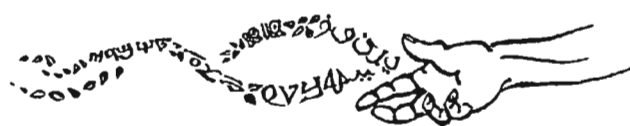


# FOUNDATION FOR ENDANGERED LANGUAGES



## OGMIOS



Our picture above is an inscription in the Rongorongo script of Easter Island, and is taken from the fascinating web page of Sergei Ryabchikov, who presents evidence that he has deciphered to the script. He writes:

(<http://www.kuban.ru/users/Rjabchikov/index.htm>)

Using the methods of structural linguistics... the author ... managed to obtain the interpretation of many words referring to the Old Rapanui vocabulary. It was proved that "Apai" is an ancient sacral text telling of the god Tiki and the goddess Hina living every six months on the island and the rest time in the heaven, they floating into the heaven in a boat. It was proved unambiguously that the first month was Maru(a) (modern Maro), the beginning of which had been linked by the Easter Islanders with the appearance of the Pipiri star in the sky. I restored the ancient religious terms, particularly, the availability of two priest classes – tuhunga and taura -- was proved. This fact brings together the structure of the Easter Island society and other Polynesian societies. The epithets of the gods derived earlier from reading of the tablets were given in this text.

The Rapanui language currently has about 2,500 speakers. (Ethnologue XIII, 1996)

In this issue:

FEL II Conference in Edinburgh - 25-27 September 1998:  
Endangered Languages - The Role of Specialist  
see pages 16-17.

OGMIOS Newsletter # 8 : Spring/Summer - 7 June 1998

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Editor: Nicholas D. M. Ostler

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### 1. Living On - a New Venture for David Crystal

In late February this year I received an amazing package from David Crystal.

He is probably the most widely known British linguist at the moment, having followed up a successful academic career (holding the chair of linguistics at Reading University) with a series of impeccable, but highly engaging and readable books for the general public on aspects of language and linguistics -- most notably, perhaps, a one-volume encyclopaedia of language (Cambridge UP, 1987), which I should guess is most linguists' first reference when they need to con an unfamiliar aspect of the field.

The package contained the manuscript of a new play, entitled *Living On*. The play turns on the situation of a language on the point of extinction: who cares about such things, and what sacrifices are worth making on its behalf? Intellectual commitment, sympathy and sheer love all come into it, and it will move hearts as well as indignation. But since this a play -- and the subject is a language -- there is little of the expected in how it all turns out.

I had known that David had been developing an idea on these lines with a commission from the Royal Shakespeare Company, and I had been looking forward to the outcome: indeed I almost included it in a by-line of the last Ogmios. But as David had pointed out to me, getting plays staged is a very hit-or-miss business, and it is still not clear how and when the curtain will rise on *Living On* -- though it should be at the RSC.

What really amazed me, however, was the promise that came with the play. All the royalties from UK production are to come to the Foundation. (And David has promised the Endangered Language Fund a similar deal on any US production.) This is without a doubt the handsomest offer that we have ever received -- inspiring and humbling at the same time, and will spur us all, but especially me, on to new efforts. It is a stirring thing when a small group that one has founded receives such generous support from such a source: we can't stop now!

I knew that David had faith in our work (and indeed our Foundation) since he had rounded off a lecture to our local Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution (on a local hero, Sir Isaac Pitman, of shorthand and spelling reform fame) with the speculation that if Pitman had been alive today he would have attended to the linguistic business of our generation, namely the fate of endangered languages: how appropriate that an enterprise in this cause should have been set up in Pitman's home town of Bath!

Well, I don't know about Pitman, or the linguistic proclivities of Bath. But I do note that there is now a growing awareness worldwide of the importance of linguistic human rights and the value of languages. The theme is being taken up in the high-level mass media, last year with a cover story

of Time Magazine, this week with an article in The Economist. New groups are springing up: we are happy to welcome the official foundation this year of our German sister, die Gesellschaft für bedrohte Sprachen, eV. As David says, "the sooner awareness grows among the general public the better. And awareness will bring funds."

But there is so much work to do, for all of us. In this issue you can read an account of what was achieved by our first grant (to Valentin Vydrine, of the University of St. Petersburg) - an inspiring and exciting first venture, almost unbelievable really, when you consider how little money we have to work with. And in September of this year, we hope to see as many as possible at our second conference, which will take place on 25-27 September in Edinburgh: the programme can be found in this same issue, section 6. Application forms are being sent out to members with this issue: if you haven't got one, please lose no time in contacting our Treasurer, at the address on the back page.

### 2. Development of the Foundation

We are now in a position to publish the first result of the Foundation's funding activity, namely a first brief trip report from Valentin Vydrine, who undertook an expedition to research the Kagoro language in Mali.

(Dr Vydrine will be publishing full results of this work in French, since Mali is a Francophone country.)

#### **Kagoro: a language transforming into a dialect?**

Kagoro is a West-Manding language (Manding branch of the Mande family, Niger-Congo) spoken in Mali to the North of the Niger river. Estimated number of ethnic Kagoro is about 30,000, but only about a half of them speak their language.<sup>1</sup> To this day, there are only three publications concerning this language: short chapters in two dialectal surveys [Bird (ed.) 1982, 364-373; Dialectes... 1983, 325-334] and an article by Denis Creissels [1986]. They leave many questions concerning phonology, sociolinguistic status, etc., unresolved.

In March-April 1997, on a grant from the Foundation for Endangered Languages, I made a trip to the Kagoro area in Mali. During the first half of this trip (10 days), our team consisted of two linguists from Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), Brad and Sue Smeltzers (both are Americans, specialists in the Soninke language), my student from St. Petersburg, Dmitry Idiatov, and myself. Our goals were:

1. Language mapping (on the base of 1:200 000 map) of all the Kagoro area.
2. Kagoro dialect survey: in each dialectal zone, we planned to collect a diagnostic wordlist.

<sup>1</sup> In the savanna zone of Africa, a language is considered to be endangered if it counts less than 20,000 speakers.

3. Sociolinguistic study: attitude of the Kagoro people to their language, degree of bilingualism.

Kagoro villages are scattered in the strip of about 350 km. From publications of predecessors we had had a preliminary idea about the localization of the main clusters of these villages; to this was added information collected by ourselves in Bamako. Our trip allowed to localize Kagoro with much more precision. We have found out that there are seven Kagoro dialectal zones:

1. The Eastern zone (Mogola) includes at least seven villages, on the left bank of Niger in the Western part of the Segu province; in all these villages Kagoro live mixed with Bamana. Our informants indicated also three Kagoro villages on the right bank of the Niger, which should be verified. There are also some indications that there may be some Kagoro further to the East. In the Eastern zone, Kagoro language is more or less spoken in the Mogola village, and everywhere else it being actively ousted by Bamana.

Another interesting finding was the fact that many villages of that area are considered as Maninka villages (a short inquiry in one of them proved that local people effectively speak a variant of Maninka). In special literature there have never been any mention of the Maninka population that far to the East.

2. Kamiko-Wagato zone is localized to the North of Banamba, mainly in the Boro district. In this zone there are 5 or 6 homogenous Kagoro villages, quite on a distance from each other, surrounded by Soninke, Bamana and Bamana-Kagoro villages. People speak Kagoro at home, but in other situations they switch to Bamana.

3. Sebekoro-Missira zone in the Kolokani district includes 11 Kagoro villages on the right bank of the Baoule river (to the East of the Baoule Bend) and two villages on the left bank. This compact group of villages is surrounded by the Bamana population on the right (Eastern) bank, and by Maninka speakers (Fuladugu dialect) on the left bank. In this zone, positions of the Kagoro language seem to be the strongest; it is currently used on all levels of village life. In the meantime, even here, Kagoro-Bamana bilingualism is very high, and an attitude toward Bamana as a leading language is attested even among elders.

4. Jumara (Dyoumara) zone, to the North-East of the Baoule Bend, includes 6 or 7 Kagoro and 3 or 4 Kagoro-Bamana villages; it is surrounded by Bamana, Soninke and Maure (Hassaniya-speaking) villages. Local Kagoro are bilingual in Bamana and/or Soninke, but, according to what the elders say, Kagoro is currently used in all spheres of life.

5. Jema (Diema) zone to the North-West of Baoule Bend includes several dispersed villages where Kagoro live mixed with Bamana and Soninke. In spite of the fact that this zone is considered by other Kagoro as central, here Kagoro language seems to be much forsaken: so, in

the Debo-Kagoro village, where the First All-Mali Kagoro Meeting took place one week before our arrival, even elders don't speak Kagoro today.

6. Jemukuraba (Guemoukouraba)\_Saghabara (Sarabala) zone is formed by about a dozen of villages adjoining the Baoule Bend in the West. Here the Kagoro language is well preserved.

7. The westernmost is the Sefeto zone covering the extreme North-Western part of the district of Kita. It includes more than 20 Kagoro villages mixed with Maninka-Bague, Bamana, and Soninke villages; in the West, it neighbours the Xasonka area. Maninka-Bague deserve special mentioning. Linguistically it is hardly distinguishable from the local Kagoro dialect.

In each zone, we collected a diagnostic 120 word list. These lists prove that the dialectal diversity within Kagoro is serious enough to make distinction between different zones clear, but it does not hinder mutual intelligibility between the zones.

During our trip, we also looked for the information on origin and ethnic history of the Kagoro people. We had had two preliminary hypotheses explaining this projection of West-Manding population far away to the East of the main group: either Kagoro represent remnants of autochthonous population of this vast area, of which the majority was assimilated by Bamana since the rise of the Segu Empire; or Kagoro are newcomers on this land. Interviews with village elders testify on behalf of the second hypothesis: according to what they say, Kagoro migrated from the Kaarta region to the East after Al-Hadj Umar's wars, i.e., less than 150 years ago. That is why eastern Kagoro refer to the Kaarta Kagoro dialect as "Kagoroba", i.e. "big, main Kagoro".

The second part of the trip (other 10 days), I stayed alone in one of Kagoro villages, namely Sebekoro (Kolokani district, to the East of the Baoule Bend). During this stay, I made:

- a comprehension test (Kagoro - Maninka of Kita, Kagoro - Xasonka) according to the techniques elaborated by SIL. It proved that Kagoro is mutually intelligible with the Kita Maninka variant, but not with Xasonka (because of the high degree of Kagoro-Bamana bilingualism, a mutual comprehension test for these languages did not make much sense, and it was not carried out).

- individual sociolinguistic interviews. Although carried out with a limited number of interviewees, they revealed some very interesting facts, namely, a much higher degree of knowledge of the main language of Mali, Bamana, and a lower prestige of Kagoro in the eyes of speakers if compared with what the elders, and especially the village head, used to say.

- observation of the everyday language practice. It turned out that Kagoro is currently used during the councils of village elders and in other situations where only representatives of the older generation

participate, while youngsters speak Bamana much more than Kagoro. In the meantime, if necessary, even young children can speak Kagoro quite well and without too great admixture of Bamana forms.

- tape-recording of Kagoro texts (mainly popular tales), their transcribing and translation. Several dozens of tales were recorded, of these 6 tales (more than 30 pages) were transcribed and translated.

- collection of lexicographical data. First, I collected a standard SIL 333 word list; then, I used "Petit dictionnaire khassonke-français" by H. Tveit and G. Dansoko as a departure point for questioning my Kagoro informants. A special attention was paid to the collection of "negative information", i.e., identification of stems attested in other Manding variants and not used in Kagoro. The result of this work is a more clear idea of the main layers of Kagoro vocabulary: words shared by Kagoro with other West-Manding languages; Kagoro innovations; a considerable number of Bamana loan-words.

In the further research, two main questions should be answered. The first question concerns the linguistic status of Kagoro. This is a question of linguistic technique; I don't think it will create any special problem if compared with other languages.

The other question is its sociolinguistic status. On one hand, Western (and the most prestigious) Kagoro dialects are very close to (or even identical with) the Maninka dialects of the Kita cluster, which rises a question: is the difference between Kagoro and Maninka of linguistic or rather ethno-identification nature? On the other hand, in the situation of predominance of another language of the Manding branch (Bamana) there is a strong tendency to consider all the Manding variants spoken in Mali as its dialects. This tendency weakened after the fall of the regime of Moussa Traore (e.g., Maninka and Xasonka were given recently an official status of "national languages"), but for languages like Kagoro it is still actual. So, in the population census which took place exactly during my stay in the Sebekoro village, Kagoro was not present in the list of Malian languages, and all those who said that their language is Kagoro were listed as Bamana (Bambara). Attitudes of Kagoro speakers is also dubious: in the group interviews, elders proclaim primacy of the Kagoro language, but when asked about the preferred language for literacy program, they often opt for Bamana, especially if the interview is individual. As for the younger population, they are even more open to Bamana.

Thus it cannot be excluded that soon enough Kagoro will be "swallowed" in the course of the progressive consolidation of the Bamana languages: first, it will be downgraded to the status of a Bamana dialect, and then, eliminated through growing scholarization and mass-media.

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Dialectes manding du Mali. Bamako : DNAFLA - Paris : Agence de coopération culturelle et technique, 1983, 409 p.

Valentin Vydrine, St. Petersburg (Russia)  
vydrine@VV1964.spb.edu

#### FEL Executive Committee Meeting, Linacre College Oxford, 6 June 98, 3pm

It is too early to have the minutes of this meeting, but here are a few brief notes on what was reported, discussed and decided.

*Present:* Nicholas Ostler (President), Margaret Allen (Treasurer and Membership Secretary), Andrew Woodfield (Secretary), Christopher Moseley (Liaison Officer). (*Apologies from other Committee members.*)

*Minutes of last meeting (3 Nov 97)* approved

*Matters arising:* none

#### Financial matters

The Foundation's credit balance had risen from £390.50 on 23 Feb. to £950 at end of May.

The credit card facility had been instated in March, and since then about 40% of subscribers had used it to pay.

#### 4. Membership matters

The Treasurer noted that since the beginning of the year, the Foundation had received approximately the same in subscriptions from new members, as it had from renewing members. The membership role now stood at 104, of which 15 were new members in 1998. This represented a 63% increase in the rate of new joiners over 1997 (in which 22 members joined overall.)

It was decided that members who had not heeded the last renewal reminder would be reminded again, **without** an issue of Ogmios attached.

#### Fund raising (all)

This was becoming the priority, now that other aspects of the Foundation were getting settled. Funds were of course necessary to provide grants. A meeting would be held specifically to generate ideas.

#### Schedule for future grants (NO/CM)

A new call for applications would be launched at the Conference at the end of September, with decisions to be announced by end of 1998.

*Planning the Edinburgh Conference, Sept 25-27, 1998 (NO)*

The budget was modified and approved.

#### Application for Charitable status (AW)

This had been submitted by the Secretary over a month ago. We now awaited results.

#### FEL Website (AW/NO)

This is being maintained by the Secretary. It was desirable to find a full-time enthusiast to take it over.

### 3. Language Endangerment in the News

"At a loss for words" by Stephen Hume :  
Vancouver Sun, 3 May 1998

Dennis King <donncha@eskimo.com> wrote :  
Some of you might be interested in reading an article, primarily about efforts being made to preserve native languages of British Columbia, that appeared in the Vancouver Sun last Sunday. It's available at:  
<http://www.vancouver.sun.com/newsite/notebook/1682233.html>

"English Kills": Economist, 6 June 1998

In an issue which starts out by congratulating the voters of California for the "steadiness" in endorsing Proposition 227 to replace bilingual education with "total immersion" in English, the editor saw nothing bizarre in including a piece on language endangerment under the heading "English Kills".

FEL's president had been interviewed for the article, and it included thumbnail sketches of George Hewitt's studies of Caucasian languages at London's SOAS, Hein Steinhauer's of Indonesia at Leiden, and Aert Kuipers' of Canada. Some of FEL's activities were sketched in too, alluding to Mark Donohue's work in Irian, and (strangely) adding a claim that Scottish Gaelic has just been admitted to our intensive care unit! (Perhaps a cryptic reference to the forthcoming conference in Edinburgh in September?) But although claiming that at least 4 activist groups for endangered languages have sprung up in the last few years, the article seems to have mixed FEL up with the Endangered Languages Fund, referring to us as ELF throughout.

Anyway, the coverage is certainly good for business: in the three hours after the issue first came out in the USA, I received two e-mail enquiries from America.

### 4. Appeals and News from Endangered Communities

#### **Turkish prosecution of Kurdish language**

On 25 January 1998, Sertac Bucak, Director of IMK e.V. wrote from Bonn in Germany:

The Kurdish language course offered by the Foundation for Kurdish Culture and Research (KÜRT-KAV) has been banned by the Turkish authorities in Istanbul. Criminal proceedings have been initiated against the Chairman of KÜRT-KAV, Yilmaz Camlibel, and Deputy Chairman M. Celal Baykara. The prosecution has called for prison sentences of six to twenty-four months for the accused on account of their alleged violation of Article 292 of the Turkish Penal Code (TPC).

On 20 August 1996 KÜRT-KAV applied to the responsible Board of Education of Istanbul Province for permission to offer a private Kurdish language course which fulfilled the standards set by the Turkish National Ministry of Education. On 20 March 1997 the Board of Education rejected this application (details are included in the annex „Background Information“). On 12 May 1997 KÜRT-KAV filed an appeal at the Ankara District Court against this decision of the National Ministry of Education. The first court hearing was held on 12 November 1997 in Ankara. The court rejected this appeal, whereupon KÜRT-KAV lodged another appeal at the Supreme Court in Ankara.

KÜRT-KAV is the first non-governmental organization with a Kurdish identity and a pluralistic basis in the history of the Turkish Republic to receive official status, after four years of juridical struggle.

According to its statutes, KÜRT-KAV is entitled to offer Kurdish language courses. This right, which was accorded to the foundation within the framework of the Turkish legal system, has been annulled by the executive branch. These actions of the Turkish institutions clearly violate the principles of a state ruled by law.

Courses in several languages are offered officially and privately in Turkey. The decision made by the Board of Education and the National Ministry of Education was politically motivated, and its roots lie in the state policy concerning the Kurds. The Turkish government should show to the Kurdish language, which is spoken by more than fifteen million Turkish citizens, the same tolerance and respect that it shows to all other languages.

KÜRT-KAV is determined to win recognition of its rights by proceeding through the courts. It urgently needs the support of national and international NGOs in all areas. For this reason, we are asking you to support our cause.

...  
- Write letters to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey and the Turkish National Minister of Education. Please send copies of your letters to us via fax.

If you have further questions, we will be happy to answer them. We hope for a positive response from you.

Yours sincerely,

Sertac Bucak  
Director, IMK e.V.

#### Annexes

Mr. Mesut Yilmaz  
Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey  
Başbakanlık, Çankaya, Ankara, Turkey  
Fax: +90 - 312 - 417 0476

Mr. Hikmet Uluğbay  
Minister of National Education  
Bakanlıklar, Ankara, Turkey

## South African San Institute looking for sponsors

From: "Geoff Perrott" <sasi@iafrica.com>  
 To: "Nick Ostler" <nostler@chibcha.demon.co.uk>  
 Subject: South African San Institute (SASI)  
 Date: Fri, 13 Feb 1998 10:22:32 +0200

Dear Nick

I am not sure if you remember me but my name is Geoff Perrott and I work for SASI which is an NGO working towards regaining dignity and justice for the San / Bushman in southern Africa through land rights, access to natural resources, language and cultural support.

This is a slightly different request from usual ... this is a short note to ask for your help with something concerning me ...and the Bushman!

I am changing jobs within SASI and moving from the co-ordinator role into a more marketing role. SASI is doing really well at the moment with funders enjoying sponsoring our work but this is not sustainable in the long run. For SASI to survive for twenty / thirty years we need to think now of ways to do it. The best way from here as we see it is to build up a donor base or regular donors to SASI. If we can get x amount of people giving us R x per year then SASI will at least be able to have a solid platform from which to do its work.

My first task will be to build this base so that in a years time I have 2000 people giving SASI R 120 per year (R10 / month ... two beers!), in two years 5000 giving R 130 / year and so on.

To start this I need to get names and addresses ... lots of them. I could get it from the voters role (and probably will at some stage) but for now I want to try to get people who I (and you) think would be interested in the work that SASI does.

So I want to ask you if you will please think of, at least, eleven people who you think will be interested in being on SASI's mailing list and send me their name and address ... actually it's ten people because I am assuming you'll want to be on that list!!!!

I have got 27 names and addresses so far and I am hoping to get 1000 before the first Donor Acquisition goes out in early April ... I have very few contacts overseas and would really like some names from there!

Thanks for the help! Kindest regards

Geoff

\*\*\*\*\*

South African San Institute  
 5 Long Street, Mowbray, 7700  
 Cape Town, South Africa  
 tel / fax: + 27 21 685 4223  
 e-mail: sasi@iafrica.com

*For some examples of what SASI actually do, see Nigel Crawhall's letter in section 4, Allied Societies and Activities.*

## Kosovar Albanians

From Tove Skutnabb-Kangas tovesku@babel.ruc.dk  
 Date: Tue, 17 Feb 1998 13:58:29 +0100

Dear FEL Members

I apologise for being much too late (travel etc.) in reacting to Chris Moseley's plea (October) for a letter about Albanian-medium teaching in Prishtina and Kosova/Kosovo in general - I have only now seen the correspondence in Osmios. I agree fully with Ken Hale's views: we should stand up for language rights, regardless of whether the languages in question are "endangered" in the more classical sense or not.

On the other hand, we need to know the situations we react to extremely well. Albanian-speakers are a very large majority in Kosova; a decade ago some 90 percent of the population. Albanians in the autonomous territory of Kosova had Albanian-medium schools and university in ex-Yugoslavia. The small Serb minority in Kosova naturally had Serbian-medium education; ex-Yugoslavia had some of the most progressive educational language rights regulations in the world. Now all public education in Kosova, for everybody, is Serbian-medium only.

Suggesting as Anthea Fallen-Bailey does that "some classes could be provided in Albanian: language classes, or history, or literature, or....; one does not have to provide a complete educational system just for Albanian", or referring to additional cost for Albanian-medium teaching materials "that the new Serbian authorities cannot afford", is therefore completely misplaced. (Anthea quite rightly says herself that she is not up-to-date on current Serbian-Albanian relations). - Let's envisage that Mexico took over the southern part of the US and made all public education Spanish-medium only. Would we then for the English speakers suggest a compromise where "some classes could be provided in English: language classes, or history, or literature, or....; one does not have to provide a complete educational system just for English", also because "the new Mexican authorities cannot afford" English-medium or bilingual teaching materials? Hardly.

Our approach should, I feel, concentrate on reminding regimes of accepted international human rights law standards and clarifying them. It was precisely for this type of situations that the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Max van der Stoep, initiated the work that led to the The Hague Recommendations Regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities & Explanatory Note (October 1996).

The Hague Recommendations are new educational guidelines issued by The Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations for the OSCE (= Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) High Commissioner on National Minorities. The guidelines were worked out by a small group of experts on human rights and



education (including the author of these lines). Below are a few bits from some of my articles, recent or in press (for details, see my Web- site): "Politicians created in the OSCE the position of a High Commissioner on National Minorities 'as an instrument of conflict prevention in situations of ethnic tension' (Rothenberger 1997, 3). The High Commissioner, Max van der Stoep (1997, 153) stated when launching the Hague Recommendations Regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities that

*...in the course of my work, it had become more and more obvious to me that education is an extremely important element for the preservation and the deepening of the identity of persons belonging to a national minority. It is of course also clear that education in the language of the minority is of vital importance for such a minority.*

In the section of the Hague Recommendations called 'The spirit of international instruments', bilingualism is seen as a right and responsibility for persons belonging to national minorities (Art. 1), and states are reminded not to interpret their obligations in a restrictive manner (Art. 3).

In the section on 'Minority education at primary and secondary levels', mother tongue medium education is recommended at all levels, including bilingual teachers of the dominant language as a second language (Articles 11--13). Teacher training is made a duty of the state (Art. 14).

*1) The right of persons belonging to national minorities to maintain their identity can only be fully realised if they acquire a proper knowledge of their mother tongue during the educational process. At the same time, persons belonging to national minorities have a responsibility to integrate into the wider national society through the acquisition of a proper knowledge of the State language.*

*3) It should be borne in mind that the relevant international obligations and commitments constitute international minimum standards. It would be contrary to their spirit and intent to interpret these obligations and commitments in a restrictive manner.*

*11) The first years of education are of pivotal importance in a child's development. Educational research suggests that the medium of teaching at pre-school and kindergarten levels should ideally be the child's language. Wherever possible, States should create conditions enabling parents to avail themselves of this option.*

*12) Research also indicates that in primary school the curriculum should ideally be taught in the minority language. The minority language should be taught as a subject on a regular basis. The State language should also be taught as a subject on a regular basis preferably by bilingual teachers who have a good understanding of the children's cultural and linguistic background. Towards the end of this period, a few practical or non-theoretical subjects should be taught through the medium of the State language. Wherever possible, States should create*

*conditions enabling parents to avail themselves of this option.*

*13) In secondary school a substantial part of the curriculum should be taught through the medium of the minority language. The minority language should be taught as a subject on a regular basis. The State language should also be taught as a subject on a regular basis preferably by bilingual teachers who have a good understanding of the children's cultural and linguistic background. Throughout this period, the number of subjects taught in the State language, should gradually be increased. Research findings suggest that the more gradual the increase, the better for the child.*

*14) The maintenance of the primary and secondary levels of minority education depends a great deal on the availability of teachers trained in all disciplines in the mother tongue. Therefore, ensuing from the obligation to provide adequate opportunities for minority language education, States should provide adequate facilities for the appropriate training of teachers and should facilitate access to such training. Finally, the Explanatory Note states that Submersion-type approaches whereby the curriculum is taught exclusively through the medium of the State language and minority children are entirely integrated into classes with children of the majority are not in line with international standards (p. 5)". (My comment: This submersion type education is what Serbia now offers to Albanians in Kosovo. As watchdogs, then, we need to know what the accepted international standards are in human rights law in our area and what their applicability is. Who is protected by the Hague Recommendations, for instance? Ex-Yugoslavia has been excluded from OSCE but might become a member again when the human rights standards improve. The Recommendations can be directly appealed to, for instance, in the US and Canada which are OSCE member states. On the other hand, they are an authoritative interpretation of human rights standards in general, worldwide, and should therefore apply even in countries which are not members of OSCE.*

But all states do not accept that they have minorities in the sense of international law (e.g. the USA and France do not); and many differentiate between "national minorities" and "immigrants". Another quote then: "The UN ICCPR (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; 1966, in force since 1976) Article 27 still grants the best legally binding protection to languages:

*In those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language.*

In the customary reading of Art. 27, rights were only granted to individuals, not collectivities. And "persons belonging to ... minorities" only had these rights in states which accepted their existence. This has not helped immigrant minorities because they have not been seen as

minorities in the legal sense by the states in which they live.

Until recently, the Article was interpreted as Tau excluding (im)migrants (who have not been seen as minorities); Tau excluding groups (even if they are citizens) which are not recognised as minorities by the State (in the same way as the European Charter does); Tau conferring only some protection from discrimination ("negative rights") but not a positive right to maintain or even use one's language, and Tau not imposing any obligations on the States.

More recently (6 April 1994), the UN Human Rights Committee adopted a General Comment on Article 27 which interprets it in a substantially more positive way than earlier. The Committee sees the Article as Tau protecting all individuals on the State's territory or under its jurisdiction (i.e. also immigrants and refugees), irrespective of whether they belong to the minorities specified in the Article or not; Tau stating that the existence of a minority does not depend on a decision by the State but requires to be established by objective criteria; Tau recognizing the existence of a "right", and Tau imposing positive obligations on the States.

What are the possible implications of the General Comment on the educational linguistic human rights of (im)migrant minorities? The answer is that we do not know yet. Neither does the Human Rights Committee (Eide 1995b). It remains to be seen to what extent this General Comment will influence the State parties. If the Committee's interpretation ("soft law") becomes the general norm, and if the Western European countries where migrant and refugee minorities live start observing this norm, the educational linguistic rights situation might improve."

A last little bit from a long article, including thoughts on (educational) linguistic human rights, ethnic conflict and the future of linguistic diversity):

"Granting linguistic and cultural human rights would be a step towards avoiding 'ethnic' conflict, avoiding disintegration of (some) states and avoiding chaos and anarchy, where the rights of even the elites will be severely curtailed because of increasingly civil war-like conditions, especially in inner cities. Many western states use today larger sums to control this anarchy (with the help of the state machinery of violence) than their education allocations. But the link between language rights and other human rights, including economic and social rights on the one hand and civil and political rights on the other hand, is seldom acknowledged.

Whether humanity has a moral obligation to prevent linguistic, or whether this would be interference in an inevitable process in which only the fittest survive, has been debated at several levels, some partly inspired by primordial romanticism (as in many revitalisation movements), some by instrumentalist 'modernism' (as in old and modern colonial situations, including the possible neocolonisation of central and eastern

Europe by the United States and Western Europe). An attachment to one's language or mother tongue as a central cultural core value seems, like ethnicity, to combine: draw on primordial, ascribed sources but to be shaped and actualised by (achieved) economic-political concerns (Fishman 1989, Smolicz 1979).

In addition, linguistic human rights are a necessary (but not sufficient) prerequisite for the maintenance of linguistic diversity on the planet as discussed earlier. Educational language rights are at the core of both efforts. Schooling, in addition to migration, was explored as one of the important causal factors in language loss at the Berkeley conference on endangered languages (see above). In a couple of generations schooling has succeeded in killing languages which without formal education had survived for millennia. Formal schooling may soon reach the entire world population.

My estimation is that languages which are not used as main media of instruction will cease to be passed on to children at the latest when we reach the fourth generation of groups where everybody goes to school - and many languages may be killed much earlier. The language which is used as the main medium in minority education is decisive for the future of languages on the planet (and too many of those who decide about minority education worldwide are (monolingual native) speakers of the killer languages)."

Sorry to be so late, and long, but I hope some of the legal quotes might be useful even for our future reactions.

Tove

Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (Dr), Roskilde University, 3.2.4., P.O.Box 260, 4000 Roskilde, Denmark; direct phone (was changed Aug.97) +45-46-742740; fax +45-46-743061; email: tovesk@babel.ruc.dk homepage <http://babel.ruc.dk/~tovesk/> home phone: 45-59 26 44 12 (was changed 5 August 1997 so check!)

Date: Thu, 26 Feb 1998 22:46:12 +1100 (EST)

## CELIAC

This is the Centro Editorial de Literatura Indígena, A.C., of Oaxaca Mexico, covered in some detail in two items in Ogmios #6 (31 October 1997). The institution provides native speakers with the skills and wherewithal to start producing literature in their own languages, regardless of the absence of a written tradition.

We recently heard this from one of its instigators, Russell Bernard:

Date: Fri, 27 Feb 1998 01:44:36 -0500

Dear Dr. Ostler:

... The letter from Margaret Allen asked that we write to let you know of issues that readers might want FEL to take up. anything you can do to help CELIAC will be much appreciated. CELIAC has a building and enough money to keep the doors open and the lights on, but they are struggling to find project funds. In particular, they have many books

ready for publication and need money to support their publication program. they can sell the books, but they need the money to pay for printing. We are looking for sponsors who might wish to support the publication of a book.

with best regards,

H. Russell Bernard  
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#### **Warao Indian Chief Elected to Venezuelan Academy of Language**

From: Julio Cesar Centeno  
<[Jcenteno@telcel.net.ve](mailto:Jcenteno@telcel.net.ve)>  
VHeadline/VENews: Sunday, March 15, 1998  
Patrick J. O'Donoghue

Warao indian chieftain Pedro Juan Krisologo (70) has been admitted into the prestigious Venezuelan Academy of Language for his bibliographic contributions and programs in favor of his ethnic group and will occupy the seat left vacant by his mentor, Capuchin friar Cesareo de Armellada.

The 23 members of the Academy made their decision based on Krisologo's unedited bibliographical studies, two dictionaries and other studies on Bari, Warao and Panaril indian legends.

Pedro Juan Krisologo laments that despite many Unesco and government programs, very little has been done to penetrate the indigenous world-view. "Luis Herrera Campins passed a law ordering bilingual teaching but only the Catholic missions are complying. The message and wealth contained in indigenous legends and sayings are ignored. Every time an indian elder dies, a complete library disappears."

The new member of the Academy, married to a Spaniard, is from Yawaraco, Santa Rosa del Cano Aragua, Delta Amacuro State. He remembers his great grandmother who died at the age of 120 and was raised by his grandmother. Missionary nuns taught him Spanish and sent him to high school where he studied under Friar Cesareo de Armellada, who recommended young Pedro Juan to Monsignor Pellin, director of the "La Religion" newspaper in Caracas.

The Spanish Ambassador to Venezuela granted him a scholarship when he was 17 to study History of the Americas at Madrid's Alcala de Henares University, and later he received his doctorate at Seville's Archivo de Indias in 1958.

In 1962, Pedro Juan obtained a Masters in Linguistic Anthropology at Mexico's Universidad Autonoma and returned to Spain for special courses on journalism and artistic education.

On returning to Venezuela, Krisologo did supply jobs at the Justice Ministry until he was nominated

President of the Delta Amacuro Anthropological & Historical Museum. "That fit me like a glove because I was able to do a lot of groundwork in social and educational programs."

"My great grandmother used to tell me that the stars we see today are new and the invisible ones we can't see belong to past years. Each generation has its own constellation and each constellation its own myths and each telluric circumstance has its guiding star ... everyone has his star in the heavens.

When a Warao indian dies he goes to an earlier world where his ancestors live and becomes part of the stars."

#### **Medals Of Honor Sought For Native American Code Talkers**

ANADARKO, OK, April 8, 1998 - Many know that in World War II a large number of Navajo served as "code talkers" for the US Marines in the Pacific. There have been books and articles published which cover their service, and they have been highly honored in many ways. Fewer people are aware, however, that there were other code talkers in both World Wars from many tribes who served in the Pacific and in Europe.

In all, at least 17 tribes have been identified as serving in this manner by Dr. William C. Meadows, an Anadarko (OK) scholar whose book on the Comanche code talkers of World War II is currently under review by the University of Texas Press.

Meadows identifies two types of code talking, which he calls Type I and Type II. The former involved actual encoding of messages and translation of code into the code talkers' native languages. The second type involved the planned or spontaneous use of Native American languages to relay strategic messages without further encoding.

An informational appendix is included below which identifies the tribes whose warriors served United States armed forces in this manner, beginning with the Choctaw in World War I, who practiced the first type of codetalking. In all instances, the use of these native languages foiled enemy attempts to decipher the communications of United States armed forces. The result was often a dramatic turn in the tide of battle, and thousands of allied lives were saved which would have inevitably been lost in continued fighting.

The code talking of these American Indian warriors was practiced under dangerous, harrowing conditions, willingly and without question. Perhaps even more remarkable, it was a service which they rendered to a government which had conquered their own people. Some of the code talkers lost their lives, and many were wounded during the two World Wars. Many of these brave men have since passed on to the land of the spirits, unrecognized by this country. The United States has never officially recognized the codetalkers, although the French government awarded them or their tribes their highest military honor in 1989.

A petition is being circulated by friends and families of Native American code talkers of World War I and II in a grassroots effort to get their country to recognize this valiant, ingenious service in an appropriate manner. The signatories to this petition are asking the U.S. government to rectify this omission now by awarding the code talkers of both types the Medal of Honor for their valiant, unique, and outstanding service above and beyond the call of duty.

=====

Appendix adapted from:

Meadows, William C. *They Spoke Comanche: the Comanche Code Talkers in World War II*. In Press. University of Texas Press, Austin, TX.

#### Code Talking Types 1 and 2: Explanation:

Type 1 = Formally developed special coded-encoded vocabularies in Native American languages.

Type 2 = Informal use of everyday non-coded Native American languages.

#### World War I

Type 1:

Choctaw (15)

Type 2:

Cherokee, Cheyenne, Comanche, Osage, Yankton Sioux

#### World War II

Type 1:

Comanche (17), Navajo (420)

Type 2:

Chippewa, Choctaw, Creek, Hopi, Kiowa, Menominee, Muscogee-Seminole, Oneida, Pawnee, Sac and Fox (19), Sioux (Lakota & Dakota)

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#### **Mapuches denounce Chilean Government at the UN Human Rights Commission**

##### COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

##### UNITED NATIONS

##### FIFTY-FOURTH SESSION

16 March - 24 April 1998-03-27

Item 16: Rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities

Document presented by International Peace Bureau

Mr. Chairman,

We thank you for the opportunity of speaking before the Human Rights Commission today, and are pleased to greet you, the members of the Commission, and the non-governmental organisations here present.

The Mapuches are a minority within the Chilean State, whose rights this State in practice does not recognise. These include: our linguistic and cultural rights; our right to a livelihood, for we are deprived of our land; and even the right to physical

integrity. Today, we are suffering brutal repression as in the worst years of the military dictatorship.

First:

Just over 100 years ago, the Mapuche nation, spread across the present-day states of Argentina and Chile, possessed a vast territory which, on the Chilean side, stretched from the Bio-Bio River down to the South. This territory was recognised first by treaties with the Spanish Crown and then by a series of treaties and parliaments held with the newly established Republic of Chile. With the military defeat of the Mapuche people in 1883, the Chileans took possession of the Mapuche territory by conquest --territory which the Mapuche communities still claim as theirs today. Despite the loss of national sovereignty and annexation to the Republic of Chile, the Mapuche have by no means renounced their claims to possession of their land and resources.

Without the recovery of these lands, and the inalienable right of property over them, the survival of the Mapuche communities and of their culture is under threat. Deprived of their lands, the Mapuche communities suffer growing social instability, with the evident danger of outbreaks of violence, which could have unforeseeable consequences for the peace and stability of the Chilean State as a whole.

We demand, therefore, the recognition of the fundamental rights of the Mapuche people, as guaranteed by legal instruments both national and international, such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, article 1.

Second:

With regard to the situation of its indigenous population, Chile in theory made an important step forward with the passing of Law No. 19.253 in 1993. This law establishes norms for the protection, promotion and development of the indigenous population and recognises a number of basic rights, such as the condition of the Mapuche as a People. It guarantees the protection of ownership of land and water, and the introduction of multi-cultural and bilingual education; it prohibits manifest and malicious discrimination. By this law, the government must consult the indigenous peoples of Chile on all issues affecting them directly. In reality, however, this law is not implemented. Yet, with the return to democracy and to the rule of law in Chile, with the strengthening of its legal institutions and its ratification of international treaties in the field of human rights, Chile presents a normal and civilised face to the rest of the world. But, if we look at recent events in Chile, it becomes clear that the treatment of the Mapuche people has not improved since the days of Pinochet's dictatorial regime. Injustice, violation of human rights, usurpation of Mapuche lands, inhuman and humiliating treatment, discrimination, racism etc. are in Chile still very much the order of the day.

Between October 1997 and March 1998, 85 Mapuches, among them women and children, were detained in Temuco, Malleco, Arauco, Angol and

Santiago. This was the result of the introduction of the Law of State Security and the Anti-terrorist law in 5 communes in the Mapuche region. The Chilean police, on the basis of these legal instruments, carried out an exaggerated military operation in the entire region. Together with anti-terrorist forces, and using military vehicles and helicopters, the police patrolled the area, entering homes, threatening the inhabitants. Detentions took place at any hour of day or night. According to the statement of one of the detained, he was held incommunicado for 7 days (whereas Chilean law stipulates 5 days), during which he suffered inhuman and degrading treatment.

In a confrontation between security guards of the logging company Arauco S.A. and Mapuche families from the Pichi Lonkollan and Pilin Mapu communities of the Lumaco sector of Malleco Province, who were trying to halt the exploitation of forestland traditionally theirs, 2 trucks were burnt -- an incident which, in our view, could hardly constitute a "threat to the interior security of the state". The reaction of the Chilean state towards the Mapuche population in this case seems to us to be irresponsible and totally exaggerated.

### Third

Projects for the improvement of infrastructures, such as the building of new roads and dams, are being carried out without the prior consent of the communities concerned, in violation of the Indigenous Law No. 19.253 of 5. October 1993. Not only has the Chilean government not implemented this Indigenous Law, due, it says, to a "lack of economic resources" (at the very moment in which Chile is buying weapons worth hundreds of millions of dollars), but it has manifestly violated it. For example, the imminent construction of a series of hydroelectric power stations in the Bio-Bio river in the Mapuche-Pewenche region, without the consent of the communities affected, is in direct contradiction with Article 13 of the Indigenous Law, which provides that "Indigenous lands, as national interest demands, shall enjoy the protection of this law. They shall not be alienated, seized, nor acquired by limitation, except between communities or indigenous persons belonging to the same ethnic group". A large number of indigenous communities are facing such situations, due to the implementation of a number of mega-projects such as the Coast Road, the Temuco By Pass, urban expansion, exploitation of forests, privatisation of coastal areas and their waters etc. All these projects, far from benefiting Chile's most needy, plunge them ever deeper into poverty, leading to enormous social and cultural problems within our people. We need hardly mention the disastrous environmental consequences of the above projects.

We should like to make it absolutely clear that the Mapuche people are not opposed to progress, but want fair, sustainable and harmonious development, with full respect of their rights and ancestral values, and a development process from which they are not absolutely excluded.

We believe that the recognition of cultural diversity in Chile will mark the beginning of a historic reparation which today the indigenous peoples are anxiously awaiting, and which sooner or later the Chilean State will have to consider. For only in this way will a solid base for coexistence with the original inhabitants of the country be created. Our demands are not of a violent nature, but are based on full respect of the Chilean legal order, which includes the norms of the common law which traditionally governed the Mapuche people, reserving for ourselves the right to self-determination, as the basis for the protection and development of the Mapuche in their ancestral territory.

We demand also the ratification of ILO Convention 169 by Chile, as this is one of the few texts, if not the only text, which recognises the inalienable rights of indigenous peoples.

We thank you.

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### Circle of African Historical Linguists

I'm interested to submit my paper. I was at Düsseldorf during last Congress (International Congress of Historical Linguistics). I noticed that there was not another African besides me. And I supposed that it was because of the lack of organisation and a problem of means. So I'm organising a Circle of Young Central African Historical Linguists (CYCAHL) in order to attend the next Congress of Vancouver 99. ... If not from the staff of ICHL XIV I expect some help from the Canadian Government....

Please let's make sure that African Historical Linguists will not miss this rendez-vous (again).

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### Rights of Roma in Germany: Sinti and Roma warn of "discrimination"

Wiesbaden / GERMANY ( RNN Correspondent ) May the 19th 1998

The Central Committee of the German Sinti and Roma has warned of a discrimination "of their language. It would be a scandal", an arbitrary act" and an international disgrace", if Romanes would not be included in the European Charta for Minority Languages" like the languages Frisian, Sorbian, Danish and Low German, said the chairman, Romani Rose, on Friday.

He emphasizes that this is the more obscure, as Romanes is the language of one of the ethnic groups that have been affected worst by the holocaust. Due to the statements of Rose, the language of the German Sinti and Roma is not being taken into account in the ratification law. Germany had signed the European Charta for Minority Languages" in 1992, and since then the Central Committee has demanded the consideration of Romanes in the Charta.

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*Subsequent comments suggested that the UK was no more helpful towards Welsh and Scots Gaelic. (Ed.)*

## 5. Allied Societies and Activities

### **Languages in the Southern Kalahari**

*Date: Fri, 30 Jan 1998 15:35:12 +0200*

Dear Nick

Thank you for the copy of Ogmios. Very useful. Also makes me feel less alone in this work!

I'd like to give you a quick update on the Southern Kalahari situation. I worked extensively with Hugh Brody in November last year. We did a lot of cultural mapping, genealogy work and following down word of mouth referrals. In the end we identified a total of 9 fluent =Khomani speakers living in townships around Upington and Keimoes - hundreds of kilometres from their original birth places in the Kalahari.

Owing to the advanced age of most of the speakers and the huge distances we used audio and video tapes to record messages and share them between the communities. This turned out to be very successful. Elsie Vaalbooi, the 96 year old woman in Rietfontein, was surprised and charmed to watch Anna Kassie and Griet Seekoei talk about making

tsamma melon pap and using snuff on a video we had just made.

Elsie recorded a five minute message in =Khomani for the other nine speakers. We played the tape and video-taped the response. It was a great moment. The highlight was sitting in Keimoes with Willem Springbok. 18 children and grandchildren sat to hear their father's language for the first time. When we left they all waved enthusiastically and said "!hoi ca" the =Khomani greeting and farewell, which they had only just learned.

I am just heading to the Kalahari again and we hope to bus all the speakers to the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park, where they will meet up with the core traditional group and give testimony on their birth places in the Park. This will assist the land claim and help the community recover its history.

You may wish to share this with your readers. Also anyone who wishes to contact us should do so at the San Institute: [sasi@iafrica.com](mailto:sasi@iafrica.com)

Thank you and Best wishes

!Hoi ca

Nigel Crawhall

*Date: Wed, 18 Feb 1998 12:19:37 +0000*

Dear Nick

Just a quick update. We spent two scorching weeks in the Kalahari with tremendous results. We brought 8 of the "bushman language" speakers from Upington up to the desert to meet with the core traditional (but younger- post language death) generation.

Many many good things transpired, but the best, from a language point of view, was that the community decided they wanted to make a word list of animals. We built a trilingual word list, as a group exercise, in !Kabee, Afrikaans and Nama.

So, you may ask where does this word !kabee come in. Once the eight speakers, plus Elsie Vaalbooi, started to talk more and reawaken their knowledge and fluency - they pointed out that =Khomani is a misnomer. Academics from the turn of the century have used this term, but the community says it is a clan name that does not apply to all of them. They refer to themselves in the aggregate as Saasi, and the language as !Kabee.

Despite there only being 11 speakers (so far) the community is really committed to teaching the language to each other and especially to the grandchildren. All this enthusiasm cannot be separated from their optimism that they will get land back during the land claim process and once again have access to the desert and its natural resources.

Hope you are well. Best wishes



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(and see Geoff Perrott's appeal above, in section 3).

### German "Society for Endangered Languages" (Gesellschaft für bedrohte Sprachen e.V.)

According to reliable estimates, a third of the world's 6500 languages will become extinct in the next century. More pessimistic estimates even predict the death of up to 90 % of our natural languages. The disappearance, in the near future, of most of the languages (and dialects) of the world will deprive us of a significant portion of the cultural and historical heritage of humankind. In the last few years action in response to this threat of language extinction has been taking shape in the form of national and international activities for the maintenance and documentation of endangered languages.

In cooperation with the Committee on Endangered Languages of the German Linguistic Society, a group of German linguists founded the independent "Society for Endangered Languages" ("Gesellschaft fuer bedrohte Sprachen e.V.") in Cologne in November 1997. The goal of this non-profit society is to promote the use, the preservation, and the documentation of endangered languages and dialects.

To achieve this aim, the "Society for Endangered Languages" will try

- to support endangered languages projects and to advise the projects' staff with respect to problems of how to plan, carry out and evaluate these projects;
- to promote field research, language documentation and other scientific projects that will contribute to the preservation of endangered languages and dialects;
- to initiate and support activities that promote the pursuit of these topics within the curricula of universities and other educational institutions;
- to promote national and international cooperation between scientists that are involved in the preservation and documentation of endangered languages and dialects; and
- to inform, as comprehensively as possible, the scientific and general public about the situation of endangered languages and dialects and about the problems such speech communities face.

It goes without saying that the "Society for Endangered Languages" ("Gesellschaft für bedrohte Sprachen e.V.") aims to fully cooperate with all the speech communities involved. It will endeavour to consider and realize these speech communities' own

ideas with respect to the documentation and preservation of their languages or dialects.

The members of the founding managing board are: Hans-Jürgen Sasse (University of Cologne, President), Gunter Senft (MPI for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen, Vice-President), Dagmar Jung (University of Cologne, secretary), Werner Drossard (University of Cologne, cashier), Utta von Gleich (Hamburg, advisor), Otto Jastrow (University of Erlangen, advisor), and Jan Würrer (University of Bielefeld, advisor).

Applications for membership should be sent to the managing board of the society. Annual membership fees are 30.- DM for members with regular income and 15.- DM for students and members without income.

Further information on the Society for Endangered Languages is available under the following address:

Gesellschaft fuer bedrohte Sprachen  
 c/o Hans-Juerger Sasse  
 Institut fuer Sprachwissenschaft  
 Universitaet zu Koeln  
 50923 Koeln  
 e-mail: GBS@uni-koeln.de

### Anyone for Bannock?

Date: Fri, 24 Apr 1998 10:25:42 +0800 (WST)  
 Doug Whalen <whalen@haskins.yale.edu> wrote:

*The following message comes from a concerned individual whose in-laws speak an endangered Native American language. I told her that I would try to find someone who might be interested in working with the Bannock elders. If anyone is interested, could you contact Cindy Senicka directly? Her email address is at the bottom of her message. I don't know this language or its situation, but it does have the first ingredient for a successful project: dedicated and concerned native speakers. And they seem to recognize the need for linguistic expertise and know that they lack it.*

*I hope that someone is interested. Also, Ms. Senicka deserves support for the efforts she has already taken.*

Hello,

I am not a linguist but am seeking information or the proper resource.

I was at a small gathering of elders at Idaho State University, the topic was the Bannocks of Idaho. One of the elders is my mother-in-law. She stated that there were only about 30 or so fluent Bannock speakers left. All elders. The younger people only speak phrases or totally English.

About 15 to 20 years ago they had made reel-to-reel tapes with the older generation documenting the language and history. Those tapes have been lost in the meantime. She and other elders have written

down vocabularies and phrases, etc. But they need assistance organizing the work. It is in a very disorganized state.

I asked my mother-in-law if it would be OK to check out resources. I know that there are groups which are looking into language preservation and retention and need languages to document. Well, here is a language.

Shoshone and Bannock people live on Fort Hall. The school here teaches Shoshone but not Bannock. The Shoshone are the majority here.

Bannock is a Paiute related language, Shoshone is Uto-Aztecan I think... I may have it wrong.

Thank you for any assistance you can give.

Cindy

Senicynt@isu.edu

### Recent Developments in the Support of Scots Gaelic

*Nancy Dorian wrote to the Endangered Languages List on 17 May 1998:*

...Efforts of behalf of Scottish Gaelic didn't get seriously underway until decades after similar efforts had already long been undertaken in Ireland and in Wales, but they've picked up a good deal of steam in a fairly short time-span.

Gaelic preschool playgroups were begun in 1972-73; the 1st one in Edinburgh was begun in 1973. By 1991 there were 85, with many, many more in the planning stage. A Gaelic Language Promotion Trust was set up in 1976, with the objective of raising and investing "large sums" of money for the future development of the Gaelic language. Gaelic-medium primary education followed in due course, after the playgroup movement had gotten underway, and Gaelic-medium secondary education followed in turn, although it hasn't grown as dramatically as yet as has primary Gaelic-medium education.

... Comann an Luchd Ionnsachaidh, the Gaelic Learners' Association, ... was founded in 1984, and Sabhal Mor Ostaig, the Gaelic business college in Skye, which specializes in technical and business/secretarial courses in Gaelic but also offer relatively short-term language instruction and a host of likewise short-term cultural courses. Some economically important business ventures have grown up in Skye, concomitantly: for example, a firm that creates sub-titles for film (especially English subtitles for Gaelic TV programs, films, & such, I think, with the goal of making them accessible to English-speakers and to Gaelic learners). There are also, since 1993, community-base development initiatives in four mainland Highland locations, with a field officer assigned to each.

Comunn na Gaidhlig (CNAG -- the Gaelic Association), based in Inverness... fosters economic development by trying to encourage jobs for Gaelic speakers and start-up enterprises involving Gaelic, also linking the Gaelic arts community with the tourism trade.

There's a Gaelic Books Council, a Gaelic Arts Project, and groups working on Gaelic videos, in addition to a much expanded broadcast industry (radio & TV both). Gaelic radio has its own broadcast frequency now, but there is no TV channel reserved for Gaelic, as there is for Welsh in Wales and (only recently) for Irish in Ireland. There's a Gaelic Educational trust, launched in 1990 (perhaps a successor to the Gaelic Language Promotion Trust of '76?), Urras Foghlum na Gaidhlig, to raise money for fostering Gaelic; their first appeal for funds, in 1990-91, was aimed at establishing a Gaelic cultural center in Glasgow.

There was great excitement in 1996 over the announcement of a planned Taigh na Gaidhlig ('House of Gaelic') in Edinburgh. It is to include recital & exhibition areas, a bookshop, a library, a cafe, creche, and "outreach & seminar rooms", with services to be provided thru the medium of Gaelic. Members of this list will perhaps not be entirely surprised to hear that there has been some sentiment among Gaelic speakers to the effect that Taigh na Gaidhlig should be reserved for actual speakers of Gaelic and barred to English speakers, who (the argument goes) have all the rest of the city of Edinburgh at their disposal for the speaking of English. English speakers, especially those with some interest in Gaelic (a rather large number, since there seems to be growing good will toward Gaelic in contemporary Scotland), haven't been overly pleased by this suggestion. Given past attitudes in Lowland Scotland toward the Highlands and toward Gaelic, it will be a very large positive step, symbolically speaking, if there comes to be a very modern and urban center in the capitol where Gaelic is routinely spoken by urban-dwelling Gaelic speakers going about essentially urban lives.

On a personal note I remember well the surprise and pleasure I felt when I saw two men in business suits, carrying briefcases, speaking Gaelic together in Portree, Isle of Skye, in 1964. There were vanishingly few opportunities to see anything of that sort in the Highlands in the 1960s, and that fact can stand as a measure of how far the Gaelic language has come in the last 30 years. Whether the very real resurgence in terms of Gaelic learning will lead to a rise in the home transmission of Gaelic is an unanswered question as yet.



**6. Forthcoming FEL Conference:  
Endangered Languages - What Role for  
the Specialist? Edinburgh, 25-27  
September 1998**

The workshop will provide a forum for researchers and activists working for the maintenance of indigenous languages that face an uncertain future.

**Conference Scope and Aims**

In recent years, number of support organizations have established themselves, all aiming to mobilize research effort, popular opinion and money in defence of declining languages.

The question is often raised of how these outsiders can really help the cause that they have identified. Language communities must have inner strength in order to survive, or at least the will and the means to go on using their traditional tongues. Outside organizations, however well-meaning, cannot supply such qualities directly. Some ask whether the organizations even have the right to try to interfere.

This conference, the second organized by the Foundation for Endangered Languages, is seeking answers to one part of this question. How can language specialists, whether professional linguists, educators, media professionals or whoever, actually contribute to language maintenance?

We shall be looking for testimony on the actual effects of professional involvement on small language communities throughout the world: both community members, and the professionals themselves will have their tales to tell.

We do not expect a common set of conclusions to emerge from this sharing of experience and analysis. But we shall be looking at the variety we find, and asking if it points to a good way to define the roles of the support organizations: how they can complement one another, perhaps sharing techniques, perhaps transmitting knowledge?

**Some Themes addressed:**

When does the professional best act as an external consultant, when as a team-player?

What are useful relations:

- among grammarians, lexicographers and sociolinguists?
- among community-leaders, language-activists and language-scientists?
- among ordinary speakers, creative users, broadcasters and publishers?

What have been great successes in specialist language work, and what motivated the people responsible?

How does local work benefit from EL support organizations with a global or continental view? Is the need for technical assistance, production of materials, publicity, funding, political agitation?

Should EL support organizations themselves specialize?

If so how: regionally, or by function?

The dates will be 25-27 September 1998, and the venue the Pollock Halls in Edinburgh. There will be a preliminary volume of proceedings distributed at the Conference.

Presentations will last twenty minutes each, with a further ten minutes for discussion. All presentations should be accessible largely in English, but use of the languages of interest, for quotation or exemplification, may well be appropriate.

Besides the formal sessions there will be a social events, including a visit to local sights in Edinburgh.

**Organizers:**

- Dr Nicholas Ostler                      Foundation  
for Endangered Languages, Bath, England
- Prof Kenneth Mackinnon              Universities  
of Edinburgh and Hertfordshire
- Dr Briony Williams                      University of  
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Programme Committee:**

Akira Yamamoto, Mahendra K Verma, Andrew Woodfield, Anthony Woodbury, Briony Williams, Tasaku Tsunoda, Jane Simpson, Mari Rhydwen, Jon Reyhner, Nicholas Ostler, David Nash, Christopher Moseley, Kenneth Mackinnon, John Clews, Margaret Allen.

**Provisional Programme**

	<b>Friday, 25 September</b>		
12.00	Registration		
	<b>Session 1:</b>	<b>Endangered Languages: What Role for the Specialist?</b>	
2.30	Nicholas Ostler	Welcome: the Foundation, and the Conference	
2.55	Briony Williams	Local introduction	
3.00	Donna B. Gerdtz	Keynote Address: The Linguist in Language Revitalization Programmes	Salishan, Canada
	<b>Session 2</b>	<i>Un peu d'histoire...</i>	
4.30	Kim Hardie	Role of Specialists: the Case of Flemish in Belgium	Germanic
5.00	Jens Eberhard Jahn	Istria: Between Regional Ethnic Awakening And Nationalism	Rom./Slav./Alban., Adriatic
5.30	Ken Mackinnon	The Past and Future of Scots Gaelic	Celtic, UK
	<b>Saturday, 26 September</b>		
	<b>Session 3</b>	<b>Successful interactions</b>	
9.30	Mick Mallon	A Partnership: Two Old Men	Eskimo
10.00	Jon Reyhner, Gina Cantoni	What Educators Can Do to Aid Community Efforts at Indigenous Language Maintenance and Revitalization	USA
10.30			
	<b>Session 4</b>	<b>Understanding the Language from the Inside</b>	
11.30	N. Louanna Furbee, Lori Stanley and Tony Arkeketa	Two Kinds of Expert in Language Renewal	Siouan, USA
12.00	Roberto Bolognesi	Standardization of Endangered Languages: the Case of Sardinian	Romance, Italy
12.30	Veronica Grondona	Endangered languages, their speakers and the language specialist: the case of Mocovi	Waikuruan, Argentina
2.30	<b>Session 5</b>	<b>Annual General Meeting</b>	
	<b>Session 6</b>	<b>Understanding the Language from the Outside</b>	
4.30	Diego Quesada	Competing Interpretations of History: What if they are Wrong?	Chibchan, Costa Rica
5.00	Tapani Salminen	Minority Languages in a Society in Turmoil: the case of the Northern Languages of the Russian Federation	Ural./Tungus./Turk/Paleosib.
5.30	M. Lynn Landweer	Indicators of Ethnolinguistic Vitality: Case Study of Two Languages, Labu and Vanimo	Austronesian/Skoko, NiuGini
	<b>Sunday, 27 September</b>		
	<b>Session 7</b>	<b>The New Role of Information Technology</b>	
9.30	Bojan Petek	Slovenian Language in the Information Age	Slav, Slovenia
10.00	RC MacDougall	Effects and Defects of E-mail	Mohawk, US
10.30	Mari Rhydwen	Strategies for Doing the Impossible	Australia
	<b>Session 8</b>	<b>Taking Stock</b>	
11.30	Hilaire Valiquette	First Things First: on Language Preservation/Revitalization Efforts	USA
12.00	Akira Yamamoto	Language Community, Scientific Community and Mutually Supported Community	USA
12.30	All	Final Discussion	

## 7. Overheard on the Web

### **Hopi Radio**

in REVITALIZING HOPI, by Jim Wilce, Northern Arizona U, *writing in the Society for Linguistic Anthropology's newsletter (March 1998)*

Were the Hopi language to become moribund, the tragedy would surely be felt by those who trace their academic ancestry to Benjamin Lee Whorf. The Hopi Tribe's current efforts to revitalize Hopi, however, are manifold; the Hopi Foundation helps channel these efforts. Hopi education officials continue to develop a Hopi curriculum for the schools on the reservation, and a variety of language revitalization efforts form a central part of the work of the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office. Meanwhile, Emory Sekaquaptewa of the University of Arizona's Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology, and Northern Arizona University's Anita Poleahla are working with Hopi students on projects that include language revitalization. Perhaps the greatest enthusiasm, however, is being stirred by one effort that is about to reach fruition- a new public radio station dubbed Hopi Radio.

By December 1998, Hopi Radio- a project of the Hopi Foundation- will be broadcasting from Third Mesa in northern Arizona. According to Radio Project Director Rosanda Suetopka Thayer, the Hopi Radio Board and the Hopi Foundation have raised over \$100,000 toward construction and operating costs, qualifying for a grant from the U.S. Commerce Department. Hopi Radio, which is located in Navajo County, submitted a proposal to the County Board of Supervisors for \$10,000 from their yearly county budget toward the Radio Project's operations, and the request was unanimously granted. Each of the twelve Hopi villages are also being asked to contribute.

Programming is currently being planned and developed. Professor Sekaquaptewa has served as narrator for the promotional video created by a filmmaker who serves on the Hopi Radio Board. Sekaquaptewa's linguistics students will soon begin preparing Hopi pedagogical materials for broadcast and will develop strategies for using these same materials with Hopis living off the reservation. Doran Dalton, Chairman of the Hopi Foundation and also a member of the Radio Project Board, says there will certainly be broadcasts in Hopi of news and activities on the reservation.

Not all of the station's programming will be in Hopi. A recent survey indicates that there are enough Hopis monolingual in English that programming will be bilingual, although a central goal of the Project is to encourage more use of the Hopi language in everyday contexts.

Speaking for herself, Northern Arizona's Anita Poleahla reports having overcome her fear of speaking Hopi (a fear instilled at a BIA boarding school), forcing herself to speak Hopi around her

office. Poleahla has begun to address tribal meetings in Hopi.

At the non-traditional end of the spectrum, the language could contribute to the lyrics of popular Hopi reggae bands like that of Casper Lomayesva- "The 602 Band, which performs "reggae from a Hopi Third Mesa perspective." The band helped raise funds for the Radio Project in a December concert publicized by Tim Shinabarger of the Arizona Daily Sun, whose reportage led this author to the story.

For more information about the Hopi Radio Project, contact Rosanda Suetopka, Project Director, c/o Hopi Foundation, Box 705, Hotevilla, AZ 86030 or call +1-520-734-2358.

*Jim Wilce, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, Northern Arizona University, Box 15200, Flagstaff, AZ 86011-5200, USA*

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email jim.wilce@nau.edu  
http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jmw22/*

### **American Indian News from Russia and Mexico**

*Gordon J Bronitsky wrote on 12 Apr 1998.*

First American Magazine is the largest circulation magazine dedicated to American Indians published in Russia, with readers throughout Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Eastern Europe, and Tazhikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and elsewhere. Bronitsky and Associates is a firm which works with American Indian individuals, communities and organizations throughout the United States (including Alaska) and Canada to bring to the world the best that Indian America has to offer.

First American Magazine asked Bronitsky and Associates to work with them to bring American Indian artists, musicians, etc to Russia to begin a long-term cultural exchange. They hope to bring the best of traditional Indian America to Russia, probably beginning with a tour by Clem Holy Eagle, a Lakota hoop dancer who will be touring the neighboring country of Finland in October. It should also educate the Russian public about contemporary Indian America, through contemporary dance, jazz, painting, hot glass art, Indian-owned tourism, and more. In part, this opportunity stems from the successful tour of William Yazzie, a Navajo storyteller and fluteplayer, to Belarus in 1996, the first American Indian to tour that country. Mexico:

Bronitsky also announce the signing of their first client from indigenous Mexico, the Teatro Loil Maxil, a Tzeltal and Tzotzil Maya theater company from San Cristóbal de las Casas in the Mexican state of Chiapas. Chiapas has been the site of an ongoing dispute between indigenous peoples and the Mexican government. This will allow Tzeltal and Tzotzil Maya to present their own stories in their own voices, their own words. Plans are underway for a European tour in the summer of 1999.

This drive to present Indian voices to the world began with the publication in Ireland of Rex Lee Jim, a Navajo language poet, in Navajo, English, and Irish in April, 1998. On a summer tour of Ireland in 1998, the author will read from his works in Navajo and English, accompanied by an Irish poet who will read Mr. Jim's work in Irish translation.

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Tel/FAX +39 35 236554*

### Maori and Hawai'ian Language Nests

*On 2 March 1998 Aggie Brockman, of Yellowknife, NWT <twoolf@ssimicro.com> wrote:*

I'm wondering if anyone has recent information or any evaluation of the language nests in New Zealand established to bring back the Maori language? They seemed like such a great idea 10 years ago, but I'm wondering if they have increased use of the language.

*Next day, Peter J Keegan <pkeegan@netlink.co.nz> replied:*

I have been involved in a research project (commissioned by Te Kohanga Reo National Trust) that located some of the original cohort (1981/1982) of kohanga reo (language nest) students to ascertain the impact of kohanga reo on the lives of these students.

Some of those students have lost their knowledge of Maori language, but still have positive attitudes to Maori language & culture. One of the main reasons for language loss is that there was very little Maori-medium education available at that time (bilingual programmes etc.) beyond kohanga reo (kohanga reo caters for 0-5 year olds only).

We are sure that kohanga reo have contributed to an increase in the use of the Maori language - but we don't know if the number of Maori speakers is increasing or not! It is important that to remember that kohanga reo are one of a number of Maori language revitalization initiatives making an important contribution.

Hence language nests are still a good idea. However, language nests in a vacuum will not increase the number of speakers in any endangered language.

Further details on the current state of Maori can be found on my web pages.  
<<http://webpages.netlink.co.nz/~pkeegan/>>

*And Rosemary Henze <Henze@arcoakland.org> added:*

I believe the efforts to revitalize Hawaiian have produced some pretty remarkable gains in number of speakers who can speak Hawaiian as a second language. (through Hawaiian immersion schooling

and Punana Leo preschools, modelled after the Maori Kohanga Reo). Whether these students are actually using Hawaiian in the community is less evident. You can contact No'eau Warner for more detailed information <Noeau@hawaii.edu>.

### What Language is Revitalized After All?

The above exchange led to a further debate on the Endangered Languages List.

*On 3 Mar 1998, Bob Richmond of Knoxville TN <RSRICHMOND@aol.com> added:*

The great success story in revival of an endangered language is undoubtedly Israeli Hebrew. This was a minuscule speech community in 1880, with about four million native speakers today (including a fair number of monolingual speakers), the fourth largest Semitic language in fact.

I have often wondered what the experience of Israeli Hebrew has to teach people trying to sustain the world's many endangered languages.

*After some discussion of whether the community which revived Hebrew as a living everyday language was a generalisable situation, the debate went off in another direction:*

*Bob Rankin, University of Kansas, <rankin@lark.cc.ukans.edu> put in:*

... There is also the interesting hypothesis of Paul Wexler that modern Israeli Hebrew should not be considered the descendant of ancient Hebrew but rather should be looked upon as a relexified (N.E.) Slavic language. I am not in a position to defend this view (in fact I attacked it when he implied something similar for modern Romanian about which I \*was\* equipped to speak), but he seems to believe that the structure of the modern language is really Semitic only in theory and that the syntax is thoroughly Slavic down to idioms.

There is a point to this digression however. Consider the difference in trying to teach, say, an Algonquian language (a) in all its morphological glory and (b) as relexified English. Obviously progress will be slow and painful in the former case but fast and possibly quite successful in the latter. Wexler emphasizes the great rapidity with which Slavic-speaking immigrants to Israel learn Hebrew.

This doesn't mean we should try to "revamp" endangered languages (although the thought does occur in the case of long-extinct languages), but it may explain part of the success of Hebrew. If Wexler is anything close to right, I think we must be careful in citing Hebrew as a precedent in language revival...

*Then the tale was taken up by Sheila Shannon <sshannon@CASTLE.CUDENVER.EDU>*

I completed a nine-month ethnographic study of Irish revival among English speakers last year (working with Padraig O Riagain at the Linguistics Institute of Ireland). I visited 15 All Irish schools

throughout the 32 counties (meaning I also went to Belfast) and talked to anyone who would talk to me. These are public schools (funded by the government including the British government in the north) in which Irish is the medium of instruction. The culture of the schools is thoroughly Irish as well -- sports, music, the everyday language, etc. Over the last twenty years the number of these schools has grown dramatically -- 11 primary schools in 1972 to over 130 today...

As Rosemary Henze said of Hawaiian, however, how much these students of All-Irish students use Irish outside of school remains to be calculated. I argue that the important thing is that these children are completely engaged at school, do well, and do it all through the Irish language and culture. Every school I visited had principals, teachers, students, and parents who were thrilled to be there. In one high school parents lined up outside the office I was in to be interviewed.

One issue that emerged, which reminds me of the Israeli Hebrew story, was that the Irish these children acquire is not "standard" Irish. It is Anglicized among other linguistic things that happen with the acquisition of a second language like fossilization. But one language activist, a native speaker himself, said that even if the Irish of these children wasn't the Irish of his grandfather at least it was a "living language."

Victor Golla <vgolla@ucdavis.edu> rounded it off:

... languages are not "objects" to be "saved", but processes of social interaction that define particular social groups. If no significant social boundaries set a group off from the ambient society, no amount of effort by linguists and educators is going to preserve a language, except as a documented artifact.

But the reverse is also true. Once a social group achieves sufficient cohesion and independence (as Israel did decades ago, and as the "natural" ethnic components of the EU are now doing) there is no stopping language being used for identity purposes, but the nature of that "language" is a socially negotiable fact, not a historical or cultural-heritage one except in the most general of senses. Either way, linguists and other scholars are peripheral and largely irrelevant, except when we play at being social activists. Our real job is to document and reflect, and, from time to time, to provide tools for communities, and the individuals that make them up, to use for their own social purposes.

#### Some Principles for Practical Orthography

Trond Trosterud wrote (*Endangered Languages List* - 12 May 1998):

I have been working with this problem in different settings, and have come to the conclusion that the following principles should be guiding the work of language planning, thereby replacing the unanimous "Roman first/computer first" view with a "language first" view:

1. First priority is given to the needs of the languages in question. All phonemic distinctions should be kept in writing.
2. As for existing written languages, they should not need to adjust themselves to existing computer systems. On the contrary, the standardizers must see to it that the computers adjust to the existing languages, so that the users do not need to change their habits. This is especially crucial in the case of minority languages, where there is enough unstability already, without unnecessary disputes over changing graphemes.
3. New written languages should restrict themselves to the grapheme repertoire of ISO/IEC 10646-1 (<http://charts.unicode.org/Unicode.charts/normal/Unicode.html>), possibly also to ISO/IEC 8859-1 (=Latin 1; i.e. the C0 and C1 sets of the above), the most important Internet standard), or (when creating cyrillic-based etc written languages: to 8859-5 (<http://www.indigo.ie/eg/emono/latincy.jpg>) etc).
4. When there are more phonemes than there are symbols in the basic (Latin or Cyrillic or Arabic or...) alphabet, this can be solved in three ways:
  - a. by modifying letters by diacritic marks
  - b. by using digraphs
  - c. by creating new letters

All three techniques have been utilized. From a computer technology point of view, a. and b. are to be preferred. 10646 already consists of most of the diacritic possibilities that will be needed.

Comments on these principles:

Ad 1:

Written languages are powerful instruments. If this principle is not respected, the written language will come back for a revenge. Thus, a bad orthography that fails to distinguish e.g. between long and short vowels, between different tones, etc., **in cases where these distinctions are phonemic** (systematically utilized to distinguish between word forms), may come back and take their revenge, so that younger speakers fail to learn their languages properly. I have seen several instances of that in the Soviet Union. Russian orthography does not mark stress, but stress very seldom is the only cue to distinguishing words (the context fixes it). I guess that they figured they should treat the diacritic length marks of minority languages as they did with Russian stress marks: Use them in dictionaries and perhaps in primers, not otherwise. Today the young speakers have often lost the fundamental length distinction.

If the new Akha orthography has other means of marking tone, fine. In norwegian, we have appr 5000 minimal pairs of the type "lande" (to land) "landet" (a land). The final t is not pronounced, but the forms are different, since they have different

tone. Thus, the distinction can be marked in many ways, but when it is systematic it really should be marked (well, perhaps it does not necessarily have to in Norwegian, but that is a different story not relevant here).

But if Akha is a tone language (as I understand from Matthews earlier remarks) and this distinction is not respected, then that is BAD, and should be corrected. Look to Vietnamese. They have both the software and the linguistic groundwork you need (evidently the missionaries did get something right, at least in the 1600 c.!).

Ad 2:

Contrary to what people speaking 7-bit-languages (a-z) may think, it is possible to cope with other grapheme repertoires. I know only **two** a-z languages: English and Indonesian. And, and this is important, threatened languages (like human patients) need stable conditions in order to recover. In case of a written language reform, there will ALWAYS be some stubborn people refusing to change their habits, and due to human nature many of them will be old, and again due to the ecology of the language, many of these oldtimers will be the ones that have the best knowledge of the language (when language loss is going on, that is). Thus, I would really think twice before changing anything. If the old orthography is REALLY BAD, and if the people supports the new (or if a new orthography can eliminate several orthographies for the same language, then OK). But NEVER change orthographies because of computer problems. Give them Macintoshes instead :-).

Ad 3:

With tabula rasa, new graphemes should of course be chosen from within the already standardized repertoire. Latin 1 has many vowels but few consonants, so very often latin 1 is not enough. With ISO/IEC 10646 around the corner (already there in Windows NT, you only have to purchase the fonts) I do not see the need to stick to Latin 1 at any price.

Ad 4:

Czech chose the first, English the second and Russian the third of these options. New letters should not be created any more, since there are enough of them already. The one-phoneme-one-grapheme-principle makes the best written language (leaving the issue of dialect variation aside, which is a different discussion), digraphs should thus be avoided. One should take into account the orthographic principles of the surrounding languages, and where e.g. English is the majority language, a new written language should probably write the postalveolar fricative as "sh" as well. This must not go too far, though. English marks a subphonemic distinction between [k+] (written k) and [k-] written c), there is no reason to impose that one on a new language as well. More grave examples come from Russian, where the palatalizing conventions of the vowel grapheme of the written language was introduced into languages without this distinction, or with quite different palatalization processes.

Bottom line:

Computers should be used for other things than destroying written languages. Grammar rules, and the computer serves, not vice versa.

...

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## 8. Places to Go, on the Web and in the World

### **The Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights**

was published in June of 1996 in the Mercator-linguistic law and legislation Bulletin. Its website address is: <http://www.troc.es/mercator> and its e-mail: [ciemen@troc.es](mailto:ciemen@troc.es).

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### **Monument for Dying Languages**

As an artist I am working on an Internet art project. See what it looks like on the site:

<http://www.burgaud.demon.nl>

The project is a web site devoted to seriously endangered languages all over the world. It is not a scientific compilation of all endangered languages, according to Ethnologue, but has to be seen as a virtual work of art.

It is not a closed project, but "a work in progress", in permanent evolution. Neither is it the creation of a single man (me), but a collective enterprise. It is not "My page" it is the language page.

The functions of the web site is to let know about the existence of dying languages by art to a large audience and to increase the possibility of permanent contact with and between all native speakers of endangered languages. My interest in languages comes from the facts that I am a poet, that I studied French linguistics at university, and that, during my youth in Brittany, I had to witness the decline of the Breton language.

Would you like to participate? Would you mind to making or organizing one or more pages?

*drs. Patrick-Henri Burgaud, Zypendaalseweg 75*  
*6814 CE Arnhem, the Netherlands*  
*tel/fax +31- 26 4438902*



burgaud@burgaud.demon.nl  
Arnhem, April 1998

### Numerals

An amazing scholarly site listing the numbers from 1 to 10 in over 2,400 languages.

<http://www.tezcat.com/~markrose/>

### Lowland Languages

There is a mailing list called "Lowland languages" dealing with Low Saxon, Frisian, Scots, Dutch and Afrikaans.

The address is:

[rhahn@u.washington.edu](mailto:rhahn@u.washington.edu)

They also have some Frisian related material on their website:

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

[Athens/1615/rhahn/lowlands/lowlands-links.htm](http://Athens/1615/rhahn/lowlands/lowlands-links.htm)

### Maltese Language Learning Products

*Tue, 14 Apr 1998*

I am a lecturer at the University of Malta (Malta - Europe) currently residing in the US. During my stay here I am trying to promote the Maltese language internationally. As many of you know Maltese is a Semitic language but quite unique in that it is written in the Roman alphabet.

At present I am promoting three Maltese language learning products created by Professors of linguistics at my University. You can link to my site which gives full descriptions of these products, including background to the Maltese language, at <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/PISC OPO/maltprod.htm>

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Suzanne Piscopo MA, Lecturer, University of Malta  
Tel: +1 212 951 4533 Fax: +1 212 695 8229  
[piscopo@aol.com](mailto:piscopo@aol.com)

### African Indigenous Knowledge Systems

<http://members.aol.com/Afsci/africana.htm>

--Milton Takei

### Western Australian Languages

An online version of Nicholas Thieberger, *Handbook of Western Australian Aboriginal languages South of the Kimberley Region* (1993), an annotated bibliography and guide to the indigenous languages of a large part of Western Australia. Information on individual languages can be found via a geographic, alphabetic, or language family index. Data can be found on: geographical location; names of the language and different spellings that have been used; classification; present number and distribution of speakers; people

who have worked intensively to record the language; practical spelling system; language programmes; and bibliographical references to word lists, texts, grammars or sketch grammars, language learning material, and literature in the language. Also included are a pronunciation guide, and some great graphics.

<http://coombs.anu.edu.au/WWWVLPages/AborigPages/LANG/WA/contents.htm>

### Yukon Native Language Centre

A public version of the Yukon Native Language Centre web site is at last ready. It is on a different server from the one previously noted. The URL is:

<http://www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/language>

--Doug Hüch

YNLC, Yukon College

Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 5K4, Canada

### SIL-Mexico

*J. A. Bickford (bickford@flash.net) 18 May 1998:*

The Mexico branch of SIL has just launched a new website, which is a subsite of the main SIL website. We hope to make it a major outlet for a variety of things, including previously published, newly-published, and unpublished materials. Some things are already posted.

It is located at:

<http://www.sil.org/americas/mexico>

--J. Albert Bickford, SIL-Mexico, P.O. Box 8987, Catalina AZ 85738

### Mesoamerican languages ("the Snake Jaguar Project")

*From Terrence S. Kaufman (topkat+@pitt.edu) 16 April 1998:*

John Justeson and I have created a website on which to post the materials produced by our project, which we call the Project for the Documentation of the Languages of MesoAmerica (PDLMA), or the Snake Jaguar Project. We will eventually post not only dictionaries but also text collections and grammars and articles, but for the moment what the site has is two dictionaries: Oluta Mijean and San Miguel Chimalapa Soke.

Our research is sponsored by both NSF and the National Geographic Society. We project about 25 dictionaries over the next few (say 10) years.

Our website address is:

<http://www.albany.edu/anthro/maldp>

*Terry Kaufman & John Justeson*

*University of Pittsburgh & SUNY-Albany*

### CyberQuechua

*From Serafin Coronel-Molina (scoronel@dolphin.upenn.edu) 1 May 1998:*

A native speaker of Quechua, I have recently developed a website devoted to Quechua which I have called "CyberQuechua". The URL is:

<http://dolphin.upenn.edu/~scoronel/quechua.html>

CyberQuechua is organized into thematic pages: academics; literature and culture; translation work; bibliography on Quechua; linguistics; and news about Quechua (a list of links to selected sites that do not fall into any of the other categories). The linguistics page is still under construction and I would be more than happy to receive suggestions from other members regarding any pertinent links or other (non-link) information that I could include.

Serafin M. Coronel-Molina  
Graduate School of Education, U. Pennsylvania

#### **Programa de Educacion Intercultural Bilingue para los Paeses Andinos**

>From PROEIB (proeib@pino.cbb.entelnet.bo) 18 Mar 1998:

This is an invitation to all SSILA Members and Bulletin subscribers to visit the web site for our organization, "Programa de Educacion Intercultural Bilingue para los Paeses Andinos" (PROEIB). There you will find information on our activities in the field of indigenous intercultural bilingual education in the Andean subregion.

URL: <http://www.proeibandes.org>

*Luis Enrique Lopez, PROEIB Andes  
Casilla 6759, Cochabamba, Bolivia  
(proeib@pino.cbb.entelnet.bo)*

#### **Center for Amazonian Literature and Culture**

A free service, advertising conferences and cultural news and publications that relate to Pan-Amazonia. Their website:

<http://socsci.smith.edu/dept/calc/home.html>

Founded in 1993  
Dewey Hall, Smith College, Northampton,  
Massachusetts 01063, U.S.A.  
Tel:+1- 413-585-3461 Fax: -3415  
Nicomedes Suarez-Arauz and Charles Cutler,  
Directors

#### **9. Forthcoming Meetings**

##### **Summer Courses in the Basque Country, 1998**

*Date: Thu, 9 Apr 1998*

*From: Cenoz Iragui Jasone <fipceirj@vc.ehu.es>*

The University of the Basque Country is organizing four Summer courses on linguistics in July 1998. Please notice that all the courses on linguistics (B1, B2, B3, B4) have English as one of the official languages.

The courses on linguistics are the following:

B1. What is the meaning of a word? 26,27,29 June  
Directors: Juan Uriagereka & Javier Ormazabal e-mail: fipvaelv@vc.ehu.es

B2. theoretical linguistics: latest developments within the minimalist approach to syntax 1-3 July  
Directors: Myriam Uribe-Etxebarria & Vidal Valmala e-mail: fipvaelv@vc.ehu.es

B3. Code separation and code mixing in early bilingualism with minority languages 9-11 July (special European Community grants) Directors: Andoni Barrena & M. Jose Exeizabarrena e-mail: fepezsem@vc.ehu.es

B4. Teaching minority languages to adults: curricular innovation 14-17 July Directors: Miren Azkarate & Juanba Bergara e-mail: habe-didakti@ej-gv.es

For further information on the program please look at the Web page  
<http://www.sc.ehu.es/scrwwwsu/b.htm> or contact the course directors

Cursos de Verano/Udako Ikastaroak  
Apdo 1042  
20080 San Sebastian, Spain

#### **Summer Institute of Linguistics at U Oregon June- August 1998: Workshop in Lexicography headed by Russian Africanist**

The Summer Institute of Linguistics at the University of Oregon (Department of Linguistics, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403, USA), as part of its regular offerings, will be sponsoring a lexicography workshop from 23 June to 14 August, 1998. The workshop will be led by Valentin Vydrine, of the European University of St. Petersburg, Russia. Dr. Vydrine is a specialist in the lexicography of West Africa, and is currently compiling a massive comparative dictionary of the Manding languages. This workshop will be designed for all linguistic and anthropological fieldworkers who are in the process of preparing a dictionary of an underdescribed language.

Oregon SIL also offers a variety of graduate and undergraduate level courses in field-oriented linguistics, including a "Workshop in Grammatical Description."

For more information on the workshops and other offerings of the Summer Institute of Linguistics at Oregon, please check out our web page at <http://www.sil.org/schools/oregon/oregon.html> or contact Tom Payne (tpayne@oregon.uoregon.edu)

#### **33rd International Conference on Salish and Neighboring Languages. University of Washington, Seattle, WA, USA: August 5-7, 1998**

Papers on all aspects of the study, preservation, and teaching of Salish and neighboring languages are welcome.



The conference will be three full days:  
9:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday and  
Friday, 9:00 a.m. through 9:00 p.m. on Thursday.

Native language program presentations and papers of practical interest to teachers will be interspersed throughout the program on all days. All sessions will be plenary. Reports on language programs will generally be 20 minutes long; discussion will follow.

Every author of a preprint paper will be expected to present a 5-minute, non-technical introduction to her/his work, geared toward a general audience unfamiliar with the paper. Presenters may add an optional 5 minutes of technical introduction. Discussion of the paper will follow.

Information on conference organizers, housing, submission, deadlines, and formats is available at:

<http://humanities.byu.edu/icsnl/icsnl.htm>

#### **Youth conference on minority languages etc. in Brussels, late August 1998**

I am writing on behalf of my youth party, the Volksunie Jongeren, here in Brussels. We are attempting to organise a 4-5 day conference later this year (end of August). The conference would deal with a range of issues related to minorities within the EU and Europe. (constitutional, political, language rights etc.)

If the conference project is successful travel and accommodation expenses will be funded for those members of youth organisations and parties selected. They would be asked to speak about the situation in their home countries/communities.

Yours sincerely,  
David Fergusson  
[intoenglish@compuserve.com](mailto:intoenglish@compuserve.com)

#### **Minority Languages in Context: Diversity and Standardisation: Chur (Switzerland), 21-23 Sept. 1998**

Date: Mon, 27 Apr 1998 01:04:05 +0200  
Lorenza Mondada <[mondada@ubaclu.unibas.ch](mailto:mondada@ubaclu.unibas.ch)>

##### *Themes addressed by the congress*

The aim of the congress is to stimulate the study and discussion of contextual dimensions within which minority languages are spoken, shared and taught. The congress will provide a forum for the exchange and discussion of descriptive and comparative reports from a variety of regional and national settings including those in Switzerland. The contexts within which minority languages evolve can be described from differing points of view along a continuum between two opposing poles. At one end of the continuum lay attempts to achieve stability and homogeneity which are usually articulated through projects aiming at the planning and normalisation of minority languages in order to

present these codes as having equal status to adjacent majority languages. At the other end of the continuum we find destabilisation and heterogeneity observable at points of contact and overlap between minority and majority languages and often leading to hybrid forms which challenge traditional notions of linguistic code. These two poles involve a variety of actors and agents of differing social and institutional status, all exercising varying degrees of influence on the language situation in question. The congress will address three thematic areas highlighting the full range of this continuum.

##### **Thematic area one: Standardisation of Minority Languages**

**Thematic area two: Minority and Majority Languages: coexistence, relationships and overlap.**

##### **Thematic area three: Minority Languages at School**

##### *Keynote speakers*

Florian Coulmas (Tokyo) for theme 1; Bernard Poche (Grenoble) and Ben Rampton (London) for theme 2; Mehendra Verma (York) for theme 3.

##### *Sessions*

The thematic development of each day will be provided by speakers reporting on data and research from numerous and diverse linguistic situations around the world.

##### *Activities of the Lia Rumantscha and other projects from the Graubünden region of Switzerland*

The Lia Rumantscha will organise a visit to their institute where they will present their current theoretical and practical research projects addressing languages and education in Graubünden.

##### *Activities of the Swiss Association of Applied Linguistics (VALS/ASLA)*

During the congress the Association will hold its annual general meeting.

The VALS/ASLA special interests groups (SIGs) will organise parallel sessions focusing on their own topics:

SIG Teaching languages for academic purposes:

Anton Lachner ([anton.lachner@aal.unibe.ch](mailto:anton.lachner@aal.unibe.ch) - <http://www.aal.unibe.ch/vals>);

SIG Fachsprachen-forschung: Jrg Niederhauser ([juerg.niederhauser@germ.unibe.ch](mailto:juerg.niederhauser@germ.unibe.ch));

SIG Lehrwer-autoren: Francesca Roncoroni ([francesca.roncoroni@aal.unibe.ch](mailto:francesca.roncoroni@aal.unibe.ch)).

##### *A report from the Federal Commission on Language Learning and Teaching in Switzerland*

This commission was set up to investigate language learning and teaching in Switzerland and make specific recommendations for the future to the cantonal education authorities. During the congress the commission will present its final report.

(see:

<http://www.romsem.unibas.ch/sprachenkonzept/>)

##### *Activities of the Fondazione Lingue e Culture*

This foundation will present its manifesto on languages and cultures in the multilingual and multicultural Switzerland.

*Dates / Venue:*

21st - 23rd September 1998, Regional Assembly Building in Chur (Switzerland)

*Accommodation:*

Participants are kindly requested to book their own hotel rooms. Further information can be obtained through Chur Tourismus, Grabenstrasse 5, CH 7002 Chur, tel. +41-81-252-1818, fax. + 41-81-252-9076.

*Enrolment:*

Students: 70.-; members of VALS/ASLA: 110.-; non-members: 130.-; dinner on Tuesday evening : 50.-.

*Definitive Program*

The definitive program will be sent out to all those who have enrolled by around mid June. It will contain summaries of the all contributions as well as a detailed description of all other congress events.

*For more information, contact:*

Lorenza Mondada, Romanisches Seminar, Stapfelberg 7/9, CH 4051 Basel.  
Fax: +41-61-267-1286  
email: mondada@ubaclu.unibas.ch

**International Symposium on Natural Sacred Sites, Cultural Diversity and Biological Diversity. UNESCO House, Paris, 22-25 September 1998**

The symposium reflects increasing worldwide interest in a whole series of interrelated concerns, including the interrelations of culture and nature, traditional ecological knowledge and "bottom-up" approaches to biodiversity conservation. It is hoped that participants at the symposium will include researchers from a wide range of disciplines, representatives of indigenous peoples, and development planners and resource managers of various kinds. The focus of the symposium will be squarely on the interfaces and interactions between natural sacred sites, cultural specificities and biodiversity conservation and management.

Completed registration forms and abstracts should be sent to Marie Roué, as indicated on the attachments. From our side we would be glad to respond to any questions concerning the symposium.

*Organizer from UNESCO*

Malcolm Hadley, Division of Ecological Sciences, UNESCO, 1 rue Miollis, 75732 Paris, Cedex 15, France

Direct Tel: (33) (1) 45 68 40 35

Direct Fax: (33) (1) 45 68 58 04

E-mail: m.hadley@unesco.org

**Third International Conference on Maintenance and Loss of Minority Languages, Netherlands, 26-27 November, 1998**

*Koningshof Conference Center, Veldhoven*

In line with the two previous International Conferences on Maintenance and Loss of Minority Languages (Noordwijkerhout, the Netherlands; 1988

and 1992), the aim of this conference is to bring together recent developments from various disciplines. The ambition of this third conference is to offer a major contribution to a theoretical discussion on the determinants of language shift and language loss, supported by the exchange of new research data. While the two preceding conferences concentrated mainly on the questions 'What is lost of the language?' (structural-linguistic aspects) and 'Why does shift occur?' (sociological and social-psychological explanatory factors), the Veldhoven conference will focus on two questions; 'Why does shift occur?' and 'How is a language lost?', i.e., what are the psycholinguistic processes involved in language loss? Emphasis will be on the interaction between the process of transferring from the first to the second language and the gradual decline of skills in the first language, at the individual and group levels.

Plenary speakers are invited to make inspiring and thought-provoking remarks on the two conference themes outlined above, as well as on the broader theoretical framework. Together with the contributions of the free paper presenters, the interaction between plenary speakers and participants forms the input for workshops and a round table discussion on the development of an integrated theoretical framework. This framework can then serve as a renewed starting point for continued research into language shift and loss in the new millennium. The organizing committee has also been open to contributions from disciplines that have recently entered or touched upon the field and may shed a new light on the language change processes involved.

The organizing committee will determine the best manner in which the results of the conference can be published.

**Programme**

The conference will consist of three sections. The first section addresses the sociological and social-psychological explanatory context in which language shift processes take place. The second section deals with language attrition from a psycholinguistic perspective, and the third is fully devoted to the building of an integrated explanatory framework for processes of language shift and loss. In memory of Willem Fase, one of the initiators of the First and Second Conference on Maintenance and Loss of Minority Languages, who died in 1997, a new forum called the Willem Fase Lecture has been set up. This plenary lecture forum will be granted to a promising scholar, to be selected from the abstracts submitted.

**General Information***Conference Secretariat*

Tilburg University  
Research Group on Language and Minorities  
c/o Heleen Strating-Keurentjes  
P.O. Box 90153  
NL-5000 LE Tilburg  
Tel +31 13 4662588  
Fax +31 13 4663110

E-mail: language.loss.98@kub.nl

(Chair: Deirdre  
martinm@edusrv1.bham.ac.uk)

Martin:

#### *Organizing Committee*

- Dr. Ton Ammerlaan, Arnhem School of Business
- Madeleine Hulsen, University of Nijmegen
- Dr. Jetske Klatter-Folmer, Tilburg University
- Heleen Strating-Keurentjes, Tilburg University
- Piet Van Avermaet, University of Leuven
- Dr. Kutlay Yagmur, Tilburg University

#### *Scientific Committee*

- Prof. Kees de Bot, University of Nijmegen
- Prof. Michael Clyne, Monash University, Melbourne
- Prof. Joshua Fishman, Stanford University, California/Yeshiva University, New York
- Prof. Koen Jaspaert, University of Leuven
- Dr. Sjaak Kroon, Tilburg University

#### *Location*

The conference will be held at Koningshof Conference Center, Veldhoven, the Netherlands. This modern conference center is situated in forested areas, only fifteen minutes from the city of Eindhoven and Eindhoven Airport.

#### **2nd International Symposium on Bilingualism 14-17 April, 1999, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, UK**

#### *Keynote Speakers*

Michael Clyne (Monash)  
Francois Grosjean (Neuchatel)  
Monica Heller (OISE, Toronto)  
Carol Myers Scotton (South Carolina)

#### *Colloquia*

1. Cross-linguistic studies of language acquisition (Marilyn M. Vihman:m.vihman@bangor.ac.uk and Ginny Mueller Gathercole: v.c.gathercole@bangor.ac.uk)
2. Bilingual cognitive processing (David Green: ucjtdg@ucl.ac.uk)
3. Input in bilingual acquisition (Annick de Houwer: vhouwer@uia.ua.ac.be and Elizabeth Lanza: Elizabeth.Lanza@ilf.uio.no)
4. Neurolinguistics and acquired communication disorders in bilinguals (Franco Fabbro and Nick Miller:nicholas.miller@ncl.ac.uk)
5. Bilingualism in/and the deaf community (Clare Gallaway: gallaway@fs1.ed.man.ac.uk)
6. Grammar and Codeswitching (Jeanine Treffers-Daller: j-treffersdaller@wpg.uwe.ac.uk and Ad Backus: backus@ling.ucsd.edu)
7. Sociolinguistics of bilingual interaction (Ben Rampton: ben.rampton@tvu.ac.uk, Mukul Saxena: m.saxena@ucrysj.ac.uk and Li Wei: li.wei@ncl.ac.uk)
8. Trilingualism and trilinguals (Charlotte Hoffman: c.hoffman@mod.lang.salford.ac.uk)

#### *Round-Table*

Issues of identification and intervention in speech therapy services for the bilingual population

#### **Invitation To Participants**

Submissions are invited for oral or poster presentations, on all aspects of bilingualism. Papers which are based on empirical research and which seek to forge new links between established fields (e.g. linguistics, psychology, speech & language pathology, sociology, and education) or to develop new sub-fields are particularly welcome. Contributors to the colloquia and round-table should contact the organisers informally as indicated above. All submissions will be peer-reviewed, anonymously, and selected on the grounds of originality, clarity, and significance of findings and conclusions.

#### **Submission Of Abstracts**

Each submission should include: 1) a cover sheet containing (a) the author(s) name(s); (b) address (including telephone number, e-mail and fax, if available); (c) affiliation; (d) the title of the presentation; (e) the category of the submission (oral presentation at parallel session or poster presentation); and (f) equipment required for presentation; and 2) Three copies of an abstract of no more than 500 words. Only hard-copies are considered (No e-mails please).

Abstracts should be sent, by 31 August, 1998, to: Mrs Gillian Cavagan, ISB organising committee, Department of Speech, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU, UK, Fax: +44 (0)191 222 6518, from whom further details may also be obtained.

(E-mail: gillian.cavagan@newcastle.ac.uk).

For further details and registration forms, please see: <http://www.ncl.ac/~nspeech>

#### **Historical Linguistics Conference At UBC In 1999**

The 14th International Conference on Historical Linguistics (ICHL XIV) will take place August 9-13, 1999, at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada.

Papers are invited on any topic in historical linguistics relating to any language or language family. Papers which address the question of "Problems for Historical Linguistics in the Twenty-first Century" are particularly welcome. Abstracts of no more than 250 words should be submitted (preferably via e-mail) before October 15, 1998.

Proposals for workshops or special sessions are also welcome. Those wishing to organize a workshop should send their proposals to the Conference Organizer by the end of June 1998. Workshop organizers are responsible for soliciting/inviting papers. One day of the conference will be devoted to workshops.

To receive the Second Circular, or for further information, contact the Conference Organizer: Laurel Brinton, Dept. of English, #397-1873 East

Mall, Univ. of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC,  
V6T1Z1 CANADA (fax: +1-604/822-6906; e-mail:  
ichlxiv@interchg.ubc.ca).

### 10. Publications of Interest

**Malintzin: bilingüismo y alfabetización en la Sierra de Tlaxcala, Norbert Francis, Ediciones Abya-yala, 1997, 508 pages, in Spanish.**

Malintzin, Cortez' bilingual interpreter (in the modern Náhuatl of Central Mexico: beloved, girlfriend, bride) embodied the first attempts at intercultural communication between Europe and America. Today, the highest point in the Tlaxcalan highlands, the now inactive volcano stands vigil over the indigenous communities that have precariously struggled to maintain their ancestral language. In "Bilingüismo y alfabetización [bilingualism and literacy] en la Sierra de Tlaxcala, the author reports on an extensive study of language and literacy development in one of the Sierra's few remaining bilingual towns where Náhuatl is still spoken by most children.

Contents:

Chapter 1 - The research questions: democracy and vernacular languages, the limits of pluralism.

Chapter 2 - Vygotsky and the debate on orality and writing; the oral antecedents of literacy.

Chapter 3 - Bilingualism and cognitive development, language and thought, models of second language acquisition and teaching.

Chapter 4 - The social context of biliteracy: diglossia and language conflict, vernacular literacy and the development of academic discourse, a sociolinguistic profile of the indigenous communities.

Chapter 5 - Assessment issues and schema theory, integrative evaluation of language and literacy in Spanish and Náhuatl.

Chapter 6 - Field work notebook and survey of classroom-based assessment, bilingual applications of miscue analysis, cloze, the language dominance interview.

Chapter 7 - Findings: oral narrative, reading comprehension, written expression, child language attitudes.

Chapter 8 - Discussion: the transactional model, the oral/written interface, transfer and interference, discourse competence and metalinguistic awareness, child and parent perceptions of diglossia and language loss.

Chapter 9 - A model for bilingual education, biliteracy development, and indigenous language maintenance.

29 graphics and maps, children's writing samples in Spanish and Náhuatl.

Order from: Ediciones Abya-Yala, Avenida 12 de Octubre 14-30 y Wilson, Casilla 17-12-719, Quito, Ecuador, <enlace@abyayala.org> \$29.00 (includes shipping and handling). ISBN 9978-04-333-0

For more information: <norbert.francis@nau.edu>

### **Repenser l'École**

A special edition of "Ethnies": "Repenser l'école: témoignages et expériences en milieu". New ideas

about education in minority communities, with contributions ranging from Greenland to Australia, Siberia, to North Africa.

Survival International, France

45, rue du Faubourg du Temple, F-75010 Paris

tel. +33-1-42414762, E-mail: survival@wcube.fr

"Ethnies" (n. 22-23, hiver 1997) FF 120 + FF16 postage. (They do not accept Eurocheques.)

**The Native Speaker: Multilingual Perspectives, R.Singh, ed., 1998, Sage Publications.**

(Contributors: Annamalai, Dasgupta, D'souza, Ford, Ikome, Kandiah, Mohanan, Mufwene, Muysken, Paradis, Pattanayak and Prabhu)

ISBN 0-7619-9213-8

Available from:

Sage Publications, 2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks, California 91320, USA, or

6 Bonhill Street, London, EC2A 4PU, England.

**Endangered Languages: Current Issues and Future Prospects. Ed. Lenore A. Grenoble and Lindsay J. Whaley. 1998, Cambridge University Press.**

This work is an extended version of the proceedings of the conference held at the University of Dartmouth, New Hampshire, in 1995 (and reviewed by the this editor in FEL Iatiku #1 - May 1995), but it reads like a purpose-edited volume.

The contributions to the volume fall into 4 categories. Chapters by Dorian, and Grenoble & Whaley, provide an overview of language endangerment. Grinevald, England, Jacobs and Nora & Richard Dauenhauer describe the situation confronting threatened languages from both a linguistic and a sociological perspective. The too little studied issue of what can be lost as a language ceases to be spoken is addressed by Mithun, Hale, Jocks and Woodbury. In the last section, Kapanga, Myers-Scotton and Vakhtin consider the linguistic processes which underlie language attrition.

*Christopher Moseley's review of this book will appear in the next Ogmios.*

**The Rise and Fall of Languages. R.M.W. Dixon. 1998, Cambridge University Press. (169 pp.)**

The book (or essay) itself carries two separate messages. One is an attempt at a new theory of comparative linguistics. The other is a passionate plea for linguists to do what they should do, before it's too late.

Thousands of languages will be irretrievably lost in the next hundred years or so, and there is nothing we can do about it. Dixon conveys this disturbing message forcefully, while at the same time urging us ('people who call themselves linguists') to literally drop everything and record the languages that are still extant NOW.

The most important task in linguistics today -- indeed, the only really important

task -- is to get out in the field and describe languages, while this can still be done. [Other things] can wait; that will always be possible. Linguistic description must be undertaken now.

And:

If this work is not done soon it can never be done. Future generations will then look back at the people who call themselves 'linguists' at the close of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first century, with bewilderment and disdain.

*I would like to thank Miguel Carrasquer Vidal <mcv@wxs.nl> from whom I have borrowed this descriptive beginning. The remainder of his review provides firece counterargument to some of Dixon's theoretical claims. But all would agree that the book is a pungent and thought-provoking statement of the situation confronting descriptive and historical linguistics (Ed.)*

## 11. Obituaries

### IN MEMORIAM - Floyd Lounsbury

*From (whalen@haskins.yale.edu) 20 May 1998:  
(Syndicated from SSILA Bulletin)*

It is with immense sadness that we must report the death of our friend and colleague, Floyd Lounsbury, on May 14th, 1998. Although he had been in poor health for over a year, his indomitable spirit and active research agenda led us to believe that he would pull through. His passing is a great loss to colleagues in his many fields.

Floyd was born in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, April 25, 1914. He served as a master sergeant in the 22nd weather squadron as a meteorologist in the Army Air Forces during World War II. He was a graduate of the University of Wisconsin with a B.A. degree in mathematics in 1941 and an M.A. in anthropology in 1947; he received his Ph.D. from Yale University in 1949 in anthropology and an honorary degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1987. He began teaching at Yale University in 1947, retiring in 1979 as a Sterling Professor.

A scholar in many fields, he made outstanding contributions to linguistic theory and the study of American Indian Languages, of Mayan hieroglyphic writing and of kinship systems. Among his many honors, he was elected to membership in the National Academy of Sciences, the American Philosophical Society and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Endangered Language Fund, Dept. of Linguistics, Yale University, New Haven, CT 06520, USA.

--Doug Whalen

And we close this issue with an obituary poem.<sup>2</sup>

### MARSH LANGUAGES,

by Margaret Atwood

from *Morning in the Burned House*  
(Houghton Mifflin, October 1995).

The dark soft languages are being silenced:  
Mothertongue Mothertongue Mothertongue  
falling one by one back into the moon.

Language of marshes,  
language of the roots of rushes tangled  
together in the ooze,  
marrow cells twinning themselves  
inside the warm core of the bone:  
pathways of hidden light in the body fade and wink  
out.

The sibilants and gutturals,  
the cave language, the half-light  
forming at the back of the throat,  
the moth's damp velvet moulding  
the lost syllable for "I" that did not mean separate,  
all are becoming sounds no longer  
heard because no longer spoken,  
and everything that could once be said in them has  
ceased to exist.

The languages of the dying suns  
are themselves dying,  
but even the word for this has been forgotten.  
The mouth against skin, vivid and fading,  
can no longer speak both cherishing and farewell.  
It is now only a mouth, only skin.  
There is no more longing.

Translation was never possible.  
Instead there was always only  
conquest, the influx  
of the language of hard nouns,  
the language of metal,  
the language of either/or,  
the one language that has eaten all the others.

<sup>2</sup> I have not yet been able to contact the author for permission, but I trust that quoting it here can be seen as a kind of "fair use", indeed homage.

# Foundation for Endangered Languages

## Manifesto

### 1. Preamble

#### 1.1. The Present Situation

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

The most authoritative source on the languages of the world (Ethnologue, Grimes 1992) lists just over 6,500 living languages. Population figures are available for just over 6,000 of them (or 92%). Of these 6,000, it may be noted that:

- 52% are spoken by fewer than 10,000 people;
- 28% by fewer than 1,000; and
- 83% are restricted to single countries, and so are particularly exposed to the policies of a single government.

At the other end of the scale, 10 major languages, each spoken by over 109 million people, are the mother tongues of almost half (49%) of the world's population.

More important than this snapshot of proportions and populations is the outlook for survival of the languages we have. Hard comparable data here are scarce or absent, often because of the sheer variety of the human condition: a small community, isolated or bilingual, may continue for centuries to speak a unique language, while in another place a populous language may for social or political reasons die out in little more than a generation. Another reason is that the period in which records have been kept is too short to document a trend: e.g. the Ethnologue has been issued only since 1951. However, it is difficult to imagine many communities sustaining serious daily use of a language for even a generation with fewer than 100 speakers: yet at least 10% of the world's living languages are now in this position.

Some of the forces which make for language loss are clear: the impacts of urbanization, Westernization and global communications grow daily, all serving to diminish the self-sufficiency and self-confidence of small and traditional communities. Discriminatory policies, and population movements also take their toll of languages.

In our era, the preponderance of tiny language communities means that the majority of the world's languages are vulnerable not just to decline but to extinction.

#### 1.2. The Likely Prospect

There is agreement among linguists who have considered the situation that over half of the world's languages are moribund, i.e. not effectively being passed on to the next generation. We and our children, then, are living at the point in human history where, within perhaps two generations, most languages in the world will die out.

This mass extinction of languages may not appear immediately life-threatening. Some will feel that a reduction in numbers of languages will ease communication, and perhaps help build nations, even global solidarity. But it has been well pointed out that the success of humanity in colonizing the planet has been due to our ability to develop cultures suited for survival in a variety of environments. These cultures have everywhere been transmitted by languages, in oral traditions and latterly in written literatures. So when language transmission itself breaks down, especially before the advent of literacy in a culture, there is always a large loss of inherited knowledge.

Valued or not, that knowledge is lost, and humanity is the poorer. Along with it may go a large part of the pride and self-identity of the community of former speakers.

And there is another kind of loss, of a different type of knowledge. As each language dies, science, in linguistics, anthropology, prehistory and psychology, loses one more precious source of data, one more of the diverse and unique ways that the human mind can express itself through a language's structure and vocabulary.

We cannot now assess the full effect of the massive simplification of the world's linguistic diversity now occurring. But language loss, when it occurs, is sheer loss, irreversible and not in itself creative. Speakers of an endangered language may well resist the extinction of their traditions, and of their linguistic identity. They have every right to do so. And we, as scientists, or concerned human beings, will applaud them in trying to preserve part of the diversity which is one of our greatest strengths and treasures.

#### 1.3. The Need for an Organization

We cannot stem the global forces which are at the root of language decline and loss.

But we can work to lessen the ignorance which sees language loss as inevitable when it is not, and does not properly value all that will go when a language itself vanishes.

We can work to see technological developments, such as computing and telecommunications, used to support small communities and their traditions rather than to supplant them.

And we can work to lessen the damage:

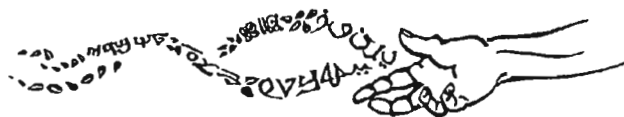
- by recording as much as possible of the languages of communities which seem to be in terminal decline;
- by emphasizing particular benefits of the diversity still remaining; and
- by promoting literacy and language maintenance programmes, to increase the strength and morale of the users of languages in danger.

In order to further these aims, there is a need for an autonomous international organization which is not constrained or influenced by matters of race, politics, gender or religion. This organization will recognise in language issues the principles of self-determination, and group and individual rights. It will pay due regard to economic, social, cultural, community and humanitarian considerations. Although it may work with any international, regional or local Authority, it will retain its independence throughout. Membership will be open to those in all walks of life.

### 2. Aims and Objectives

The Foundation for Endangered Languages exists to support, enable and assist the documentation, protection and promotion of endangered languages. In order to do this, it aims:-

- (i) To raise awareness of endangered languages, both inside and outside the communities where they are spoken, through all channels and media;
- (ii) To support the use of endangered languages in all contexts: at home, in education, in the media, and in social, cultural and economic life;
- (iii) To monitor linguistic policies and practices, and to seek to influence the appropriate authorities where necessary;
- (iv) To support the documentation of endangered languages, by offering financial assistance, training, or facilities for the publication of results;
- (v) To collect together and make available information of use in the preservation of endangered languages;
- (vi) To disseminate information on all of the above activities as widely as possible.



## Foundation for Endangered Languages

If you wish to support the Foundation for Endangered Languages, please fill out the order form below, and send it with your subscription to the Foundation's Treasurer and Membership Secretary:

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