

OGMIOS Newsletter # 10 : Winter - 31 December 1998

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And something to bear in mind...

FEL Conference III
 “Endangered Languages and Education”
 Fri. 24 - Sun. 26 September 1999

Place: To Be Announced Shortly
(but Cardiff and Maynooth (near Dublin) are on the short list)

Watch for a Call for Papers — soon!

1. Editorial: Light and Shade

We should love to believe

that in many parts of the world there is growing revulsion at the forces which endanger languages, and growing determination and enthusiasm to cherish and promote traditional tongues.

The Western media are now full of stories that cast doubt on the long-term value of "progress" as promoted by multi-national companies or Westernizing, "modernizing", governments. (Genetic modification of crops, and the arbitrary constraints imposed by cash economies on care for the environment and small communities — as in Indonesia and Brazil — have loomed particularly large in the UK media over the last quarter.)

Here in the UK the Northern Ireland Peace Agreement refers explicitly to the rôles of Irish Gaelic and Ulster Scots in healing that land; and the present government has reversed the stance of its predecessor by announcing an intent to accept the European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages for Welsh, Scots and Gaelic, wherever in the Kingdom they are spoken.

And especially, in attending small gatherings such as the FEL conference in Edinburgh this year, one is easily moved by the natural sympathy that flows among so many people, independently involved in local struggles and construction work, but touched and inspired by one another's commitment.

Most recently, we ourselves have managed to find a little money (little enough, but 50% more than last year) to support four active efforts to make the world a little more friendly to, and knowledgeable of, endangered languages.

So there is food for hope in many places.

But even where there is relative wealth and a free flow of information, the news is not always good.

Last June California voted to abolish bilingual education in state schools; this December the Northern Territory Government in Australia has announced its intention to do likewise. The conscious motives may vary: California seems to have been thinking mostly on right-wing political lines; the NT government more just to save money. And whereas the former resolution was aimed mostly against use of Spanish, the latter decision will strike squarely against indigenous languages. But whatever the motive or the target, the result will be a lessening of respect, and self-respect, for the traditions that these languages continue, and a life-time loss for the people that could grow up speaking them.

A slighter act of similar callousness was the recent banning by AOL of the use of Irish on its "Peace in Ireland" computer newsgroup, an egregious act that combined misguided commercial judgement with political naïveté and unintended insolence. (And

that's putting it charitably: others might see this as AOL doing its bit to make "the Irish problem" go away.)

There is still much to be done to disseminate good sense and decency, clearly. Chris Moseley, our Liaison Officer, is even now writing on FEL's behalf to the Northern Territory officers and AOL. But any member of the Foundation is urged to make their own point. In this issue you will find the information, and the addresses to send them to to make them count.

Please write to us, as well as to those who need to get the message. There must be so many cases, both of encouragement and recent ignominy, that we all need to know about, but have yet to hear of. And Ogmios can still reach some places where the Internet cannot.

2. Development of the Foundation

Announcing Our Second Round of Grants

A call for proposals was issued early in October 1998, and despite the restricted period in which the call was open, 30 applications were received in time for the closing date of 7 November. The FEL Committee, who in this act as the Selection Panel, decided that our finances allowed the award of £1,500 sterling in grants this year. Higher than last year by perhaps 50%, but nothing like as high as we need: our funds were oversubscribed by a factor of 8. Since subscriptions remain practically FEL's only source of finance¹, this in itself is a strong argument for our members to keep themselves in good standing!

In future it will be our policy to encourage all applicants to become members of the Foundation, since this would add significantly to the funds available for award.

The criteria for proposals are not distinct from the categories of the application form, which is available at our web-site.² It was a heart-rending task to make the selection, since the vast majority of proposals were satisfactory under all the criteria; but besides requiring excellence in all aspects, the Committee also hoped to select a list which was spread geographically and varied in terms of the kind of work to be undertaken.

In the end it proved possible to stretch the funds to offer material support to four projects.

G.Holton	documentation of Tanacross (Alaska)	£400
J.G.Lucich	master-apprentice scheme for some younger people to acquire Mountain Maidu from academic	£200

¹ with the exception this year of kind donations from the Linguistic Association of Great Britain and Prof. & Mrs Akira Yamamoto to support our conference

² <http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Philosophy/CTLL/FEL/>

	source	
A.Terrill	dictionary compiling for Lavukaleve (Solomon Islands)	£500
E.Benedicto	community project to document lexicon of Tuahka (Nicaragua)	£450

For those who were not so lucky, we can only urge applicants to re-direct their efforts to the Endangered Language Fund, whose call for proposals remains open.³

FEL had promised to declare the results by the end of the year. The couple of weeks' delay which has overrun this deadline is solely due to the fact that referees have in some cases been very slow in returning their statements. Strangely, the one respect in which almost all applicants were deficient was in disregarding the requirement to get references to us at the same time as their proposals!

FEL's Second Conference: Outcome

This event, which took as its theme "What Rôle for the Specialist?", was held in Edinburgh from 25 to 27 September 1998. It was attended by about 70 people, with representatives from every continent. Besides the speakers of the published programme (given in the last issue of Ogmios), one of the conference's most affecting features was the Open Forum, where many more speakers could share their concerns. These included:

Ole Stig Andersen	The Burial of Ubykh
Nigel Birch	The EPSRC, Multilinguality And Endangered Languages
Joy Hendry	Minority Languages in Scotland
Anda Hofstede	The Modern South Arabian Languages ⁴
Jarmo Lainio, Birger Winsa	Digitalization of Regional and Minority Languages: One Attempt to Reverse Language Shift in Ireland, Scotland, Sweden and Wales
J. William Lewis	The Politics of RLS on the Reservation: Writing Curriculum in Warm Springs, Oregon
Joseph Selwyn TeRito	Maori in Recent Years
Doreen Mackman	Yamaji Language Centre, W. Australia

After the conference, I sent out the following reflections on what we had learnt there.

"Damnosa hereditas"

Many aspects of the past reputation of linguists and anthropologists need to be overcome, especially reputations for arrogance, selfishness and inaccessibility.

Perhaps one advantage of wider and deeper education of traditional communities will be to give the means to form a judgement on how much Western societies may have changed, and the extent to which real help can be expected from them.

Social Role of the Specialist

Effective work by specialist outsiders usually require there to be a clear social role defined for them within the society. The closeness of this bond (and the obligations it will entail) will vary, but may amount to a family responsibility.

e.g. Chiwere (Furbee et al.), Tornedalen Finnish (Lainio & Winsa)

Vulnerable Position of Indigenous Teachers

There are special problems in certifying, i.e. conferring high enough status on, local or indigenous teachers of the endangered language. The problem may be with the teaching institutions of central or ex-colonial authorities, or it may be in getting the potential learners to respect the teachers.

Very often, such teachers have serious problems in obtaining adequate payment for their efforts.

Nevertheless, the work of such teachers is likely to be crucial; so authorities within the communities must be urged to concentrate on these problems.

e.g. Naskapi (Jancewicz et al.), Mocovi (Grondona), Halkomelem (Gerds), Warm Springs, Oregon (Lewis)

Religion and Language

Traditional religious links and practices may be important strongholds of language survival, and motives for revival.

It will tend to be particularly difficult for outsider specialists to take part in this aspect of language use.

e.g. Mocovi (Grondona), Halkomelem (Gerds)

The Two-Edged Sword of Education⁵

Evidently this is a threat to traditional culture and language by bringing foreign elements to the explicit attention of the pupils; however, educated people are more likely to resist unwanted intrusions from outsiders, and build confidence in their own traditions.

There is a need, therefore, for education programmes to be formulated with clear reference to, and respect for, local culture.

e.g. Teribe (Quesada), Mohawk (MacDougall), Mocovi (Grondona), Forest Nenets (Salminen)

An international organization (as FEL) may help in negotiations with local administrations or national governments, and indeed international programmes.

e.g. Mocovi (Grondona), Forest Nenets (Salminen)

³ See section 7 of this Ogmios.

⁴ See her brief article in section 5, Fieldwork Reports.

⁵ This has been adopted as the theme for next year's conference.

Influence of an International Organization

An international organization (as FEL) may also serve as a useful source of pressure on local administrations when it comes to persuading them to help with language revitalization policies.

e.g. Mocovi (Grondona), Halkomelem (Gerds)

Where Weakness is a Strength

There are situations where the isolation of local and traditional communities can be a source of strength.

e.g. Forest Nenets (Salminen) - unaffected by collapse of the rouble; Teribe (Quesada) - isolation has aided survival, but unconsciously

Rising to Challenges

Great threats can give rise to exceptional achievements.

e.g. Naskapi (Jancewicz et al.): the prospect of hydro-electric developments motivated agitation which led to explicit settlement of land claims.

Help vs Cooperation

The main need is not for explicit help from outsiders, but for channels of cooperation to be opened up. On the one hand, this means that community members must be alerted to their own responsibility in preserving and furthering their own traditions. On the other, they need to be shown the widespread nature of the struggle: they are not alone, and inspiration and encouragement can come from many quarters.

e.g. Valiquette, Rhydwen, Yamamoto; Maori (TeRito)

This situation is somewhat different for the speakers of minority languages in Europe, since they are often at a point where explicit confrontation with national governments (or international organizations) may be necessary in order to guarantee their rights. Nevertheless, the value of international solidarity and cooperation remains.

e.g. Slovenian (Petek), Flemish (Hardie)

The main substantive comment received came from Doug Whalen, President of the Endangered Language Fund. (I have added the emphasis to one crucial sentence.)

Date: Thu, 12 Nov 1998 15:49:46 -0500

From: whalen@haskins.yale.edu

Nick,

Thanks for the thoughts based on your conference, which I wish I could have attended. I think that all of your considerations are worthwhile.

My own thinking about my organization, the Endangered Language Fund, is that we will continue to fund those projects that accommodate to the need for linguistic input along with the cooperation of the native community. Those (many) cases where either aspect is lacking will simply not register. Since we cannot at present fund all of the excellent projects within these constraints, it seems that we have enough to do. Since our efforts must always

fall short (languages will die no matter what we do), I feel that coherent limits are useful. It is pleasing to me that the natural tendency for different groups to attend to different aspects of the problems is apparent in your notes. I feel that our relatively uncoordinated efforts are, so far, still in tune.

As always, best of luck, Doug DhW

Discussions are now under way on the publication of the Proceedings. **However, the volume (+ supplement) as available at the Conference itself is still available for purchase (@ 12 pounds sterling, including postage and packing).**⁶

FEL Executive Committee Meeting, University of Edinburgh Pollock Halls, 27 September 98, 2pm

(Minutes taken by Heather King in the absence of a secretary.)

Present: Nick Ostler, Margaret Allan, Heather King, Alasdair MacCaluim, Ole Stig Andersen (items 1-4), Mari Rhydwen (item 4), Tapani Salminen (items 5-10)

1. Appointment of Officers.

The following existing officers were confirmed for a further term:

Nick Ostler	President
Margaret Allen	Treasurer
Chris Moseley	Liaison Officer & Grants Officer

Nominated committee members:

John Clews	(York)
Mahendra Verma	(York)
Heather King	(Scotland)
Ole Stig Andersen	(Denmark)
Alasdair MacCaluim	(Scotland)
Rod Jones	(Cardiff)
Nigel Birch	(Swindon)
Davyth Hicks	(Scotland/Cornwall)

Constitution needs to be amended to allow a greater number of committee members. Nick will send a copy of the constitution to all members (existing and potential) of the Committee, with a proposal for amendment.

*ACTION Nick

It was proposed by Nick that those present at this meeting act as a de facto committee.

Margaret declared herself to be overloaded by the duties of Treasurer, Membership Secretary, and Conference Organiser. Nick suggested that Margaret propose a way to split the duties of Treasurer and Membership Secretary. Margaret will look for someone in York to take over the duties of Membership Secretary.

*ACTION Margaret

2. Remuneration of Secretary.

One Committee member had volunteered for the position of Secretary but had advised that he would

⁶ See the subscription form at the end of this issue for ordering details.

need to be remunerated. Margaret advised that the FEL did not have sufficient funds to pay its officers.

Nick declared that the matter of finding someone to take on the duties of secretary could be done through correspondence.

*ACTION Nick

3. Minutes of last meeting (Oxford, June 5 1998).

Signed by chairman.

4. Fund raising and publicity.

Nick called for suggestions for raising funds for FEL grants.

Mari suggested that she could get sponsors for her boat trip.

Mari suggested a scheme whereby a number of people/organisations could sponsor work on a language and would receive progress reports, much the same way of that with child sponsorship. Nick expressed concerns about getting enough money to make it work.

*ACTION Mari, to send further details of her scheme to FEL

Nick suggested that FEL approach organisations with money to distribute to good causes, such as the Toyota Foundation. A list of such organisations would need to be compiled and volunteers found to approach them.

*ACTION Nick

Ole suggested that FEL must get more human interest stories in the mass media to raise awareness and thus funds. Ole also suggested that we could have an endangered language of the year to raise awareness. Nick expressed concerns that making a community into a celebrity would limit their freedom.

Nick recalled David Cheezem's idea (in 1996) of having an International Endangered Languages Day. It had attracted support all over the world, but ultimately had been left aside. According to David Cheezem (writing on EL List), this had been because individual language communities had seen it as something of a distraction from their real activities.

Alasdair drew the meeting's attention to the 25th anniversary of the death of the last Manx speaker (Ned Maddrell) next September. He suggested the FEL could do something with this to raise awareness.

*ACTION Alasdair - formulate plan to mark Anniversary of Maddrell's death, perhaps in cooperation with Celtic League or others.

Nick noted that Ogmios includes an obituary section for languages, but has found it hard to get appropriate information regularly.

Ole suggested a web page with a personalised list of last speakers of languages. This would include photos of the speakers, etc. but would only be posted with the permission of each speaker. This would be a resource for people wanting to write stories on endangered languages.

Ole will prepare details (including feasibility, possible cost) of making a magazine directed to the public. People could subscribe so that they feel they are at least contributing something towards language maintenance - in much the same way that the Greenpeace magazine functions.

*ACTION Ole

Alasdair suggested developing a small article spelling out the functions and aims of FEL for other organisations to include in their newsletters, etc.

Ole suggested that FEL make a database of our own articles on endangered languages which could be sent to magazines/newsletters of relevant organisations - he knows of lists of these organisations on the web.

*ACTION Ole (to send details of such lists to Nick)

5. Grants.

Nick will issue call for grant applications to members by email. The deadline for applications will be October 31 1998.

*ACTION Nick

Nick informed the meeting that four grant proposals have already been received by FEL. All members of the Committee will be sent copies of the grant applications by mid-November to allow time to read them before the grant allocations is discussed and decided at the next meeting.

Nick informed the meeting that there was one grantee from the last round who had not submitted a report yet. Heather offered to contact the grantee and inform him that he needed to submit his report by October 31 1998. Heather suggested that in future FEL retain 10% of the value of each grant until a report from the grantee has been received. This was agreed by the meeting.

*ACTION Chris Moseley to update rules of procedure for grant allocation.

It was decided that when calls for the next round of grants go out it will include the total amount that FEL expects to have available to allocate. This allows FEL flexibility in the amount it allocates to each grantee and does not commit FEL to an absolute amount before it knows how much it will have to distribute, whilst giving the applicants a general idea of the amount they could aim for.

*ACTION Margaret, to inform Nick (and Chris) of such total amount as soon as it is known.

7. Topics for future discussion.

Deferred to next meeting.

8. Web page and Ogmios.

Nick and Alasdair will discuss ways to improve appearance of Ogmios.

*ACTION Nick, Alasdair

Heather volunteered to take over the copying and mailing out of Ogmios. Nick will send her a camera-ready version from which she will have 200 copies made. Margaret will send Heather a cheque for £200 for copying and a cheque for £80 for postage as soon as the camera-ready version is ready.

9. Next conference.

Cardiff and Ireland have been suggested for a venue for the conference next year. Nick will elicit further suggestions from the members.

Nick will organise the publication of the proceedings of the 1998 conference.

*ACTION Nick, Alasdair

10. Next meeting.

2pm, Saturday November 28 1998 at Nick's house in Bath (as below).

FEL Executive Committee Meeting, Batheaston Villa, 28 November 98, 2pm

Present: Nick Ostler, Chris Moseley, Margaret Allen, Nigel Birch, Alasdair MacCaluim, Heather King

Apologies: Mahendra Verma, John Clews, Davyth Hicks, Ole Stig Andersen
These minutes were taken by Heather.

0. Appointment of Secretary

*ACTION: Nick to find person willing

1. Minutes of last meeting

Alasdair corrected the date of the anniversary of Ned Maddrell's death from September to December. The Minutes were passed and signed by the President, and seconded by Alasdair.

2. Matters arising

None, beyond the items below.

3. Financial matters

Treasurer's report submitted by Margaret.

Passed: Nick Seconded: Chris

Nick pointed out the methods for paying subscription:

- credit card, bank order, cheque in sterling, cash in person (or cheques in American dollars made out to Nick if necessary)

Travel expenses to meeting to be paid to committee £169.82

Amount to be given away as grants £1500

Necessary to retain £500 to cover next issue of Ogmios and ongoing costs.

4. Membership matters

Membership Secretary's report submitted.

Passed: Nick Seconded: Nigel

46 members have not paid their latest subscription. 5 on the list have never paid.

Nigel suggested that a note go out to members with outstanding subscriptions pointing out that we only had £1500 to give out as grants because members had not paid up on time despite reminders. The note would point out that as a person concerned about language maintenance the unpaid member would understand the effect of having limited funds and would want to contribute by paying up. Email to those with email and letters to those who do not.

*ACTION: Nick

The issue of a replacement membership secretary was carried over. Nick suggested Mukul Saxena in York as a possibility.

5. Fund raising

Nick has compiled a list of UK-based foundations whose published stance suggest they might favour FEL with grants. They are mainly in the area of support for cultures.

He mentioned that it would be possible to use the list of unfunded proposals to give content to DEL's approach to them; or to single out

particular projects and approach a foundation with a definite proposal.

*ACTION: Nick to write to all of the foundations.

6. Grants

After deliberation of all the opinions of the committee members on the applications for grants, the following allocations (in pounds sterling) were decided:

£400	Holton	
£200	Lucich	(funding does not include computer)
£500	Terrill	
£450	Benedicto	(funding for 3 language workers, not 4)

It was therefore decided to go £50 over the £1500 limit.

Nick thanked Chris for all his hard work on the grants.

*ACTION: Chris to approach as soon as possible the referees of the successful applicants who have not yet submitted a reference.

Nick asked committee to email him with any suggestions of improvements to the application form.

It was decided that in future a membership form will be sent out with each application form for grants. Membership will not be a condition of applying for a grant but applicants will be strongly encouraged because this is what keeps FEL going.

7. Publications

York conference proceedings are still in process - some time before news is expected.

Edinburgh conference proceedings are being considered by editors of Multilingual Matters - waiting for response.

8. Next conference

Possible venues: Cardiff, Maynooth

Chris suggested the topic of *Language and Education*, which met with general agreement.

Conference subcommittee to be set up - Nick and Chris volunteered.

*ACTION: Nick to consult members for other volunteers.

Nigel suggested two conference fee scales - one for members and one for non-members. The non-members fee would amount to more than the members fee and members subscription combined to encourage delegates to become members.

9. Campaigns

No advantage has come of Chris' letter to Milosovic re the rights of Albanian speakers - the war has progressively worsened.

Alasdair is planning to write an article for a Gaelic newspaper as a representative of FEL in co-operation with the Manx Language Officer to commemorate the 25th anniversary death of Ned Maddrell.

10. Changes to constitution

The constitution is to be changed to allow for an increased maximum number in committee, and some modifications to the rules for grants. Andrew

Woodfield has official constitution, so this issue had to be deferred.

11. Ogmios

Alasdair said he that Ogmios format was probably best to stay as it is to keep cost down.

12. Website

Only Andrew has access to the FEL website. The committee needs to arrange to get more control over it.

13. Next meeting

Sat 27th March, 2 pm Chris's house in Nettlebed.

*ACTION: Chris - to tell us all how to get there.

14. Other business

Mark Donohue's grant report and three booklets arrived.

3. Language Endangerment: Policy Issues

Australia's Northern Territory will phase out Bilingual Education for Aboriginals

Date: Wed, 02 Dec 1998 10:29:27 +0930

From: Bob Boughton <bob@menzies.su.edu.au>

The following statement was the work of a group of people in Alice Springs and is being forwarded for information and action by those interested in the future of bi-lingual education.

Wednesday, December 2nd, Alice Springs, NT

Yesterday in Alice Springs a Forum of educationalists attended by over sixty (60) people including many experienced Indigenous educators gathered to discuss the future of Aboriginal education in Alice Springs, particularly for Arrernte-speaking high school age students. As the Forum was listening to a proposal concerning the implementation of Arrernte and Warlpiri languages as part of the curriculum for Aboriginal children in Alice Springs schools, news arrived that the Northern Territory Government Minister for Education Peter Adamson had just announced in the parliament his government's intention to replace bi-lingual education with ESL programs throughout the Territory (For the NT Department of Education Statement, and copies of the Minister's press release, see <http://www.ntde.nt.gov.au/announce>)

To say that the announcement came as a body blow is to underestimate the demoralising effect that it had on the gathering. A number of people immediately pointed out that the announcement gave communities a false and potentially divisive choice, and that communities should never be asked to surrender the right to teach and learn in their own languages, before they could access ESL support. ESL and bi-lingual education are not mutually exclusive, it was said, but could and should work together to produce quality educational outcomes for Aboriginal communities. It was also pointed out that this action directly threatened the rights of

indigenous language speakers to educate their children and young people in those languages if they wished, with government support, a right specified in the current draft UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

A majority of people at the gathering voted to call on the Government to withdraw its announcement and immediately conduct extensive consultation with Aboriginal organisations and communities in Central Australia.

--

Bob Boughton

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Selections from :

*Australian Indigenous Languages (Internet Library
for Australian Languages) Edited by David Nathan
URL: <http://www.dnathan.com/VL/alert.htm>*

Attack on bilingual education in the Northern Territory
14 December 1998

Recent correspondence indicates that Bilingual Education is being withdrawn in the Northern Territory. Many Territorians are concerned about the future of the NT's children.

The findings of a NT Department of Education review includes the following Initiative:

"Progressively withdraw the Bilingual Education program, allowing the schools to share in the savings and better resource English language programs."

...

A 3 year time frame has been suggested, with some of the major restructuring likely in the first half of next year.

...

It is worth noting that in 1994, the Australian Senate published a Report A Matter of Survival, the findings of an inquiry undertaken "because of widespread concern over language loss amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people." Participants in the inquiry included Dr Michael Wooldridge, MP, the current Health Minister, Mr Les Scott, MP, (Chair) Mr Garrie Gibson, MP and the current member for the NT, Warren Snowdon.

Date: Thu, 10 Dec 1998 08:47:51 -0400

To: endangered-languages-l@carmen.murdoch.edu.au

From: Kenneth Hale <klhale@mit.edu>

Subject: Re: ELL: Bilingual ed ditched

Dear David:

Here is a letter I sent to Abramson and Stone about bilingual education. I hope it's appropriate. Best, Ken.

December 9, 1998

Hon Peter Adamson, MLA
Minister for Education
Fax: 618 8981 7440

The Honorable Mr. Adamson:

I am writing in relation to the decision to withdraw bilingual education from the educational programs for Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory. I was one of the contributors to the 1975 report on bilingual education and one of the people involved in producing materials and in training Warlpiri-speaking teachers during the first months of the Yuendumu Bilingual Education Program.

Bilingual education has been one of the most effective ways to ensure that the linguistic traditions of local communities play the role they deserve to play in the schooling their children and young adults. This has been established as virtually axiomatic in indigenous communities the world over. While it is of course a necessity that pupils gain full access to the language of the nation in which they live, English in this case, it is also necessary that their native language and cultural heritage be accorded a position of dignity and integrity in the context of their formal education, which constitutes a significant percentage of their waking hours.

With 35 years of experience in working with indigenous language communities, in the United States, Australia, and Nicaragua, I feel qualified to say that policies which effectively remove from the school setting the intellectual heritage represented by the local language have consequences which are serious and harmful for students who need to have that heritage and to realize that it is important and deserving of a position of centrality in their education. The policy of denial deprives students of something they need. They need their language and they need to see their language accorded the respect it deserves. Given that the school is an important and prominent institution in Aboriginal communities, the best way to show respect for an Aboriginal language is to give it a serious position within the school.

In conclusion, I wish to urge in the strongest possible terms that the decision to withdraw bilingual education from the school in the Northern Territory be reconsidered and revoked.

Sincerely yours,

Kenneth Hale
Ferrari P. Ward Professor of Modern Languages and Linguistics
MIT

Davyth Hicks <celdhp@srv0.arts.ed.ac.uk> quoted a message from 21 December on the list CORNISHSTUDIES@anu.edu.au.

SOME PARALLELS AND LESSONS?

The decision of the Australian Northern Territory Government to axe school teaching in Aboriginal languages and the furore the decision has generated

might seem somehow familiar to Cornish people... For a flavour of the 'debate' I will quote two articles from the Canberra Times of 10th December, both starting on page 1 of the newspaper:

LANGUAGE AXING WILL 'DISEMPOWER'

By Naomi Mapstone and Emma MacDonald

The Northern Territory Government has been accused of winding back the clock to the assimilationist education policies of 40 years ago.

Indigenous communities and educationists are in uproar about the move to teach in English only, accusing the government of disempowering Aboriginal people, denying them the right to keep their culture and languages alive and jeopardising literacy outcomes.

Between 60 and 100 jobs are at risk, affecting 21 indigenous communities in the territory.

NT Education Minister Peter Adamson (Country Liberal Party) defended the decision to phase out bilingual education yesterday, saying employment opportunities for Aboriginal people would be maintained and children could still learn their own languages at home.

If a community felt strongly about learning indigenous languages, they could invite elders to come into the school and teach voluntarily he said.

Federal Labor Member for the NT Warren Snowdon, a former teacher, said English was the second language of many indigenous students, and proficiency in a first language was a proven aid to progress in a second. 'Bilingual education is regarded as fundamental to providing two-way education for Aboriginal people... clearly the NT Government has decided that rather than having policies for the next millennium, they'd rather have policies of the 1940s and 1950s,' he said.

The chairman of the central Arnhem Land Galiwin'ku community, George Daynambu, said his community was angry that its language was to be denied official recognition.

'Equal rights demands that cultural richness of languages must be recognised and promoted,' he said.

The Ngulu community of Tiwi people on Bathurst Island said the move harked back to the assimilationist policies of the past.

'We feel angry - nobody came and talked to the Tiwi people. This is discrimination, it is attacking Aboriginal culture and language,' they wrote in an open letter.

'The children need to learn their own language, keep it strong. They learn relationships, singing, dancing, skin group, seasons, country, totem, story telling, clans, dreamtime...kids need to be able to read and write in Tiwi because that is what they will speak forever.'

Papanyah School community spokeswoman Diane de Vere has asked for the issue to be reconsidered as a matter of 'urgency, conscience and hope.'

IN PLAIN ENGLISH: BILINGUAL CUT IS 'STUPID'

By Emma MacDonald

World languages expert Stephen Wurm has warned that a decision to cut bilingual education for Aboriginal students could extinguish indigenous languages.

Australian National University Emeritus Professor Wurm, who speaks 40 languages, including several Aboriginal dialects, and who is the president of the Permanent International Council of Linguistics, said yesterday that the Northern Territory Government's move was a 'great shame' and could 'come back and haunt it'.

The Government's justification that English was a more important language for indigenous people to learn was 'stupid'.

'People think that bilingualism is harmful to English, but that is absolute idiocy. The vast majority of speakers of languages in the world are bi and multilingual, and there is no harm to English with that', he said.

Professor Wurm said the Government was displaying the 'typical attitude of speakers of large languages such as English, French, Russian, Chinese'.

Yet he warned that if indigenous languages did disappear, the Government could be faced with young people storming back to scholars and politicians saying 'Please, we have forgotten our language, can you teach it to us?'

Professor Wurm reported that the University of Adelaide had been requested by a local community to provide tuition in an extinct language, resulting in 50 fluent speakers.

He warned that reviving an extinct language was difficult and expensive and that the Northern Territory Government could face enormous pressure from many of the active Aboriginal communities.

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See also the Editorial column above, for FEL's response, and how you can contribute; and for a Petition Form on electronic media:
<http://www.dnathan.com/VL/petition.htm>

UK Committed to Sign the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in respect of Welsh; Active Consideration for Irish and Scots Gaelic

(Much of this information is from the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages, and especially Contact Bulletin 15.1 (Nov. 1998)).

The Charter is a document formulated by the Council of Europe on 5 September 1992, which defines minimum standards for the treatment of indigenous languages by European states. It outlines measures relating to Education, Judicial Authorities, Administrative Authorities and Public Services, Media, Cultural Activities and Facilities, Economic and Social Life and Transfrontier Exchanges. It is flexible, in that it only requires countries that ratify, accept or approve it to guarantee action under an appropriate selection of these measures. The Charter requires a minimum of 35 such measures (out of a possible 94) for a given language, with 3 each from the Education and Cultural groups.

The previous Conservative administration in the UK had decided not to sign at all. But the new Labour government in 1998 stated its acceptance of the Charter's principles through Derek Fatchett, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, in response to a Parliamentary Question. Its readiness to sign the Charter for Welsh was declared by Ron Davies, then Secretary of State for Wales.

It is necessary to provide for the use of Scots Gaelic in the courts before this language can be included, and it was said to be the Government's intention this year (1998) to draw up legislation for use of Gaelic in civil cases where Gaelic is used by a substantial proportion of the population. Irish in Northern Ireland was to be specified "at an early date".

Scots (a dialect of English) is to be specified under Part II of the Charter, which only states Objectives and Principles, without minimum standards for measures to be enforced. This mention of Scots is not geographically specific to Scotland; and it is in fact an issue in the Northern Ireland negotiations what status is to be given to Ulster-Scots.

The following clauses are part of the "Good Friday" 1998 Northern Irish Peace Agreement:

Economic, Social and Cultural Issues

3. All participants recognise the importance of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to linguistic diversity, including in Northern Ireland, the Irish language, Ulster-Scots and the languages of the various ethnic communities, all of which are part of the cultural wealth of the island of Ireland.

4. In the context of active consideration currently being given to the UK signing the Council of Europe Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the British Government will in particular in relation to the Irish language, where appropriate and where people so desire it:

- take resolute action to promote the language;
- facilitate and encourage the use of the language in speech and writing in public

and private life where there is appropriate demand;

- seek to remove, where possible, restrictions which would discourage or work against the maintenance or development of the language;

- make provision for liaising with the Irish language community, representing their views to public authorities and investigating complaints;

- place a statutory duty on the Department of Education to encourage and facilitate Irish medium education in line with current provision for integrated education;

- explore urgently with the relevant British authorities, and in co-operation with the Irish broadcasting authorities, the scope for achieving more widespread availability of Teilifis na Gaeilge in Northern Ireland;

- seek more effective ways to encourage and provide financial support for Irish language film and television production in Northern Ireland; and

- encourage the parties to secure agreement that this commitment will be sustained by a new Assembly in a way which takes account of the desires and sensitivities of the community.

Poignant report on the Regional Languages and Cultures of France
(Derived from the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages' Contact Bulletin 15.1 (Nov. 1998)).

In response to a request from the French Prime Minister, Bernard Poignant (mayor of Kemper in Brittany) continued the work of Nicole Péry (a parliamentary deputy from the Basque country) in producing a report on regional languages and cultures in France. It was duly delivered on 1 July 1998, and immediately published.

It recommends signing and ratification of the European Charter, despite the recent controversy about this in France, where the Council of State, on 24 September 1996, ruled that it was incompatible with the clause of the French constitution (added in 1992) that "la langue de la République est le français". The report recommends changing the constitution if necessary.

It recognizes 12 'cultural languages of the Republic other than French'. Besides Basque and Breton, these are Mosel-Alsatian (written as German), Catalan, Corsican, Creoles (of Guyana, Guadeloupe, Martinique and Réunion), Occitan, Flemish, Tahitian, the Kanak languages, the Oïl languages close to French itself (e.g. Picard, Champenois ...) and Franco-Provençal.

Its concrete proposals are for the languages to be considered in recruitment of teachers, language quotas for public TV and radio, and centres for meetings and discussion. By and large, it has been met with a measured welcome from representatives of the regions.

Parliamentary Report on the Status of Corsican (in French): Statut de la langue corse dans l'enseignement, Corse, Septembre 1998

Claude Truchot (Univ. Franche-Comté, France: <Claude.Truchot@wanadoo.fr>) nous a envoyé ce rapport, sur la base du rapport de la commission d'enquête parlementaire sur la Corse et comptes-rendus de presse.

Le volumineux rapport de la Commission Parlementaire d'Enquête sur la Corse Nouvelle remis au Premier Ministre français en septembre 1998, recommande au Gouvernement la défense et promotion de la langue corse comme étant une des sept priorités pour sortir l'île de la situation économique et sociale difficile où elle se trouve actuellement. Elle relève que si la connaissance du corse est en baisse (60% de la population de l'île est en mesure de soutenir une conversation contre 80% en 1977), le processus de valorisation dans les médias et dans la culture (surtout chez les jeunes) est en forte hausse. Dans l'éducation 85% des élèves du primaire apprennent le corse notamment dans onze écoles bilingues. Cet enseignement est prolongé dans le secondaire, soit dans des "sections méditerranéennes" (français, corse, latin, italien ou espagnol), soit en tant que langue vivante. En 1997, environ un tiers des élèves avaient passé une épreuve de corse au bac. Par contre la Commission ne se prononce pas en faveur de l'obligation de son enseignement, contrairement à ce que demandent les nationalistes et une partie des élus de gauche, mais recommande un élargissement des possibilités d'apprentissage, ce qui devrait être, pour l'instant, la position gouvernementale.

Census of Canada's Aboriginal languages

The Daily, Statistics Canada, 14 December 1998:
<http://www.statcan.ca:80/Daily/English/981214/d981214.htm#ART1>

This report is based on an article in the publication Canadian social trends that explores which of Canada's Aboriginal languages are flourishing and which are in danger of disappearing.

The article examines the factors that differentiate viable languages from endangered ones. In addition, it compares language use and maintenance patterns between 1981 and 1996 to understand what happened to Aboriginal languages over the years, and what the future may hold for them.

The article uses data from the 1981 to 1996 censuses as well as the 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey. The 1996 Aboriginal identity population

includes those people who reported identifying with at least one Aboriginal group, that is, North American Indian, Métis or Inuit. In 1991 and in previous censuses, the Aboriginal population was defined using the ethnic origin question based primarily on ancestry. Because of changes in concepts and measures of the Aboriginal population over time, the time-series analysis from the census is restricted to language-based data only.

During the past 100 years or more, some 10 of Canada's once-flourishing Aboriginal languages have become extinct, and at least a dozen are on the brink.

As of 1996, only three out of 50 Aboriginal languages - Cree, Inuktitut and Ojibway - had large enough populations to be considered truly secure from the threat of extinction in the long run. This is not surprising in light of the current situation. Of some 800,000 persons who claimed an Aboriginal identity in 1996, only 26% said an Aboriginal language was their mother tongue, and even fewer spoke it at home.

The 50 Aboriginal languages belong to 11 major language families - 10 First Nations and Inuktitut. Some of these families are large and strong, others small and vulnerable.

The three largest families together represent 93% of persons with an Aboriginal mother tongue. About 147,000 people have Algonquian as mother tongue, the family that includes Cree and Ojibway. Another 28,000 have Inuktitut, and 20,000 have Athapaskan. The remaining eight language families account for 7% of persons with an Aboriginal mother tongue, an indication of these languages' relative size.

Since a large base of speakers is among the essential factors to ensure long-term viability, the more speakers a language has, the better are its chances of survival. Inuktitut, Cree and Ojibway all boast more than 20,000 people with an Aboriginal mother tongue.

In contrast, endangered languages rarely have more than a few thousand speakers, and often they have only a few hundred. For instance, the two smallest and weakest language groups, Kutenai and Tlingit, have mother tongue populations of only 120 and 145 respectively.

Aboriginal languages underwent steady erosion between 1981 and 1996

Between 1981 and 1996, most Aboriginal languages experienced a steady erosion in linguistic vitality. Although the number of people reporting an Aboriginal mother tongue increased nearly 24% during the 15-year period, the number of those who spoke an Aboriginal language at home grew only 7%.

As a result, for every 100 people with an Aboriginal mother tongue, the number whose home

language was most often an indigenous language declined from 76 in 1981 to 65 in 1996.

Endangered languages experienced the largest declines. For example, for every 100 individuals with Salish languages as a mother tongue, the number who used it at home fell from 35 in 1981 to only 12 by 1996. Tlingit and Kutenai had practically disappeared by the 1990s as languages most often spoken at home.

The use of Cree at home declined as well, but by considerably less than other languages. For every 100 individuals with Cree as a mother tongue, the number who used it at home declined from 78 in 1981 to 65 in 1996.

The younger the speakers, the healthier the language

Age plays an important role in maintaining a language. The younger those who speak a language, the healthier it becomes. Problems for a language arise in communities in which the average age of speakers is higher. As the elders in such communities who speak the language die, the language might too.

Overall, the average age of the population with an Aboriginal mother tongue was 31 in 1996, up from 28 in 1981. Meanwhile, the average age of individuals who spoke an Aboriginal language at home also increased during the 15-year period, but to a lesser extent. It was 27 in 1996, up from 25 in 1981.

There are two reasons why people with indigenous languages as a mother tongue are getting older. First, although fertility rates are still high, they are declining, translating into relatively fewer children. Second, the proportion of the Aboriginal population with an indigenous mother tongue is decreasing with younger generations.

In 1996, only one-fifth (20%) of children under age five had an indigenous mother tongue. In contrast, 60% of those aged 85 and over and 30% of those aged 40 to 44 reported an Aboriginal mother tongue.

Loss of an Aboriginal language most pronounced in the working-age population

The loss of a language appears to depend greatly on the stage of life through which people are going. Young children have not yet had time or reason to shift from their mother tongue to another language. For most of them, their mother tongue is, therefore, the same as their home language.

For example, for every 100 children under age five in 1981, 91 spoke their mother tongue at home. However, in 1996, when these children were in their mid- to late-teens, only 76 still used their mother tongue as their home language. This indicates a serious loss in home language, but the decline did not stop there.

As youth move out of the original family home, marriage, entry into the labour force, and a different, often large, urban environment can further accelerate their language decline. While this was true for both sexes, it was particularly noticeable among women. One reason may be that they are more likely than men to leave reserves for other locations where the chances of marrying non-Aboriginal people are higher.

Erosion of languages can be difficult to resist if an individual does not have the support of a closely-knit community and is immersed in the language and culture of the dominant society.

Aboriginal elders, teachers and other leaders are well aware of the gravity of the linguistic situation, however, and are taking steps to preserve indigenous languages. These include such measures as language instruction programs, Aboriginal media programming, and the recording of elders' stories, songs and accounts of history in the Aboriginal language.

1996 Census Figures for Individual Languages

Aboriginal language	Mother tongue populations	Status of language
Total	208,610	Mix of viable and endangered
Algonquian Family	146,635	Mostly viable
Cree	87,555	Viable large
Ojibway	25,885	Viable large
Montagnais-Naskapi	9,070	Viable small
Micmac	7,310	Viable small
Oji-Cree	5,400	Viable small
Attikamek	3,995	Viable small
Blackfoot	4,145	Viable small
Algonquin	2,275	Viable small
Malecite	655	Viable small
Algonquian*	350	Uncertain
Inuktitut Family	27,780	Viable large
Athapaskan Family	20,090	Mostly viable
Dene	9,000	Viable small
South Slave	2,620	Viable small
Dogrib	2,085	Viable small
Carrier	2,190	Viable small
Chipewyan	1,455	Viable small
Athapaskan	1,310	Uncertain
Chilcotin	705	Viable small
Kutchin-Gwich'in (Loucheux)	430	Endangered
North Slave (Hare)	290	Endangered
(Dakota) Siouan Family	4,295	Viable small
Salish Family	3,200	Endangered
Salish	1,850	Endangered
Shuswap	745	Endangered

Thompson	595	Endangered
Tsimshian	2,460	Endangered
Gitksan	1,200	Viable small
Nishga	795	Endangered
Tsimshian	465	Endangered
Wakashan Family	1,650	Endangered
Wakashan	1,070	Endangered
Nootka	590	Endangered
Iroquoian Family	590	Uncertain
Mohawk	350	Uncertain
Iroquoian	235	Uncertain
Haida Family	240	Endangered
Tlingit Family	145	Endangered
Kutenai Family	120	Endangered
Aboriginal languages*	1,405	Endangered
*Not identified elsewhere		

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 1996

(The Winter 1998 edition of Canadian Social Trends (11-008-XPE, \$11) is now available. For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Mary Jane Norris (+1-613-951-2316), Demography Division.

Mirandes Recognized within Portugal

LISBON, Sept 17 (AFP) - Portugal was to officialise Thursday a minority language, known as Mirandes, spoken by a tiny group of 15,000 people living in the far northeast of the country by the border with Spain. A bill making Mirandes an official language was to be presented to parliament by a deputy from the region and was expected to be passed without difficulty.

Mirandes-speakers are grouped in a region of around 500 square kilometres (220 square miles) around the town of Miranda do Douro, on the river of the same name that forms the border between Portugal and Spain. Mirandes, a Latin language, is one of two⁷ surviving descendants of the Leonese language spoken in the former Kingdom of Leon, now part of the Asturias region in northwestern Spain, according to local linguist Manuela Barros.

Officialisation means that the state is pledged to promote the language in the region, to use it in schools, and to use all possible scientific means to prevent it dying out.

Antonio Teixeira <teix+@pitt.edu>

4. Appeals and News from Endangered Communities

Revival of Livonian Language in Latvia

⁷ For the other, see section 8, Places to Go, below.

[Excerpts from programme in the 'Ear for Language' series, Estonian Radio 1st Programme 1530 GMT 21st September 1998, Presenter Mari Tarand. The Editor thanks Chris Moseley for translating this and bringing it to our notice.]

Livonian, also known as Liv, is a Finno-Ugric Language spoken on the Baltic coast of Latvia.

[Presenter]...There are these 15, about 15, old people who have come up now and again for discussion recently, also in our press, and who belong to the so-called first stage of the Livonian movement. They are the singers of the 'Livlist' ensemble, the grandparents of the young Livonians living today, however many they may be.

One generation - actually even two generations - have been missed out, so the current instigators of the Livonian movement are young people in their twenties. And what is most interesting is that no-one has forced them to do this - they have been doing it of their own volition. No outsider has come up with the suggestion - the Ministry of Culture, or, say, another other institution, to say "let's get the Livonian cause going"; they have done this themselves - this is what is the most essential fact about this, that all these young Livonians are self-motivated.

They learned the Livonian language later; Latvian has always been their first language, and because there has been a 50-year break in the speaking and active use of Livonian, and these young people have learned it only later, it is very difficult to speak a language that is lacking the new words that have come up over the past 50 years. And yet they are able to teach this language on Livonian language courses at the annual Livonian camps. These are held on the Livonian coast, and that is where the little Livonians go, the youngest ones, who are going to school, and they are taught the Livonian language by Livonians themselves, and of course by people who speak Livonian.

What is especially remarkable is that a Livonian textbook has been prepared by *Kersti Boiko*, who teaches at the University of Latvia. It is designed to be taught in ten lessons, with a vocabulary of 800 words. Now that this textbook has appeared in print, it is a really big step forward, as it may well make it really possible to intensify the 're-Livonianization' process, so that the young people who are now learning it will really get a grasp of Livonian. Of course this also means that the rebirth of the Livonians is a reality, and the process will continue.

[Presenter] Let's talk a bit more about these pioneers who are promoting the Livonian cause. One more important thing is that up till now there has been talk of folklore, and we have records of songs in Livonian, some of which is due to Peter Damberg...

But now a collection of Livonian poetry has been published and printed.

[Boiko] These are young enthusiasts who have taken on themselves the promotion of Livonian culture and the Livonian cause. One must mention first of all Valt Ernstreit, who has graduated from Tartu University this spring, and who is the editor of the anthology of Livonian poetry... [Inaudible passage] There has also been a travelling exhibition of Livonian art put together, with a whole room devoted to Aivar Damberg, showing his graphic works. And these were extremely interesting, and really attracted attention among the Finns, for example. I also know that a committee meeting of the new Society of Friends of Livonians has taken place, and they are planning the biggest Livonian event ever, to take place next summer, when 60 years will have passed since the building of their People's House, built with the help of the Livonians' sister nations, which was opened just before the war. Nine years ago people from Estonia attended its reinauguration, now under the blue, black and white flag, so that is also a celebration for next summer.

The Society of Friends of Livonia was set up actually on 1st August, during the Livonian festival. The Livonian festival is the annual event that is held on the Livonian coast, and since next year it will be the 60th anniversary of the building of the Livonian House, the committee of the Society of Friends of Livonia took the decision to have a really proper celebration of the event. Thus the idea came about of inviting the three presidents, and it was also mooted that a sort of seminar may be held, a cultural seminar on the Livonian coast, and the more people that intend to come to it, then of course the better the activities will be. This means that we are taking the Livonian movement on our shoulders, and the more supporters there are, the better it will be for the reawakening of the people.

[Presenter] I turn now to one person who has advanced the study and promotion and reawakening of Livonian culture, with great strides forward in Latvia, Professor *Mati Hint*, to comment. Mati Hint, ever since you were a student you have been running Livonian courses, studying the Livonian language, visiting the Livonian coast, going there with your own students. You have lived with it in your heart.

[Hint] First of all, not all my Livonian teachers have vanished. There are still eight to twelve Livonian people left who have taught me the Livonian language, and we have Professor Eduard Vaari, with whom I have been many times to the Livonian coast. Fortunately he is still alive. To tell the truth, I have been feeling guilty for quite a while my active pursuing of the Livonian cause has been put aside, because of my activities for the Estonian cause, and even now I have head of the Estonian language department here, and I have to keep up with that - though I have not forgotten Livonian language or the cause.

But if we are talking about a rebirth of Livonian, as it were, then my greatest concern is that it seems to prepare ground for the mood that everything is OK if eight people over 80 years of age still speak the language, and that this is the right time for a

rebirth. It prepares the ground for the mood that Estonians would be OK if there were only 260,000 of them left, which is the population of Iceland, or 360,000 people, as on Malta. Independent nations and people live on very happily. That was the tone of one leading article in the 'Postimees' newspaper. No way can I agree that the physical disappearance of a people, or the sharp decline in a population, is not a death threat to a language and culture.

In this sense, talking now very optimistically about the rebirth of Livonians, the Livonian idea, and the Livonian culture and language is misleading, to put it mildly.

The fact that there is so much excitement around the Livonian cause really pleases me extremely much. I remember from my own university days, when old people used to say that Livonian is a dog's language and a cows' language - these times are gone for good.

And so the time is gone when the younger generation learned Livonian as their first language, a mother-tongue, a natural mother tongue, but now they are learning Livonian in conditions where they have already acquired a different language as their mother tongue. They are learning Livonian consciously, as a foreign language - their mother tongue as a foreign language, and that is not really the same thing. The basis of pronunciation is not the same any more, it is no longer as natural as a first mother tongue. For that reason, I emphasize, we are very glad here about the liveliness and the positive results that the Livonian cause is now experiencing, but to talk of a rebirth - well, if it's stimulating, it's very good, but if it is lulling, along the lines that there is nothing to fear, as we Estonians have nothing to fear, that's the opposite, and quite bad.

[Presenter] So there is still plenty to think about, isn't there? And so there is still the opportunity to take part in one cultural development. I remind you that you can read more about the Livonian festival that took place in Riga in next Friday's issue of 'Sirp' newspaper.

Uphill Struggle for Teillifis na Gaeilge

The station, with its core staff of 30 broadcasters, seeks to project a forward-looking image using the most advanced TV technology available. It has been broadcasting now for just over two years. TnaG chief executive Cathal Goan notes that some of his station's own programs "have been greeted with critical acclaim in all Irish media and have received international awards."

TnaG broadcasts for about 10 hours each day: four hours in Gaelic, with an additional six hours of programs in English. Recent viewer figures, however, indicate audiences for the Irish-language programs rarely go above 10,000 viewers, while programs in English attract as many as 150,000 viewers. Perhaps this is unsurprising, given that the usual number quoted for Irish speakers is put 80,000, or about 2% of the population. But TnaG

has not yet built its market share in the vitally important Dublin area, where one-third of the Irish population lives.

Donncha O hEallaithe, a member of TnaG's advisory council, recently came out with the suggestion that its weak audience figures posed a question about its future. "I don't want TnaG to be closed down. I want an open debate about its purpose," he said.

As often the national consciousness of this was raised when the point was taken up by the notorious Irish Times controversialist Kevin Myers. He was even backed up to some extent in an editorial, which referred to the station as "prohibitively expensive and ... failing to win sufficient viewers except occasionally for its non-Irish output, which is hardly its purpose."

The station receives an annual government grant of just over \$15 million and gets 360 hours of programming each year from Irish national television (RTE), at a cost of \$10 million. Its quasi-official status was reinforced by a mention of its reception in Northern Ireland in a clause of the Good Friday Agreement Peace Agreement.⁸

And TnaG chief executive Goan pointed out that the market share achieved by TnaG "is roughly equivalent to the share of [24-hour news channel] Sky News and superior to that of MTV." Both these stations are well established and massively resourced, he noted, but make little or no contribution to Irish life.

University Aid Sought for Akha Publishing

Matthew McDaniel in Thailand writes:

I am seeking any University which would be interested in helping with the required funding for the production of original manuscripts in Akha Language.

At this time our project has been very successful in gaining elders and writers for our literature project and now we are increasingly short of funding for both recording equipment and the moneys for payment of these elders to continue the recording of the cultural knowledge.

According to our policy, all transcribed work will be made publicly available when completed as well as supplying copies to any institution assisting with funding of this project.

For those of you interested in Endangered Languages you can now go to:

<http://www.akha.com/downloadpdf.htm>

There you will find 2 and 3 meg files that make up the Akha Reader in PDF form. There are 9 files. I think the first is the biggest at 3.4 meg. Parts 1 and 2 are loaded. 3 through 9 will take me a few more days. Each part can take up to an hour to download unless you are at University connection

⁸ See "UK Committed..." in Section 3: Policy Issues above.

which may be faster. Of course here in Thailand it is slow. Anyway, that is a whole lot easier than loading down the whole thing at once.

Matthew McDaniel
The Akha Heritage Foundation, 386/3 Sailom Joi Rd, Maesai, Chiangrai, 57130, Thailand

Donations by check or money order may be sent to:

The Akha Heritage Foundation
1586 Ewald Ave SE, Salem OR 97302, USA

Donations by direct banking can be transferred to:

Wells Fargo Bank, Akha Heritage Foundation, Acc. # 0081-889693, Keizer, Oregon, USA

Web Site: <http://www.akha.com>
mailto: akha@loxinfo.co.th

5. Fieldwork Reports

Report from Mark Donohue: The languages of Wasur: archivists and activists

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Time and resources

May and June 1998 saw my return to the Merauke area, in South-east Irian Jaya, Indonesia, in order to conduct work with speakers of the endangered languages in the area in accord with the funding provided by the Foundation for Endangered Languages and the Endangered Languages Fund. Our aim was to conduct literacy work with the Yei and Moraori communities and to assemble additional grammatical survey work.

There are four ethnolinguistic groups indigenous to the area, the Yei, Kanum, and Morori (earlier spelt Moraori). A fourth group, the Marind, was initially excluded because they have a large population base (minimally 8,000), and had already established an internationally-funded self-help organisation, with a base in Merauke and funding from The Netherlands. Recent changes in 1997 (detailed below) have forced a change in this original decision.

Background

The last couple of years have seen a sharp increase in local awareness of the plight of their languages and cultures (due mainly to the forced acquisition of 85% of the traditional land in the area by logging concessions and by transmigration developers). In 1997 the first of a series of self-funded *balai adat* (culture centres) were built by the Morori, Yei and Kanum, and at the end of that same year the Marind-organised self-help organisation became reorganised as the *Forum komunikasi masyarakat adat Marind*, the Communications forum for the peoples of the Marind cultural type. This restructured organisation includes members of the Kimaama, Marind, Yei, Kanum and Morori ethnic

groups, and aims at representing them in the event of further forced acquisitions of land by the government transmigration contractors or logging consortiums. As a result of this development, it was felt that the most appropriate way to interact with the targeted communities was to work through and with the FKMAM, who were most amenable to this suggestion.

While in Merauke and surrounding districts we conducted a series of workshops to produce basic orthographies that were acceptable to the communities, with the aim of having standardised literacy materials; as a result of this investigation we have now got

- more extensive lexical documentation,
- a growing series of archives of local stories
- the organisation for locally-led advances in the production of written materials
- extended grammatical work for the wider linguistic community
- a better idea of the language and dialect situation on the ground

Each of these points shall now be discussed in turn.

Lexical documentation

The workshops which were initiated during the trip have resulted in preliminary picture dictionaries being produced in both Morori and Southern Yei. These are to be used in the local primary schools, with children who are proficient in the spoken language (at least passively), as a means of extending the sphere in which the language is used to include national-government institutions like schooling and education.

In addition to the preliminary production of these general picture dictionaries, initiatives have been started to collect lists and definitions of subject-matter specific lexical groups, with the aim of producing Department of Education approved booklets on this in the next few years. Topics that have been proposed include birds (which can draw on the many good ornithological studies in the New Guinea area as a source of illustrations), housing construction, and agriculture. This has only been made possible as a result of the developmental work that has been carried out, in full and continuous community consultation, to produce workable orthographies. While it is most likely that there will be some orthographic revision in the following years, importantly this is now a community issue, and is being discussed at a broad community level.

Archival work

In the course of the orthography development several local folk tales, or clan stories, have been recorded and written down as examples of the use of a local writing system. This has started the long process of amassing cultural materials that will be a benefit for the children in their schooling, since most current materials are unchanged Javano-centric propaganda leaflets, and do not make the process of acquiring literacy much easier.

For ongoing work the purchase of several tape players, batteries and blank tapes, with instructions for use and practical demonstration, will hopefully lead to a collection of stories and folk tales being gathered in the continuing future.

Linguistic findings

In addition to the locally-relevant work, we have now gained an improved perspective on language use and the language situation in the Wasur area. The Yei language has been shown to be split into (at least) two languages, northern and southern Yei, with orthographic consequences (Northern Yei has an extra vowel that needs to be distinguished, as well as contrastive vowel length for the low vowel).

Materials in Morori and Yei have been extended, in the fields of phonology, morphology and basic morphosyntax, and will presently find their way into the wider linguistic community, with some interesting results in the fields of lexical transitivity in Yei, and pronominal agreement marking in Morori.

The continuing work shows that the hypothesis that the Kanum languages and Yei are possibly related to the Pama-Nyungan family in Australia is at least tenable, and awaits further development in both the investigation of Australian linguistic prehistory, and ongoing work in the linguistic relations in the New Guinea area.

Moraori is all but confirmed as a linguistic isolate, having survived for an unknowable period of time with large neighbours on all sides, yet maintained its linguistic uniqueness. The grammar is proving challenging.

Modern South Arabian Languages: an overview by Anda Hofstede

Dr Hofstede writes: At the conference in Edinburgh (25-27 September), I gave a paper on the position of the Modern South Arabian languages. Due to time constraints, this paper was very short and many things had to be left out. In this article, to which I had committed myself already before the conference, some comments from participants at the conference have been included.

(The editor regrets that diacritics used in the names of the languages could not be reproduced. A fuller version of this work is available from Dr Hofstede.)

The Modern South Arabian languages are spoken in the south of Oman (Dhofar) and the southeast of Yemen. The name is slightly misleading as they are not dialects of Arabic. The languages are grouped together with the Semitic languages of Ethiopia and the Sayhadic languages (also called Epigraphic South Arabian or Old South Arabian languages) in the South Semitic branch. To the MSA languages belong Mehri, Socotri, Jibbali, Bathari, Harsusi and Hobyot. The extent to which research has been carried out, varies from language to language. Around 1900 many stories and some poems in Mehri (Southern dialect group), Jibbali and Socotri were collected and published (Jahn

1902, Müller 1902, 1905, 1907). Recently, extensive research has been carried out on Socotri and Mehri, and to a lesser extent on Jibbali and Harsusi.

In this article, I will give first an overview of the languages, the estimated number of speakers and the traditional occupations of the speakers. Then a discussion of possible writing systems and the influence of Arabic on the languages follows. Finally, some remarks concerning the attitude from the governments to the MSA languages, and the necessity of research on the languages will be made. The references follow at the end of the article.

Overview of the languages

As noted before, to the MSA languages belong Mehri, Socotri, Jibbali, Bathari, Harsusi and Hobyot. The following is an overview of each language.

Mehri

Mehri is spoken in Southern Oman (Dhofar) and in Southern Yemen. The number of speakers is estimated at about 100,000. There are two main dialect groups: a Northern group, rather called Negd dialect, which is spoken in Dhofar (Oman), and a Southern dialect group, which is spoken in Southern Yemen. The dialect of Qishn, the former centre of the Mahra, is the prestigious Mehri dialect in Yemen. In 1902, a word-list of the Southern dialect group appeared (Jahn 1902). A dictionary of the Negd dialect is published in 1987 (Johnstone 1987), but the most recent research is on the Southern dialect group (see inter alios Simeone-Senelle 1997).

Jibbali:

Jibbali is spoken in Dhofar, Oman. The number of speakers was estimated by T.M. Johnstone at about 5,000 (Johnstone 1975:94). However, Dr W. Arnold (University of Erlangen, Germany, in personal communication) estimates the total number at about 30-50,000. Traditionally, three dialect groups are distinguished: Eastern dialects (including the dialect of the al-Hallaniyyat Islands), Central dialects, and Western dialects (Johnstone 1981:xii). A dictionary of a Central dialect was published in 1981 by T.M. Johnstone (Johnstone 1981). Two publications on Jibbali poetry have been published (Johnstone 1972 and Morris 1985). A Ph.D. thesis has been written on the culture of Dhofar. This thesis also contains many poems in Jibbali (Tabook 1997). I myself have just written a Ph.D. thesis entitled *Syntax of Jibbali* (Hofstede 1998).

Socotri

Socotri is spoken on the island of Socotra. There are four dialect groups: the dialects spoken on the north coast, the dialects spoken on the south coast, the dialects spoken by Bedouins in the mountains in the centre of the island and the dialect spoken on 'Abd al-Kuri. The dialect spoken on the island Samha seems to be the same as the one on the west coast of Socotra. The inhabitants of Socotra are estimated at 50,000, those of 'Abd al-Kuri at about 250 and those of Samha at ten or a dozen (Simeone-Senelle 1997:379, following Naumkin 1988:342,

359). In 1938, W. Leslau published a dictionary on Socotri (Leslau 1938). Recently, more research has been carried out on the language and culture (see *inter alios* Simeone-Senelle 1997, and Naumkin and Porchomovskij 1981).

Bathari

Bathari is spoken in Oman on the coast facing the al-Hallaniyyat Islands, previously called the Kuria Muria Islands. Bathari is closely related to Mehri. The number of tribe members is estimated at about 300 (Morris 1983:130). Not all of them speak Bathari, some of them speak only Mehri. The research carried out on this language is rather limited. The standard work on Bathari is written by B. Thomas (Thomas 1937), but this should be treated with caution, as the transcription is sometimes misleading. More recently, M. Morris has published an article discussing a Bathari poem (Morris 1983). Some Bathari words are mentioned in Johnstone's *Mehri Lexicon* and *Jibbali Lexicon*.

Harsusi

Harsusi is mainly spoken in the Jiddat al-Harasis, Oman. The estimated number of the H arasis is not more than about 600 (Johnstone 1977:x). M.-Cl. Simeone-Senelle suggests that the number is very likely larger as at the time of Johnstone's visit many H arasis had left the region to go and work in oil wells (Simeone-Senelle 1997:379). The language is, like Bathari, closely related to Mehri. Johnstone has published a dictionary of Harsusi (Johnstone 1977) and also B. Thomas gives some information (Thomas 1937).

Hobyot

Hobyot is spoken around the border between Yemen and Oman. The estimated number of speakers is less than 100. The language displays characteristics of both Mehri and Jibbali. W. Arnold concludes in his article that it can be regarded as an independent language (Arnold 1993:24). A few Hobyot words are mentioned in Johnstone's *Mehri Lexicon* and *Jibbali Lexicon*.

Depending on where the speakers live, the traditional occupation is breeding camels, cows and goats, or cultivating palm trees. In villages alongside the sea, it is fishing. Of course, speakers are now also working in governmental offices, the university and private companies.

Writing system

The languages possess a rich oral tradition, but not a written tradition. Presently, there exist two systems for writing the languages: one is the Arabic alphabet, the other is a modified Latin alphabet.

The system in which the Arabic alphabet is used, has two variants.

- In the most commonly used variant, only unmodified Arabic letters are used. This leads sometimes to problems as some letters are used for two phonemes. Users of this system are aware of this problem. Also the way in which Arabic vowels are written, does not suffice for the wide variety in the MSA languages.
- In the other variant, a modified Arabic alphabet is used. Dots are added to or omitted from an

original Arabic letter. The system for vowels is the same as in the first variant. (One example of this kind of system is given in Simeone-Senelle and Lonnet 1986:265.) Attempts to create such a system have come from native speakers and non-native speakers. Even in this modified system it is sometimes not possible to have a one-one representation. (For example, it does not provide a letter for the Central Jibbali phoneme *s*.) Two other problems: the system is not standardized; and it is not always understood by outsiders.

At present, only the first, unmodified, system is used in publications and other writings.

The second system, the modified Latin script, is the result of the mixture of modified Latin letters and IPA. There are some differences between languages/dialects with regard to occurring vowels and consonants. Eight colours of short vowel are distinguished. Special graphs are used to mark labialized and lateral variants of dental obstruents, and diacritics for ejective and fricative consonants, as well as for nasalized, long and accented vowels. This system is now standardized. But, depending on the purpose of an article, one can decide to use a more phonetic script, i.e. closer to IPA, or a more phonological script, i.e. one closer to the Latin script.

The choice between the Arabic and the modified Latin alphabet depends on the circumstances. The (unmodified) Arabic alphabet is used by the native speakers, and in publications written in Arabic. The modified Latin alphabet is used in publications which are not written in Arabic.

Language Situation

The MSA languages are spoken in countries in which Arabic is the official language. Arabic is the medium of instruction in schools and universities and it is used for communication between speakers of different languages. Therefore, it is not surprising that Arabic has a strong influence on the MSA languages. At a young age, children learn both one of the MSA languages and the local dialect of Arabic from their parents. This natural process of the influence of Arabic on the MSA languages is very clear in the vocabulary of children. I have noticed this during my fieldwork on Jibbali, and M. Morris has noticed it for Bathari (Morris 1983:142). There is no doubt that this phenomenon occurs also in the other MSA languages. Most speakers of these languages are aware of this process.

There is some awareness among the population that something has to be done in order to preserve their languages and their cultures. In Oman, only the preservation of the culture is actively supported by the government. There is a special Ministry of National Heritage and Culture with a department and a museum in Salalah. There does not exist a specific governmental programme to preserve the languages. But there is no objection to linguistic research. There are a few Omani students, speakers of Jibbali, who are presently carrying out research on their language or intend to do so. However, up

to now most research projects have been carried out by European researchers.

The government of Yemen allows research on the languages and culture. I do not know to what extent they give active support.

Research

Further research on the MSA languages is necessary. There are two reasons for this. The first reason is to preserve the languages. It is still possible to record the languages as they are spoken by elderly people. Their language is the least influenced by Arabic.

The second reason is rather academic. Compared with research on other Semitic languages and related topics, only very little research has been carried out on these languages. Further research will contribute to a better understanding of the relation between the South Semitic languages. At the same time, one can observe how the languages are changing under the influence of Arabic.

In this article, I have given an overview of the language situation of the MSA languages which are spoken in Yemen and Oman. Readers who are interested in linguistic aspects of these languages are referred to two articles which give an outline of the various languages (Johnstone 1975 and Simeone-Senelle 1997). I will also be pleased to give further information.

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6. Allied Societies and Activities

Request for Proposals, Endangered Language Fund

The Endangered Language Fund provides grants for language maintenance and linguistic field work. The work most likely to be funded is that which serves both the native community and the field of linguistics. Work which has immediate applicability to one group and more distant application to the other will also be considered. Publishing subventions are a low priority, although they will be considered. The language involved must be in danger of disappearing within a generation or two. Endangerment is a continuum, and the location on the continuum is one factor in our funding decisions. Eligible expenses include travel, tapes, films, consultant fees, etc. Grants are normally for one year periods, though extensions may be applied for. We expect grants in this round to be less than \$2,000 in size.

HOW TO APPLY

There is no form, but the information requested below should be printed (on one side only) and **FOUR COPIES** sent to:

The Endangered Language Fund
Dept. of Linguistics
Yale University
P. O. Box 208236
New Haven, CT 06520-8236
USA

The street address for express mail services is:

The Endangered Language Fund
Department of Linguistics
320 York Street
Yale University
New Haven, CT 06520

Applications must be mailed in. No e-mail or fax applications will be accepted. Please note that regular mail, especially from abroad, can take up to four weeks.

If you have any questions, please write to the same address or email to:

elf@haskins.yale.edu

REQUIRED INFORMATION:**COVER PAGE:**

The first page should contain:

- Title of the project
- Name of language and country in which it is spoken
- Name of primary researcher
- Address of primary researcher
- (include phone and email if possible.)
- Social security number (if US citizen)
- Place and date of birth
- Present position, education, and native language(s).
- Previous experience and/or publications that are relevant.

Include the same information for collaborating researchers if any. This information may continue on the next page.

DESCRIPTION:

Beginning on a separate page, please provide a description of the project. This should normally take two pages or less, single spaced. Be detailed about the type of material that is to be collected and/or produced, and the value it will have to the native community (including relatives and descendants who do not speak the language) and to linguistic science. Give a brief description of the state of endangerment of the language in question.

BUDGET:

On a separate page, prepare an itemized budget that lists expected costs for the project. Estimates are acceptable, but they must be realistic. Please translate the amounts into US dollars. List other sources of support you are currently receiving or

expect to receive and other applications that relate to the current one.

LETTER OF SUPPORT:

Two letters of support are recommended, but not required. Note that these letters, if sent separately, must arrive on or before the deadline (April 20th, 1999) in order to be considered. If more than two letters are sent, only the first two received will be read.

LIMIT TO ONE PROPOSAL

A researcher can be primary researcher on only one proposal.

DEADLINE

Applications must be received by **April 20th, 1999**. Decisions will be delivered by the end of May, 1999.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

Receipt of application will be made by email if an email address is given. Otherwise, the applicant must include a self-addressed post-card in order to receive the acknowledgment.

IF A GRANT IS AWARDED

Before receiving any funds, university-based applicants must show that they have met the requirements of their university's human subjects' committee. Tribal- or other-based applicants must provide equivalent assurance that proper protocols are being used.

If a grant is made and accepted, the recipient is required to provide the Endangered Language Fund with a short formal report of the project and to provide the Fund with copies of all publications resulting from materials obtained with the assistance of the grant.

FURTHER ENQUIRIES can be made to:

The Endangered Language Fund
Dept. of Linguistics, Yale University, P. O. Box 208236, New Haven, CT 06520-8236 USA
Tel +1-203-432-2450, Fax +1-203-432-4087, elf@haskins.yale.edu

1998 Annual Report of the LSA Committee on Endangered Languages and their Preservation (CELP)

Submitted by Anthony C. Woodbury, University of Texas, Austin, Chair. (The LSA is the Linguistic Society of America.)

1998 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Catherine Callaghan (OSU), Wallace L. Chafe (UCSB), Daniel Everett (U Pitt), Joseph Grimes (Cornell/SIL), Colette Grinevald (MRASH), Leanne Hinton (UCB), George Huttar (SIL), Alana Johns, (U Toronto), Peter Ladefoged (UCLA), Martha Ratliff (Wayne SU), Keren Rice (U Toronto), Anthony C. Woodbury (U TX Austin)

MISSION STATEMENT

The CELP encourages the study and documentation of endangered languages and makes technical assistance available to language communities

seeking to preserve their languages from extinction. The Committee encourages academic institutions to offer assistance and support to members of threatened language communities working to preserve their languages. It also encourages institutions to offer training and degree programs oriented to the compilation of dictionaries and grammars of threatened and poorly documented languages, as well as to the documentation and study of naturally-occurring speech of all kinds in threatened-language communities. The Committee coordinates its activities with other relevant organizations, such as CIPL, AAA, SSILA, the Society for Linguistic Anthropology, the endangered language committees of the linguistic professional societies of Canada, Australia, Germany, Japan, and others, and several private organizations and foundations focused on language endangerment, including the Endangered Language Fund and the Foundation for Endangered Languages.

MEETINGS

CELP had an open meeting at the LSA meeting in New York on January 9, 1998. Items discussed included: A plan for honoring the linguistic contributions of native speakers of endangered languages; a proposal to name a "Language of the Year"; information-gathering targeted to language preservation and documentation efforts; liaison with other organizations; and representation, agitation, and reform within the discipline of linguistics regarding language endangerment issues.

It was the sense of the meeting that these items should be addressed by ad hoc task forces of one or more interested LSA members, whether or not they happen to be among the twelve people serving as appointed CELP members at this moment.

The committee will have its next open meeting in Los Angeles on January 8, 1999, as well as an informal breakfast meeting that same morning for just the officially-appointed committee members.

The committee has otherwise interacted by electronic mail. However, the circle of correspondence has been enlarged well beyond the committee proper through the construction of a CELP electronic mailing list, in keeping with our sense that endangered language activism must involve all interested LSA members. The list now contains 167 names, including those of the committee itself.

PROJECTS

PLAN FOR HONORING THE LINGUISTIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENDANGERED LANGUAGES

The Executive Committee of the LSA requested in 1996 that the CELP propose a plan for honoring endangered language speakers who have contributed to linguistics. This plan was discussed in January, 1997 and January, 1998, but no further action has been taken by the committee or any ad

hoc task force of the committee. There were differences of opinion on how such an award would be organized, and even on its advisability. A related proposal to name a 'language of the year' was also discussed, but likewise, no consensus was reached on its shape or advisability, nor has further initiative been taken.

PROPOSAL FOR AN LSA SCHOLARSHIP ON ENDANGERED LANGUAGES

Martha Ratliff, incoming CELP chair, reports:

"I remember one idea that was very enthusiastically received last January: the founding of an LSA scholarship to support a graduate student's field research each year. It would be of immediate practical value, and would help make the CELP "mission" clear to the whole Society, thereby contributing to the goal of promoting this kind of training within the field." This is an idea I hope we can pursue in our January, 1999, meeting.

ENDANGERED-LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIP AT THE LSA ANNUAL MEETING

For the last four years there have been regular Field Reports/Endangered Languages sessions at the LSA Annual Meeting, as well as special colloquia and symposia. This year's program includes two regular Field Reports/Endangered Languages sessions, and one symposium by LSA members. The committee expresses its thanks to all involved:

Field reports/Endangered languages. Regular session. Papers by Harold D. Crook, Willem J. de Reuse, Jeanette King, William J. Poser, David B. Solnit, Siri G. Tuttle, and Suzanne Urbanczyk.

Field reports/Endangered languages. Regular session. Papers by Anna Berge, John Foreman, Donna B. Gerds, Christine Gunlogson, Marcia Haag, Paul D. Kroeber, Esther Martinez, Siri G. Tuttle, William F. Weigel, and Suzanne Wertheim (UC Berkeley).

Amy Dahlstrom: Symposium. Field work and linguistic theory: American Indianists in the development of American linguistics. Papers by Charles F. Hockett, Wallace Chafe, William Jacobsen, Ken Hale, and Victor Golla.

DATABASE ON ENDANGERED LANGUAGES

In 1996 Akira Yamamoto completed a survey of endangered language community populations and speaker populations, by world area and language, including numbers of remaining speakers and contact names of linguists. We have expressed interest in having this survey put on the LSA's web site.

BOOKS ON ENDANGERED LANGUAGE RESEARCH

Cambridge University Press has accepted a proposal from Paul Newman and Martha Ratliff for a book on the enterprise of linguistic field work. The prospectus includes paper abstracts from:

Jonathan Bobaljik and Susi Wurmbrand, Shobhana L. Chelliah, James Collins, Alan Dench, Nancy C. Dorian, Nicholas Evans, David Gil, Kenneth L. Hale, Larry Hyman, Ian Maddieson, Fiona McLaughlin and Thierno Seydou Sall, Marianne Mithun, Keren Rice, and Tony Woodbury.

Colleen Cotter and Sarah Trechter have mentioned plans to edit a book on the basis of their January, 1998 LSA symposium, 'Practical Fieldwork: conflicting constraints on the ethical researcher.' The presenters in this symposium raised, through accounts of their personal experiences, a range of complex and important issues widely aired in anthropology but generally left alone by linguists. From my perspective as one of the symposium discussants, the effort met its goals well and received a warm response from a large and diverse audience.

THE USE OF LINGUISTIC INFORMATION IN EL COMMUNITY SETTINGS

For several years, a number of proposals have been raised to develop information on how linguistic information of various kinds could be mobilized in community language preservation efforts. This includes the development of pedagogical materials from scientific grammars, dictionaries, and text collections; the effective dissemination of scientific results on such topics as multilingualism (e.g., Knowing more than one language won't stunt a child's intellectual growth); and the preparation of videos or how-to kits for communities undertaking language maintenance work.

In this connection, I described in last year's annual report a planning conference that took place under the auspices of the Institute for the Preservation of the Indigenous languages of the Americas (IPOLA) in Santa Fe in Spring, 1997, for a Clearinghouse of Indigenous Language Programs. The conference was chaired by Ofelia Zepeda (U Arizona) and Akira Yamamoto (U Kansas). It is my understanding that this plan continues to move forward. CELP remains ready to assist when asked; however I think it is important to emphasize--perhaps especially to this audience--that the relevance, effectiveness, or even welcomness of LSA or CELP at all stages of such a project cannot be taken for granted. It is best I think to be ready and willing, and, in the meantime, to act as individuals where we can.

ENDANGERED LANGUAGES ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVING LSA MEMBERS

Several independent organizations active on endangered languages issues have emerged in the last few years on the initiative of LSA members.

Through the work of its founder Doug Whelan (Haskins Labs), the Endangered Languages Fund became a US nonprofit charitable organization in 1997, has been raising money, and has been giving modest grants to communities and linguists with projects on language preservation.

Another charitable organization, the Foundation for Endangered Languages, has been established in the UK by Nicholas Ostler. Among other things, the FEL, under Nick's guidance, sponsored its second major conference in Edinburgh in September, 1998, titled 'Endangered languages: What role for the specialist?' A proceedings volume for this conference is already available.

Another organization, Terralingua: Partnerships for Linguistic and Biological Diversity, whose president is Luisa Maffi, has been active in a number of ways and has an informative web page at <http://cougar.ucdavis.edu/nas/terralin/home.html>.

The American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI), with which Akira Yamamoto and Ofelia Zepeda (among other LSA members) have been long involved, will be in its 20th season of teaching for community language activists and educators, at the University of Arizona, Tucson. They will also host the Sixth Annual Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Conference, with the theme "One Voice, Many Voices: Recreating Indigenous Language Communities," June 3-5, 1999.

PLANS FOR AN ENDANGERED LANGUAGES JOURNAL

I was contacted by Gunter Senft, vice-president of the German Gesellschaft fuer bedrohte Sprachen, asking if CELP wished to become involved in the founding of a journal, 'Endangered Languages,' with Mouton de Gruyter expressing tentative interest as publisher. He proposed to couple receipt of the journal with membership in one of the various endangered languages organizations, including our own. I indicated strong support for the journal plan (but pointed out that coupling receipt of the journal to committee members only would find too narrow an audience, while coupling it to LSA membership would find too wide an audience).

CELP AND LINGUIST

Martha Ratliff, incoming CELP chair, reports:

"LINGUIST moderator Anthony Aristar has proposed two ways LINGUIST could help the endangered languages effort: (1) as discussed last year, LINGUIST could establish an information site for endangered languages (which could incorporate different types of information that others have proposed we collect -- programs information, publication information, funding information, data collection formats, -- as well as endangered language sketches and word lists) and (2) LINGUIST could mount an on-line conference on endangered languages. They have "test-driven" the concept of the on-line conference at LINGUIST, and the first one was a great success by all reports. They would now like to pursue funding to run a second conference on some aspect of the study of endangered languages in 1999, and would like topic suggestions from the committee, and names of people who would like to be involved. They would do all the organizing -- they just need idea people."

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The CELP wishes to thank all those LSA members who have contributed ideas, proposed projects, and become involved during the last year. This includes those mentioned already in this report, and many others too. We give special thanks to those relatively more junior members of the profession who have taken part in these ways and have given so freely of their time.

Thanks also to Elizabeth Traugott and Maggie Reynolds for their help and support.

Finally, let me give my own special thanks to the other 11 members of the committee for their many ideas, initiatives, and contributions.

Tony Woodbury <acw@mail.utexas.edu>

Professor and Chair
Dept. of Linguistics Phone: +1(512)471 1701
Calhoun Hall 501 Fax: +1(512)471 4340
University of Texas
Austin, TX 78712, USA

7. Overheard on the Web**AOL-UK Censorship of Irish Language**

Date: 12/23/98 8:37:46 AM CST

From: Sqirlee

To: info@belfast-news.ie

It was bad enough that AOL UK chose to close all 23 Irish message boards but now writers are being threatened with a COS if they stop using IRISH Gaeilge and only use the much newer English language. I applaud the Belfast-News to have a forum that allows free expression of ones thoughts. Also this being Christmas I ask the readers not to speak in Orange or Green colours but rather with the more peaceful backdrop of White.

Merry Christmas my friends, Ua Niall

copy:

A FOLLOW UP TO YOUR AMERICA ONLINE CENSORSHIP ARTICLE

Today, December 22, 1998, the following message was posted by the message board manager, on AOL/UK's "Peace In Ireland" message board, BANNING the use of the Irish language on that board.

>"This board is designed for English speakers and Gaelic postings are not allowed. Continuation of this type of posting will result in a warning to the account." "As for posting in Gaelic and then giving a translation in a later posting, we all know that we then rely on the accuracy and fairness of the person giving the translation.

>So.....to make it crystal clear.....posts in Gaelic will be removed without further recourse to the person who posted it.

>

UKHostCelt"

This ruling came after the SAME unionist poster who caused most of the problems on the Irish Heritage boards, THREATENED to report to AOL, another poster who had posted a phrase in Irish, if that poster did not immediately capitulate to her demand to translate the phrase into English for her. This has become more than just simple censorship, these actions by America Online are a violation of civil rights and free speech.

Sheila Fabey,
Chicago

(p.s. several posters have been posting Welsh language phrases as well, but today's action by AOL does not similarly prohibit the use of that language)

The URL for AOL's feedback page is :

<http://www.aol.com/info/feedback.html>

This may by now have been jammed with protests, but there is certainly no harm in adding to them. There is some encouraging evidence that such protests are effective with AOL:

<http://www.aclu.org/news/w072696c.html>

gives the story of how AOL revoked its English-only policy after experiencing the electronic wrath of some Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking customers.

Another e-mailer, who chose to remain anonymous as "Cin", pointed out that the effectiveness of protest might be enhanced by copying messages to <pradmin@netscape.com>

thus alerting Netscape, currently in the delicate stage of tying up its take-over by AOL, that the value of the new AOL stock it was receiving might be in the hands of some very short-sighted and irresponsible management, exposing it to possible censorship/discrimination litigation.

8. Places to Go, on the Web and in the World**Asturian site**

On 19 Sep 1998, Antonio G Teixeira <teix+@pitt.edu> wrote in response to a question :
> what's the other Leonese language that survives?⁹

Asturiano or Bable spoken in the the Spanish Autonomous region of Asturias. This language as an official status but it is not co-official as Catalan, Basque or Galician in their regions. As a source for more information you can try the webpage of the Academia de la Llingua Asturiana (Asturian Language Academy) at:
<http://numero.asturnet.es/alla>

Linguistic Olympics

On 19 Sep 1998 Tom Payne <tpayne@oregon.uoregon.edu> wrote:

'For one possible approach to raising public awareness of endangered languages, readers of this list may be interested in the "Linguistic Olympics" website.' It can be found at:

<http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~tpayne/lingolym/li ngolym.htm>.

⁹ See "Mirandes Recognized" in section 3, Policy Issues, above.

The Linguistic Olympics was conceived by Russian linguist A. Zaliznyak. In 1965 the first linguistic Olympics were held at Moscow State University. In 1996, over 450 students participated in the Moscow Linguistic Olympics and 350 in the St. Petersburg Olympics.

The site quoted contains a number of fairly simple linguistic decipherment problems, in the same spirit. -Ed.

Babel seeks multilingual correspondents and translators

Babel, the multilingual, multicultural online journal of arts and ideas (<http://www.towerofbabel.com>) is seeking multilingual correspondents and translators to report on what's happening in your part of the planet for the international stringer "Our Man In Havana" section

<http://www.towerofbabel.com/sections/ourmaninhavana>

...

So if you have a keen eye for observation, a love of life and education, and a knack for having a deft turn of phrase, please send an email to malcolm@wolfenet.com

Malcolm Lawrence, Editor-in-chief, Babel
<http://www.towerofbabel.com>

MOST Clearing House on Linguistic Rights--UNESCO

<http://www.unesco.org/most/ln1.htm>

The MOST (Management of Social Transformations) Clearing House has added a section on linguistic rights. The Clearing House on Linguistic Rights supplies legislators, decision-makers, researchers, and other representatives of both governmental and non-governmental organizations with information related to the development of policies that will lead to peaceful and democratic solutions to problems that arise within societies characterized by cultural and ethnic pluralism. This site provides several full-text international legal documents concerning the rights of linguistic minorities, excerpts of 86 national constitutions which contain provisions on language, and a modest bibliography on linguistic rights in international human rights law.

Sources related to Indigenous Knowledge

From: "Krukkert, Ingeborg" <krukkert@nuffic.nl>

To: Indknow@u.washington.edu

CIRAN, Centre for International Research and Advisory Networks, department of Nuffic has an important activity in the promotion of the use of indigenous knowledge in development activities. For more information you can take a look at the CIRAN homepage at

<http://www.nuffic.nl/ciran/>

Two interesting products might be the IK Pages, a home page exclusively focused on indigenous knowledge. They provide access to relevant sources of information on indigenous knowledge. Here you will find a lot of URLs of organizations, articles, homepages, reports, etc. Every link has a short description. The website also makes it possible to

search for and retrieve full texts from the Internet. You will find the IK pages at <http://www.nuffic.nl/ik-pages/>

Also interesting might be the publication of the Indigenous Knowledge and Development Monitor - a journal to serve everyone around the world who has an interest in the role that IK plays in participatory approaches to sustainable development. This publication can also be found - full text! - on the internet at <http://www.nuffic.nl/ciran/ikdm/>

Welsh Materials

Darren Wyn Rees <merlin@A470.demon.co.uk> of the organization, Blodwagedd Cyfyrder Cyngres Gogleddwawr Pengadam Wicedwr, wrote in October 1998:

wales.cymraeg For discussion in the Welsh language (the only Welsh language newsgroup on Usenet (out of 30,000+ groups)

I've not long completed a wee upgrade to the collection of Welsh verbs I have prepared, at: <http://www.netlink.co.uk/users/merlin/berfau/>

Basically, I started collating some verbs on MSAccess then decided to convert/publish as web pages, using an Access template. I later added a search CGI-script and a feedback form for corrections etc. There's a 0.5MB file if you'd like to download it!

The main weakness is that the Welsh verbs have not been run/extrapolated. Once I customise a PERL script to do that task, I believe the value of the learning resource would triple immediately. Perl is also a very portable language, so anyone with access to a Perl interpreter could use the resource locally. Aside from that, I'm recruiting volunteers to help prepare the sound files for proper pronunciation.

Please - if you're involved with teaching Celtic languages - I'd be delighted to know how you take advantage of the Web and new technology in your instruction.

--

Darren Rees merlin@netlink.co.uk
2500+ Berfau; fformat .zip .htm
<http://www.netlink.co.uk/users/merlin/berfau/>

9. Forthcoming Meetings

Linguistic Anthropology in the Circumpolar World: Fairbanks, Alaska, 1-3 Apr. 1999

Session at the 26th annual meeting of the Alaska Anthropological Association

Seeking presentations on linguistic anthropology, both applied and theoretical, in Alaska and other circumpolar regions. Particularly appropriate would be presentations in which linguistics is centered within four-field anthropology. A non-exclusive list of topics includes: the relevance of linguistic

anthropology to social issues, sociolinguistics, conversation analysis, language and culture, linguistic relativity, language contact, language conservation, language and education, language policy and planning, and historical linguistics.

Interested presenters should send abstracts to Roy Iutzi-Mitchell; Anthropology Department; University of Alaska Anchorage; Anchorage, Alaska 99508-8334 or to ffri@aurora.alaska.edu by **5 February 1999**.

Chicago Linguistic Society. University of Chicago, IL, April 22-24

The 35th Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society will take place at the University of Chicago, April 22-24, 1999.

Invited speakers for the main session will be Beth Levin (Northwestern U) and Paul Smolensky (Johns Hopkins U). Original, unpublished papers are invited on any topic of general linguistic interest. In addition, papers are invited addressing one of the following panel topics:

-- Language, Identity, and the Other (Thursday, April 22): Language serves as a means to unite as well as to exclude groups or individuals. This panel will explore the linguistic mechanisms by which this is accomplished in different speech communities. Invited Speakers: Robert Greenberg (U of North Carolina), and Michael Silverstein (U of Chicago).

-- ChiPhon 99: Multi-Disciplinary Approaches to Basic Units of Speech (Friday, April 23): This panel seeks to synthesize findings from linguistics and other fields which investigate linguistic behavior, to determine whether these can be used as evidence for a unified theory of basic units of speech processing. Invited Speakers: John Ohala (UC-Berkeley), and Joseph Perkell (MIT).

-- Theory and Linguistic Diversity (Saturday, April 24): Approximately five thousand languages are spoken throughout the world today. This panel seeks to explore the ways in which linguistic theories attempt to account for such variety. Invited Speakers: Mark Baker (McGill U), Joan Bresnan (Stanford), and R.M.W. Dixon (ANU).

The deadline for receipt of abstracts is **February 1, 1999**. Guidelines for abstracts may be obtained by visiting the CLS website at: <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/humanities/cls/cls.html> or by e-mailing CLS at cls@diderot.uchicago.edu.

Student Conference in Linguistics 11 with Special Theme of Endangered Languages. The University of Texas at Austin. May 8-9, 1999.

Keynote Speaker: Jonathan David Bobaljik

The 11th annual Student Conference in Linguistics will be held at the University of Texas at Austin May 8-9, 1999. SCIL is a student-run conference which aims to bring together graduate students from

around the world to present their research and build connections with other students. The proceedings are published in the MIT Working Papers in Linguistics.

We invite original, unpublished work in any area of linguistics. We would particularly like to encourage submissions which focus on endangered or underdescribed languages, in keeping with the conference theme.

Guidelines for Submission:

Please submit ten copies of a one-page, 500-word, anonymous abstract for a twenty-minute paper (optionally, one additional page for data and/or references may be appended), along with a 3" by 5" card with:

- (1) your name,
- (2) your affiliation,
- (3) your address, phone number, and e-mail address,
- (4) the title of the paper, and
- (5) an indication of which subdivision of linguistics best describes the topic (e.g., Phonetics, Phonology, Syntax, Semantics, Psycholinguistics, Anthropological Linguistics, Computational Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, etc.)

The abstract should be as specific as possible, and it should clearly indicate the data covered, outline the arguments presented, and include any broader implications of the work.

The deadline for receipt of abstracts is **5:00 PM, February 15, 1999**. Send abstracts to:

SCIL 11 Abstract Committee
Department of Linguistics
501 Calhoun Hall
The University of Texas at Austin
Austin, Texas 78712

E-mail abstracts will be accepted. Please email us or consult our web page for detailed instructions. Email abstracts should be submitted to scil@ccwf.cc.utexas.edu by 5:00 PM, February 15, 1999.

Further information is available at <http://ccwf.cc.utexas.edu/~scil/index.html>

Questions can be directed to scil@ccwf.cc.utexas.edu

- Ralph C. Blight
Department of Linguistics,
The University of Texas at Austin
<http://ccwf.cc.utexas.edu/~gizzmo/index.html>

Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics 1999: Language in Our Time: Bilingual Education and Official English, Ebonics and Standard English, Immigration and the Unz Initiative, May 6 - 8, 1999

Conference Speakers:

Shirley Brice Heath, Anna Uhl Chamot, Deborah Tannen, Walt Wolfram, Ralph Fasold, Roger Shuy, Salikoko Mufwene, Roger Bowers, Ronald Scollon, Tom McArthur, Peter Brimelow, Donna Christian, John Rassias, G. Richard Tucker, JoAnn Crandall, Maggie Ronkin & Helen Karn, Reinhold Freudenstein, Shaligram Shukla, Edwin Thumboo, Anne Pakir, Bernard Spolsky, Denise Murray, Leanne Hinton

Plenary panel on Bilingual Education:

Stephen Krashen, Professor, University of Southern California "Condemned Without a Trial: Bogus Arguments against Bilingual Education"

Mauro E. Mujica, Chairman, U.S. English Foundation "The Official English Movement and Bilingual Education Reform"

Delia Pompa, Director, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, U.S. Department of Education "Update on the Reauthorization of the Bilingual Education Act"

Rosalie Pedalino Porter, Director, Institute for Research in English Acquisition and Development "Educating English Language Learners in U.S. Schools: Agenda for a New Millennium"

Tutorials with Stephen Krashen and John Rassias. Pre-conference session by the Federal Interagency Language Roundtable and the Society of Federal Linguists

PREREGISTRATION DEADLINE: March 31, 1999

Dr. James E. Alatis, Chair or Alison McArdle, Coordinator, GURT 1999, Georgetown University, International Language Programs and Research, 519 B Intercultural Center, Box 57-1045, Washington, DC 20057-1045

Tel. +1-202-687-5659, Fax-687-0699

gurt@gusun.georgetown.edu

<http://www.georgetown.edu/conferences/gurt99>

Stabilizing Indigenous Languages (Tucson, AZ, June 3-5, 1999)

The 6th Annual Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Conference (SILC) will be held at the University of Arizona, Tucson, in conjunction with the 20th annual American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI). It will take place June 3-5, 1999, and is being co-sponsored by SSILA.

The conference will produce strategies for heightening awareness of the importance of indigenous languages, extending existing language environments, and creating a new generation of speakers. The goal is to inspire indigenous communities to continue to develop and expand the circle of native language speakers.

Proposals are being accepted for workshops, panels, paper presentations, roundtable discussions and policy planning groups promoting the theme "One Voice, Many Voices: Recreating Indigenous Language Communities". Possible topics include (but are not limited to):

- 1) Workshops/Panels/Presentations
 - Model activities for reversing language shift
 - Technology in language transmission
 - Developing community- and family-based language teaching strategies and materials
 - Using multi-media language teaching techniques
 - Teaching strategies
 - Documentation of indigenous languages
 - Indigenous literacies and literatures
- 2) Roundtables
 - Creating and recreating language communities
 - Orthography issues and development
 - Curriculum and language materials development
 - Language immersion programs
 - Language planning and policy development
 - Language variations
 - Community-based programs
 - Language surveys and assessments
 - Grant proposal writing

For forms and guidelines on submitting proposals, contact AILDI by phone at 520/626-7555, or by e-mail at <SILC@u.arizona.edu>.

The deadline for submission of proposals is **January 15, 1999**. The registration fee will be \$125 (if received by March 31), and \$150 after April 1. Registration fee for students (with proof) is \$50.

More detailed information will be posted shortly. If you have any questions, contact Akira Yamamoto (akira@ukans.edu), Ofelia Zepeda (zepeda@linguistics.arizona.edu), or Teresa McCarty (tmccarty@mail.ed.arizona.edu).

Workshop on Language Maintenance and Death at LSA Summer Institute, U. Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, July 17-18, 1999

We all know that the empirical lifeblood of the linguistics discipline--the languages of the world--is diminishing at a truly alarming rate. This workshop wishes to pool the ideas and sharpen the research tools of linguists at the institute, to deal with language maintenance and salvage projects both in North America and across the globe. Prominent fieldworkers/ researchers/ theoretical linguists--such as Ian Maddieson (UCLA) and Sally Thomason (Pittsburgh)--will lead discussions of language endangerment problems. They will also explicitly present their experiences of successful methods utilised in maintenance work, and will offer the workshop participants elaborated justification for why such work is absolutely crucial both to linguistics and to the larger global community. Young linguists and allied researchers will have the opportunity to present aspects of their own experiences, and most importantly to hear from others in the field how maintenance work can best proceed.

Topics covered will include the following:

- what kinds of goals do language maintenance programs set themselves?

- what factors lead to successful maintenance of minor languages?
- what linguistic knowledge is prerequisite to planning a maintenance effort?
- how can a community become aware of the need for a maintenance program early enough to avoid the desperation scenarios of most North American and Australian languages, as well as of many African languages?
- how can linguists be useful to the people whose languages they study?
- what kinds of things would we never know about the phonetics (and others areas) of human language if we didn't have data from hundreds of now-endangered languages?

Fees: \$10 for students, \$15 for faculty

Ideas of topics for presentation and discussion are welcome. Please contact the workshop organizer: Simon Donnelly, Linguistics, Univ. Witwatersrand, P/Bag 3, 2050 Wits, SOUTH AFRICA <104simon@muse.arts.wits.ac.za>, or see http://www.beckman.uiuc.edu/groups/cs/linginst/Workshops/lang_maint.html.

Language Policy at the Millennium, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel, November 23-25, 1999

Call for research reports, case studies, problem statements in language planning and policy.

The Language Policy Research Center in cooperation with the Lechter Institute and the Lewis Family Fund for International Conferences in the Humanities are now planning the Second International Symposium on Language Policy.

Our goal for the Symposium is to provide an opportunity to reassess the current status of language policy studies at the end of the century and to clarify theory and methods of the field. We hope to identify questions and define guidelines for the next decade of research.

Six invited papers will serve as conceptual and theoretical jumping off points for the shorter research reports and case studies requested in this call. The focal papers will be given by Joshua A. Fishman, Joseph Lo Bianco, Lachman Khubchandani, Peter Nelde, Carol Myers-Scotton, and Bernard Spolsky. In order to offer data-based challenges to the discussion, we invite abstracts of research reports, case studies or statements of a problem in the field of language policy and planning, from which we will select a small number for presentation, each to be juxtaposed with one of the focal papers. In addition, there will be a poster session for presentation of individual research.

Please submit your abstract of a proposal for a short research report, case study, or statement of a problem in an area of language policy by **March 1, 1999** to Joel Walters at the address below. Notification of acceptance will be sent by April 15, 1999.

Organizing Committee:
Muhammad Amara, Bar-Ilan University
Ellen Spolsky, Bar-Ilan University
Joel Walters, Bar-Ilan University
Elana Shohamy, Tel-Aviv University
Bernard Spolsky, Bar-Ilan University

Language Policy Research Center
Faculty of Humanities
Bar-Ilan University
Ramat Gan, Israel 52900
Tel. 972-3-531-8125
Fax 972-3-535-4062
Email: waltej@mail.biu.ac.il

Additional information will soon be available on the LPRC website:
<http://www.biu.il/HU/lprc>

Conference on Languages in Contact, Groningen University, November 25-26, 1999

FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS

A conference on languages in contact will be held on November 25-26, 1999, at the University of Groningen. This conference will include sessions devoted to descriptive and theoretical aspects of language contact.

The aim of this conference is to discuss language contact. Issues for discussion involve pidgins and creoles, minorities and their languages, Diaspora situations, 'Sprachbund' phenomena, extralinguistic correlates of variety in contact situations, problems of endangered languages and the typology of these languages.

We particularly welcome reports on contact phenomena between languages in Russia, their survival and the influence of Russian. This includes Yiddish and Mennonite dialects of Low-German. There will be a special session devoted to this topic: languages in contact with Russian.

The conference will be held on the occasion of the degree of honorary doctor in St Petersburg of Dr Tjeerd de Graaf.

We welcome contributions for 30-minute presentations (including 10 minutes of discussion).

Invited speakers, in alphabetical order:

Liya Bondarko (University of St Petersburg)
Evgenij Golovko (Russian Academy of Sciences)
Pieter Muysken (University of Leiden)
Sally Thomason (University of Pittsburg)

Abstracts should be restricted to two pages, including examples and references. Two copies of abstracts should be submitted, one anonymous, and one mentioning the author's name, affiliation, postal address and e-mail address. The deadline for submission of abstracts: **April 1, 1999**.

Abstracts should be sent to:

The organizing committee: John Nerbonne, Jos Schaecken, Dicky Gilbers, Dept Linguistics, University of Groningen, Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat 26, 9712 EK Groningen, The Netherlands

e-mail: nerbonne@let.rug.nl, schaecken@let.rug.nl, gilbers@let.rug.nl
fax: +31-50-3636855

Sociolinguistics Symposium 2000: The Interface between Linguistics and Social Theory. UWE (Bristol), 27-29 April 2000

University of the West of England, Bristol (UWE, Bristol) Centre for European Studies (CES), Faculty of Languages and European Studies (LES) & School of Sociology, Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences (ESS)

The Sociolinguistics Symposium 2000 is the thirteenth meeting of the Sociolinguistics Symposium which meets once every two years. This conference will focus primarily on the Interface between Linguistics and Social Theory, and it is hoped the meeting will contribute to further cooperation between the two disciplines. The conference welcomes papers from a range of different subject areas such as: language variation and change, language and gender, language and the media, discourse analysis, languages in contact, creole linguistics, intercultural communication, language and migration, social stratification of language, language development and other related topics.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Professor Jack Chambers (Toronto): Leaders and laggards in the diffusion of changes

Professor David Corson (Toronto) Critical Realism: An Emancipatory Social Philosophy for Sociolinguistics

Professor Pieter Muysken (Leiden): Radical Modularity and the Possibility of SocioLinguistics

Professor Shana Poplack (Ottawa): The Social Context of Linguistic Variation (working title)

Professor Ruth Wodak (Vienna): Does Sociolinguistics need Social Theory? New Perspectives in Critical Discourse Analysis

PROVISIONAL TITLES OF COLLOQUIA

- Language, Nationalism and Minority Rights
- Multilingualism and Migration
- Intercultural Communication
- Language Contact along the Language Frontier
- Discourse

Suggestions for other colloquia are welcome.

COMMITTEE

Prof. Michael Scriven (Dean,LES,UWE), Prof. Alison Assiter (Dean, ESS,UWE), Mr Felix Bihlmeier (Assoc. Dean (Resources), LES, UWE), Dr Susan Price (Assoc. Dean (Academic Affairs), LES, UWE), Dr Carmen Arnaiz (UWE), Mrs Kate Beeching (UWE), Mr John Bird (UWE), Prof. Jim Coleman (University of Portsmouth), Prof. Nikolas Coupland

(University of Cardiff), Dr Aidan Coveney (University of Exeter), Dr Helmut Daller (UWE), Prof. Roy Harris (University of Oxford), Dr Stephen May (University of Bristol), Dr Tom Osborne (University of Bristol), Dr Mark Sebba (University of Lancaster), Dr Sali Tagliamonte (University of York), Dr Jeanine Treffers-Daller (UWE), Mr Jem Thomas (UWE), Dr Glyn Williams (University of Wales at Bangor)

The deadline for proposals of colloquia is: **1 June 1999.**

The deadline for submission of abstracts is: **1 September 1999.**

Abstracts are welcomed for oral presentation (20 mins + 10 mins discussion) or poster presentation. Please send 4 hard copies, one of which contains your name and address, as well as an electronic version (Rich Text Format) of the abstract to the address given below.

More information about the conference programme, the venue and the general organisation of the event can be found either on our website:

<http://www.uwe.ac.uk/facults/les/research/socioling2000.html>

or at our addresses/numbers below:

Jessa Karki/Jeanine Treffers-Daller, Centre for European Studies (CES), UWE, Frenchay Campus, Coldharbour Lane, Bristol, BS16 1QY, UK

+ 44 117 976 3842, ext 2724, Fax: -976 2626 (admin.) Jessa.Karki@uwe.ac.uk; (acad.) Jeanine.Treffers-Daller@uwe.ac.uk

10. Publications of Interest

Hopi Dict. / Hopiikwa Lavaytutuveni

Trumpeted by Kenneth Hale (MIT) as "among the very best dictionaries in the world, in any language," the Hopi Dictionary/Hopiikwa Lavaytutuveni was published in the autumn of 1998 by the University of Arizona Press with support from the US National Endowment for the Humanities.

Kenneth C. Hill (UofA) was project director and editor-in-chief. Emory Sekaquaptewa (UofA), Mary E. Black, Ekkehart Malotki (NAU), the Elder Hopi Consultant Group, and Michael and Lorena Lomatutuway'ma were instrumental in compiling the dictionary. The University of Arizona Press has donated copies of the dictionary to the Hopi Tribe and the editors have designated their royalties for the Hopi Foundation and the Hopi Tribal Council. Hale wrote, "In Uto-Aztecan linguistics..., [this] is probably the most important contribution since the Nahuatl documents of the 16th century."

Endangered Languages in Africa (ed. Matthias Brenzinger)

This volume (ISBN 3-89645-305-X) has just (1998) been published by Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, P.O. Box

45 06 43, D-50881 Köln. It is the published proceedings of the Symposium on Endangered Languages in Africa, held in the 2nd World Congress of African Linguistics (WOCAL 97) at Leipzig from 29 July to 1 August 1997.¹⁰

It consists of three parts:

- Gains from Studying Endangered Languages,
- On the Processes of Language Contraction and Language Shift, and
- Qualitative Overviews and Case Studies of Endangered Languages in Different African Regions.

The papers focus largely on languages of East and West Africa, especially Ethiopia and Nigeria, but there are two papers on Khoisan languages, and others address situations in Togo, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Cameroon and Somalia. The four papers in parts 1 and 2 are more general and theoretical in orientation.

11 scholars (Hayward, Sommer, Dimmendaal, Tosco, Appleyard, Leyew, Blench, Connell, Haruna, Kastenholz and Batibo) have contributed, all but one (Dimmendaal) with revisions of papers delivered in the Symposium. Brenzinger's Introduction puts them into the context of the full range of papers delivered.

Language Culture & Curriculum: special issue on Indigenous, Community-based Education

Coherently with the Committee's decision to focus the next conference on the rôle of Education in the struggle for endangered languages, it is interesting that one of our former Committee members (Stephen May of the Sociology Dept, University of Bristol) is editing a special issue of a journal on just this theme: *indigenous, community-based education*.

- Language, Culture and Curriculum: no. 11, 3: 1998.

The issue is in fact due out circa March/April 1999. The journal's regular Editor is Eoghan Mac Aogain, of the Linguistics Institute of Ireland. And the publisher, Multilingual Matters, is at Frankfurt Lodge, Clevedon Hall, Victoria Road, Clevedon, BS21 7SJ. <multi@multi.demon.co.uk>

Writing the Wind - a Celtic Resurgence. ed. Thomas Rain Crowe, with Gwendal Denez and Tom Hubbard

This anthology of Celtic poetry (with examples in all 6 modern (or recent) languages, but most of the work in translation) was published in 1997 by New Native Press, P.O. Box 661, Cullowhee, NC 28723, USA at US\$18.95. (ISBN 1-883197-12-0).

It features work by 59 poets, fairly evenly spread among the different languages, and runs to 335

pages. It is an attempt to give English versions of the key modern figures writing poetry (not songs) in each of the 6 traditions, principally for an American audience. Each section begins with an older poet's work, to represent an authoritative Elder: Bob Jones for Welsh, Anjela Duval for Breton, Eithne Strong for Irish, Somhairle MacGill-Eain for Scots Gaelic, Richard Gendall for Cornish, Brian Stowell for Manx.

The book gives excellent value in the range it covers, and there will be few readers who cannot profit from its introduction to parts of the Celtic traditions they do not know; though evidently its central aim is to console English-speakers with the sense that they can participate somewhat in the poetry of Celtic languages without actually learning them.

Rex Lee Jim: People from Here

Bronitsky and Associates is very proud and honored to announce the arrival in the United States of the first copies of *Dúchas/T K-- Dinéé/People From Here*, a trilingual (Irish/Navajo/English) publication of the poetry of Rex Lee Jim, an outstanding Navajo writer, poet and teacher from Rock Point, Arizona. The book is illustrated by Navajo artist, Ron Toahani Jackson, of Tempe, Arizona.

The publisher is Diarmuid O Breaslin of *An Clochán* (The Celtic Pen) in Belfast, Northern Ireland. To the best of our knowledge, this marks the first publication by a Native American author in his own language overseas. Plans are now underway for a reading tour of Ireland by Mr. Jim this spring.

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11. Words of Parting

Anger is on me
As I imagine
Tongues uprooted
 Calmly,
Their speakers bribed
Or lulled or threatened
Their worlds aborted
 Unloved children,
Ancestors gagged
 Backs turned on them,
New mongrel buzzes
Taking the space
 Of whispered promises.

Nicholas Ostler, 4.xii.1998

¹⁰ Covered in Ogmios #6 (Autumn 1997) by Matthias Brenzinger, pp. 19-22).

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 1996) 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.

