on the developing study of language endangerment and endangered languages. Historiography and epistemology of language endangerment.

The languages of the conference: English, Russian and Tajik. Abstract and papers will be accepted in any of these languages.

Abstract Submission

An abstract of no more than 500 words should be submitted before 1st of March, 2009. After this deadline, abstracts will not be accepted.

It is possible to submit an abstract in English for a Russian or Tajik paper.

Abstracts can be submitted in three ways:

1. EasyChair (English abstracts only):

go to <http://www.easychair.org/conferences/?conf=felxiii2009>

if you already have an EasyChair account you can just enter your user name and password and log in.

if you don't have an account click on the link 'then click here' and follow the instructions and then log in.

click on 'new submission' and follow the instructions.

Note: You will be taking the "Abstract Only" option, which requires Latin-1 characters. Consequently, submission in Russian or Tajik is not possible via EasyChair.

2. E-Mail:

If you are not able to submit your abstract via EasyChair, please send it (with details) via e-mail to [hakimelnazar<at>yahoo.com](mailto:hakimelnazar@yahoo.com) and [nostler<at>chibcha.demon.co.uk](mailto:nostler@chibcha.demon.co.uk) with the subject of the e-mail stating:

"FEL Abstract: <last name of the author(s)>: <title of paper>".

If the abstract is in Russian or Tajik it should also be copied to [yshp<at>mail.ru](mailto:yshp@mail.ru).

3. Post:

Finally, if you are not able to submit your abstract via EasyChair or e-mail, please print and send your abstract and details to the following address (to arrive by 1 March, 2009) to the address at the head of this newsletter.

The name of the first author will be used in all correspondence. Writers will be informed once their abstracts have been accepted and they will be required to submit their full papers for publication in the proceedings before June 15, 2009 together with their registration fee (amount still to be determined).

Conference presentations

Each presentation at the Conference will last twenty minutes, with a further ten minutes for discussion and questions and answers. Keynote lectures (by invitation only) will last forty-five minutes each.

Important Dates

Abstract arrival deadline : March 1, 2009

Notification of acceptance of paper: March 30, 2007

In case of acceptance, the full paper is due by June 15, 2009 (further details on the format of text will be provided to the authors)

Conference dates: September 24-26, 2009

Travel and Excursion

Transit to or from the conference site (via Dushanbe in Tajikistan) will take two days from most parts of the world. Transit within Tajikistan will be provided.

A day's excursion is planned for September 27.

About the organisers

The Institute of Humanities in Khorog is an affiliate of the Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan. The institute is engaged in the study of culture, history, languages, folklore and literary tradition of the people of Badakhshan region of Tajikistan. The institute holds an extensive archive of oral traditions of the Pamir and adjacent areas.

Khorog is capital of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region of Tajikistan.

3. Endangered Languages in the News

Cover story: HRELP workshop in Winneba, Ghana

HRELP and the Summer School on Documentary Linguistics in West Africa

By David Nathan, Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project

The Summer School on Documentary Linguistics in West Africa was hosted by the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana from 16-26 July 2008, held prior to the 26th West African Languages Congress at the same venue. HRELP was centrally involved in the event; it was organised by panel member Professor Felix Ameka (Department of African Languages and Cultures, Leiden University, The Netherlands), funded by ELDP, and David Nathan from ELAR and Sophie Salfner from ELAP contributed to the teaching and also organised the large amount of documentation equipment that was used for the workshop and then donated at the end of the workshop to participants from each west African country represented at the school.

There were about 35 participants coming from nine countries right across the region: Cameroon, Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, and Senegal. Each participant was either already involved in language documentation or planning to do so.

This Summer School was unique and remarkable in several respects. It was the first such workshop on documentary linguistics to be held on the African continent. Impeccably organised, it featured a rich curriculum ranging from the ethnography of communication to the use of software for annotation and dictionary making. But it was by no means a "chalk and talk" event - all participants were involved in group practical project work, with each group working face-to-face with a speaker of Effutu (a local group at Winneba whose language is in serious danger) to do research, recording, and learning materials development.

The enthusiasm, collaboration, and good spirits in the groups were outstanding. This work culminated with the groups presenting their project work on the final day, including a presentation of one of the groups' work - a multimedia language learning resource - to a representative of the local primary schools.

The School was also unique in that it brought together a wide international network of people. The participants came from countries across West Africa, and the teachers were eminent people in their respective fields from Australia, Canada, Germany, The Netherlands, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and the UK.

See pictures on front and back covers.

Poetry in Endangered Languages

FEL is currently consulting with a British publisher of poetry toward the creation of an anthology of poems in translation from endangered languages. The language communities chosen for the book will be European ones, but this seems a good opportunity to suggest to our readers that in future we publish the work of poets from endangered language communities in the pages of *Ogmios*. I would like to set up a new feature, a sort of Poetry Corner, presenting the work of a different poet in each issue, in original and translation. So please, if you know and admire the work of a particular "endangered" poet, European or not, please send your suggestion to the Editor.

Chris Moseley

The resurrection of a language long lost

Malcolm King, from The Age (Melbourne), 6 September 2008

The world's languages are dying at a rate of one a fortnight, but an Aboriginal tongue has been brought back to life.

MUCH has been written about the need for ecological diversity to maintain a balanced ecosystem. Yet in the City of Churches an equally profound revolution is taking place that has linguists all over the world talking — the resurrection of a dead Aboriginal language.

Ninna marni? Are you good? Marniai. I'm good. Wanti ninna? Where are you going? Wodlianna. Going home.

That's Kaurna, the language of the original inhabitants of the Adelaide Plain, the Kaurna people. It was effectively dead by 1900. It suffered the fate of many Aboriginal people: dispersal, disease, infighting and assimilation. English buried their tongue.

When Europeans arrived, linguists estimate, there were more than 250 Aboriginal languages. Today no more than 25 Aboriginal languages are spoken daily.

Enshrined in a language is the whole of a community's history and a large part of its cultural identity. We think in language. It is Logos — the Word. It is the code through which we make sense of the world. It makes us self-aware. Our art, culture and scientific discoveries come to us through language.

The only record of the Kaurna language was a tiny dictionary and some song sheets compiled in 1840 by Kaurna elders and two German missionaries, Clamor Schurmann and Christian Teichelmann, who ran a school for Aboriginal children in Adelaide.

The pair were not cane-wielding Bible-bashers who sought to eradicate the local language. They were Christian linguists who meticulously recorded the Kaurna language knowing that it faced extinction. They saved more than they knew.

The dictionary lay buried in an Adelaide library until it was unearthed in 1960. And there it might have stayed until in the early 1990s linguist Dr Rob Amery and members of the Kaurna community decided to "rebuild" the language and teach it to schoolchildren and adults.

This was an epic undertaking. Amery and the Kaurna community had been left a smattering of words, but constructing the grammar was another matter.

"In 1990 Teichelmann's dictionary was pretty much all we had of the Kaurna language. There were other materials around but they had not been produced or collated. Some were not reliable and didn't tell us much about the grammar," Amery says.

His comprehensive research turned up some prayer books written in Kaurna back in the missionary days. By identifying the tunes, he could also translate some of the words into English. This was enough to build a "grammar spine".

It took Amery and others 10 years to become confident enough to teach the resurrected language in schools.

"For the Kaurna people it was an act of identity. For me, I just got interested in the language for its own sake. I could also see what being involved in this language stuff was doing for some individuals. It changed their lives completely," Amery says.

He is aware that the reborn language is not identical to that spoken 300 years ago on the eastern shore of St Vincent's Gulf.

"We don't know everything, and some words have been lost forever, but what we have is the grammar and a vocabulary of more than 2000 words."

Amery underplays his part in the rebuilding of the Kaurna language, but this is an event of international importance. Renowned

international linguist Professor David Crystal makes special mention of the Kaurna language project on his website and in his book *Language Death*.

There are about 6000 global languages, yet on average one perishes every two weeks, often as the last elderly speakers die. In 2002, the Bureau of Statistics found there were fewer than 3000 people who spoke an indigenous language in NSW. In 2006 that had fallen to 800. Crystal, says about half the 6000 languages will die this century.

It's not unusual that the Australian mainstream media in the 2008 United Nations Year of Languages have failed to mention the culture-saving work of Amery and the Kaurna elders. The media tend to portray Aboriginal people as victims in a morality play, where they are either lazy and living off welfare or else battling underdogs whose dignity has been crushed.

But the Kaurna people will have none of that. They are now teaching their language in schools throughout the northern suburbs of Adelaide.

Kaurna elder Auntie Josie Agius agrees with Amery that the resurrection of the language has changed lives, giving displaced or disenfranchised Aborigines a path back to their cultural identity.

"When you start researching a language you also have to go out and meet people. We'd sit down and start talking about families and we'd use some Kaurna words, and they'd say, 'How did you know that? That's a word we use,'" Agius says. "You've got to understand just how dispersed some of us older people were. The Kaurna language is like a map not only of who your kin might be, but also a spiritual map of who you are."

There are very few success stories of language resurrection. One of the most spectacular is modern Hebrew, reborn to serve as the official language of Israel. The Māori language in New Zealand has also been maintained by intensively exposing young children to it.

What makes the resurrection of the Kaurna language so astonishing is that it flies in the face of the global trend of language death and diminishment.

Says Crystal: "Most people have yet to develop a language conscience. But the extent of the ongoing loss in the world's linguistic diversity is so cataclysmic that it makes the word 'revolution' look like an understatement.

"We should care for dying languages for the same reason we care when a species of animal or plant dies. It reduces the diversity of our planet. I'm talking about the intellectual and cultural diversity of the planet now — not it's biological diversity, but the issues are the same."

Malcolm King is an Adelaide writer.

Window on Eurasia: Russian Capitalists Expand on Stalin's Dictum – No People, No Problem

Paul Goble, 1 February 2008

Baku, February 1 - A Russian firm has updated Stalin's dictum that when there is no person, there is no problem. It argues that it need not respect the existence of a small people its construction project will disperse because the group is not listed on a government register of protected peoples and thus does not exist de jure.

But in a post-Soviet twist perhaps reflecting the concerns of some that such attitudes could hurt its brand, the firm apparently has taken this statement off a major website and promised to build new culturally-themed housing for the group's members.

A week ago, the Regrus.ru news portal reported that the construction of the Ust-Luga port in Leningrad oblast will ultimately destroy the

only two villages where the Vod, a small Finno-Ugric people, live and lead to the loss of their language and the destruction of that ancient nationality. Although only 30 people now speak the Vod language, down from 700 before World War II, they have been trying to revive their national culture in the villages of Krakol'ye and Luzhitsy by organizing folklore festivals and teaching the language in local schools.

Speaking on Radio Kultura on January 29, Tatyana Agranat, a specialist on folk art, pointed out that the Vod had been a self-sustaining community through the middle of the 20th century. But the proposed construction, she said, will destroy the group and its language "instantly".

Because the Vod and their language represent a kind of living museum, scholars at the Institute of Linguistics of the Russian Academy of Sciences have been studying them intensely. And the director of that institute, Viktor Vinogradov, has appealed to the economic development ministry and the Leningrad oblast leaders to stop construction.

In his letters, which Regrus.ru reproduces, Vinogradov notes that the Vod are included in the list of numerically small indigenous peoples of the Russian Federation and thus are protected both by the Russian Constitution and "generally recognized principles and norms of international law."

That prompted Nikolai Iyevlev, the head of the Ust-Luga Company to reply, and his statement, which is no longer available on the Newprojects.ru site, can be found on the Estonia-based website devoted to the numerous small Finno-Ugric peoples in the Russian Federation.

Iyevlev said that complains about the impact of his company's project were "neither new nor problematic." On the one hand, he said, his firm has no obligation to protect the Vod because, he argued, "at present," they are "not included in the register of small peoples of the Russian Federation."

That means, he said, that "de jure, there is no such small people," whatever its members or the scholars who study them say.

And on the other, he said his firm would not be destroying their villages - at least not in the first stage - and that it support the construction of ethnically-themed houses for those who will be displaced and support the development of the language and culture of a group he suggests does not really exist.

In other comments, Iyevlev lashed out at the scholars of the Institute of Linguistics for failing to get in touch with the company directly and the government agencies that are supervising its work and instead writing directly to the most senior Leningrad oblast and a Moscow minister.

But to date, these senior officials do not appear to have taken any action to save the Vod. And the threat to their existence from Iyevlev's project has gained attention only because of the efforts of ethnic rights activists in Estonia, one of the three independent countries whose people speak a Finno-Ugric language related to that of the Vod.

Going back to her roots

By Robin Denslow, The Guardian 1 August 2008

It's a big night at the Carinish village hall, on the little island of North Uist in the Outer Hebrides. A capacity audience of 200 - almost one in seven of the entire population - heave turned for a musical charity show to buy beds for the old people's home. Outside, the curlew and redshank are calling across the island's barren mosaic of moorland and tiny lochs and, on the stage, there's an impressive reminder that this is still a bastion of Scottish Gaelic culture. There are rousing fiddle tunes from schoolchildren, songs from a local teenager, and "the highlight of the concert", an 84-year-old singing

powerfully, with backing from his 12-year-old son on accordion. “Surely you mean grandson?” I ask. “No, it’s his son.”

In the midst of all this, there are songs from “someone you all know”: a girl with an exquisitely cool, clear voice, who is in her late twenties, jokes in Gaelic with her audience about the differences between North and South Uist, and is accompanied by her husband, Eamon Doorley, playing the bouzouki. Julie Fowlis is North Uist’s biggest celebrity, this year’s BBC folk singer of the year and the best-known Scottish Gaelic singer on the planet. Everyone here knows her songs. Many deal with local characters and events, and several have been learned from those in the hall. Sometimes, she says, she gets nervous singing in North Uist. “When I’m away, no one knows what I’m talking about, but here people know what the songs are about, and who they are about. I’ve learned a few songs from old archive recordings, but most of them I’ve got from real living people.”

A week earlier, a North Uist man had handed her the lyrics of a song written by his father during the second world war, but he didn’t know the melody. “So I tried to track down the tune,” says Fowlis. “At the concert, my primary school teacher, a great singer, Isa McKillop, said ‘It goes like this’. So in the space of six days, I had the words and tune, and the song was revived.”

She is, she says, “a song junkie”, obsessed by the “pressure to do it right, be true to the tradition and the language and, most importantly, to the people who have given me the songs. It’s like giving you a physical thing, giving you a gift, passing these things on – and the most important thing to me is that they are happy with it.”

Fowlis learned to appreciate North Uist by leaving it. Her mother was a Gaelic-speaking islander, from a family of fishermen and crofters, while her father was from the mainland but for many years ran a hotel in North Uist. She grew up “listening to both Radio 1 and Gaelic radio, playing the pipes and dancing,” but had to leave the island at 13, when her father took a new job in the Highlands. She wanted to study music, and after being told to learn “a proper instrument”, the oboe, went on to study musical performance in Strathclyde. “But I didn’t enjoy performing with an orchestra. I got really nervous and sick.”

She started thinking of the music she grew up with, playing pipes and whistles in bars “to earn a few quid”, and spent a year improving her language skills at a college in Skye before becoming the development officer for Feis Ross, an organisation that supports Gaelic music and song across Scotland, partly by organising music projects in schools. She continued to perform, both alone and with friends in the band Dochas, and was by then doing “tons of gigs, touring all over the place and trying to hold down a full-time job.” She was awarded a grant by the Scottish Arts Council to research and record an album of songs from North Uist.

She never intended to be a full-time Gaelic singer. “I’m generally quite a sensible person, and the life of a musician didn’t feature in my planning at all. I wanted a steady job and a house. But I did something I wouldn’t normally do – I just jacked in the job.”

Now she has brought Gaelic song to a following that’s far wider than the language’s 60,000 speakers in Scotland (“less than 1% of the population”), and is popular even among audiences who can’t understand a word of her songs. She agrees that the success of world music has opened a new market for those who don’t sing in English, “and I think people are tired of the same churned-out music.”

On her most recent album, *Cuilidh*, Fowlis is backed by a classy band that includes Doorley, along with the mandolin star Chris Thile and John McCusker on fiddle. Fowlis sings and plays whistle. All the songs are in Gaelic, most of them from North Uist.

Driving down the island’s narrow lanes the next morning, she points out the musical landmarks, Over there, near the coastal bird reserve at Balranald, is the former home of Jessie, a woman whose elopement to Skye features in two songs on the album. And close by,

between the lochs, there’s a monument to the “Raiders” featured in yet another song, *Oran nan Raiders*. Now remembered as local heroes, these were islanders who were promised land if they fought in the first world war. Given nothing on their return, they seized the land themselves. “One of their sons taught me the song,” Julie says. “He was at the concert last night, too.”

While keen to promote Gaelic culture, she’s wary of getting too involved in the politics. “Alex Salmond has been good in taking the mantle of Gaelic-ness of late, but in a lot of ways, Gaelic has been supported by Westminster; I know a lot of Gaels who have a resistance to nationalism and the SNP because of that.” Has Alex Salmond contacted her? “Yes, but I was not available at the time. He’s a brilliant politician but I’m sitting back and waiting to be convinced. Most of the time my thinking is smaller, about Uist or the Hebrides or the Highlands, not about Scotland.”

But whether she likes it or not, she is fast becoming a celebrity. This summer, ahead of her first American tour, she is playing at a batch of UK summer festivals, appearing alongside Pete Doherty, Shane MacGowan and Lou Reed on the Rogues Gallery tour, reworking *Blackbird* in Gaelic for a Beatles tribute set, and recording an album exploring the links between Scottish and Irish Gaelic songs. Would she ever record a non-Gaelic song? “I could hardly sing you an English song from start to finish, except for something really embarrassing like a Dolly Parton number. The songs I know are from here, and I’m fascinated that I can sing a song from the 12th century that has survived intact.”

When nobody understands

From The Economist print edition Oct 23rd 2008

The electronic age drives some languages out of existence, but can help save others

THINK of the solitude felt by Marie Smith before she died earlier this year in her native Alaska, at 89. She was the last person who knew the language of the Eyak people as a mother-tongue. Or imagine Ned Mandrell, who died in 1974—he was the last native speaker of Manx, similar to Irish and Scots Gaelic. Both these people had the comfort of being surrounded, some of the time, by enthusiasts who knew something precious was vanishing and tried to record and learn whatever they could of a vanishing tongue. In remote parts of the world, dozens more people are on the point of taking to their graves a system of communication that will never be recorded or reconstructed.

Does it matter? Plenty of languages—among them Akkadian, Etruscan, Tanguit and Chibcha—have gone the way of the dodo, without causing much trouble to posterity. Should anyone lose sleep over the fact that many tongues—from Manchu (spoken in China) to Hua (Botswana) and Gwich’in (Alaska)—are in danger of suffering a similar fate?

Compared with groups who lobby to save animals or trees, campaigners who lobby to preserve languages are themselves a rare breed. But they are trying both to mitigate and publicise an alarming acceleration in the rate at which languages are vanishing. Of some 6,900 tongues spoken in the world today, some 50% to 90% could be gone by the end of the century. In Africa, at least 300 languages are in near-term danger, and 200 more have died recently or are on the verge of death. Some 145 languages are threatened in East and South-East Asia.

Some languages, even robust ones, face an obvious threat in the shape of a political power bent on imposing a majority tongue. A youngster in any part of the Soviet Union soon realised that whatever you spoke at home, mastering Russian was the key to success; citizens of China, including Tibetan ones, face similar pressure to focus on Mandarin, the main Chinese dialect.

Nor did English reach its present global status without ruthless tactics. In years past, Americans, Canadians and Australians took native children away from their families to be raised at boarding schools where English rules. In all the Celtic fringes of the British Isles there are bitter memories of children being punished for speaking the wrong language.

But in an age of mass communications, the threats to linguistic diversity are less draconian and more spontaneous. Parents stop using traditional tongues, thinking it will be better for their children to grow up using a dominant language (such as Swahili in East Africa) or a global one (such as English, Mandarin or Spanish). And even if parents try to keep the old speech alive, their efforts can be doomed by films and computer games.

The result is a growing list of tongues spoken only by white-haired elders. A book* edited by Peter Austin, an Australian linguist, gives some examples: Njerep, one of 31 endangered languages counted in Cameroon, reportedly has only four speakers left, all over 60. The valleys of the Caucasus used to be a paradise for linguists in search of unusual syntax, but Ubykh, one of the region's baffling tongues, officially expired in 1992.

The effort to keep languages alive can lead to hard arguments, especially where limited funds are available to spend on education and official communications. In both America and Britain, some feel that, whatever people speak at home, priority should go to making sure that children know English well.

But supporters of linguistic diversity make strong arguments too. Nicholas Ostler, a scholar who heads the Foundation for Endangered Languages, a non-profit group based in Britain, says multilingual children do better academically than monolingual ones. He rejects the notion that a common tongue helps to avoid war: think of Rwanda, Bosnia and Vietnam.

Mark Ablar, a Canadian writer, says the protection of endangered species is closely linked to the preservation of tongues. On a recent expedition in Australia, a rare turtle was found to have two varieties; a dying but rich native language, Gagudju, had different words for each kind.

Thanks to electronics, saviours of languages have better tools than ever before; words and sounds can easily be posted on the internet. Educational techniques are improving, too. In New Zealand Māori-speakers have formed "language nests", in which grandparents coach toddlers in the old tongue. Australia's dying Kamilaroi language was boosted by pop songs teenagers liked.

But whatever tricks or technology are used, the only test of a language's viability is everyday life. "The way to save languages is to speak them," says Mr Austin. "People have to talk to people."

*"One Thousand Languages: Living, Endangered and Lost," edited by Peter K. Austin. University of California Press (2008).

For more detail on this volume see also Ogmios 36.

Push for English causes Aboriginal backlash

by Natasha Robinson, The Australian, 20 November 2008

Governments risk poisoning their relationship with Aboriginal people by clumsily pushing through a threadbare policy mandating that children in remote schools are predominantly taught in English, Arnhem Land's most experienced Aboriginal educator has warned. Yalmay Yunupingu, a teacher at Yirrkala Community Education Centre for 32 years and one of the rare remote-based Aboriginal teachers who holds a mainstream diploma of education qualification, has broken ranks with her brother-in-law, Galarwuy Yunupingu, to condemn the English-focused schools policy that effectively spells the death of bilingual education.

Ms Yunupingu's criticisms came as Federal Education Minister Julia Gillard threw her support behind the Northern Territory Government's policy, following opposition from race discrimination commissioner Tom Calma. "English is the language of further learning and English is the language of work, and if we want indigenous kids who are growing up today right across the Northern Territory, right across the nation, to have a chance to do an undergraduate degree, do a postgraduate degree, go out and get a good job, then people need to read and write English," Ms Gillard said.

"They need to be able to do it at the level that further education requires, and at the level that work requires." Ms Yunupingu, one of the original proponents of bilingual education in schools, said the Territory Government had not consulted with those who would be affected by the new policy, which was poorly understood. The Territory Government had not articulated the new policy beyond announcing a new requirement that the first four hours of schooling would be conducted in English.

"Teaching the first four hours of English -- we don't know what it really means, it could mean teaching English all day," Ms Yunupingu said. "It's like spitting on the bilingual program and devaluing the indigenous children's first language without any respect. Language is our living treasure and our survival, we nurture our language just like a child." Ms Yunupingu criticised the way the Territory Government had done a U-turn on bilingual education with little warning, condemning the new policy as assimilationist.

"I've heard everyone say English is a language of power, because it is a universal language. I'll tell you something -- that indigenous language is a language of power too." Yolngu leaders are divided over the issue of English in schools. Mr Yunupingu, an Arnhem Land powerbroker, believes teaching children in English does not lead to a loss of culture. Territory Deputy Chief Minister Marion Scrymgour denied the Government had failed to consult Aboriginal people on the English-focused policy. "There has been a lot of consultation with a lot of those communities," Ms Scrymgour said.

These things will always be

by Jane Simpson, from the University of Sydney blog site, 23 November, 2008

Darkening clouds are looming over Indigenous languages in the Northern Territory. Tom Calma, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner and national Race Discrimination Commissioner, has put up a defiant umbrella - the Eric Johnston lecture which includes a well argued section in support of bilingual education. I was struck by the comment that this year "seven students from five homeland communities in North East Arnhem Land will be the first homeland students to graduate with the Year 12 Certificate." Tremendously good news.

Other umbrellas are going up too - some honourable souls have leaked to AAP the following:

"Preliminary results from the Evaluation of Literacy Approach (ELA) report, ..., found that for "active reading skills in English" students at bilingual schools achieve better results than non-bilingual schools by the time they reach Grade 5."

[Update: And there's a good letter by Patrick McConvell in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, along with Wendy Baarda's letter in *Crikey*. Anggarrgoon.org has several posts on the topic.]

Gleams of sunlight come from the Araluen Art Centre in Alice Springs. They have a travelling exhibition about Darby Jampijinpa Ross of Ngarliyikirlangu, north of Yuendumu. Jampijinpa was an extraordinary man; there's a beautiful book about him, by Liam Campbell: *Darby : One hundred years of life in a changing culture* (Sydney : ABC Books for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation; Alice Springs, N.T. : Warlpiri Media Association, 2006). It comes

with a CD of Darby singing in Warlpiri, as well as telling stories about early days, about the Coniston Massacre. For these he uses the language which he learned as a young man, the Aboriginal English/Kriol which has become the spine of the new mixed language Lajamanu Light Warlpiri.

Araluen also have a new exhibition which brings language together with art (including text, sculpture, etchings, installation, and digital media). *Intem-antey anem* 'These things will always be': Bush medicine at Utopia, is opening at the Araluen Gallery in Alice Springs, on Saturday November 29th at 2 pm, with Lena Pwerl and Josie Douglas speaking and a performance by Utopia women. The exhibitors are students from Utopia (Alyawarr and Anmatyerre) who are studying their own languages, art and craft at the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Education (BIITE), Alice Springs campus.

The exhibition runs until 8th February. A week after the exhibition opens, nine women from Utopia together with some BIITE staff will head to the World Indigenous People's Conference on Education to present on the teaching /learning aspect of the project.

More discussion on similar topics can be found on the web-site of Sydney University at www.usyd.edu.au

Australia: Indigenous Languages Petition

Forwarded by Adriano Truscott, 10 November 2008

The Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages (FATSIL) is the national peak body for community based indigenous language programs in Australia. FATSIL is currently circulating the following petition to deliver to the Federal Government on the preliminary of 13th February 2009 – the year anniversary Federal Parliament's Apology to the Stolen Generations. There are currently just over 1000 signatories to the petition, which reads as follows:

TO THE HONOURABLE SPEAKER,
MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

This petition of citizens from Australia and overseas both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous draws to the attention of the House that we are alarmed at the rate of unchecked language loss in Australia.

Over 250 vigorous and vibrant languages on record at the time of European arrival in Australia have been reduced to just 17 which are being transmitted naturally to younger members of their communities.

Some other languages are still spoken fluently but the vast majority are in varying states of decline and disrepair.

There are also vigorous efforts across the country to maintain and revive languages, in some cases to re-introduce them after many decades of non-use.

In the debate and activity addressing indigenous disadvantage indigenous languages have been overlooked. Language should be seen as a pathway to education, to healthier and wealthier communities, not as a separate subordinate issue.

We therefore ask the House to develop a National Indigenous Languages Policy and a National Indigenous Languages Institute in order to strategically and coherently support the:

- Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages (including creoles and Aboriginal Englishes);
- Documentation and development of Indigenous Languages;
- Development of programs at all levels of Education;
- Development of numeracy and literacy targets in Indigenous Languages;
- Provision of interpreting and translation services (and training interpreters);

- Expansion of employment options that recognise and utilise language knowledge and skills; and
- Development of measures to increase the use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in the public domain (including music industry, TV, radio, press, public art and signage).

Paul Herbert (FATSIL)
PRINCIPAL PETITIONER

The petition can be printed from www.fatsil.org.au and faxed or posted to the details provided on the site. Alternatively, you can email admin@fatsil.org.au for further information.

India's aborigines study, rather than shed their culture

By Anand Giridharadas, *International Herald Tribune*, 10 November 2008

In a library deep in the western Indian countryside, in an academy surrounded by farms on all sides, five students are writing briskly in their ruled notebooks.

They are in their early 20s and newly enrolled, pimples dotting their faces and polish peeling from their nails.

But there is no discounting the gravity of their assignment: When they complete it, the world will have five more documented languages at its disposal.

One word at a time, they are making dictionaries of languages that they grew up with but that to the outside world scarcely exist. They are oral languages, whose sounds have perhaps never before appeared in ink.

Because these languages lack scripts, the students use the script of Gujarati, the official regional language.

"If we make this, those who come after us will profit from it," said Kantilal Mahala, 21, taking a brief respite from his work on the Kunkna language but speaking in Hindi. "In my village, people who move ahead speak only Gujarati. They feel ashamed of our language."

Like drivers speeding downtown at rush hour, these students see everyone else going the other way. A swelling class of Indian aspirants in small towns and in villages like this one sees English as a pathway to affluence, security and respect. They read Dale Carnegie's "How to Win Friends and Influence People," but ask them to name a good novel in their mother tongue, and they may draw a blank.

Had it not been for Ganesh Devy, the young people in this rural community might have gone down that path. But more than a decade ago, the former English literature professor quit that work with a burning question on his mind: Why do we wait for cultures to die to memorialize them?

There are certain inevitabilities to the arc of development: Villagers emigrate. Life's pace quickens. Languages sputter and die. Years later, a foundation raises money, curators are retained and visitors explore a museum wondering what life then was like.

But what, Devy wondered, if there were a pre-emption doctrine for cultural preservation? His Adivasi Academy, where the dictionary-making was unfolding on a recent afternoon, is based on such a doctrine.

"There is a continent of culture getting submerged, and that's why I wanted to take the plunge," he said in an interview.

With funding from the Ford Foundation and other philanthropic groups, it tries to preserve a dying culture in real time, not by

showcasing it globally, but by steeping a rising generation of villagers in their own fast-evaporating traditions.

India today does not lack for evaporating traditions. But this project has special resonance in a community chronically excluded even by the standards of India's chronically excluded. Tejgadh is home to one branch of India's vast population of *adivasis*, or "original people." They are, despite their more than 84 million members, modern India's most-forgotten group.

The *adivasis*, compared sometimes with Native Americans and Australia's Aborigines, are highly fragmented, with as many languages, cuisines and sartorial habits as there are clans. But there are common threads.

These clans traditionally lived in hilly or forested areas, where they hunted and foraged instead of farming, and lived nomadically instead of settling down. They are known for a respect for nature, for their bonesetters and shamans, for their worship of elephants and trees instead of abstract gods, for their lack of interest in material accumulation.

Unlike hundreds of millions of Indians, they have never had a caste system, telling them what to eat and where to work. If caste Hindus had one berth for bricklayers and another for priests, *adivasis* let a man lay bricks by day and lead prayers by night, and throw in toilet-cleaning and art-making to boot. Ordinary families produce necklaces and paintings in their spare time.

"Among *adivasis*, nobody is an artist because everybody is an artist," Devy said.

But in recent years some in Tejgadh have indeed specialized and become professional artists - the mere tip of a deeper, wider transformation.

Tejgadh is home to the Rathwa clan, famed for their wall paintings, known as pithora. When a person falls ill, the Rathwas often invite a painter to come along with a shaman. As the painter decorates the walls, the shaman enters a trance and guides his brushstrokes.

Earlier, Mansingh Dhanji, despite immense painting talent, had no way of building a name beyond the village. Then he was "discovered" by London and New York connoisseurs. He still lives in the village and creates illness-alleviation works. But now he spends much time away, painting on canvas rather than walls, for foreigners rather than kinfolk.

In various other ways, modernity is drizzling here, bringing new temptations to abandon the past.

Selfishness is creeping in, villagers say. When events demand a feast, they still do it the ancestral way.

The man of the house corners a wild chicken. Feathers are plucked, tendons torn. A spicy curry is served with flat bread and flower wine.

Nowadays, though, when Dhanji's son, Hari, kills a chicken, he no longer invites the entire extended clan over for dinner. It is acceptable now to hoard everything for immediate family.

The Rathwas still make their own wine. But now, if a man brews a surplus, he sells rather than shares.

They still build their own homes. But now they hire laborers instead of calling over a cousin.

As urban mores pour into the village, young people pour out. Yet they are unprepared. They grew up speaking a language no one recognizes beyond their village, and crumbling schools leave them inexperienced in Gujarati, Hindi and English, the languages of urban employment. In the cities, they cannot escape the most menial tasks.

When Devy was still an academic in Baroda, a major town in Gujarat State, he watched *adivasi* migrants arriving by the busload. They slept outdoors, turning up every morning at the human market where builders recruit laborers.

Devy wanted to combat this gravitational force. Could *adivasis* be persuaded to study their culture rather than shed it, and stay in the villages rather than flee?

The students at the academy he founded in 1996, drawn mostly from Gujarat but also beyond, study not sociology or biology, but autology: They study themselves.

In the academy's museum, *adivasi* culture is depicted as if it no longer existed. The exhibits feature kitchen implements, jars of *adivasi* foods, hand-tossed pottery, jugs for homemade liquor. If the idea were to explain *adivasis* to outsiders, New Delhi would be a better place. The goal is, instead, to impress upon *adivasis* that their culture is worthy of a museum, worthy of protection.

"If a community has a strong sense of identity and a sense of pride in that identity, it wants to survive and thrive," Devy said. "The new economy is important. The old culture is equally important. We should not throw the baby with the bath water."

Last year, India's government followed in his footsteps, chartering a National Tribal University in central India.

The *Adivasi* Academy's principal course is "tribal studies," which the dictionary-makers were pursuing. It also teaches sustainable agriculture, tribal linguistics and women's development, and it runs a supplementary school for young children. Its age range spans 6 to 30. Ninety percent of the faculty are *adivasis*, and students are generally taught in both Gujarati and Hindi, given the absence of books in their own languages.

Vikesh Rathwa, 27, graduated two years ago in tribal studies and, like most of the academy's alumni, chose to stay in the villages and work for Bhasha, the parent organization of the *Adivasi* Academy.

"Before, I thought I would get a B.A. and M.A. and make a film," he said. Immersion in his heritage changed his mind. His dissertation explored kitchen utensils and ancient recipes of the Rathwa clan.

"Coming here made me see my household life in a new way," he said.

He is writing a book that he plans to call "Adivasi Life: Art and Science," crammed with Rathwa folk wisdom: extracting oil from seeds, brewing liquor, kindling fires.

"We need to walk in step with our traditions," he said, quickly adding, "and with technology, too."

Scottish Parliament unveils five-year Gaelic language plan

Scottish Parliament web-site, 14 November 2008

The Scottish Parliament will launch its five-year Gaelic Language Plan next week.

The plan outlines the Parliament's core commitments to expanding the Gaelic services and resources it provides to the public.

Presiding Officer Alex Fergusson MSP will officially unveil the plan on Thursday 20 November.

Mr Fergusson said: "As Scotland's Parliament, we are committed to promoting Gaelic given the important place it holds in Scotland's rich cultural identity.

This plan will ensure we continue to look for ways to engage with the Gaelic community and do all we can to promote the Gaelic language and further strengthen access for the public.

The Parliament already offers a wide range of services to Gaelic speakers and this plan has given us the opportunity to formalise our way ahead for promoting Gaelic over the next five years."

The plan builds on current Gaelic provision available at the Parliament in a number of ways including:

- the introduction of a bilingual corporate identity
- expanding the range of public information available in Gaelic
- introducing Gaelic awareness training for front-of-house staff
- ensuring Gaelic is considered in policy making
- improving the Parliament's Gaelic web pages
- expanding Gaelic signage throughout Holyrood

To mark the launch of the five year plan the Scottish Parliament will host two days of events to highlight the use of Gaelic at Holyrood.

Events include a Member's Debate in Gaelic, information stalls for MSPs and members of the public and a forum for organisations engaged in Gaelic planning to discuss issues and opportunities for promoting the language across Scotland.

As part of the programme of events, schoolchildren will also be taking part in the final of the annual BT Scotland National Gaelic Schools debate on Thursday 20 November.

In addition, the Parliament will be providing guided public visitor tours with a Gaelic flavour and promoting books by Gaelic authors in the Parliament shop. It will also be printing restaurant menus in Gaelic and labelling all artwork and more signage throughout Holyrood in the language.

The Gaelic Language Plan has been devised in conjunction with Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the statutory Gaelic body set up to encourage the use and understanding of Gaelic.

Peadar Morgan, Language Planning Manager at Bòrd na Gàidhlig said: "We are pleased to be working with the Scottish Parliament on their five-year Gaelic Language Plan.

"Gaelic Language Day will help showcase Gaelic to MSPs and the public."

The plan is a requirement of The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 which was passed by the Scottish Parliament to secure the status of Gaelic in Scotland.

The Scottish Parliament Corporate Body was one of the first public bodies asked to devise a plan and it was approved by the Bòrd in May 2008.

The Scottish Parliament already provides a range of services for Gaelic speakers including the provision of online and printed publications in Gaelic, outreach sessions for schools and the community in Gaelic and arranging interpretation and translation services to support the parliament's business processes for debating and publishing in Gaelic.

Greenland votes for more autonomy

From the BBC News website, 26 November 2008

The people of Greenland have voted decisively in favour of a plan to give it greater autonomy from Denmark.

Officials said just over 75% of voters had supported the plan, which would see Greenland take a greater share of its annual oil revenues.

It will also take control of police, courts and coast guard, and have some say in foreign policy.

Correspondents say the vote could be a major step towards independence for the Arctic island of 57,000 people.

Hans Enoksen, the head of the local government in the Danish self-governing territory, thanked Greenlanders for "this overwhelming result".

"The tears are running down my cheeks," said an emotional Mr Enoksen.

Final results showed that 75.54% voted in favour, while 23.57% said no - in line with predictions before the vote. Turnout was 71.96%.

Regaining rights

About 50,000 of the population are native Inuit.

Greenland gained self-rule in 1979, after previously being a colony and then a province of Denmark.

"It was time for us for to regain our rights and freedoms that were stolen from our ancestors," David Brandt, a former fisherman, told the AFP news agency.

Under the new arrangement, due to take effect in June next year, the island will take a greater share of its annual oil revenue, and Greenlanders will be treated as a separate people under international law.

If the proposals are enacted, Kalaallisut would become the official language, instead of Danish.

The plan would also see Greenland becoming less reliant on subsidies from Copenhagen. Currently these provide 30% of its GDP.

In 1985, the island left the European Union to avoid subjecting its fishing grounds to EU rules.

Campaign launched to keep Breton street names

By Davyth Hicks, Eurolang web-site

The inhabitants of the Breton village of Plougerne are facing the threat of having their Breton street names translated into French. According to the mayor this is because the Post Office does not understand the names.

Fran May Prigent who is leading the campaign to keep the street names in Breton said that, "The aim is to give the streets new names... It could mean that all the tradition and culture of our fishing village will be lost overnight." The plan has come as a shock to people in the Breton-speaking village. Supporters are being asked to sign a petition and to write to the mayor - Mr Andrew Lesven.

Altering the linguistic landscape and the language of place names is in itself a nonsense as many lesser used language speakers will know. Plougerne has a meaning in Breton relating to the original settlement and resonating with its history. 'Plouguerneau', created to emulate the Breton name, means nothing in French. (*Eurolang 2008*)

4. Appeals, News and Views from Endangered Communities

Indigenous TV network seeks new members

Publicity release, Tuesday 11 November 2008, from Vanessa Horan, Maori TV, New Zealand.

A global network of indigenous television broadcasters is inviting like-minded organisations to join the international alliance. The World Indigenous Television Broadcasters Network (WITBN) aims to unify television broadcasters worldwide to retain and grow

indigenous languages and cultures. The nine foundation Council members are National Indigenous Television (NITV), Australia; Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN), Canada; TG4, Ireland; Maori Television, New Zealand; NRK Sámi Radio, Norway; BBC ALBA, Scotland; South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), South Africa; Taiwan Indigenous TV (TITV) / Public Television Service (PTS), Taiwan; and S4C, Wales.

WITBN chairman Jim Mather - chief executive of Maori Television - says there are two levels of membership: Council and Associate. Council members must be indigenous television broadcasters that have a mandate to promote and revitalise the indigenous languages and cultures of their countries, or be non-indigenous broadcasters able to demonstrate commitment and a proven record of contributing to retention and development of indigenous languages and cultures. Broadcasters can include content providers and aggregators. Associate members are organisations that meet the Council membership criteria but do not wish to participate in the leadership of WITBN or are other key stakeholders who wish to support the objectives of the network.

Mr Mather says the network promotes partnerships and co-operation between member broadcasters, and builds capacity and capability within the indigenous television broadcasting sector by identifying opportunities for development, staff exchanges, training, bursaries, scholarships and networking opportunities. As well as a new logo, WITBN will launch a dedicated website by the end of this year.

The aim of the website is to facilitate sharing amongst indigenous television broadcasters and will include information and links on member organisations, membership application forms and latest news. "WITBN also facilitates the sharing of programme concepts, content for broadcast and news and current affairs materials, and an indigenous current affairs programme is in development," Mr Mather says.

Taiwan Indigenous Television - supported by the Public Television Service - will host the next World Indigenous Television Broadcasting Conference in 2010 followed by S4C in Wales in 2012 and APTN in Canada in 2014.

Membership application forms for WITBN are available on the website www.witbn.org.

Wake Up Your Languages – Aboriginal languages hit the TV screens throughout Western Australia

From Adriano Truscott

In 2008, the Irra Wangga Language Programme (Western Australia) was proud to announce the launch of 2 TV commercials for its 'Wake Up Your Languages' media campaign. The commercials run continuously for around 6 months from September 2008 to March 2009 and are in 5 Aboriginal languages local to Western Australia's Mid West region. It is likely to be the first time that the languages of Wajarri, Badimaya, Warriyanga, Nhanda and Yinggarda will have been heard on television.

Australian Indigenous Languages are in a severe state of decline and are constantly under threat from English language practices and policies. Of the estimated 250 that existed prior to colonisation, it is now feared that less than 20 traditional languages are being learnt fully by children. Nevertheless, speakers of other languages remain; and throughout Australia there are community groups working diligently and passionately with a lot of these speakers to ensure that their languages can be strong again.

The idea for the TV commercials, which were made possible thanks to the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund, came from a community member who was trying figure out how to motivate people to reconnect with their culture and encourage them to 'wake up' the language inside of them. The result is a collection of 5 clips of elders from around the region saying how important language is, to get up, not be shy and speak your language.

The commercials are being played throughout most of the state of Western Australia on a state TV channel. For more information, please go to www.wakeupyourlanguage.org

Making a change: World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education 2008

Celebrating diversity, culture and sharing indigenous wisdom

From Adriano Truscott

Over three thousand indigenous and non-indigenous delegates from over 20 countries gathered in Melbourne, Australia for the tri-annual World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education (WIPCE) from 7-11 Dec 2008. The awe inspiring opening ceremony was held on the spacious grounds of the Aboriginal Advancement League, one of the first Aboriginal community run organizations in Australia. After the Traditional 'Welcome to Country' Ceremony was given by representatives of the Kulin Nation, Conference leaders Geraldine Atkinson and Mark Rose presented landmark speeches they had developed in their own languages, through intensive study of language reclamation issues with VACL in preparation for the event. Indigenous delegates were then invited to respond through words, song, stories, dance and other culture performances. The day was an emotional and vibrant celebration of culture and diversity that left me moved, humbled and honoured to witness.

The importance and uniqueness of this conference cannot be understated: it is the main event where some of the ground-breaking achievements made in education are shared amongst Indigenous as well as non-Indigenous educators from all over the world. These achievements and developments are made in the face the many challenges of today, political or otherwise and often go unnoticed in the respective home countries. This world event was the stage that all these events deserved, and so it was appropriate that the conference's official proceedings start with strong and passionate key note addresses by Bruce Pascoe and Paul Herbert of the Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages: Bruce reminded the audience of the ravages of Indigenous history and the importance of languages in education; then Paul proposed a petition to lobby the Federal Government to, among other things, develop a national languages policy to address the 'varying states of decline and disrepair' of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages (see www.fatsil.org.au).

What is refreshing and unique about this conference is that it is organised and presented by Indigenous people. And the result can be breathtaking: discourses of passion, inspiration, courage and humble wisdom that arise from personal and community experiences, unencumbered by the formalities of academia and colonial thinking.

The themes were threefold: Respecting Tradition, Living with Competing Knowledge Systems and Beyond the Horizon. Unfortunately, with an average of over 20 concurrent presentations running at a time (almost 400 over 3 days!), one is never without a sensation of despair at all the valuable information that one is missing out on. I tried to catch what I could in the time I had:

- the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages presented a very helpful guide for communities to develop and oversee their own language revival programmes (see www.vaclang.org.au);
- there was a beautifully made documentary on how members of the Secwepemc Nation of the Canadian province, now known as British Columbia, have been regenerating their language and culture in truly inspirational ways to counter act the destructive effects of residential schools (contact: Helen at haig-brown.net);
- in Belize, the Tumul Kin (New Sun) Centre of Learning has recently been established and is a success story in terms of community led Mayan education blending with the mainstream (see www.tumulkinbelize.org);
- and there was much, much more.

The gathering of so many like-minded, dedicated and inspirational people at an event such as WIPCE is a real opportunity to motivate positive changes for Indigenous education; this is, after all, the ultimate reason why we come together, make connections and exchange experiences and ideas. This is why for me, the personal highlight was seeing two distinguished community members and teachers from the Australia's Northern Territory deliver a powerful and eloquent message on the potential impact of the recent decision by the Territory government to effectively put an end to bilingual education in the 9 remaining bilingual government schools. They came to the conference to make a change. They brought petitions that they got signed and at the end of the conference, personally handed it to the Honourable Jenny Macklin MP - Federal Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. Though this happened off-stage, out of the limelight like so many of the great things that happen in Indigenous education, this is what this event is all about: determination, pride, truth and seizing the moment to make a change.

Finally, congratulations are in order: the 2011 World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education will be hosted by the Quechua people and is to be held in Cusco, Peru, South America.

5. Allied Societies and Activities

Australian digital archive wins award

From John Hajek

PARADISEC (Pacific And Regional Archive for Digital Sources in Endangered Cultures), a collaborative project based in the universities of Melbourne and Sydney as well as the ANU has won the Victorian eResearch Strategic Initiative (VeRSI) eResearch Prize (HASS category) for 2008. The project, based in the Linguistics Department since 2003, has been recognised for its exemplary use of technology in support of ethnographic research. PARADISEC primarily aims to preserve records of small indigenous languages, and has used current best methods to convert analog materials, describe them and make this description available on the web. PARADISEC has been cited as an exemplary system for audiovisual archiving using digital mass storage systems by the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives and has also been included as an exemplary case study in the Australian Government's NCRIS Strategic Roadmap for Australian Research Infrastructure. For further information about the project contact: Nick Thieberger (PARADISEC Project Manager) nick.thieberger@hawaii.edu or Linda Barwick (PARADISEC Director).

6. Overheard on the Web

Nigeria: State Governor Aliyu encourages indigenous languages

From the allafrica.com web-site, 21 April 2008

Nigerians have been called upon to encourage writing of books in indigenous languages as one of the tools of consolidating rich culture and values, known with diverse African societies.

Governor Mu'azu Babangida Aliyu of Niger state, stated this at a launching of a book titled "Gadar Zare" written in Hausa by Dr. Auwalu Anwar, in Kaduna.

According to the governor who was chairman of the occasion "a language must be encouraged, it must not be assumed, if the people that use the language do not make it an important embodiment of their lives, and it keep on borrowing and borrowing words, at the end of the day, the language is over seventy percent foreign, then you have a problem"

Continuing that "one way to encourage language is to get classics translated into that language and in coming to people to read, not only as a subject in school but as something people can just pick as part of life and gateway to discipline, we need to let our children enjoy reading and not to be ashamed of their language".

He also stated that as a matter of priority, he would present the issue in the Northern Governors Forum, so they can encourage translation of some classics and encourage authors to write books on Hausa language, praising the author for his unrelenting efforts in the quest of revitalising the resurrection of Hausa poetry and art.

The book reviewer, Professor Bello Ahmad Salim, said "Gadar Zare, is a compendium of exuberant youth, sober, reflective, though still brash semi-middle aged (in experience) Mallam and, a rebellious politically conscious academic. The poems, like Dabaibayin Tsumma, Karangiya and Kafar Uwa for instance, can be regarded as good examples of these traits".

He continued that "the deeply religious character of the poet and, as for the tradition on which Hausa Poetry is based, his excellent grounding in Islamic culture is attested for in almost all the poems not just those categorised as Wakokin Addini (Religious Poems) in the book".

He also asserted that all the poems in the book meet with the metric demands of the prosodic meters with which they are constructed, adding that the poems in the book are for easy reference, divided into five sections each devoted to a particular theme.

Salim said dates indicated at the end of each poem is to indicate date of construction, noting that dates are useful guide for those who not only want to enjoy the poems for their sake, but also want to study them. Citing examples that poems written in certain years, like the angry Gwano of 1987 or derisive A Kai Juji of 1086 or the exuberant, educative Dabaibayin Tsumma, have a cadence all of their own and trip easily on the tongue.

He ended the book review eulogising the author, Dr. Auwalu Anwar, noting that he represents the small, but intellectually sound, and, most essentially vocally gifted, youth whose worldviews are encapsulated in the book, saying "this is the rising North. We better listen to him".

In his remarks, Mallam Nasiru Ahmed El-rufai, said the author impressed him with his intelligence, calmness, wisdom and integrity, adding that he does not only has education but; what education cannot give, maturity, capacity for handwork and integrity.

He also stressed that FCT administration, involved him in the revitalisation of education sector during his time as minister. And he

shinned like a star, decongesting from 120 per classroom to about fifty students per classroom, and the introduction of motorcycle for teachers along with computers in the schools.

He attributed the success he achieved in education, health and agricultural sectors to Dr. Auwalu Anwal.

Also in their separate speeches, Governor Ibrahim Shekarau of Kano state, former speaker house of representatives, Ghali Umar Na'abba, who were special guests of honour and, Senator Bello Hayatu Gwarzo, who presented the book to the audience, all described the author as a hardworking person and raised the desires of grading indigenous languages high as a bases of preserving, rich cultural values amid the crises of indiscipline and unethical way of life, being adorned by the society.

Living Tongues Institute for Endangered Languages

The mission of the Living Tongues Institute for Endangered Languages is to promote the documentation, maintenance, preservation, and revitalization of endangered languages worldwide through linguist-aided, community-driven multi-media language documentation projects: <http://www.livingtongues.org/>

Enduring Voices Project

National Geographic's Enduring Voices Project (conducted in collaboration with the Living Tongues Institute for Endangered Languages) strives to preserve endangered languages by identifying language hotspots—the places on our planet with the most unique, poorly understood, or threatened indigenous languages—and documenting the languages and cultures within them. <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/mission/enduringvoices/>

Endangered Languages of Indigenous Peoples of Siberia

Information portal Endangered Languages of Indigenous Peoples of Siberia is conceived as a developing project. We are planning continued clarification and replenishment of bibliographical materials on Siberian languages and cultures, provision of the portal's visitors with updated information on newly supported projects and results of completed projects, on new conferences and round tables, as well as on the existing funding opportunities. In prospect, the creation of the forum for discussion of the most urgent problems of Siberian languages and cultures is planned. <http://lingsib.unesco.ru/en/>

7. New Publications

Two encyclopedias from Routledge

An Encyclopaedia of Language and Encyclopedia of the World's Endangered Languages

From Harold Schiffman, Language Policy list, 1 October 2008,

1. N. E. Collinge, "An Encyclopaedia of Language" Routledge | PDF | 570 Pages | 5 MB In this indispensable reference, twenty-nine leaders in the field describe how language works—accounting for its nature, use, study and history. An Encyclopaedia of Language provides a truly comprehensive overview of how the various branches of linguistic study have arrived at their current positions. It divides the subject into three logical sections: 1) the "inner nature" of language; 2) its interaction with other disciplines; and 3) some special aspects of its study and use.

Readers will find detailed coverage of: how language works; how language is taught and learned; phonetics; grammar and semantics; how linguists research their subjects and interpret results; second languages; language and computation; writing systems; the history of language study; the evolution of language; the distribution of languages around the world; lexicography; dialectology; and other topics.

2. Christopher Moseley, "Encyclopedia of the World's Endangered Languages" Routledge | PDF | 688 Pages | 5.3 MB The concern for the fast-disappearing language stocks of the world has arisen particularly in the past decade, as a result of the impact of globalization. This book appears as an answer to a felt need: to catalogue and describe those languages, making up the vast majority of the world's six thousand or more distinct tongues, which are in danger of disappearing within the next few decades. Endangerment is a complex issue, and the reasons why so many of the world's smaller, less empowered languages are not being passed on to future generations today are discussed in the book's introduction. The introduction is followed by regional sections, each authored by a notable specialist, combining to provide a comprehensive listing of every language which, by the criteria of endangerment set out in the introduction, is likely to disappear within the next few decades. These languages make up ninety per cent of the world's remaining language stocks.

Each regional section comprises an introduction that deals with problems of language preservation peculiar to the area, surveys of known extinct languages, and problems of classification. The introduction is followed by a list of all known languages within the region, endangered or not, arranged by genetic affiliation, with endangered and extinct languages marked. This listing is followed by entries in alphabetical order covering each language listed as endangered. Useful maps are provided to pinpoint the more complex clusters of smaller languages in every region of the world. The Encyclopedia therefore provides in a single resource: expert analysis of the current language policy situation in every multilingual country and on every continent, detailed descriptions of little-known languages from all over the world, and clear alphabetical entries, region by region, of all the world's languages currently thought to be in danger of extinction.

The Encyclopedia of the World's Endangered Languages will be a necessary addition to all academic linguistics collections and will be a useful resource for a range of readers with an interest in development studies, cultural heritage and international affairs.

First English-language monograph about Buryat literacy and language policy

Late Tsarist and Early Soviet Nationality and Cultural Policy: The Buryats and their Language

By Robert Montgomery, Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006, ISBN 0-7734-5916-2

From the author

This is a monograph on late Imperial Russian and Soviet policies toward the language of the Buryats, a native people of southeastern Siberia's Lake Baikal region. This work can do much to expand the knowledge of an oft-overlooked area of Russian and Soviet nationality policy. Although the Buryats are Siberia's largest indigenous group (numbering around 500,000), they have received far less attention than other non-Russians by scholars of Russia's treatment of its minority peoples and their cultures. On a more general level, the book will provide an opportunity to introduce readers to a unique and vibrant native Siberian culture. Finally, this study can help deepen our understanding of the challenges facing the cultural survival of *all* indigenous peoples in the modern age; a matter of urgent importance in the current context of globalization.

“Today’s Buryats live divided in three countries: in Siberian Russia, in Northern Mongolia and in the northernmost part of China’s Inner Mongolia. The cultural history and the fate of the language and letters of this small Siberian nation and the destiny of her men of letters in the multinational giant empire of Russia – first in the growing and decaying monarchy, and then in the fledgling Soviet state – is the topic of this treatise... The author sums up the results of the Latinization that was later imposed by Moscow; the consequences of Stalin’s Great Purges for the Buryats; and the fate of the Buddhist monasteries during the Great Patriotic War and after, in the ‘thaw’ of the Khrushchev years, in the re-frozen period of ‘stagnation’ under Brezhnev, in the more lax Gorbachev era, and after the fall of the Soviet Empire. He shows the difficulties facing Buryat cultural rebirth at the turn of the twenty-first century, but he does maintain hope for the survival of the Buryat language and the Buryats’ cultural heritage. Dr. Montgomery’s book is the first English-language monograph about Buryat literacy and language policy and is written with great sympathy for the Buryat people.”
Professor György Kara, Indiana University

“Making an argument that language is the crux of ethnonational identity, Dr. Montgomery contributes to our understanding of the history and historiography of the Mogolian Buryat people of Siberia. The cultural ramifications of language and religious policies are stressed, with the significance of Buddhist educational traditions and partial ‘nativization’ explained especially well.” *Professor Marjorie Mandelstam Balzer, Georgetown University*

“This book is a critically valuable addition to studies of late imperial Russia and early Soviet cultural policies, as well as to the growing body of literature on empire and imperialism. The author’s meticulously researched, expertly handled, and splendidly written book is much broader than its title suggests. He uses the evolution of government policies toward the Buryat language during the twilight of the Tsarist autocracy and in the early Soviet era as a prism through which to examine the development of nationality and cultural policies from 1801-1928.

All serious students of Russian history and current affairs would profit from reading this valuable new work.”

Alexander Rabinowitch, Professor Emeritus, Indiana University

8. Obituaries

Isidore Dyen

From the An-lang mailing list

Isidore Dyen, the pioneer American Austronesianist, passed away on December 15, 2008, at the age of 94. He trained as an Indo-European and Sanskrit scholar under Norman Brown at the University of Pennsylvania, but became interested in Austronesian after Leonard Bloomfield assigned him to prepare the Malay section of the US Army pedagogical series during World War II. He was appointed to the faculty of Yale University for this project and in 1948 introduced the first Indonesian language instruction in the United States. He was best known for his massive lexico-statistical study, comparing close to 400 Austronesian languages from across the board, in all possible pairs, in order to come up with a genetic classification of the Austronesian languages. He was active in many other aspects of the historical study of the Austronesian languages to his death, and participated in the most recent international conference on Austronesian linguistics 10-ICAL, in Palawan, Philippines in 2006, presenting a paper that has subsequently been published. His most valuable contribution to Austronesian linguistics, in my opinion, is his work from 1946 through 1957, when he wrote a series of articles and a monograph, reanalyzing Dempwolff’s data, determining the correct correspondences for the apical and palatal

consonants and for what he called the “laryngeals” *h and *ʔ (now reconstructed as *S and *q).

Professor Dyen trained many of the foremost Austronesianists of our generation and devoted extraordinary time and effort into guiding his students. Without him historical Austronesian linguistics could not have come as far as it has.

John Wolff

Evelyn Todd

From Malcolm Ross (An-Lang web-site)

Colleagues working on Pacific languages will be sad to hear of the death of Professor Evelyn Todd, who passed away in her home town, Peterborough, Ontario, on 12th March after a series of heart attacks and strokes.

Evelyn joined the Department of Anthropology at Trent University, Ontario, as an Assistant Professor of Anthropology on 1st July 1968, received her PhD from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1970, and remained on the staff at Trent until her retirement on 1st July 1999, by which time she was a full professor.

Evelyn did pioneer work on the languages of the central and western Solomons and Bougainville. She contributed a chapter on the Papuan languages of the Solomons to S.A. Wurm’s massive 1975 *New Guinea area languages and language study* at a time when she was probably the only person who could have made such a contribution. In 1978 she published two major articles in the Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics. The first was on Roviana syntax, and drew attention to the fact that Roviana was syntactically unlike all then known Oceanic languages. The other was a grammar sketch of Nissan (Nehan), the language of a small island midway between Buka Island and New Ireland, which remains the only published description of this language.

Among other the material in it provides information crucial to our understanding of the history of the languages of north Bougainville and Buka. In 1980 she published a short paper on Qae, an Oceanic language of Guadalcanal, and its neighbours.

Evelyn spent the second half of 1998 in the Department of Linguistics of the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the Australian National University. At that time, her passion was the Papuan language Savosavo, a member of the Solomons language family, of which she was working on a grammar and a dictionary. Sadly, she was overtaken by ill health before this work could be completed. Languages of the southwest Pacific were just one of Evelyn’s interests. She also worked on indigenous Canadian languages, particularly Ojibwa.

We regret the delay in announcing Evelyn’s passing, but even in the age of the internet, some pieces of news travel at a Melanesian pace.-

Malcolm Ross

9. Forthcoming events

Endangered Languages Week 2009, SOAS, London

There are approximately 7,000 languages spoken today and half of them are under threat from larger languages.

Endangered Languages Week 2009 presents a variety of displays, discussions, films and workshops to provide a view of what is

happening to languages and what is being done to document, archive and support endangered languages at HRELP and around the world.

Activities will include:

Monday 23rd 7 p.m.: Languages vs. species? – A debate on priorities of preservation in an endangered world. This event will take place in the Khalili Lecture Theatre in the main SOIAS building at Russell Square.

Monday-Thursday 1.15 pm – 2 pm: Meet an Endangered Language – a series of short presentations on several endangered languages, where you can learn about where they are spoken, why they are threatened, and experience their culture – as well as learn some basic words and phrases. Held in Room R210 on the second floor of the main SOAS building.

Tuesday 24th 10 am – 3 pm: International film day – film screenings on endangered languages in room 4421 on the fourth floor of the main SOAS building.

Wednesday 25th 10 am – 3pm: Open Day – meet researchers, see displays of staff and student work, and experience the latest technologies used to record, archive and support endangered languages. Exhibition and displays will be held all day in room G3 on the ground floor of the main SOAS building. PhD posters will be on display in the Rausing Room, located next to R201 on the second floor. An archive demonstration will take place in room R201.

Thursday 26th 6 pm: Public lecture: 'Rescuing Māori – the last 40 years' by Bernard Spolsky, held in room G52 on the ground floor of the main SOIAS building. Please book by e-mail: elap at soas.ac.uk.

To be followed by:

ELAP workshop on beliefs and ideology

From the Endangered Languages Archive, SOAS, University of London

ELAP Workshop: Beliefs and Ideology on Endangered Languages

Friday 27 and Saturday 28 February, 2009

Convenors: Peter K. Austin, Julia Sallabank, Endangered Languages Academic

Programme, Department of Linguistics, SOAS

Location:

Day 1: Birkbeck, rooms 152 and 153, Malet Street, Bloomsbury, London WC1E

Day 2: SOAS, room G50, Thornhaugh St, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG

The goal of the workshop is to highlight and discuss theoretical and practical issues in the area of beliefs and ideology on endangered languages, and especially views that have implications for language support and revitalisation. Language ideologies have been described as 'socioculturally motivated ideas, perceptions and expectations of language, manifested in all sorts of language use' Blommaert (1999:1). Blommaert goes on to suggest that 'there is now a widespread recognition of language ideologies as a crucial topic of debate ... when it comes to assessing the motives and causes for certain types of language change'. The study of language ideologies and beliefs may therefore provide insights into the reasons for language shift and/or revival, and may help to determine the success or otherwise of language revitalisation projects.

Among the issues to be considered could be:

1. Are endangered languages fundamentally different from other languages when it comes to beliefs and ideology?

2. What, if any, are the consequences for language support and revitalisation of the beliefs held by speakers of endangered languages?

3. To what extent can beliefs and ideologies be influenced by campaigning and language planning?

4. What beliefs and ideologies do linguists have about endangered languages? Are these in conflict with those of communities?

5. Fishman speaks of the need for "establishing ideological clarity" before any revitalisation project can begin. How is this best achieved?

Case studies will be presented on the role of beliefs and ideology in endangered languages research, especially in the context of revitalisation and language support.

Workshop Programme

The first day of the workshop will consist of four plenary talks followed by discussion, and the second day will be devoted to case studies of particular situations where ideological issues have surfaced in endangered languages research.

Keynote speakers:

Bernard Spolsky, Bar-Ilan University: "Language beliefs and the management of endangered languages"

Lenore Grenoble, University of Chicago: "Conflicting ideologies and beliefs in the field"

Jane Freeland, University of Southampton: "Considering popular language ideology in revitalizing the language of the Mayangna of Nicaragua's Caribbean Coast"

Tadhg Ó hÍfearnáin, University of Limerick: "Shared language management goals, differing beliefs and unexpected outcomes"

Call for papers

Proposals are invited for papers for the second day of the workshop, presenting cutting-edge research on the themes and topics outlined above.

Each speaker will have 20 minutes plus 10 minutes for discussion, followed by a round table discussion at the end.

Abstracts should be a maximum of 300 words long (not including any references) and should be sent to: elap at soas.ac.uk.

Deadline: Friday 14th January 2009.

Notification of acceptance will be sent on 28th January.

It is planned to make the proceedings of the workshop available to the academic community and interested members of the public through a British Academy Occasional Paper and/or through the Endangered Languages Project's journal Language Documentation and Description

Booking information

Registration

To attend the workshop, you need to submit a booking form by Monday 16 February 2009.

- *Full*
Early bird (by 6 February) £12.50
After 6 February £17.50
- *Student/unwaged*
Early bird (by 6 February) £7.50
After 6 February £12.50

Registration will include a reading pack, and tea and coffee on both days.

International conference in Estonia on Minority Languages

CALL FOR PAPERS

The University of Tartu and partners are pleased to announce the 12th International Conference on Minority Languages (ICML XII) which will be held in Tartu, Estonia, 28-30 May 2009.

Conference theme

Language revitalisation and new technologies

The ICML conference in Tartu will focus on autochthonous minority communities and their language use. New perspectives have emerged for the revitalisation of lesser-used languages due to modern technological development. However, new educational and communicational technologies and tools have not been fully applied in the development of minority communities and their languages. This conference will provide an academic opportunity to discuss which barriers need to be overcome, myths to be broken, processes to be followed and changes to be undertaken.

Background and goals

Given their colonial past and often-shifted state borders, but also today's multimodal media and fluid identities, scholarly attention to autochthonous languages always confronts a number of problems.

- What are the consequences of standardisation?
- How are the issues of language ownership reflected in schooling?
- Do multiple identities and languages visualised into landscapes add to linguistic diversity?
- What is the role of primary socialisation in language maintenance?
- Does the way researchers or planners name languages decide their very existence?
- Have minority communities and their languages benefited from the World Wide Web?

ICML XII aims to search for answers to these questions and to reconsider some theoretical orthodoxies. Furthermore, we hope to hear from the experience of such communities who have taken advantage of technological innovations.

Main themes for paper and poster presentations:

Notions: autochthonous language, minority and/or regional language (RML).

- Revitalisation and maintenance of RML: case studies of actual practice.
- New technologies and methods for revitalisation and maintenance of RML.
- Language policies and language planning concerning autochthonous languages.
- Language acquisition and education in RML: home, pre-school, school.
- Experiences of bilingual education. New technologies and methods.

- Literature, theatre and music as tools for language revitalisation and maintenance.
- Any topic concerning autochthonous RML's in the Baltic region.
- Contact-induced change in minority languages.

Plenary speakers

Uldis Ozolins (La Trobe University)

Sarah Thomason (University of Michigan)

Anna Verschik (Tallinn University)

Richard Villems (Estonian Academy of Sciences)

Location of the conference

This conference will be the first ICML conference to be held in the region. The historical towns of Tartu and Võru are located in the South-East of Estonia. Tartu is often considered the intellectual and cultural hub of Estonia, especially since it is home to the oldest and most renowned university in Estonia. Võru is the capital of Võru County and the centre of the historical Võru Parish. Both these towns are known as the centres where the South Estonian literary language was used from the 17th to the early 20th century. Today, the South Estonian Võro language is mainly spoken only in the areas of the historical Võru Parish.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Proposals regarding original and previously unpublished research on minority languages are invited in three formats: colloquia, individual papers and posters. Proposals should fall broadly within the conference theme.

Proposals for colloquia

Colloquia are collections of paper presentations that relate to a narrowly defined topic of interest, and are offered in a three-hour time block. Proposals for colloquia are limited to 700 words, and should include brief summaries of each of the papers to be included, along with paper titles and individual authors' names. Sufficient detail should be provided to allow peer reviewers to judge the scientific merit of the proposal. The person submitting a proposal for a colloquium is responsible for securing the permission and co-operation of all participants before the proposal is submitted.

A chair for the session must also be identified. Although the proposals should be submitted in English, the language of the colloquia may be chosen freely.

The submission deadline for proposals for colloquia is October 1, 2008. Submissions should be sent to icml@lists.ut.ee.

Proposals for individual papers or posters

Please submit by e-mail a one-page (500-word) abstract of your paper or poster, including your name, affiliation, address, phone and e-mail address at the end of your abstract. The abstract should include enough detail to allow reviewers to judge the scientific merits of the proposal. All abstracts will be reviewed anonymously by the members of the Scientific Committee of ICML XII. We kindly ask you to attach to your abstract a short presentation of your professional activities (in third person singular form) in maximally 150 words.

We will accept for presentation by each author: (a) a maximum of one first authored paper/poster and (b) a maximum of two papers/posters in any authorship status. At the time of submission

you will be asked whether you would like your abstract to be considered for a poster, a paper or both.

Oral papers will be allotted 30 minutes, allowing 20 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for questions. Posters will be on display for a full day with two attended sessions during the day. The official language of the conference is English.

The submission deadline for proposals for individual papers and posters is November 1, 2008. Submissions should be sent to icml@lists.ut.ee.

Acknowledgement of receipt of the abstract will be sent by e-mail as soon as possible after the receipt. You will receive notification of acceptance no later than **December 20, 2008**.

Further details regarding ICML XII will be available on the conference website, www.icml.ut.ee.

Indigenous Languages across the generations

From Jon Reyhner Professor of Bilingual Multicultural Education Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Arizona

2009 Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Symposium

Arizona State University's Mary Lou Fulton College of Education and Institute for Humanities Research are pleased to announce the 2009 Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Symposium, to be held April 30-May 2, 2009 on the Tempe campus of Arizona State University. The 2009 theme is "Indigenous Languages Across the Generations – Strengthening Families and Communities." The Call for Proposals began December 1, 2008, and will continue through January 30, 2009. Mail-in registration is available on the SILS '09 Web site, and online registration begins January 1, 2009. For more information, please visit our Web site, <http://sils09.asu.edu>, or contact us at sils09 at asu.edu.

Conference on Endangered Languages and Cultures of Native America

March 27-29, 2009, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

The Conference on Endangered Languages and Cultures of Native America (CELCNA) is dedicated to discussion of the documentation and revitalization of endangered American Indian languages. Sponsored by the Center for American Indian Languages (U of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah) and Smithsonian Institution's Dept of Anthropology, National Museum of Natural History.

<http://linguistlist.org/confcustom/celcna09>

Multilingualism, Regional & Minority Languages: Paradigms for 'Languages of the Wider World' conference

Call for Papers

Jointly organised by the SOAS-UCL Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning Languages of the Wider World (LWW CETL) and the Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning of the Fryske Akademy, the conference will be held on 16-17 April 2009 in London.

Proposals are invited for papers on following themes and topics:

- 1) Language Transmission outside the school
- 2) Multilingual Education
- 3) New technologies in teaching and learning languages
- 4) Social benefits & costs of multilingualism.

Deadline for papers: 17.00 on 23 January 2009

FEL 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 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.



Prof Felix Ameka presents the language documentation equipment donated by HRELP to Flavien Gbeto from Benin (for Togo and Benin).



Yvonne Agbetsoamedo, Eno-Abasi Urua, and Davidson U. Mbagwe



Elmina, a fishing village and site of an infamous slaving castle, lies to the west of Winneba and was our destination for the workshop free day.



Some of the workshop participants during the visit to Elmina.

