

FOUNDATION FOR ENDANGERED LANGUAGES

OGMIOS



Freestyle polo, a traditional sport among the Khowar people of Pakistan. See the article on the Khowar language in this issue.

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شندورو استورغاڙ

شندورو ميله ٻر سال جولائي مسو اولانو بفتائي
شندورو جوناليه گلگتو اوچي چھترارو موڙي
بويان- بيہ ميلو خاص لو ٻيہ کي گلگتو اوچي
ضھترارو موڙي استور غاڙ شير- بيہ استورغاڙو
مزہ ٻيہ کي بمو کيہ بو سخت اصول نيکي -
جناليو اندريني بمو جاچ نو بوئي صرف کھاڙ
وٻڪيار کميٿي بوني کيہ مسئلہ کي بوئي بيہ
کميٿي والا تان موڙي نيشي بو فيصلہ کوني- بيہ
غاڙو موڙي استورو استورو سو ديك، غاڙو ڇوڻو
چھينڪ يا موشو ديتي استورار غيريک بيہ غاڙو
اي حصہ جوشونو بويان- بيہ ميلو لوڙيکو بچي
دنيو ٻر ڙا غار روئي گوني- وٻيہ ميلو خاص مينو
حکومتہ پاڪستانو صدر يا وزير اعظم بوئي-

1. Editorial

The Foundation can look back with satisfaction on another successful conference, on 'Endangered Languages – the voices they project, and the images they present' in Quito, Ecuador in September 2011. The delightful setting of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Ecuador, near the heart of the great Andean city, and the excellent organisation of every detail of the conference, made an impression on everyone who attended it. In this issue of *Ogmios* you will find an interview with our Conference Chair, Marleen Haboud, on the work it entailed and the problems it had to overcome.

But we are not resting on our laurels. Already we are in the planning stages of FEL XVI, our next conference, to be held in Auckland, New Zealand, in September 2012. The announcement of the conference and the call for papers will be made shortly.

Improving our financial position has become a major concern for FEL. We are dependent on membership fees, donations and the sales of our products (mostly our Conference proceedings) to keep running, and to accumulate funds for our grants programme. Our income has remained steady for several years, and it is never enough to assure us of a secure future. Each year we have to review our position and decide whether we can afford another round of grants, and 2012 will be no exception.

I make no apology for including a few of my own special hobby-horses in this issue. On behalf of the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger, I have had some interesting travels in the past year, and my interest in the Livonian language of Latvia meant that I took the opportunity to attend a conference on that language in Tartu, Estonia in November. You'll find some reporting on Livonian in this issue. And much more, reflecting the wide range of interests and talents among our Foundation's international membership.

Chris Moseley

2. Development of the Foundation

FEL XV, Quito, Ecuador: some impressions

Adriano Truscott

Probably the most effective way to summarise FEL XV for this medium and moment (as I'm on the move) is in dot point form. I have to say that my notes here don't

reflect any kind of order or emphasis: most, if not all of the papers (delivered consecutively rather than concurrently) were interesting and inter-related. I couldn't possibly summarise all, but the main and familiar themes, common to many countries of course, that arose were as follows:

- Culture and language: "La cosmovision no puede ser separado del idioma" (Jorge Gomez y Wilson Poirama) – the cosmovision (a term which is widely used in Peru and Ecuador, and I believe much more appropriate than the more conceptually limited construct of 'worldview' especially in Indigenous Australia) cannot be separated from the language. Not only was this a common theme in the indigenous presentations, but it was a marked feature in those presentations.

- Language and the land: "muere una planta, muere una palabra" – when a plant dies, a word dies. There's an important and underestimated (by the non-indigenous) connection that is being severed by mining (which is rife here) and all it brings with it.

- Researchers/investigators and even tour guides can often, unintentionally or otherwise, distort and/or even disrespect the people and cultures that they work for/with: Katherine Bell (US – talking about the Blackfoot culture as depicted by 2 tour companies) and Kathryn Lehman (Aotearoa – looking at the translation of Indigenous Knowledge and the non-Maori translator) – and I (how documentation and material production can be (albeit unintentionally) intellectually and culturally distorted by inexperienced non-Indigenous linguists/teachers)

- Contrary to some theories of language contact, a quick shift towards the dominant language (Spanish) does not necessarily have a structural impact on the indigenous language, as is the case with Puerto Bolívar Siona (Martine Bruil) and it can simply replace the incumbent language (but, and this is my view, not the cultural conceptualisations that the speakers may have developed over the generations and use to make sense of their world)

- Identity: Speaking in language in public is still associated with shame. This can still take place even though the culture may be celebrated and the language (Quechua) is an official language (as Gabina Funegra found in Huallanca, Peru).

- The gap between policy and practice: countries like Argentina, Ecuador and Peru, whose indigenous languages have strong legal backing (e.g. 1998 Constitution of Ecuador) are still under threat due to weak practice on the ground (such as a lack of books, media and signage in language).

- Bilingual in name doesn't necessarily mean bilingual in nature: This is an example of the last point. Some schools in Peru and Ecuador are running so-called bilingual programs (educación intercultural bilingüe - EIB) which for reasons such as lack of teachers and materials or contradicting ideologies of the schools themselves, are mainly in Spanish.

- Attempts at reviving language in the school also needs support from the home, such as in Colombia with the Saliba language.

- Tech: New technology can help (Phil Cash Cash) but we need to be mindful that they don't turn into tools of domination (Tulio Rojas). Armin Schwelger noted that the arrival of electricity (and all the products it powers) in Palenque, Colombia, was one of the factors that brought about the decline in its use. He also talked about how academic tours and others come to Palenque to experience the culture has brought about greater pride in and use of Palenquero.

Overall, this was a fantastic FEL conference not only for its quality of content and its usual convivial energy, but also for its organisation: Marleen Haboud and her young team (most of whom are linguistics students) rock and created a master class event. Furthermore and importantly, there was representation of many of the language communities, as well as information about all of the languages in Ecuador.

At the risk of over-simplifying the area of LP, I'll say that South America has certainly 'got it going on' in terms of overt policy (my favourite has to be Brazil, where schools are funded to run in the mother tongue and students are taught Portuguese as a second language). What was reiterated in this conference though was that policy and law don't guarantee anything. Nevertheless, while it's important to bear these limitations in mind and how overt language policies can undermine practice, having language in the law sure is a good start. Peru is almost an example of when language policy doesn't work, where Quechua, made an official language in 1974 and spoken in some form by some 12 million speakers across 6 countries, is barely supported in practice and it has literally crowded out the smaller indigenous languages; but this is a topic of another post.

Australia, where I live, is mulling over amending its constitution to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It could do worse than to learn from the constitutions of countries like Brazil (1988), Ecuador (1998) and Paraguay (amended 2010) who also experience extreme language diversity as well as endangerment.

To the Australian government: It ain't hard to check all this out: just Google it!

- Geolinguistics and the importance of accurate data on language speakers: while the population of an indigenous community may be known, that doesn't necessarily reflect the speaker numbers. Interdisciplinary studies (such as here with geographers and linguists working together) are needed to get a firmer understanding of the numbers of language speakers, their languages and the domains of use. (as discussed by Olga Mayorga and Marleen Haboud)

Abstracts and summaries can be found here (in Spanish):

<http://voceseimagenes.com/2011/category/novedades-2/page/2/>

Example of some interdisciplinary action with "actividades interdisciplinarias con estudiosos de la Antropología, Sociología, Literatura, Comunicación, Arte, Diseño, y Geografía":

<http://www.oralidadmodernidad.com/>

I'm deeply in favour of interdisciplinary work (in a decolonizing and deconstructing way) to not only spread understanding about language (speakers, issues, communities, policy and practice) across the academy so that it may more justly reflect the embedded nature of culture throughout all fields (law, medicine, science, education), but also as a means of motivating genuine indigenous input so that ALL groups, not just the dominant one(s), can be fairly considered in the conceptualisation, design and practice of those disciplines.

FEL XV in retrospect: an interview

Your Editor has interviewed the Conference Chair of our fifteenth international conference, Marleen Haboud, on what the conference achieved in retrospect, and the organisational challenges she faced in bringing the FEL community to Quito.

What inspired the theme of 'Voices and Images' of endangered languages?

We were inspired by the speakers of endangered languages worldwide and the fact that their voices and images have been historically hidden by more powerful ones. We strongly believe there is a true need to create awareness towards the voices and images which have been silenced and maintained out of sight for centuries. *Voices and Images of Endangered Languages (Voces e*

Imágenes de las Lenguas en Peligro) aimed to open a space where the endangered languages and peoples could become clearly visible and where the efforts to empower these languages could be shared and strengthened. We do believe the Conference surpassed this goal not only on the academic aspect, but also on the human one.

Were you pleased with the variety of speakers who came to the conference?

We were very pleased not only by the variety of speakers and the number of languages that we could actually hear, but also by the topics discussed during the event. Our program included linguistic, sociolinguistic, cultural and ethnic issues, as well as linguistic and educational policies and practices, and the use of the most modern means for linguistic documentation and educational practices. We were enriched by the knowledge, experiences and initiatives developed by Academia and the speakers of minoritized languages. Listening to their voices guided us along a multilingual and multicultural path which made us understand what are the implications of "living" in various languages and having to continuously struggle for survival.

What aspects of the conference were most interesting to the Ecuadorian media?

The Ecuadorian as well as the international media were very interested in the great variety of voices that could be heard during the event. They were eager to learn about the worldwide situation of endangered languages and the new strategies developed by speech communities, official institutions and governmental parties. September 2011 turned into a month in which people continuously found articles about the Conference and the importance of learning about diversity, respect and intercultural relations.

Without any doubt, to welcome native peoples from different sites in the world as well as local indigenous representatives had a great impact on the general public and the Ecuadorian and international media as well as social networks.

Voces e Imágenes de las Lenguas en Peligro was a unique opportunity for the speakers of minoritized languages to represent themselves and to raise their voices vis-a-vis the world communities.

What effect will our conference have on the attitudes of Ecuadorian people to their country's indigenous languages?

On a short term basis, each one of the talks, round tables, "the path of voices" exhibition and the launching of the UNESCO World Atlas of Endangered Languages were an eye opener and a call to awareness; however, our aim

is to have a longterm impact. Hopefully, this event, along with our permanent dialogue with local authorities and educational agencies will generate profound respect to diversity, openness to learn from hidden voices and images and flexibility to rethink our existing linguistic and educational policies, to implement inclusive research methodologies and to develop creative strategies which could truly benefit our languages and their speakers.

What advice do you have for the organisers of the next conference, in New Zealand in 2012?

Maintaining permanent fluid communication between the organizers (FEL and the local organizers) is the basis of success. From the start, the 2012 co-organizers should set channels of communication regarding the academic and the financial aspects of the event. Regarding the overall organization, at least one open event (eg, open public conferences) should be organized to open doors for the general public to participate of the event. Immediate and future effects of the Conference on the local people should also be previewed.

Grant completion reports

In Ogmios 45 we presented some reports from the Foundation's grant recipients over the years. Here is a further report, from our grant recipient Beatrice Clayre:

The grant to produce a first reader in Sa'ban

Sa'ban is an Austronesian language spoken in Borneo. The Sa'ban once inhabited the region of the upper Bahau river in Kalimantan Borneo, but over the last hundred years or so they have migrated down-river towards the coast in Kalimantan, or have crossed the border into Sarawak. Today there are only about 2000 speakers of the language, and one of their largest settlements is at Long Banga' on the headwaters of the Baram river in Sarawak. In order to help preserve their culture and language they meet together for a 'Sa'ban Natale' every two years in a village in Kalimantan or Sarawak.

Although Sa'ban belongs to the Apo Duat, or Kelabitic, group of languages of middle Borneo, it has undergone remarkable sound changes that have produced sounds and sound combinations that are unknown in other Kelabitic languages, or indeed, in the rest of Borneo. These include voiceless nasals and laterals, word initial long consonants, and long and short vowels. The language of school and business is Malay which does not have any of these sounds, so that the Sa'ban have long had difficulty writing (and reading) their own language.

By about 2002, we had an orthography that most Sa'ban agreed with. We also had a collection of Sa'ban stories, two of which seemed ideal for use in a reader. One was a well-known story that had given rise to a proverbial saying, and the other had useful repetition to help new readers. Two Sa'ban school teachers and community leaders were enthusiastic about the idea and supported an application to FEL for a grant to cover the cost of publication. In 2002, we were delighted to receive a grant of \$500 for the project.

It was decided to publish the two stories separately and a talented young Sa'ban, Hendrick Nicholas, agreed to provide the illustrations for the readers. The Kadazandusun Language Foundation (KLF), which has done so much to promote the Kadazandusun languages of Sabah, willingly agreed to help pilot our booklets through the process of publication. They were ready by late 2003 when the Sa'ban Natale' was due to take place that year in Long Banga', Sarawak. At one of the meetings we presented 25 copies of each reader to the school library in Long Banga' and a large number of copies to the representatives from Kalimantan for them to take them over to Kalimantan.

Since then, two graded, illustrated dictionaries are being prepared. The first to help with the preservation of Sa'ban names for local wildlife, geographical features and items of daily use, the other, a more general list of some 1800 words, based on a dictionary published by KLF for Kadazandusun. KLF have kindly given permission for us to use their illustrations. The Saban Association of Miri has promised to fund the publication of at least one of these dictionaries.

The Sa'ban language is an endangered language, but the Sa'ban have not yet woken up to that fact. The use of Malay is necessary to get on in the world, but it has been encouraging to see a growing use of Sa'ban on Facebook and similar internet sites, though sometimes the spelling is not ideal the message has been understandable.

Beatrice Clayre

(Note: The 'we' in the report refers to Kathleen Kaseng, whose father related one of the stories, and without whose help this project might never have been seen through to completion. She sadly died of cancer in 2006.)

FEL and the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger

The Foundation is still contracted by UNESCO to deal with the feedback from users of the on-line edition of the *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger*. The system for dealing with the comments has been streamlined to some extent, but the consultants appointed by FEL are still acting as referees and reviewing the comments relating to languages in their geographic areas. The number of comments received so far is now well over 700.

UNESCO's Department of Intangible Heritage was responsible for the publication of the Atlas, and now a special section dealing with Endangered Languages at UNESCO has been created. It was responsible for the international gathering of experts at UNESCO headquarters in Paris in May 2011, at which a number of our consultants had a chance to meet together. UNESCO does face economic difficulties at the present time, and we cannot assume that the future of the project is assured, but the assistance of these consultants has been invaluable, because the Atlas has already been improved in several ways since the 3rd edition was released in February 2009.

Chris Moseley

3. Endangered Languages in the News

Rescuing Endangered Languages Means Saving Ideas

By Emily Badger, from the Miller-McCune on-line newsletter, 19 August 2011

While saving the world's threatened languages may seem informed more by nostalgia than need, federally funded researchers say each tongue may include unique concepts with practical value.

Federally funded researchers take on the task of rescuing the world's disappearing languages believing that they hold within them more than just communication, but scientific and cultural value.

Endangered languages don't seem as self-evidently valuable as, say, endangered species essential to the functioning of a healthy ecosystem. If the world loses Chuj, a particularly endangered Mayan language of Central America, or Itelmen, a language with fewer than two dozen native speakers on an isolated peninsula in the far east of Russia, people will still be able to communicate. They'll just do it in Spanish, or maybe Russian. And history will move on.

Human language, though, encapsulates more than just different ways to say to "hello."

“The debate about the universality of language, that we all have the same ideas and therefore language is just a function of history, that we’re basically using verbs and nouns [to say the same thing] — that’s a hypothesis,” said Anna Kerttula, the program officer for Arctic Social Sciences at the National Science Foundation. “Or maybe it’s reached the level of theory. But that’s in no way been proven.”

As the famous example says, Eskimo have numerous words to describe what Americans would just call “snow” and “ice.” This suggests language systems don’t merely translate universal ideas into different spellings; they encode different concepts. And when we lose a language, we risk losing those concepts.

A lot of concepts are on the edge of oblivion — out of about 7,000 languages spoken in the world today, half are projected to disappear by the end of the century, if not sooner.

“That’s an amazing amount of knowledge,” Kerttula said.

She helps run a joint program of the National Science Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities that’s been trying for seven years to fund efforts at recording and documenting endangered languages before they disappear. (The program received an infusion of \$3.9 million last week to pay for 10 fellowships and 24 grants.) The project may sound like a punch line for another anti-science tirade from a small-government politician, but its work touches on fundamental questions about how the brain works, how people express ideas, how societies adapt and how human history has evolved. And of how researchers benefit.

“We’re talking about neuroscientists, we’re talking about computer scientists, we’re definitely talking about historians, anthropologists and biologists in some cases” working on nearly extinct language, Kerttula said.

Lingua Preservation!

Ten endangered languages the NSF/NEH Documenting Endangered Languages (DEL) program has attempted to preserve:

1. Bangime, Northern Bali
2. Navajo, Southwestern U.S.
3. Kosati, Louisiana.
4. Wichita, Oklahoma.
5. Arawak, Brazil
6. Máihiki, Peru
7. Cherokee, Southeastern U.S.

8. Chechen, the Caucasus

9. Southeastern Tepehuan, Mexico

10. Defaka, Nigeria

The National Science Foundation actually has physical scientists working with Inuit people to identify different aspects of ice that aren’t captured in the English language but could inform our understanding of the changing Arctic ecosystem.

“If you don’t understand and don’t have the language for what ice is, what ice should be, you’re not going to understand how it’s changing,” Kerttula said. “Language is critical in recognizing change in your environment.”

One researcher receiving the money allocated last week, Jürgen Bohnemeyer at SUNY Buffalo, wants to know: If people talk differently about objects in space, does that mean they also think differently about them? He’ll investigate how spatial concepts are represented in 25 languages on five continents.

Another researcher, Pedro Mateo Pedro, will study how children acquire Chuj, the endangered Mayan language. Other projects will document endangered native languages in Oklahoma and the construction of Cherokee grammar. Some will develop learning and training resources for communities to record their own language.

A few of the researchers will be working with languages spoken by fewer than 30 elderly people. But the designation “endangered,” Kerttula says, isn’t necessarily a measurement of the small number of people still speaking a language. Rather, she said, languages become endangered when children no longer speak them.

Out of 92 languages known to have been used in the Arctic, for example, she says 72 still have some speakers. All but one (Greenlandic) are endangered, the result of the steady encroachment of other dominant languages like English into the domains of public schools and legal systems, television and now the Internet.

“Pretty soon, all of the domains of your life are in English, and the only place where you get to speak your native language is to your grandmother,” Kerttula said. “So how long is that language going to last? It’s basically not.”

The government program’s efforts of course won’t save them all.

“With 7,000 languages, that means 3,500 languages are going to disappear, and we’re funding how many projects a year?” Kerttula asked rhetorically. The National Science Foundation and National Endowment for the Humanities aren’t the only ones doing this work; some individual states, for example, have programs that in-

clude keeping native languages on life support. But the number of programs worldwide is small, and for each language that one of them targets, there are exponentially more elements to understand, from grammar to vocabulary to the cognitive processes of children.

Kerttula is effusive about the individual projects now trying to do this. But, she adds, "It's a Sisyphean task."

Tooth Puller bites back: Colombia's Wayúu people protest against mocking names on official ID cards

From the Guardian (London), 17 September 2011

By Sibylla Brodzinsky, Bogota

Rapayet Pushaina thinks he is about 80 years old; he is pretty sure he was not born on 31 December; and he is absolutely certain his name is not Iron Scraper.

But that is the information that appeared on his Colombian national ID card for more than 50 years.

Pushaina, an elder of his clan of Wayúu Native Americans, who live in the deserts of the northwestern Guajira peninsula, chafes at the mockery of a name given to him by an official of the national registry office who went to his remote village 50 years ago. "I don't want to be Raspahierro [Iron Scraper], I am Rapayet," he said through his Spanish-speaking granddaughter.

He is one of thousands given derisive names, according to Esterilia Simanca, a Wayúu lawyer. "In some cases there may have been a misunderstanding but in others it was clearly intentional," she said.

Wayúu ID cards show names such as Arrancamuelas (Tooth Puller), Bolsillo (Pocket), Cabezón (Big Head), Chichi (Piss), Coito (Coitus), Gorila (Gorilla), Monja (Nun), Payaso (Clown) and Teléfono (Telephone). Others are Alka-Seltzer, Land Rover, Marilyn Monroe and Tarzan.

Most of their bearers neither speak nor read Spanish, so were unaware of the mockery. The Wayúu tongue is an Arawak language. They do not use the Gregorian calendar either, but mark dates with knots on a yarn. Because of this, registry officials opted to give everyone the same birth date: 31 December.

"Since I was little, I thought it was strange that all my family had the same birthday," Simanca said.

She estimates about 70% of Pushaina's generation were given humiliating names by visiting registry officials, and nearly all were listed as having been born on 31 December.

Pushaina only became aware of his "official" name when he began to attend meetings with NGO and government officials about ten years ago as a representative of his community. "At first I thought they were pronouncing my name wrong," he said. Then he realised that what was on his ID card was a twisted joke.

Film-maker Priscilla Padilla has documented the abuses in a documentary called *Born on 31 December*, which was screened last month in Bogota.

The Colombian registry office has said it does not know how or why the changes – the bulk of which happened in the nineteen-sixties and seventies – were made, and has promised an investigation. The director of the office, Carlos Ariel Sanchez, vowed to "correct the names that make people uncomfortable or that are ridiculous."

Simanca said she was encouraged by the official statement but that name changes were too costly for most Wayúu, who live in remote rural areas and can hardly afford travel and legal costs which can add up to more than 200,000 pesos (£67).

Pushaina is now privileged among his clan. With the help of Simanca and Padilla, he was able to reclaim his true name. He says he is happy with his new card. "Now no one can make fun of me any more."

Bunscoil Ghaelgagh – Mother-tongue primary education on the Isle of Man

Chris Moseley

In October 2011 I had the opportunity to visit the Isle of Man, thanks to the generosity of the Manx Heritage Foundation and Adrian Cain, the Language Officer on the island. Adrian's job is to raise awareness of the revived Manx language, not only among the local population but four outsiders like myself.

My main objective was to give the 2011 Ned Maddrell Lecture as part of the annual Cooish Festival, a celebration of the Manx Gaelic language and culture. In the lecture I presented the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger, which had caused controversy among Manx language activists when it was launched as an on-line publication in 2009, because Manx Gaelic had been labelled 'extinct'. It was thanks to vigorous campaigning by, above all, the Manx and Cornish language movements that the categories of 'revived' and 'revitalized' were introduced to the print version of the Atlas when it appeared a year later, and also the amended on-line version.

But Adrian was kind enough to show me first-hand the real state of the revival of Manx. Not only is there a net-

work of adult learners' classes on the island (one of which I attended) supported by the Language Officer, but, crucially, education in the Manx medium is being offered at primary-school level. Julie Matthews, head teacher of the Bunscoill Ghaelgagh, the only fully Manx-medium primary school on the island, attended my lecture and offered to show me around the school the next day. I seized the opportunity. After showing me around the classrooms and introducing me to the teachers, she told me the history of the school. It's an instructive lesson for anyone engaged in the revival of a language that has almost been lost.

A support group dedicated to Manx-medium education, Sheshaght ny Paarantyn, was formed in August 2000. By September 2001, nine children were accommodated within a larger school in Douglas, the island's capital, with a separate curriculum adapted from the British – or rather the Manx - National Curriculum. Manx was the medium of instruction from the outset.

An opportunity to acquire premises in St.Johns, in the middle of the island, arose when the school there moved to new premises nearby. The move took place in 2003, and the premises were refurbished to accommodate the Bunscoill.

In September 2006, by which time 47 children aged from 4 to 11 were enrolled, Julie Matthews, one of the founders, was promoted to Head Teacher, the position she still holds. Two full-time teachers were employed in addition to part-time staff. The first cohort of pupils left in July 2007, and – crucially for their continued use of the language – had by then the opportunity to continue to Manx-medium learning in a high school, namely QEII High School in Peel, which provides teaching in History, Religious Education and Geography in the Manx Gaelic medium. The pupils are able to sit their GCSE (=General Certificate of Secondary Education, in the British system) examinations in Manx Gaelic as well.

Numbers of pupils have been steadily rising. Currently there are 69 children enrolled. As a proportion of the schoolchildren on the island, obviously this is a tiny number, but considering the parlous position of the revived Manx language just ten years ago, when the school was founded, it is a great stride forward. The four teaching staff are complemented by the head teacher, a school administrator, and an in-house translator (none other than Bob Carswell, editor of the anthology *Manannan's Cloak* – see the Reviews section of *Ogmios* 45) who works 15 hours a week. The school works in conjunction with the Isle of Man Department for Education and Children, although the cultural foundation *Mooijer Veggey* is its direct employer.

The Parents' Handbook for the Bunscoill, which is itself bilingual, states the following Main Principle:

All the lessons are delivered through the medium of Manx Gaelic. Teachers, parents and visitors are asked, where possible, to respect the Gaelic-only ethos.

And the **Aims**:

The long-term aims of the Bunscoill are:

1. To provide children with the same opportunities for learning as their contemporaries in other Manx primary schools.
2. To have achieved competency in Manx and English by Blein 6.
3. To give children the opportunity to understand and use Manx with ease, through continual exposure to the language.
4. To enable children to learn through the native language of the Isle of Man.

The Curriculum., the handbook states, follows the Manx national curriculum as closely as possible., except for inevitable differences “particularly in relation to the English language/literature curriculum which cannot be simply transposed into Manx in its entirety.”

The handbook goes on to explain matters which aren't directly relevant to the language, but it expresses a vision of the school as “cultural ambassadors for the island”, welcoming visitors from around the world to share Manx music, dance and language.

I was very impressed by my visit to the Bunscoill. Of all the manifestations of the resurgence of Manx as a living language, this primary school will have the most far-reaching consequences. Adult learning classes are a very healthy sign, the *Cooish Festival* itself is an inspiring project, the general visibility of Manx on the island – all these are encouraging pointers to the future, but the Manx Gaelic school will have a resonance far in the future, as these children grow to maturity accepting Manx as a natural part of their lives. In itself, a school like this is not unique in the world, but it is surely very rare to find such a school, with good supporting infrastructure and part of a larger educational system. Which is playing a part in rescuing a language from its recent near-oblivion.

Say what? To find new subjects of study, some linguists simply open their front doors

From the Economist, 10 September 2011

Where in the world is the largest number of different languages spoken? Most linguists would probably plump for New Guinea, an island that has 830 recognised tongues scattered around its isolated, jungle-covered valleys. But a place on the other side of the world runs it close. The five boroughs of New York City are reckoned to be home to speakers of around 800 languages, many of them close to extinction.

New York is also home, of course, to a lot of academic linguists, and three of them have got together to create an organisation called the Endangered Language Alliance (ELA), which is ferreting out speakers of unusual tongues from the city's huddled immigrant masses. The ELA, which was set up last year by Daniel Kaufman, Juliette Blevins and Bob Holman, has worked in detail on 12 languages since its inception. It has codified their grammars, their pronunciations and their word-formation patterns, as well as their songs and legends. Among the specimens

in its collection are Garifuna, which is spoken by descendants of African slaves who made their homes on St Vincent after a shipwreck unexpectedly liberated them; Mamuju, from Sulawesi in Indonesia; Mahongwe, a language from Gabon; Shughni, from the Pamirian region of Tajikistan; and an unusual variant of a Mexican language called Totonac. Each volunteer speaker of a language of interest is first tested with what is known as a Swadesh list. This is a set of 207 high-frequency, slow-to-change words such as parts of the body, colours and basic verbs like eat, drink, sleep and kill. The Swadesh list is intended to ascertain an individual's fluency before he is taken on. Once he has been accepted, Dr Kaufman and his colleagues start chipping away at the language's phonology (the sounds of which it is composed) and its syntax (how its meaning is changed by the order of words and phrases). This sort of analysis is the bread and butter of linguistics.

Every so often, though, the researchers come across a bit of jam. The Mahongwe word *manono*, for example, means "I like" when spoken soft and flat, and "I don't like" when the first syllable is a tad sharper in tone. Similarly, *mbaza* could be either "chest" or "council house". In both cases, the two words are nearly indistinguishable to an English speaker, but yield starkly different patterns when run through a spectrograph. *Manono* is a particular linguistic oddity, since it uses only tone to differentiate an affirmative from a

negative—a phenomenon the ELA has since discovered applies to all verbs in Mahongwe.

Such niceties are interesting to experts. But the ELA is attempting to understand more than just the nuts and bolts of languages. It is collecting stories and other verbal material specific to the cultures of the participants. One volunteer, for example, wants to write a storybook for children in her language (Shughni), and also a recipe book. That means creating a written form of the language, which the researchers do using what is known as the International Phonetic Alphabet.

Many of Dr Kaufman's better finds, he says, have come from "hanging out at street corners with a clipboard on Roosevelt Avenue"—a street (pictured above) in the borough of Queens that he describes as the "epicentre of the epicentre" of linguistic New York. How long it will remain so is moot. The world's languages, which number about 6,900, are reckoned to be dying out at the rate of one a fortnight. The reason is precisely the sort of cultural mixing that New York epitomises. The value of learning any particular language is increased by the number of people who already speak it. Conversely, the value of a minority language is diminished as people abandon it. To those languages that hath, in other words, shall be given. From those that hath not, shall the last speakers soon be taken away.

Liet International in Friûl in Italy

Adapted from Mercator Research Newsletter 75 (October 2011)

In Friuli, in the northeast of Italy, Liet International lasted four days from Thursday 17 until Sunday 20 November. Both on 17 and 18 November a Waiting for Liet International evening was organised, with presentations and live performances of several contestants participating in Liet International 2011. On Sunday evening an After Liet International evening was organised.

Other activities during the Liet International weekend were a conference about Minority languages and music education, organised by Friulian language organisation ARLeF. Besides several local speakers, Mr Alexey Kozhemyakov, head of the secretariat of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of the Council of Europe, and Mrs Ana Elorza, a music teacher using the Basque language and philologist, addressed the audience. There was also an exhibition of the French photographer Sandro Weltin. Sandro Weltin attended and carefully documented all editions of Liet International since 2008 at the request of the Council of Europe. A

A selection of some of his most interesting pictures was exhibited in Udine.

Occitan opposition to Spanish court ruling against a Catalan law on Aranese dialect

From Mercator Research Newsletter 75 (October 2011)

Several pro-Occitan language organisations, political parties and cultural associations showed outrage at the suspension by the Spanish Constitutional Court of the Law on Occitan, Aranese in Aran, that had been passed by the Catalan Parliament in September 2010. The Court has accepted an appeal against the law by the Spanish Government, who does not accept that Occitan is declared "preferential language" of Aran Valley by the law.

Occitan anger

The prime minister (síndic) of Aran Valley, Carlos Barrera, described current Spanish Government (led by Socialist prime minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero) as "the most intolerant government in the history of Spain's democracy" and accused the government of Spain. Barrera recalled that Spanish Government is "in contradiction" with the fact that Spain has already signed and ratified the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. Both the Aranese and the Catalan governments have announced that they will present allegations against the suspension of the law.

Aranese is a southern dialect of Occitan that is currently spoken by more than 4,000 people in Aran Valley. Catalan laws foresee that Aranese must be of "preferential use" in Aran Valley within public institutions, public media, schools and place names. The Spanish Government does not accept that Aranese should have such a "preferential" status.

Zambian farmers learn to write in their own language

From the BBC News (Africa/World Service) web-site, 23 November 2011

"It's like a miracle," says Hastings Sitale, recalling how he felt when he saw a booklet written in ciShanjo, a language he had only ever spoken before.

Mr Sitale, who describes himself as "just a farmer", is part of an estimated 20,000-strong Shanjo community in Zambia's remote Western Province.

Over the last few months, he has been part of a group of amateur linguists, mostly fellow farmers, who have been creating a spelling system for their mother tongue.

For the first time stories passed down through the generations by word of mouth are being written down.

"We decided to do this so, as the older people die away, the younger people will see the language," Mr Sitale told the BBC World Service.

'Sheer excitement'

Mr Hastings and his team of village translators are one of five teams developing a written language for their tongues in the Western Province.

They attend translation workshops in the regional capital Mongu - a round trip which can take up to 32 hours, travelling by oxen, car and bus.

Oxen also formed an important part of their inaugural session with Paul Tench, a retired linguist from Cardiff University, who helped the Shanjo team begin their project in July.

"Their sheer excitement was wonderful to behold," he said.

The first task was to record a sample of the language which could be used for a dictation exercise.

So Mr Tench asked the team to think of a story and decide who should tell it; they elected one member who described the importance of training oxen for effective farming in ciShanjo.

Individually they all wrote down the story, after which they compared their efforts.

But they mostly agreed, according to Mr Tench.

"All of these people were literate in the [local] trade language siLozi and English; they knew from these languages the consonants and vowels of the Latin alphabet and what they stood for in those two languages.

"They applied this as best they could to the sounds of the words in their own language.

"Then they discussed things together in their mother tongue to agree solutions to any problems that arose. I kept a tally of the letters used and arranged them in a chart that reflected phonetic patterns."

Isolation

A spelling system emerged as the exercises continued. After two weeks, a 27-page booklet on how to read and write ciShanjo was produced, which included a 500-word dictionary, some grammar notes and three short pieces they had studied.

The original request for the translation initiative was made by Christian church groups who complained that many in their congregations were unable to understand

the Bible written in siLozi, and missionary groups sponsored Mr Tench's trip.

Since then, James Lucas, a Christian missionary based in Zambia, has continued to co-ordinate the language translation project, helping the Shanja and four other ethnic groups.

"The languages in the Western Province are quite similar, go back 150 years and many of them come from the same language," says Mr Lucas.

But that changed over time because they live so far apart, leaving some minority languages very isolated.

It is a pattern partly mirrored at the continental level, according to Mr Tench: Africa has about 15% of the global population but between them Africans speak 30% of the total number of languages in the world.

Zambia alone has more than 70 languages; the official national language is English.

'Forest people'

Nancy Kula, who lectures in Linguistics at the University of Essex, says the Western Province is probably the most linguistically diverse region in Zambia.

"CiShanja, like many other languages of the Western Province, is very much under threat of extinction," she warns, saying it is difficult to say how many languages have become extinct in Zambia recently.

"The situation is very under-investigated and I fear the real situation is probably even worse than anticipated."

Part of the problem is the influence of English and siLozi in the area - siLozi is the lingua franca for speakers of ciShanja travelling or trading in the Western Province.

But many Shanja cannot understand siLozi and even when they do attempt to speak it, they are teased by townsfolk because of their accents.

"They call us people from the bush or forest people," says Carol Mushali, who is the only woman on the ciShanja translation team.

She sees the potential for primary school lessons using ciShanja now that siLozi and English can be translated in written form because, many researchers say, children learn best in their mother tongue.

There are also benefits for adults learning this new form of their language.

"Once they taste a bit of knowledge they want more. It opens up learning to take place - a foundation that teaches them to read and write opens up the mind to further learning of every type," says Ms Mushali.

'On the map'

Isilimwe Limakazo, 25, is the youngest person to take part in the translation project.

He says the experience of taking part has led him to "want to only use the Shanja language every day".

He sees a bright future for the language.

"Even my friends are cutting songs and videos in ciShanja... before when they were singing, they used to make mistakes but now because they have learned to read and write the language properly, if they produce another album, then it will be better than before."

Enoch Walubita, another farmer and translator on the project, is similarly enthused.

"The advantage of this project is our people will be exposed - on the map."

"We were thinking we are nobody, but now we are the same as everyone in the world."

Doctor of Philosophy follows the Livonian path

By Raimu Hanson, from Postimees (Tallinn, Estonia) 9 December 2011

On the first of December, Valts Ernštriets (37), who is one of the vanishing Livonian people and has been promoting the Livonian cause for 20 years, was among those receiving their doctorates in the hall of the University of Tartu.



How many Livonians have ever achieved a doctorate?

That is very hard to say. But it is known that two people have defended a doctoral thesis on a Livonian subject.

In 2002 Renate Blumberga defended her thesis on Livonian materials in Finnish collections, covering the past 150 years of Livonian history. For this research she won the very important Spidola Cultural Award in Latvia. And the second was myself; I wrote my doctorate on the development of the written Livonian language.

In early November you interpreted a speech by Latvian president Andris Bērziņš into Livonian and in late November you interpreted a speech by Estonian president Toomas Hendrik Ilves in Tartu. Both were speaking in connection with the Livonian Year. How important is the participation of the presidents for Livonian life?

It's always important! Actually this was the first time that the Livonian issue has publicly reached the presidential level. The participation of the presidents in events directed at research into the Livonian cultural heritage shows the attitude of the Estonian and Latvian states. I think it is one of the greatest achievements of the Year of Livonian Language and Culture.

In one of your articles you expressed surprise that a language as small as Livonian has survived so long, whereas for a lot of larger nations the language has no written literature to show for it. How does it come about that although the nation has vanished, the end of the Livonian language is not in sight?

The end-point is not coming. It is a basic paradox of the whole Livonian issue, and it ought to be closely studied. I imagine that for the Livonians the Livonian language is a very important part of their identity – so that is one of the reasons why the language has been preserved so long.

According to the volume "Liivlased" [The Livonians], which has just been published, there is only known to be one person left alive whose mother-tongue is Livonian: Grizelda Kristin, aged 101. How different is her Livonian from yours?

It isn't, because in a way we are children of the same family. My basic language guides and teachers were people from the village of Vaid – Grizelda, her cousin Elza Mansurova... We are from the same background.

At the beginning of the last millennium, the Livonian area extended from Pärnu [town on the coast of modern Estonia] to Courland. Wars, diseases and politics have left only a small part to the Livonians, called the Livonian Coast. In which village there are your roots?

My roots are in Piza, called Mikeltornis in Latvian. At the moment my father lives there, and my sister has partly

moved back there. That is where the villages were left deserted from the Soviet era.

How much of a Livonian are you?

Very clearly I am one-eighth Livonian, and for some reason I have chosen to identify myself by that part of my family roots. On my father's side the male line is Livonian, except that my grandmother on my father's side was from Latgale [eastern Latvia]. Anyway, almost every second Latvian can find a Livonian in their family tree.

What do the Estonians have to learn from the disappearance of Livonian, if that is meant as the decline in the number of everyday speaker?

Estonia is in a different situation, because the Estonians have their own state. After the Second World War the number of Livonians remained relatively stable, but in the nineteen-seventies it started to decline very sharply. It's a question of only a single generation.

If you look at the Finno-Ugrians who live in Russia, you can see that the process of language disappearance does not take centuries. The final phase can be very rapid, especially today when there are no borders; people move around and migrate.

In the speech that you interpreted, the Estonian president expressed concern for the disappearing Mulgi language. For me it is a shame that the Tartu language, or "tarto kiil", is disappearing from everyday use. What do you recommend to the Mulgi and Tartu people to do to keep their ancient languages alive?

First of all you have to find outlets for the use of the language. What is needed is to create an environment for language use. To some extent you can do it on the Internet, with chat-rooms and portals. It would be good to issue a reading primer.

The Irish have a good idea for preserving the Irish language: people who know and can speak Irish gather in pubs in Dublin at a particular time. So once or twice a week they create a language island.

How are you getting on with serving the muses of literature and art?

With poetry and art I'm waiting until the Year of Livonian Language and Culture ends. It has demanded a great deal of organisational effort, there has been plenty of activity of all sorts. But I have been able to do something. In Helsinki at the moment there is an art exhibition with Baiba Dambergā and Lilita Līce, who are from Livonian backgrounds.

This year in Latvia there appeared a bilingual poetry collection, "How to Salt a Livonian", with the work of 20 poets. Apart from me, there are three other Livonian poets; the others are Latvian, Estonian and Finnish. The poems are translated into Livonian and Latvian. This is a book very close to my heart.

Hasn't your own poetry appeared on its own in a collection?

My Livonian poems have been published here and there. In 2003 my Latvian collection "Inter/rational" appeared. Just now, at the end of November, I got an e-mail from Liivia Viitol, who says she has translated a collection my poems into Estonian. I hope it will appear soon as a book.

So far only four Livonian poetry books have been published: Korli Stalte's 1924 collection, my anthology of Latvian and Livonian poems assembled in 1998, as well as this year's book of 20 poets in Latvian and Livonian, and also the Estonian and Livonian collection from this year "I'll take you on a hook, cod!" with Estonian translations by Valli Helde.

In Riga you're very active as the assistant director of the Livonian Cultural Centre. You're also involved with the web-sites livones.lv and niceplace.lv. What is your involvement with these?

We created the livones.lv site five years ago to make it possible to get information about the Livonians in a concentrated form. We try to show as many topical issues as possible on it. It's yet another voluntary job in the Livonian cause.

I've been working with my wife on the niceplace.lv site for three years – on it we sell our own Latvian souvenirs and other pieces of design. At the moment our main partner is the Latvian national historical museum, so we are dealing in Latvian and Livonian cultural heritage.

After interpreting the Estonian president's speech and making your own immediately afterwards, on Toome Hill [Tartu] in the last week of November, you rushed out of the hall to read the proofs of the Livonian reading primer. When is it coming out?

The manuscript of the primer by Korli Stalt seems to have been ready in 1938. But it remained unpublished, and for a long time it wasn't even known about. It turned up quite by chance six years ago. The presentation is at the end of December.

Doctorate praised

Valts Ernštreits started studying at Tartu in 1991. His studies tended to get delayed because of his work for the Livonian cause and other side issues. Between his mas-

ters' and his doctorate he took a couple of years' break. So it took him 20 years to get his higher degree.

But the result is very good. Otherwise Ernštreits' doctorate, 'The Development of the Written Livonian Language' written in Estonian, would not have been translated into Latvian. And otherwise the head of the Culture, Education and Science Commission of the Latvian Saeima (parliament), Professor Ina Druviete, in praising the doctoral dissertation, would not have said that the work should be translated into as many other languages as possible.

The world's only Livonian native speaker

In May last year, Ernštreits visited a grey-haired old lady in Canada. The young Livonian linguist is astonished that Grizelda Kristin, then aged 100 (now 101) speaks Livonian so well, as if she had stepped out of her coastal Livonian farmhouse just yesterday.

Actually she fled to Sweden during the war, and went from there to Canada in 1947.

For decades she has lived in an English-speaking environment, and as far as her homeland is concerned, she has had mainly the company of Latvians there. She has children too, but they cannot speak Livonian. Grizelda Kristin is now the only Livonian who was taught the language by her father and mother.

She studied home economics in Finland in the nineteen-thirties, and before the war she lived in Riga, where she worked in a restaurant and later moved into restaurant management.

"She's a very good cook," said Ernštreits. "The whole week while we were with her in Canada, she made meals for us."

Grizelda Kristin has also lived in an old people's village, but she didn't put up with it for long. "She explained that there are two reasons why she came to live on her own at home. Firstly, there were silly old men in the old people's home who didn't remember anything. Secondly, she wasn't allowed to make her own meals, but was offered ready-made food."

Interpreter for the president

At the end of November, Valts Ernštreits gave a presentation in Livonian at an international conference in the Museum of History at the University of Tartu. But before that he interpreted the speech of welcome by President Toomas Hendrik Ilves sentence by sentence into Livonian.

According to Ernštreits this was the first time in history that an Estonian president's speech has been translated into Livonian. "There's a certain symbolism about it," he

added. "Many people think there aren't enough words in Livonian. No, you can talk very well on any subject in Livonian!"

His doctoral dissertation also proves that Livonian is rich and viable, that Livonian is no different to any other language in applicability.

Translated and abridged by Chris Moseley

The Khowar language in Pakistan

By Farid Ahmad Raza, Booni Chitral, Pakistan

Khowar, the language (*war*) of the Kho community, is also known as Qashqari or Chitrali: it is an Indo-Aryan language of the Dardic group spoken by approximately 400,000 people in Chitral in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, in the Ghizer District of Gilgit-Baltistan (including the Yasin Valley, Phandar Ishkoman and Gupis), and in two villages of Kalam area in Upper Swat, Ushu and Matiltan. Speakers of Khowar have also migrated heavily to Pakistan's major urban centers e.g. Peshawar, Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi, creating sizeable populations there. There are thirteen languages are spoken in District Chitral, of which Khowar is the second largest. Khowar has four dialects: two are spoken within Chitral, viz Lotkoh and Laspur, and two beyond, in Ushu and Matiltan in Swat, and the Ghizer valley.

There is no documentary proof of the Khowar language's origin, although there are some stories about it.

Before the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, Khowar had important role in the functioning of government. Although it was not a written language, it was the language of the royal family and was used "for all oral official communications", while Farsi (i.e. Persian) was used for all written purposes until 1952.

The first evidence of Khowar as a written language is a letter of Mr. Muhammad Nasirul Mulk, written to his munshi (personal assistant) Muhammad Ghufuran, on 26 May 1917. In the letter, he used Persian script, devising signs for Khowar's extra phones. In this early period, there was some limited foreign research on Khowar. It used Roman script for the language.

IPA in use	Use the letter in Khowar script	IPA sign for the Khowar special letter	Khowar special letter
tʃɔŋɡʊ	چونگو	tʃ	چ
dʒɛŋɡɛr	چنجیر	dʒ	ج
tʃɛq	شقیق	ts	ش
dʒɔx	خوخ	dʒ	خ
zɑ:ŋɡ	ژانگ	z	ژ
ʃapik	شاپیک	ʃ	ش

Shehzada Muhammad Hisam-ul-Mulk, governor of Meher state, established a literary organization called Anjuman-e-Tarqi-Khowar, for promotion the Khowar language in 1956: he became its founder-president. In addition, he organized the first poetry recital on the lawn of Chitral's public library in 1957: 17 poets attended. It was the start for local scholars. Later on the organization continued to hold poetry recitals, as part of a wider programme of promoting language development.

In 1962, Shehzada Muhammad Hisam-ul-Mulk managed to get Khowar included in the curriculum as an optional subject at primary level. Within a few months, however, this decision was withdrawn by the provincial government, since it did not seem to have community support.

In 1969, a monthly magazine Jamhor-e-Islam Khowar ("The Khowar Islamic Masses") began publishing in Khowar; but it too ceased to exist when the government withdrew its financial support.

Since 1965, Radio Pakistan Peshawar has relayed a one-hour program daily in Khowar. In 1993 a Khowar radio station was established too at Chitral, but this is only audible within a distance of ten kilometers.

Despite all these setbacks, Khowar is a written language with a working orthography, and long history of publication, even if it is still facing some challenges in details of its spelling. For example, the sort-order of Khowar alphabet is not yet standardized. It varies with every publication (one letter added, another removed). Another big issue is spelling inconsistency, which sometimes is visible even within the work of a single writer. Writers vary in their use of diacritics etc. There is no sign for long and short vowels, stress or tone. In sum one can say that Khowar orthography still faces big challenges.

In Khyber-Pokhtun-Khawa province Pashto is the dominant language. Kho people are considered peace-loving and honest but outsiders' attitudes to the Khowar language are not good. Some consider it a dialect of Persian. Kho speakers like their language and speak it anywhere, without reserve. However, they have economic reasons to use English and Urdu, the official languages of Pakistan.

Khowar is not included in the curriculum of Government or private schools. Private schools actually discourage speaking of Khowar in the classroom, encouraging their students rather to speak English, or Urdu.

The present government has included five languages in the curriculum, and Khowar is one of them. However, this does not entail progress practically.

We have started a project of MLE (multi-lingual education) with the help of our foreign colleagues. We have

formed MLE committee in the community, and with the help of that committee we have produced materials. I hope, we able to open MLE schools by mid-2013.

Pakistan has no clear language policy. The Government authorities do not know how many languages are spoken in Pakistan, and sometimes mix up dialect and language. In practice, the Government of Pakistan supports only English and Urdu.

At present, the minor languages face endangerment although the speakers themselves are doing their best to promote and save the language and culture for future generations. The pressures from national and international media speed up the process of endangerment of the minor languages, threatening their very existence, as well as the history and culture which they have preserved. This is the time to act to save the history, culture and language. Otherwise in the near future the world will be deprived of its long-treasured diversity.

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4. Allied Societies and Activities

Fryske Akademy: joint projects with Yamal, visit to Salekhard

As representatives of the Fryske Akademy/Mercator Cor van der Meer and Tjeerd de Graaf have been invited to take part in the Arctic Educational Forum which has been organised in Salekhard (the capital of the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District) from 16 until 19 November 2011. About 250 participants attended this Forum, most of them representatives of institutes in the Russian Federation, where the languages of the Arctic regions are studied and used in educational programs. Other scholars from abroad were colleagues from Canada, Estonia, Finland, Hungary and Scotland, who also reported on

the experience with the teaching and learning of minority languages in their country.

Terralingua: Langscape

Our sister organization Terralingua's on-line journal *Langscape* issued Volume II, issue 8 (Autumn 2011) in September. The theme was "The case for linguistic diversity". To locate the journal, go to <http://www.terralingua.org/linguisticdiversity/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/L II 8.pdf>

Enselenguas

From 10 to 14 October 2011, the Universidad Central and the Fundación Etnollano in Colombia held **Enselenguas**, an international seminar on indigenous language teaching, drawing together experienced practitioners from all over the Latin American region. Funding came from the Basque Country, and the papers dealt with the situation in education and revitalization programmes in languages as diverse as Basque, Yukpa, Palenquero, Nathuatl and Embera.

Symposium on Teaching and Learning Indigenous Languages of Latin America

By Serena d'Agostino

STLILLA 2011, the **Symposium on Teaching and Learning Indigenous Languages of Latin America**, was held Oct 30-Nov 2 at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana. It was hosted by the Kellogg Institute for International Studies, home of the Latin American Indigenous Language Learning Program, specialised in Quechua teaching.

This meeting follows STILLA 2008, hosted by the Minority Languages and Cultures of Latin America Program and the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies at Bloomington University. The first meeting proceedings are now available at <http://kellogg.nd.edu/projects/quechua/STLILLA/2008.shtml> it also brought forth the creation of the Association for Teaching and Learning Indigenous Languages of Latin America (ATLILLA), whose president is Serafin Coronel-Molina.

Over 100 representatives of institutions, language schools teachers, researchers, activists and poets from the Americas and elsewhere in the world gathered at Notre Dame to exchange on the relevance and the urgency of documenting, teaching and preserving indigenous languages. Speakers, teachers and researchers are determined to keep these languages alive and many great initiatives are in progress in several countries. Everywhere people are

facing the same need to standardize writing and limited printed materials. The atmosphere was friendly at the Kellogg's Institute for International Studies, who generously offered transportation for all guests coming from Latin American countries, while kind student hostesses made sure that everybody had plenty of everything.

5. Letters to the Editor

Craig Soderberg, a new member of FEL, writes:

I am enclosing a copy of my membership application for the **Sungai, Sinobu, Makiang** language association in Sabah, Malaysia.

Here is a website link for the Ethnologue entry on this language:

www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=dmg

With just 5000 mother-tongue speakers, I think you will probably agree that this is an endangered language.

If you or any of your colleagues are interested in co-authoring a paper on endangered languages, I would be willing to be a co-author. I have written phonetics papers on Indonesian, Central Sama, and Tausug-Suluk, but now my focus is the Sungai language and the dialects of Sinobu and Makiang.

My postal address is

Craig Soderberg
c/o Kamrin Bin Satah
W.D.T. 205
90009 Sandakan, Sabah, Malaysia

6. Publications, Reviews

Dictionary of the Great Andamanese Language

By Anvita Abbi. Delhi: Ratna Sagar, 2012

To call this pioneering work of scholarship a mere "Dictionary" is to underestimate its significance. Interlingual dictionaries serve the purpose of showing equivalences between words in two languages, with usually a minimal need for elucidation. In the case of Great Andamanese, however, Professor Anvita Abbi, the foremost scholar of this "sixth family" of Indian languages, has been motivated by the urgent need to document this rapidly perishing language before it is too late – and to do so as comprehensively as possible. For she has come to know what she eloquently calls this "ancient world of cognition", and she realised early on in her research that the Andamanese view of the world was unique and precious.

The arduous circumstances in which this vast body of information was collected must have been some of the most challenging in the world of language documentation. As you will find described in the Preface, not only was the natural environment hostile – if also pristinely beautiful – but the attitude of officials and of the speakers themselves was, initially at least, negative and unco-operative. The story of how some of the speakers, responding to Prof. Abbi's patient efforts at elicitation, opened up and began to realise the dormant storehouse of words and concepts within them, will bring a smile of recognition to any linguist who has experienced the relief of rediscovery after the frustrating sense of doom for a language whose speakers are rapidly forgetting it through decades and generations of neglect.

The environment in which the Great Andamanese live is unique from a scientific point of view as well. The information contained in this volume is of great value not just to linguists and anthropologists, but also to natural scientists, and will be easily usable by botanists, zoologists, ornithologists and others because it contains not only scientific terms for natural phenomena in the body of the dictionary, but also listed under their Latin names in a handy appendix.

This dictionary is also copiously illustrated, not only with photographs relevant to the fieldwork entailed, but also with visual representations of many of the entries. In its electronic form it is also aurally illustrated, with sound-files of native speakers enunciating the lexemes in question.

For the general linguist, the language typologist, and the student of mankind's many different thought-worlds, this Dictionary is a treasure-trove. Each language has its own way of compartmentalizing the world; Prof. Abbi has made a close study of those aspects that make this one unique, such as the system of proclitics, and the concepts of time measurement, elicited after years of patient study. A language (or rather system of closely related language varieties) such as Great Andamanese also presents the challenge of standardization to the lexicographer; there being so few remaining fluent speakers, representing several different varieties, she has had to arbitrate, on the basis of comparison of varieties and historical evidence, on what constitutes the 'normative' dictionary variant in many cases. She has confronted this challenge squarely and explained her reasoning. Orthography, too, has had to be settled once and for all in the forms in a dictionary; the Devanagari script as used in Hindi, with minimal variation from it, has proved to be eminently adaptable to Great Andamanese, and has the advantage of ease of transfer to metropolitan Hindi, the language that is inevitably encroaching on it. For the benefit of non-Hindi speakers, the Andamanese words are also Romanized in a consistent and unambiguous way.

Most of all, though, this work is a testimony to the value of thorough and systematic language documentation. Great Andamanese is, to put it bluntly, on the verge of extinction. The treasures that the language has yielded up here make that a cause for sincere regret. But should the time ever come to revitalize this ancient and fascinating tongue, which is disappearing so fast before our very eyes in an increasingly homogenized world, this Dictionary will stand ready to ease and greatly enrich that process.

Christopher Moseley

Siraya: Retrieving the phonology, grammar and lexicon of a dormant Formosan language

By Alexander Adelaar. The Hague: Mouton De Gruyter, 2011. Price 129 euros

Siraya is an extinct Formosan language once spoken around Tainan City in southwest Taiwan. This comprehensive study is based on an analysis of the language of the Siraya Gospel of St. Matthew, which was translated from the Dutch in 1661. It contains a grammar, lexicon and extensive text with interlinear glossing as well as an introduction with detailed background information. Siraya has many unique linguistic features, which are of great interest to the study of linguistic typology in general. They include various reduplication patterns, orientation prefixes (adding the notions of motion, location or comitativation to a verb) and anticipating sequences. The latter are (usually) formal elements of the lexical verb, such as a first consonant or a first syllable, which are prefixed to the auxiliary. Siraya is also of crucial importance for the prehistory of Taiwan because it is one of the first languages to branch off from the Austronesian language family, which has more than 1200 members. This study is a major contribution to the Siraya people who are keen to rehabilitate Siraya culture heritage and are endeavouring to learn their lost language again. It is a unique achievement in the endeavour to revitalise the traditional languages of Taiwan."

East Timor: New Tetun and English resources from Dili Institute of Technology

Dili Institute of Technology is pleased to announce that it has just launched the following new publications.

"Tetun-English interactive dictionary",

for use on computers, is aimed at intermediate learners. It contains 7400 Tetun entries, 6800 English ones, 2700 cross-references to related words, and 700 example sentences. Search on English, Tetun, or by categories such as health or food. It runs on Windows XP, Windows 7 and Vista. (CD is \$10 at DIT)

Recordings for vocabulary and dialogues of chapters 1-10 of the Peace Corps book. (On CD with the interactive dictionary)

Computer **flashcards** for vocabulary of chapters 1-12 of the Peace Corps book. (On CD with the interactive dictionary)

"Peace Corps East Timor Tetun Language Manual" (edition 2).

This updated Tetun course covers a wide range of everyday needs, as well as an introduction to more specialised areas such as meetings, administration and health. Each chapter includes vocabulary, dialogues, and notes on culture and grammar. (\$17.50 at DIT)

The following older resources are also still available:

"Word-finder".

With 4500 Tetun words and 4900 English ones, this pocket-sized dictionary is aimed at beginner and intermediate learners of Tetun and English. Over 10,000 copies have been sold to date. (\$5 at DIT; bulk discount of \$2/copy for orders over 30)

"Tetun for the Justice Sector",

produced cooperatively by the Timor-Leste Police Development Program and Dili Institute of Technology, is designed to teach Tetun at intermediate level with special emphasis on policing and justice. (\$10 at DIT)

"Tetun 1" and "Tetun 2"

provide the course material for teaching two semesters of Tetun writing skills to Timorese university students. (\$5 at DIT)

How to get these resources:

Some of these resources are available from bookshops in Dili, including Lalenok Study Group (inland from the traffic lights in Colmera) and Silvia photocopy shop in Vila Verde.

They can also be downloaded for free from our website, www.tetundit.tl.

Alternatively, particularly for larger orders, visit the Centre for Language Studies at Dili Institute of Technology in Aimutin, in the afternoons from 2-5pm, and ask for the Tetun teachers. They can also be contacted on 736 9768 or by email on regis@tetundit.tl.

Dr Catharina Williams-van Klinken
Director, Centre for Language Studies,
Dili Institute of Technology.
Email: cvk@iinet.net.au
Website: www.tetundit.tl

7. Places to go on the Web

USA: National Science Foundation grants for endangered language work

For information about US National Science Foundation: "Documenting Endangered Languages" Grants, see

http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=12816
http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=13453

Anticipating FEL XVI: Māori sites

In anticipation of the Foundation's next conference (Auckland, New Zealand, 12-14 September 2012 – with further details (including excursions) to be announced) you might like to glean some background information about Māori language and culture on the Internet. Here are some suggestions:

Te Whānau Ipurangi (www.maori.nz)

www.maori.org.nz for links to other Māori institutions

Specifically language-related:

www.koreromaori.nz

Kotaho mano kāikaL kmk.maori.nz

Media-related:

www.maoritelevision.com

Most important of all, though, is **Te Ipukarea**, the National Māori Language Institute. Tania Smith, its Executive Assistant, is based at Auckland University of Technology (AUT), the venue for our next conference, and she has issued the first number of a new bimonthly magazine devoted to language revitalization, *Te Koko Tataki*. If you'd like to subscribe on-line, write to her: tsmith at aut.ac.nz.

8. Forthcoming events

Language Endangerment: Methodologies and New Challenges. University of Cambridge, UK, 6th July 2012

From Dr Mari Jones, Reader in French Linguistics and Language Change, Fellow, Director of Studies and Tutor of Peterhouse, Cambridge CB2 1RD:

CALL FOR PAPERS

At a time when UNESCO deems 43% of the world's 6,000 languages at risk of extinction, the imperative to record and analyse these linguistic varieties while they are still spoken has scarcely been greater. Yet researchers have ostensibly been slow to avail themselves of the opportunities offered by new technologies, from visual and aural archiving, to digitisation of textual resources and electronic mapping, techniques which could have the potential to play an integral role in reversing language shift. However, it is clear that with these new technologies come new challenges for the linguist. The Second Cambridge Language Endangerment Conference invites researchers to bring forward their ideas for tackling these issues: to share experiences from the field, to consider how these new resources might best be applied, as well as the problems that they can bring, to reassess more traditional techniques in light of new technologies and to work with a view towards achieving a practicable synthesis of old and new methodologies. At this critical time, our Conference seeks to ignite the debate as to what, if indeed anything, new technologies have to offer the fields of documentation, revitalization

and maintenance, and how the research community might seek to enhance the functionality of these resources in order to advance their application beyond mere superficialities.

Plenary Speakers

Nicholas Ostler (Foundation for Endangered Languages): *Endangered languages in the New Multilingual Order: Per Genus et Differentiam*

Tjeerd de Graaf (Frisian Academy, The Netherlands): *The Use of Sound Archives for the Documentation and Maintenance of Siberian Endangered Languages and Cultures*

Abstracts (200 words maximum) are due by Thursday 15 March 2012 and should be sent to the conference organisers, Mari Jones ([mcj11 at cam.ac.uk](mailto:mcj11@cam.ac.uk)) and Christopher Connolly ([cpc37 at cam.ac.uk](mailto:cpc37@cam.ac.uk)) Further details may be found on the conference website: <http://www.crassh.cam.ac.uk/events/1688/>

13th International Conference on Language and Social Psychology (ICLASP)

The next conference of the International Association of Language and Social Psychology, ICLASP 13, will be held between 20-23rd June, 2012, in Leeuwarden, The Netherlands. The conference will be held in conjunction with Mercator Research.

This conference will bring together scholars from different disciplines who explore language and communication in their social contexts using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The focus is mainly on aspects such as identities, perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, values, motivations, norms, behaviour, policies and so on in their individual and intergroup contexts. Topics covered in previous conferences include language and health communication; language learning; bilingualism & multilingualism; language and discrimination, interpersonal, intercultural, interethnic and intergroup communication; nonverbal communication; miscommunication and communication failure; discourse analysis; language and ageing; language and mass media; language and humour; language and gender; language and authority; language and tourism; language and technology; language and security; endangered, regional and minority languages; language planning; and so on (see www.ialsp.org). Papers and symposia are invited for these and related topics.

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