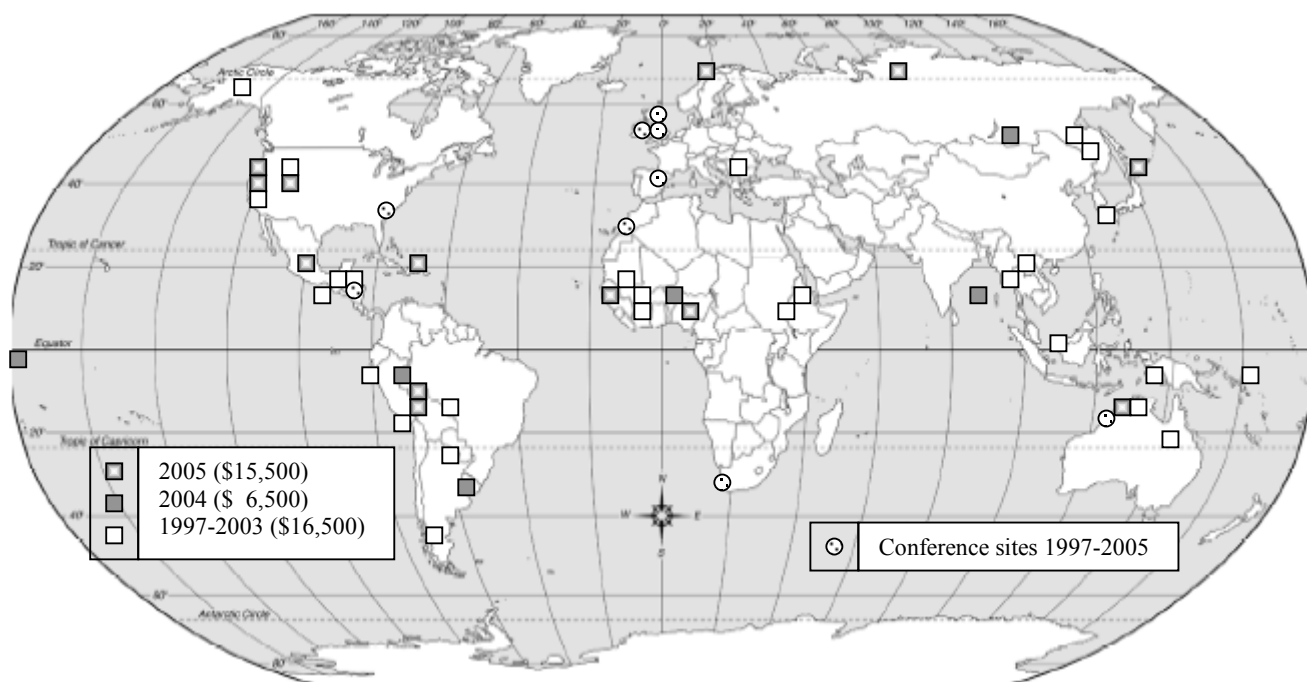


# OGMIOS



**Incidence of FEL Grants and Conferences 1997 - 2005**

This issue of Ogmios announces our latest awards, as well as the site and theme of our next conference.

We have had an excellent year financially, which has put us in a position for the first time to do something approaching justice to the range of excellent grant applications which come to us every year. This year we were able to fund one proposal out of every four, awarding US\$15,500 in all, almost as much money as we distributed in the all the first six years of our grants programme. The map shows where these grants have been directed, this year and in all the years before, and it is clear that our influence, light though it is, is being felt in many of the most inaccessible parts of the world.

Some idea of the variety of work which is being proposed, and will be funded, can be derived from the descriptions of projects in section 2. The manifold role of electronic technology, from dictionary databases to video records of story-telling, is quite notable in these short descriptions. Such technology often provides a concrete target for some action to highlight and utilize a language in a new way; but the challenge always remains for each language's speakers, to bring these new media into active use. FEL retains its aspiration to go on supporting these projects in future, so as to build durable links between concerned funders and speakers.

But like Robert Bly's wrens 'who make their nests of fancy threads and string ends' (*Listening to the Köln Concert*), we are just 'animals [who] abandon all their money each year'. FEL is now once again penniless, but not hopeless: we rely on an apparent determination, steadily growing among people all over the world, that something must and shall be done, to value and protect the vast human heritage of languages. Thank you for supporting this.

## OGMIOS Newsletter 3.02 (#26): 30 April 2005

ISSN 1471-0382

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Membership of the Foundation is open to everyone anywhere in the world. If you would like to join and do not have an application form, please contact the Editor at the address given above.

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## 1. Development of the Foundation

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### FEL Grants 2005

This year's Grants round saw a great increase in the number of successful applications and a major increase in the amount of money we could give out. We have been able to fund 14 out of 41 applications, well over double what we managed to offer last year (6 out of 41). We have also been able to increase the size of our awards.

Here are the successful applicants, with the languages that they are supporting, and where the languages are spoken. Congratulations!

**Alan Yu (Washo – Dresslerville NV, USA)** receives US\$1,500 to document the Washo language and create a searchable and web-accessible digital database of Washo textual materials. Washo is one of the most critically endangered and least documented languages of North America. The Washo language is now used only by approximately 13-20 elderly speakers who live in several townships near the California-Nevada border southeast of Lake Tahoe.

**Rafael Nonato (Bororo – Mato Grosso, Brazil)** receives US\$1,472 to develop tools of preservation for the Bororo language. Bororo is a South American Indigenous language with less than 700 speakers living in 5 villages near the city of Rondonópolis, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil. It is the last living language of the Bororoan family.

**Carme Junyent (Mandinka – Senegal, Gambia, Guinea Bissau)** receives US\$1500 to develop a grammar-lexicon-corpus (teaching materials) of the Mandinka of Kaabu. The proposed research consists of a documentation work on the Mandinka of Kaabu language. This is a language that is going through an accelerating process of endangerment, due to the pressure of former colonial languages and other expanding neighbouring languages, and to massive migrations that are leaving from the traditional Mandinka territories (specially in Casamance, Senegal). The main objective is to develop teaching materials to help literacy schemas both in the historical Mandinka territories (where no literacy in Mandinka has been provided) and among the migrant Mandinka communities in western societies (namely in Catalonia, at this stage of the project).

**Lindsay Jones (Owens Valley Paitute, Paka'anil, Yowlumni, Wukchumni, Western Mono – California)** receives US\$1,000 to provide Shoebox training for community members. The Nüümü Yadoha Language Program, part of the Owens Valley Career Development Center in California, is

currently working with teams from six different California American Indian language communities. Team members generally have no background in linguistics, no tools for keeping track of new words, and no clear ideas about how to gather or work with longer texts from their fluent speakers (such as stories). Shoebox is a computer program designed by the Summer Institute of Linguistics that works as a dictionary database program and also a tool for analyzing texts.

**Martin Hilpert (Pite-Saami – Northern Sweden, Norway)** receives US\$750 to develop learners' materials. This project is an initial field trip to the Arvidsjaur region around the Swedish-Norwegian border. The investigated language is Pite-Saami, a Southern Lappish language. The Ethnologue website lists Pite-Saami among seven European languages that are nearly extinct and estimates the number of speakers to be 50 or fewer. His contact in Arvidsjaur estimates that there are 15 speakers in the region.

**Atindogbe Gualbert – (Barombi – Cameroun)** receives US\$1,430 to provide a linguistic description of the Barombi language: phonology, alphabet, orthographic rules, morphology, syntax and tonology. Barombi (Lombi, Lambi, Rombi, Rambi, Lombe) is a narrow Bantu language, designated as A40 within the Basaa-Beti group in Guthrie's (1948) referential classification of Bantu languages. The people who speak the language are called the "Barombi", the prefix "ba-" being the mark of plurality. They constitute a minority tribe, living in the South West Province of Cameroon.

**Irina Nikolaeva (Tundra Yukaghir and Kolyma Yukaghir – Siberia)** receives US\$1,301 for the lexicographic documentation of Yukaghir. The modern Yukaghirs inhabit the extreme North-East of Siberia and constitute one of the smallest ethnic groups in Russia. At present there are two Yukaghir languages, Tundra Yukaghir (about 150 speakers) and Kolyma Yukaghir (about 50 speakers), but these figures are rapidly decreasing. Kolyma Yukaghir especially is on the verge of extinction, since the transmission of the language from parent to children has stopped. The two languages are closely related, but demonstrate considerable differences in their lexicon, to the extent that mutual understanding is impossible.

**Erin Haynes (Wasco – Oregon, USA)** receives US\$650 for the transcription of recorded language materials. There are only two remaining native speakers of Wasco, a central Oregon language that is now situated on the Warm Springs reservation. The Wasco tribe is in possession of almost 300 audiotapes of Wasco speech, much of it informal conversation. These tapes have not been inventoried nor transcribed, and the

danger is that the information on them will eventually be lost.

**Rik van Gijn (Yurakaré – Central Bolivia)** receives US\$1,000 for the production of a dictionary: Yurakaré-Spanish, Spanish-Yurakaré. The aim of this project is to produce and distribute a dictionary Yurakaré-Spanish, Spanish-Yurakaré. Yurakaré is spoken by ca. 2500 speakers in central Bolivia. It is in danger of becoming extinct, since the language is no longer transmitted to the youngest generations.

**Midori Minami (Ainu – Japan)** receives US\$864 for the language and identity in Hokkaido, Japan. The Ainu, indigenous people of northern island of Hokkaido, Japan, and also of Sakhalin and Kurile, are both physically and culturally distinct from the Japanese. Linguists have not conclusively related Ainu genetically with any other languages. The aims of the work are to document and analyse the current situation of Ainu, and also support an Ainu language school, which was built by young generations who attempt to revive their language.

**Ruth Singer (Mawng – Goulburn Island, NT Australia)** receives US\$1,000 for the Mawng video texts project. Mawng is a non-Pama-Nyungan Australian Aboriginal language spoken in Northwest Arnhem land, Northern Territory, Australia. For around 500 people, Mawng is the main language used on a daily basis and it is estimated that another 500 people have some ability in Mawng as a second language. Mawng is still being acquired by children. The main activity for this project is to record elders telling traditional myths and post-contact histories. The stories will be recorded on video and distributed using DVDs.

**Ronald Kephart (French Creole – Eastern Caribbean)** receives US\$1,000 for documenting French Creole on Carriacou, Grenada. He will continue locating and recording elderly speakers of French Creole on the island of Carriacou, Grenada. Field research in 2003 showed that this dialect of French Creole varies in some ways from those spoken on nearby islands (St. Lucia etc.). In the past, documentation has been done mostly by non-linguists (folklorists, musicologists). Thus, linguistic investigation of this language constitutes a potentially important contribution to the ethnographic and ethno-linguistic record. The presence of French Creole on Carriacou dates to French settlement in the late 17th century.

**Jesus Pedraza (Chocholteco – Oaxaca, Mexico)** receives US\$1,000 for revitalizing Santa Maria Nativitas Chocholteco by training a native speaker in computer literacy and supporting the writing of his book on community oral traditions. Chocholteco or *Ngigua* is an Oto-Manguean language belonging to the Popolocan family. It is spoken in the northwestern part of the State of Oaxaca, central Mexico: there are no more

than 60 native speakers left in a population of some 700. The project consists in offering 12 weeks of training to a Chocholteco, Mr Vicente Jiménez, a bilingual teacher from Santa Maria Nativitas. Mr Jiménez will be trained by Mr Jesús Salinas at in the CELIAC facilities in Oaxaca, and will be materially and technically supported throughout the writing of his book on native myths.

**Silverio Audiffred (Nahuatl – Milpa Alta, Mexico)** receives US\$1,000 to use new technologies and the arts as a tool for Language Revitalisation in the Nahua Community of Milpa Alta. In the entire town of Milpa Alta, Nahuatl has no official or ceremonial purpose and as an outsider no-one ever hears it in the street or at home. This is really alarming for according to the Elders from the community, the language was widely used there as late as the 1950s. By using Stop-Animation and the New Technologies I propose to recreate traditional stories, songs and poems from Milpa Alta to be used as teaching material by Native language instructors.

The incidence of FEL Grants since their inception in 1997 is illustrated on the front cover of this Ogmios.

### **FEL IX - "Creating Outsiders: Endangered Languages, Migration and Marginalization"- Stellenbosch, S. Africa, 18-20 Nov. 2005**

Today's world-maps, political and linguistic, were laid out through human population movements, some ancient but some of them very recent. In this year's conference we want to address the effects of these movements on language communities: how they dissolve communities, and change their status; how communities may re-form in foreign places, and the relations between incomers and the established populations, whichever has the upper hand; the impact of empires, deportation, mass immigration, population loss from emigration. Remembered migration histories may be relevant to the modern self-image of communities. Internal migration by dominant-language speakers into the territories of minorities may lead to the marginalization of others *in situ*; and minorities often decamp to the dominant centres under various pressures.

The UN has declared a second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples. The languages we talk about will be very varied, and likely to include the languages of communities all over the world. Some of them are spoken by indigenous communities, which have become a minority on their own original territory due to the immigration of a dominant majority group. This kind of marginalization is very common, and notable examples include the San languages in South Africa, the Ainu language in Japan and many pre-Hispanic languages in California. It plays

a major role in the current civil disorder in Nepal. In some cases, endangered languages may have gone into their own world-wide diaphora: such is the case of Plautdietsch, language of the Mennonites, who emigrated to many places (Siberia, Canada, Mexico, Paraguay), where often their language became marginalised.

Marginalization can, however, result from a variety of causes: a state policy of forced assimilation, military domination, religious conversion, the wish for social betterment, attendance at boarding schools, etc. We shall look at how both the State and communities can address the causes of marginalization, and of course its effects on the survival and development of languages.

Besides the international dimension, this year's location in South Africa will give members an opportunity to get acquainted with many of the local linguistic issues, among them the position of Khoe and San, the past and future of Afrikaans, but also the Makuwa-speaking ex-slaves from Durban, the Phuthi speakers from Eastern Cape, and no doubt many others.

Issues that may arise include:

- Why are migration histories so treasured as sources of language identity?
- Do language-communities always (or ever) have better prospects of survival in their home territories than when transplanted?
- Can language-communities on their home ground and in diaspora give each other effective support?
- Can small language-communities create new identities in remote territories?
- Can new communities resulting from migration or deportation establish a new quasi-indigenous identity based on a shared language?
- What is the value of cultural resources for maintenance of status and active language use within endangered language communities?
- Do technical media have a significant role in combatting or reinforcing marginalization?
- Is it possible to reconcile the recognition of official languages with respect for a much larger number of indigenous languages?
- Can minority and even endangered languages play an active role in a state's policy of multilingualism?

Local Site: The University of Stellenbosch is in South Africa's Western Cape, close to Cape Town. It has had a Department of African Languages for more than half a century

([http://academic.sun.ac.za/african\\_languages](http://academic.sun.ac.za/african_languages))

Conference Chair: Nigel Crawhall  
<crawhall@mweb.co.za>

#### Important Dates

Abstract arrival deadlines - 24 April 2005 (e-mail); 1 May 2005 (by post)

Committee's decision 15 May 2005 · In case of acceptance, the full paper should be sent by 31 Aug 2005. (Further details on the format of text will be specified to the authors)

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## 2. Endangered Languages in the News

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### **BBC: In defence of 'lost' languages**

19 January 2005

*Duncan Walker*, BBC News

Of the 6,000-odd languages in the world, one is said to disappear every fortnight. Should the English-speaking world care?

Somewhere on the remote Timor Sea coast of north Australia lives Patrick Nudjulu, one of three remaining speakers of Mati Ke. It is problem enough that one of the other speakers doesn't live nearby and speaks a slightly different dialect. But the 60-year-old Aborigine also has to cope with the fact the other speaker is his sister - who traditional culture has forbidden him from speaking to since puberty. Patrick's language then, is almost certainly going to die out. It's not the only one.

The problem is repeated to various degrees in practically every country, with dialects vanishing under the weight of major languages like English, says the writer Mark Abley. It was 10 years ago that Mr Abley's interest in these disappearing dialects was sparked by an elderly woman in Quebec, Canada, trying to teach Abenaki to other members of her native American community.

#### WORDS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

Coghal - big lump of dead flesh after a wound is opened (Manx)

Tkhetshikhe'tenhawih'tennih's - I am bringing sugar to somebody (Mohawk - Canada and USA)

Puijilittatuq - he does not know which way to turn because of the many seals he has seen come to the ice surface (Inuktitut - Canadian Arctic)

Tl'imshya'isita'itlma - He invites people to a feast (Nootka - Canada)

"I thought it was poignant and pathetic," says Mr Abley. "But I later realised it was also very interesting that she had the passion to do everything she could to revive her language."

Movies, computer games, music and TV shows do not get made in minority languages and so the dialects start to become the preserve of the old, says the author of *Spoken Here: Travels Among Threatened Languages*.

"One of the main things that's happening is that young people all over the world are being exposed to 21st Century culture, which is very often arriving in the form of English," he says.

That languages occasionally disappear is nothing new. Some 200 years ago the German explorer Alexander von Humboldt stumbled upon the village of Maypures, near the Orinoco river, in what's now Venezuela.

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#### MORE WORDS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

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Onsra - to love for the last time (Boro - NE India and Bangladesh)

Sjonvarp - television (Faroese - a language in good health)

Nartutaka - small plum-like fruit for which there is no English word (Wangkajunga, central Australia)

Th'alatel - a device for the heart (Halkomelem, Canada)

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While there he heard a parrot speaking and asked the villagers what it was saying. None knew since the parrot spoke Aures and was its last native speaker.

But such changes - whether they are caused by war, famine, marriage or mass media - should not mean the loss of dialects is acceptable, says Mr Abley. English and other major languages, while often acting as a democratising force, do not always reflect the breadth of meaning in the language they supersede. The Inuit language of Inuktitut, for example, has many verbs for the word "know", ranging from "utsimavaa" - meaning he or she knows from experience to "nalunaiqpaa" - he or she is no longer unaware of something. "The point is that it's not just picturesque details that are lost if a language dies out, it's also a whole way of understanding human experience."

Most attempts to revive threatened languages flounder, but they can succeed - particularly if they become a part of popular culture. Think Lisa Simpson and her recent flag-waving on behalf of Cornish and the teaching of Manx in Isle of Man schools. But it is Welsh that stands out as a "great example", with popular TV soap operas made in the language and bands like Super Furry Animals and Gorky's Zygotic Mynci recording in it. There's even been a pornographic novel written entirely in Welsh. "That's all for the good because it means the language is flourishing," says Mr Abley.

Story from BBC NEWS:  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk\\_news/magazine/4172085.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/4172085.stm)

Published: 2005/01/19 10:39:39 GMT  
 © BBC MMV

### Language intergroup to work more closely with the council of Europe

17 January 2005

Strasbourg, Simone Klinge

The new European Parliament Intergroup for National Minorities, Constitutional Regions and Regional Languages, met in Strasbourg on Thursday with representatives from the Council of Europe's European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML) to hear an update on progress with the Charter and to exchange views on its capabilities. The Intergroup and the Council of Europe's ECRML Secretariat agreed to work more closely together.

### Center Works to Preserve Yiddish a Book at a Time

19 January 2005

Michael Powell, Washington Post

AMHERST, Mass. History arrived not so long ago in a thousand-pound crate postmarked "Bulawayo, Zimbabwe." Workers here wrestled the crate inside the National Yiddish Book Center and opened it. What treasures they found: Yiddish travelogues from Belgian Congo, accounts of Yiddish ostrich farmers, a famous history of the Russian Socialist Party. The last synagogue in Bulawayo, a tree-lined city on the edge of the Kalahari Desert, was closing its doors, and a rabbi packed this crate and mailed it to the Center with no notice. "You have no clue, none, what you'll find when you open these boxes up," said Aaron Lansky, the Yiddish Book Center's founder and chief *zamlar* (a person who gathers scattered things). He pulled out a history book and turned the pages. Yellowed parchment flecked off like sand. "It's our lost history," Lansky said, "literally crumbling in our hands."

Lansky has created the world's greatest repository of books in a language spoken and written by 11 million of the world's Jews until the 1940s, when the Holocaust nearly consumed that culture. The Center, modelled on an Eastern European *shtetl* and set in an apple orchard at Hampshire College, houses 120,000 Yiddish titles. Another million or so volumes sit in an old silk mill in Holyoke, where the weight of so much literature causes the support beams to bend: and still the books arrive, 100 on Monday, another 500 on Thursday. "Early on, I found myself interested less in the details of the Holocaust than by this question: So who were these Jews they wanted to murder? What was this culture they wanted to destroy?" Lansky said. "I discovered in Yiddish the language by which Jews made sense of the modern world."

Enlisting hundreds of volunteer *zamlers* - many of them Holocaust survivors - Lansky has passed a quarter-century ferreting out Yiddish novels in attics and cellars in the Bronx and Cleveland, discovering musical score sheets in a garage in Borough Park and stacks of histories in abandoned bookstores

on New York's Lower East Side. In 1981, he discovered a dumpster filled with Yiddish books: history's dustbin come to life. He and friends conducted a Perils of Pauline night time rescue, with a U-Haul van and a dozen friends forming a de facto bucket brigade to load the books of Zionist theory, memoirs and Yiddish translations of the Torah before the rain ruined them.

"Half of our books have come from New York City, but we have our surprises," he said. Lansky has hopped secret flights to Cuba to rescue books from a synagogue and sifted through volumes left in a San Francisco carriage by a socialist, Yiddish chicken-farming commune in Petaluma. He's taken receipt of Yiddish books from Nome, Alaska, and with the help of movie producer and director, Steven Spielberg, his Center is turning the collection digital.

Not for nothing did he title his memoir *Outwitting History: The Amazing Adventures of a Man who Rescued a Million Yiddish Books*. There is a boyish quality to the 49-year-old man with the blue eyes, wire-rimmed glasses and dishevelled hair. "When I began I consulted with academic experts and they said, 'Oh, there's about 70,000 Yiddish books in the nation,'" Lansky said. "Now I have 1.5 million books."

Yiddish, as such things go, is a relatively young language, formed around the 10th century from a linguistic bouillabaisse of Aramaic, German, French, Italian, Hebrew, Belarusian and Ukrainian. "It was spoken by more Jews than any language in history," said Ruth Wisse, a professor of Yiddish literature at Harvard University, who taught Lansky in the 1970s.

By the 18th and 19th centuries, Yiddish had become the conduit by which Jewish peddlers and merchants introduced the Enlightenment to the East - from Poland to Hungary and Bulgaria and Russia. Jewish intellectuals responded to this ferment by writing in Hebrew, the language of scholars. But there was a problem. "It was like writing in Latin. No one understood them," Lansky said. "They turned to Yiddish as a necessary evil."

The first modern Yiddish novel was written in 1864. Then a sort of cultural combustion occurred: The great masters of Yiddish literature, Sholem Aleichem, I.B. Singer, Moyshe Kulbak and H. Leivick, began turning out novels and poems and plays that played with memory and surrealism and sex and modernity.

"The power, the velocity, of this literature was astonishing," Lansky said. Israel promoted Hebrew over Yiddish, which was the language of exile. In the United States, assimilation took its toll on the language. Only the Hasidim, the ultra-orthodox, speak Yiddish any longer. And they will not touch Yiddish literature, which they consider

worldly, and sexualized, and therefore *treyf* (impure).

The Yiddish modernists wound up marooned. Lansky recalls how the elderly editor of the avant-garde magazine, *Zayn*, handed him the old copies and turned away. "I could not possibly understand what he felt," he said. "It's the ultimate tragedy of their lives that they had helped create modern culture and now their children literally could not understand their language." Lansky was no different. He grew up in New Bedford, Mass., hearing Yiddish without quite understanding it. "My parents spoke Yiddish as a language of secrets," he said. He came to Hampshire College in the 1970s and took a course in the Holocaust and another in Yiddish and somewhere the hook slipped in. "I remember our Yiddish professor yelling at us: 'Just because your grandmother spoke it doesn't mean you'll learn it by osmosis,'" he said.

Only in time did Lansky realize that his collecting was as much about saving a generation's memory as about their books. In July 1980, he received a letter from an 87-year-old. "I have books . . . [but] I am a very old man and I'm afraid that after I will be gone they may throw them in the trash. Please do help me out. Respectfully, Norman Temmelman." Lansky drove to Atlantic City and found Temmelman in a fifth-floor apartment, a place piled high with boxes of Yiddish books. Temmelman showed him the poetry books that he had shared with his wife, and yellowed accounts of the history of interwar Europe. "It became clear to me that he was handing me an inheritance, his *yerushe*," Lansky said. "I was his hope."

For a decade, Lansky worked 15-hour days, travelling constantly, making calls from graffiti-covered phone booths, climbing tenement stairs, reaching under beds and into closets for those books. In 1997, he scraped together the \$7 million needed to build the Center. Arranged as sort of post-modern *shtetl*, it has a museum and the digitalization program and visiting scholars. He used money from a MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship in 1989 to pay himself a steady salary for the first time in his life. Now he has the aches: his knees, like those of any good *schlepper*, are going on him. And there's the modest salary and pension. Talk of this and Lansky shakes his head. "Eh! Not for a second did I ever think I was living in poverty," Lansky said. "My work has meaning; I've been blessed."

### Watchdog to investigate 'only 7% Welsh language' radio station

1 February 2005

Martin Shipton, Western Mail

THE row over Welsh language radio in West Wales has taken a new twist, with Radio Carmarthenshire to face a new inquiry over its use of Welsh. An investigation by S4C current affairs programme, *Y Byd ar Bedwar*, has revealed only 7% of Radio

Carmarthenshire's output is in Welsh, highlighting serious doubt over their commitment to the language. Broadcasting regulator, Ofcom, has announced it will investigate the programme findings.

Following protests about the lack of Welsh content on Radio Carmarthenshire, Ofcom issued a yellow card warning to the station last October. The warning was lifted in December, when Ofcom found several changes had been made by the radio station. Now following the new S4C research, Welsh language campaigners have criticised Ofcom's readiness to give the station a clean bill of health.

When Radio Carmarthenshire made their initial application for a licence they had indicated that 30% of their output would be in Welsh. Three weeks ago Y Byd ar Bedwar monitored the station for 24 hours and found that 93% of the speech content was in English, with only 7% in Welsh.

### Preservation of ethnic minority languages urged on China

[www.chinaview.cn](http://www.chinaview.cn) 2005-04-29 09:33:59  
[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2005-04/29/content\\_2892878.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2005-04/29/content_2892878.htm)

BEIJING, April 29 -- Scholars from some famous universities in the mainland and Hong Kong have called for measures to preserve China's ethnic minority languages, at a seminar held in Guangzhou on the language and culture of ethnic minority groups.

Experts say many of China's 120 minority languages face extinction due to under-use as society is dominated by the Mandarin language. They say it is the nation's obligation to record and preserve them as cultural treasures.

Their suggestions included the use audio and video equipments as means of preservation.

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### 3. Appeals, News and Views from Endangered Communities

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#### Paraguay: Congress Rejects Bill to Protect Isolated Indians

Survival International, 8 April 2005

Paraguay's Congress yesterday rejected a bill to protect the heartland of the last isolated Indians south of the Amazon basin. The decision leaves the Indians at the mercy of cattle ranchers who have bought up the land illegally and have already started to clear it.

The Indians, members of the Ayoreo tribe, live in the dry scrub forests of western Paraguay. They are nomadic hunter-gatherers living off the abundant game, such as wild

pigs, anteaters and armadillos. They also gather wild honey, and cultivate crops.

Most of the tribe have already been brought out of the forest, but an unknown number remain, resisting contact with outsiders. Their land is protected by injunctions which are supposed to stop all deforestation. Under Paraguayan law, the Indians have the right to own their land.

Acting illegally, large Brazilian and Paraguayan companies have bought up the Ayoreo's land and have already started clearing it. The bill rejected by Congress yesterday would have transferred ownership of the Indians' heartland back to the tribe.

For more information contact Miriam Ross on (+44) (0)20 7687 8734 or email [mr@survival-international.org](mailto:mr@survival-international.org)

#### FEL Chairman notes:

The Ayoreo language is reputed (Ethnologue 2000) to have just 4,000 to 4,500 speakers in Bolivia and Paraguay's Chaco and northern Alto Paraguay departments. It is part of the Zamucoan family of which the only other member is Chamacoco, also spoken in Paraguay, with 1,800 speakers.

The existence of the uncontacted Ayoreo-Totobiegosode was dramatically confirmed last year when a group of seventeen Indians appeared at the edge of the forest and made contact with outsiders for the first time. The group made clear that they did not want to leave the forest, but were desperately short of water. Nearly all their permanent waterholes have been occupied by settlers.

Last year Paraguay's lower house, the Chamber of Deputies, approved a bill to expropriate the area from the logging companies and to return it to the Ayoreo-Totobiegosode. However, after fierce lobbying by a powerful landowners' association, the bill was rejected by the upper house (the Senate). It has now been rejected by the Chamber of Deputies, where a simple majority in favour would have made it the law.

FEL did send an appeal on behalf of these people to both Señor Oscar Salomón, Presidente de la Cámara de Diputados, Congreso Nacional, and Señor Miguel Carrizosa, Presidente del Congreso Nacional, in Asunción, Paraguay. No reply was received.

#### Appeal on Behalf of Mari People 21 February 2005

We the representatives and friends of the Finno-Ugric peoples of the world call on the Russian authorities at all levels to take immediate steps to end the attacks on members of the democratic opposition in the Republic of Mari El. We urge international

human rights organizations to join us in this cause.

In recent months, the local government of Mari El has done nothing to stop the rising tide of discrimination and attacks against the Mari people, thus creating the impression that it supports or may even be behind them. We note with regret that the authorities have done nothing to identify those who earlier this month attacked Vladimir Kozlov, editor-in-chief of the Finno-Ugric newspaper Kudo+Kodu and head of the all-Russian movement of the Mari people, Mer Kanash, beating him nearly to death.

The Mari people are an important part of the Finno-Ugric world, and this summer they are scheduled to host the next world congress of Finno-Ugric studies.

Cultural workers, human rights activists and politicians are asked to sow support by signing on the Internet page:  
<http://www.ugri.info/mari>.

### **Blackfoot Tribal youth offers invocation in State Senate**

*Glacier Reporter*, 17 Feb 2005

Senate President Jon Tester invited Jesse DesRosier, a 16-year-old citizen of the Blackfoot and Gros Ventre Nations, to offer an invocation in the Montana State Senate on Feb. 17.

In the Blackfoot language, DesRosier is called Ahsinapoi, or He Who Speaks Cree, a name that his great-grandfather also held because of the ability to speak many different tribal languages.

DesRosier is a sophomore at Valier High School. A speaker of the Blackfoot Tribal language, from the fourth to the eighth grade, DesRosier attended the Nizipuhwahsin Blackfoot language immersion program of the Piegan Institute in Browning.

Nizipuhwahsin, or Real Speak School, has been nationally recognized as a successful and effective model for native language immersion using a multi-generational approach. Nizipuhwahsin began in 1995, and today the school teaches a standard curriculum to children ages five to 12 years of age using the Blackfoot language.

### **Vietnamese programme to preserve Cham language**

7 March 2005

<http://vietnamnews.vnagency.com.vn/showarticle.php?num=3D02SOC070305>

HANOI: The southern province of Ninh Thuan, home to half of the ethnic Cham population, has announced a plan to strengthen the Cham language teaching staff of schools in the Cham communities.

"Over the past 20 years the Cham language teaching programme has contributed to the preservation of the ethnic minority group language and has created a foundation to research the culture," said director of the provincial Education and Training Service, Pham Hong Cuong.

Ninh Thuan was the first in the south to launch Cham language classes. A Cham language board was set up in June 1978 and has written over 80 textbooks so far.

The board has opened a number of Cham language training courses for 510 local teachers, who have been sent to primary schools to teach at the first and second grade levels. Refresher courses are also available regularly for teachers of Cham origin at the provincial Teachers University.

The Cham language is taught at all 23 primary schools in the Cham community in Ninh Thuan province, far more than the two that were taught in the 1978-79 academic year in the former Thuan Hai province (Thuan Hai was split into two provinces, one of which is Ninh Thuan). Almost all of the 10,000 Cham pupils attend Cham-language classes.

Ninh Thuan is now home to some 60,000 Chams, which makes up 11 per cent of the province population.

### **Inuktitut should be third Canadian language**

*Canadian Press*, February 2005

Frustrated by what it calls poor funding for Nunavut's mother tongue, the territorial government says it is negotiating with Ottawa to have Inuktitut declared Canada's third official language.

That would force the federal government to correct an imbalance that has it spending more than \$3,500 per francophone on French services in Nunavut and nothing on the language most residents actually speak, said territorial Culture Minister Louis Tapardjuk. "We're hoping if we can get the federal government to recognize Inuktitut as an official language, then we can use that to serve Nunavummiut in their own language," Tapardjuk said.

Under the Official Languages Act, Ottawa is obliged to provide translations of laws and documents in both official languages everywhere in Canada. Last year, the federal government spent \$1.45 million providing Duch services to Nunavut's 410 francophones. However, Nunavut is the only jurisdiction in Canada where neither French nor English is the majority language. Statistics Canada figures show more than 70 per cent of Nunavut's 25,500 Inuit speak Inuktitut, a figure that holds across all age groups. "Our language is still thriving and still strong," Tapardjuk said.

Although Ottawa spends about \$1.1 million on Inuktitut language programs, that money is only available for community-based projects such as dictionaries or curriculum materials.

The federal government won't pay for translations of official debates, laws or other government documents: Tapardjuk's department estimates [that] that costs the territory an extra \$5 million a year. A recent survey done for the territory showed that 42 per cent of Inuit had trouble getting service in Inuktitut from the federal government. Louis Chagnon of Canadian Heritage said Nunavut has slipped through a hole in the Official Languages Act. "It kind of falls between the cracks," he said from Winnipeg. "We are sensitive to the quandary before us."

Chagnon said Ottawa does fund other language-related programs in Nunavut, including the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation and CBC North.

### **Evaluating Language Nests in B.C.**

*Lynda Hills*, 5 February 2005

<http://ring.uvic.ca/05feb03/features/language.html>

"Language nests" refers to childcare programs for pre-school children taught exclusively in a heritage language. These programs, based on a Maori language revival initiative in NZ, are now being initiated in two First Nations communities in British Columbia, Canada.

For her master's thesis, Uvic child and youth care graduate student Onowa McIvor chose to study Lil'wat and Secwepemc language nests.

Of the approximately 50 indigenous languages in Canada, over half of them are in B.C. According to language theorists, only three are expected to survive Canada-wide: Cree, Ojibwa and Inuktitut. None of these is historically rooted in B.C.

"We know that language and culture are inextricably linked," McIvor says. "If the youngest members of a community are not learning the language then the language will die."

McIvor examined each of the Lil'wat and Secwepemc community's language revival stories, the resources they used, how they kept the program going and how they overcame barriers. Her passion to protect languages comes from personal experience; it took just one generation for her family to lose their aboriginal language.

"My grandparents spoke Swampy Cree but grew up in the era of assimilation. They were told that maintaining their language would hinder their children's future," she says. "Consequently, they were fluent Cree speakers but never spoke it to their children, a story all too common in Canadian aboriginal history.

McIvor discovered that one of the main barriers to language revival is a lack of government support. As the Ministry of Health licenses most childcare programs in B.C., workers must have early childhood educator certification (ECE). But language nests don't quite fit the mould of other childcare programs.

"This doesn't mean they are a less-quality program, they're just different," she says. "Because you need traditional language speakers to be the main caregivers, those people wouldn't necessarily have ECE-certified training."

In the Secwepemc community, for example, there are two kinds of people working in the language nests: elders who are traditional speakers and "middle-generation" women with education degrees. However, because they don't have ECE certificates, the program is not eligible for funding.

### **Miami tribe fighting to save language publishes dictionary**

Miami University, Oklahoma 27 January 2005  
[http://nativetimes.com/index.asp?action=displayarticle&article\\_id=5889](http://nativetimes.com/index.asp?action=displayarticle&article_id=5889)

The vast majority of the estimated 300 languages spoken in North America before the arrival of Christopher Columbus are endangered or extinct. But the Miami language, once spoken throughout much of Ohio and Indiana, is in the process of being revitalized.

Thanks to a cooperative effort by the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and Miami University, the college named in honor of the tribe, the first comprehensive dictionary for the language is due to be published in late February.

Titled *Myaamia neehi peewaalia kaloosioni mahsinaakani* (or 'A Miami-Peoria Dictionary'), the 200-page book contains about 3,500 entries plus a brief description of the language and an English cross-reference list.

The accomplishment reflects a university/tribe partnership that is unusual in higher education, says Daryl Baldwin, director of the Myaamia Project for Language Revitalization and a member of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. He, along with David Costa, a linguist who has done extensive language work on the Miami-Peoria language, are co-editors.

When Miami University was founded in 1809, the Miami Tribe was well known throughout the Midwest, but in 1846 the tribe was forcibly removed from Ohio and Indiana and relocated first to Kansas and then in the 1870s to what is now Oklahoma.

By the early 1960s, the last tribal member to speak the language conversationally had died but it was not until the late 1980s that there was attention to what that loss meant. In 1995, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma launched an organized effort to revive its language.

Language is culture, explains Baldwin. "It's important because it embodies our values and belief system and generations of accumulated human knowledge. And all of these things are important to our identity as Miami people," says Baldwin.

For example, Miamis say "nipwaahkaalo" when departing, which is often translated to "take care," but it also means to have wisdom or be conscious. The word is related to the verb "nipwaameewa," which means he teaches him. So this farewell term embodies a basic concept of Miami culture—that seeking knowledge is important.

"There's a way of understanding the world that is embodied in this language. To me that's the real value of this effort," he says.

There's much more work to be done to make Miami a living language, says Baldwin.

Tribal elders, who can only recall fragmented phrases or bits of songs and prayers, are documenting their memories. In Miami Tribe households, children are beginning to use some of the ancient kinship terms—"iinka" for mother and "noohsa" for father—that have not been heard for decades.

There are, explains Baldwin, lots of native studies program, but few if any universities have the intimate ties with a specific tribe that Miami University has with the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. The relationship, which began in the 1970s, has steadily strengthened until now it includes several research and service projects in addition to language revitalization efforts.

### **Online technology used to preserve Choctaw language**

By Ken Studer, *Herald Democrat*  
[http://www.heralddemocrat.com/articles/2005/01/20/local\\_news/iq\\_1715132.txt](http://www.heralddemocrat.com/articles/2005/01/20/local_news/iq_1715132.txt)

DURANT - Creating community classes for teaching the Choctaw language was a priority for Chief Gregory Pyle when he was elected in 1997. Pyle hired a language coordinator and a language specialist.

The 48-week community class curriculum of literacy, vocabulary and conversation has been attractive enough to students to be able to create more than 30 classes in the 10 counties. In the year 2000, the Choctaw Nation decided to take advantage of modern technology and created an Internet course. At that time, the course served approximately 1,000 students. Technology has provided the avenue for the Choctaw language to be taught

in the public schools. Terry Ragan is language director of Choctaw Nation.

Ragan said when the Choctaw language course first started in the schools, it was considered an elective class. Now, through legislation, it has become an accredited class. Using the tools provided by modern technology, the Choctaw Nation has created distant learning programs in 37 schools and four colleges. The program also has students from Germany, Japan, Thailand, United Kingdom and Canada.

"Mainly these students are service-related people of Choctaw descent," Ragan said. As the course progressed, the classes grew from one beginning Choctaw class to multiple beginning and intermediate classes during the day and evening. There is absolutely no restriction on who can enroll, e.g. at the website listed below. A student can also call the Nation's toll-free number to enroll. At that time a student is given a user name and password.

Wayne Coston, technology and media specialist of Choctaw Language School, said, "Currently the students can see the teacher, but she cannot see them. They can communicate with the teacher by typing their questions and answers into the system. With the next version of the software, the students will be able to talk back to the teacher, but only if they are set up with a broadband connection, such as DSL. The version after that will have video and audio going back and forth."

The Choctaw language is also being taught in the 14 Headstart facilities scattered throughout the 10 counties. "The program is developing childhood curriculum from 4 years old to third grade. You don't build a ball team when the kids are juniors and seniors," Ragan said.

[www.choctawschool.com](http://www.choctawschool.com)

### **Inuit Sign Language could open courts to the deaf: official recognition, interpreter training in Canada**

Sara Minogue  
[http://www.nunatsiq.com/news/nunavut/50204\\_10.html](http://www.nunatsiq.com/news/nunavut/50204_10.html)  
 4 February, 2005

The case of Bobby Suwarak, a deaf man from Baker Lake who communicates with gestures not related to standard sign language, has raised the possibility of an indigenous sign language known to Inuit for centuries. And that has raised the potential for training legal interpreters who can assist deaf Nunavummiut, whether accused of crimes or victims of crimes, in the courts.

In court-ordered assessments, a hearing specialist from Montreal has determined three



times that Suwarak cannot communicate effectively in court using his language through an interpreter unfamiliar with the legal system. But after meeting deaf people and their families in Baker Lake, Pangnirtung, Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet in 2000, the same specialist found that an Inuit sign language exists, and could be used to offer trained court interpreters for deaf Nunavummiut.

Using video to capture signing, Jamie MacDougall found that signers in two different communities shared similar gestures for certain words, such as walrus or polar bear. He also found that several people - not just the deaf - use, or recall elders using, what one participant called "Inuk sign language." The existence of such a language would be consistent with documented cases of several aboriginal peoples that use a signing system to communicate.

In a report presented to Justice Canada five years ago, MacDougall recommended that, in order to meet the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the court can and should provide trained legal interpreters for the estimated 155 deaf people in Nunavut, who currently rely on family and friends for the service. He also recommends that work begin towards officially recognizing ISL as a language. MacDougall compares this process to the still recent recognition of Inuktitut in the courts, and the steps that have been taken to document and promote the language over the last 20 to 30 years. "[ISL] is a language spoken by a small number of people, but under the charter and so on, I believe it has to be recognized," MacDougall says.

Recognition of the language could have a huge impact on deaf people across Nunavut. MacDougall estimates that 30 per cent of Nunavut's deaf rely on ISL to communicate. Many others, however, are sent south to learn American Sign Language. That has the benefit of offering them a legally recognized language, but they often return home to find few people can understand them. At the same time, MacDougall found that almost 75 per cent of the population of Baker Lake can speak to Suwarak through signs. Kautaq himself is an advocate. "You can communicate with him yourself if you have the patience," he says. And many people do.

### **Elders honored for helping keep native language, traditions alive**

Ellen Thompson/Havre Daily  
4 February, 2005

News/ethompson@havredailynews.com  
[http://www.havredailynews.com/articles/2005/02/04/local\\_headlines/elders.txt](http://www.havredailynews.com/articles/2005/02/04/local_headlines/elders.txt)

The two women being honored at this week's Mid-Winter Fair at Fort Belknap don't know each other well but they have a lot in common. Theresa Walker Lamebull and Mabel Snell, at age 97, are both the oldest members of their respective tribes. Each

woman is among the few remaining fluent speakers of their native languages. A banquet was held at the Red Whip Center at Fort Belknap on Wednesday to honor Lamebull, a member of the Gros Ventre Tribe, and Snell, who is an Assiniboine. Both will be a focus of attention as fair events continue through this weekend, ending with a powwow on Saturday night.

Lamebull has lived in Hays nearly all her life. She spent much of her time raising children and, after they grew up, teaching the Gros Ventre language to grade school and college students. Her efforts have helped to keep the language from dying. One of her former language students recently began teaching one of Lamebull's grandsons the Gros Ventre language, her daughter, Kathy Cichosz, said. One of Lamebull's fondest memories is of the old Hays fair. When she thinks about it now, she still smiles and laughs. At the fair, children would race horses and play games and there were funny contests, including an ugly contest, she said: "We used to really have good times."

What Lamebull misses is the way people used to visit one another more often. Guests arrived unannounced nearly every day, she said. Now people wait for invitations. Until recently, Lamebull could speak with other friends in their language and visit the way they used to, but her last Gros Ventre-speaking friend died recently, Cichosz said.

### **Ex-Post Evaluation of EC Activities with Regional and Minority Languages 1998-2002**

This evaluation report focuses on the support provided by the European Commission to regional and minority languages (RML) between 1998 and 2002. It was conducted by the Interacts Foundation, with contributions from the UNESCO Centre of Catalonia, between July 2003 and January 2004.

Some of the general conclusions were:

- The European Commission's support for regional and minority languages in the period 1998-2002 has been conducive to strengthening the position of some RMLs in Europe.
- Core support provided to EBLUL (European Bureau of Lesser Used Languages) and the MERCATOR Centres, as organisations active in the field of RMLs, has also been of great importance to existing knowledge about linguistic diversity in Europe.
- The impression remains that EU action in the field of languages has changed at a higher speed than regional and minority languages themselves.

Changes are also needed within organisations representing or with an interest in RMLs if they expect to achieve European support to a relevant extent.

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## 4. Allied Societies and Activities

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### **News from Native Languages of America**

*Osiyo, Aaniin, Hau Kola, and Hello!*

Here at *Native Languages of the Americas* we have had a busy year, adding more than 200 pages of vocabulary, soundfiles, and other Indian language materials to our website (<http://www.nativelanguages.org/>). We have also streamlined our projects to make it easier for the community to participate in our work. Here are three ways you can join us in our work if you like:

1) We have improved our projects page, <http://www.nativelanguages.org/help.htm>, to include a list of practical things you can do to help us with our mission of language preservation, from simply linking to our site all the way through making audio recordings of an elder relative. Please visit this page and see if there's anything you'd like to pitch in with! In particular, if we do not have a page about your own tribe or nation yet, and you'd like to help us change that, just e-mail us.

2) We have added a page for our submission guidelines <http://www.nativelanguages.org/submissions.htm>. (We still publish all Indian language materials submitted to us the same way we always have.)

3) And if there is any way that we can help with your community's language revival or preservation efforts, please let us know!

Have a great new year, and may all our nations prosper. Orrin, Laura, Pinny and Kate

### **Salish Language Papers Sought**

We are putting together an *MITWP on Less Familiar and Endangered Languages* volume on Salish. We are interested in all aspect of linguistic inquiry (formal, functional, preservation efforts, etc.) regarding the Salish languages. We are also looking for contributions from the variety of language scholars conducting research/working with Salish languages.

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## 5. Analysis of Some Language Situations

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## Recent Change in Language Communities Of Nepal - **B. K. Rana**

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### Introduction

The Himalayan kingdom of Nepal is one of the linguistically diverse countries in South Asia and is a home for different peoples who speak different languages, adhere to different religions, practice different cultures and live in harmony forming distinct identities among themselves from the ages. Spoken as lingua franca by nearly 20 million people, Nepali is the first language of 48.61% of total population of 22,736,934 [2001] and also the national language of Nepal. Except for Burushaski, a language isolate which is still spoken north of Gilgit in Hunja, a remote part of northern Pakistan at the border of China, Nepal's languages all belong to the world's major language families: Indo-European, Dravidian, Sino-Tibetan and Austro-Asiatic. There are at least three native speakers left of Kusunda<sup>1</sup> which is a unique language once spoken in the central hills of Nepal some 30 years ago.

Nepali falls within the Indo-European family. It has much closer affinity with Hindi and Sanskrit. Hindi is spoken almost by half a billion people as their mother tongue in India only. Millions others speak either Hindi or Urdu both in India and Pakistan. These two major South Asian languages are spoken among the Indian population across South and East Africa. People in Indonesia, Malaysia, Mauritius and Fiji also speak Hindi.

Some people who have migrated to USA, Canada and United Kingdom also speak either Hindi or Urdu. The Hindi-Urdu community comprises one of the largest speech communities in the world. Scholars and language activists of India are prescribing Hindi in a broader national context as well as global perspective, and affirm Hindi's status as a world language.

Likewise, a significant number in Hong Kong, Burma and England speak Nepali also. It is spoken by a larger mass of population in different provinces of India. Therefore, the government of India has recognized Nepali as one of its 18 state languages, which is used in schools and in office materials also. The recognition of Nepali as an official language in 1988 by the government of India was a

<sup>1</sup> I could discover only three fluent Kusunda speakers in remote parts of western Nepal in 2000. No others have since been reported. The government of Nepal has allocated some money for the preservation of Kusundas.

Some linguists regard Kusunda and Burushaski as language isolates. But divergent views have emerged on Kusunda. Analyzing some 150 years old data, which often include inaccuracies, some western linguists have recently classified Kusunda as Indo-Pacific. This new classification cannot be accepted because it is not a complete study, which lacks information on recent development on Kusunda language

major event for Nepalese linguistic communities to assert their linguistic rights. In this paper I will attempt to offer some insights into recent linguistic dynamism in Nepal from a South Asian perspective, where language communities are asserting their linguistic and cultural rights for development. The language issue has been a vital one for a couple of decades in Nepal.

### Growth of Nepali as the National Language amongst Linguistic Diversity

Along with the rise of the Gorkha Kingdom<sup>2</sup> in 1768, the state had to promote Hindu culture and Nepali language to unify the country with a policy of one language and one culture. National policy as such could ease the process of unification of scattered small principalities into a greater sovereign nation. Nepal has always remained an independent nation in South Asia. Since the founding of the Gorkha Kingdom, Nepali has become the national language of Nepal and general identity of Nepalese people. There is a vast literary treasure in Nepali: government papers, educational materials, newspapers etc. are all published in it.

There has been no linguistic survey of Nepal to this day (despite some light discussion in academic circles a couple of years ago); so nothing firm can be said on how many languages are spoken in Nepal. Language data tend to differ as between entities and authors. As many as 48 different languages have been enumerated in the population census report of 1991. The National Language Policy Advisory Commission [1993] in its report mentions that there are 70 different languages in Nepal, 20 of them endangered. The report also cites Kusunda as dead. Nonetheless, 87 Kusundas [37 males, 50 females] have been reported speaking Kusunda as their first language in the recent national population census report. According to the population census report [2001] there are 99 different caste, ethnic and two other unidentified groups of peoples who speak 93 different languages as their mother tongues in Nepal. Ethnologue [2000] reports that there are 128 different languages in Nepal.

In Nepal the larger number of different languages falls in Sino-Tibetan language family. The speakers of Sino-Tibetan languages are mostly indigenous in origin. They are remote, less numerous, poorer, socio-politically weaker and unrepresented or

<sup>2</sup> The 'Gorkha Kingdom' also suggests the political process and development that happened in Nepal. The outstanding name in modern Nepal's history, King Prithivi Narayan Shah, ancestor of the current king Gyanendra, annexed the Kathmandu valley into Gorkha in 1768. At that time the Kathmandu Valley was known as 'Nepal' and Newari was its language. King Prithivi discarded Newari, introduced the 'Gorkha language', gave the kingdom another name – Nepal, and made Kathmandu the capital. Nowadays the king, the Nepali language and Hindu culture are seen as symbols of national unity.

under-represented to the national life. The situation as such has led to intense language endangerment in Nepal. As a result of the restoration of democracy in 1990, and also the concern of the United Nations for indigenous peoples in the world, different language communities in Nepal have begun to foster their languages. They have even begun to develop their own scripts, vocabulary, dictionary, grammar and literature etc.

### Establishment of Mahendra Sanskrit University for Revival of Sanskrit language

To preserve and promote Sanskrit education in different sectors of Nepalese society and also develop the Kingdom of Nepal into a center for teaching and learning through Sanskrit, the government of Nepal established Mahendra Sanskrit University in December 1986. The university was opened amidst a sharp decline in Sanskrit language in the country. No speaker of Sanskrit has been enumerated in national population census reports. This is an indication that Sanskrit is not spoken as the first language in Nepal.

Indeed the great teachings of Rshi-Munis<sup>3</sup> in early centuries, possibly even before the Greeks, are written in Sanskrit. The Vedas, Upanishads, Smritis, and the much loved philosophy by Hindus – the Bhagavat Gita etc. are written in Sanskrit. Whether Sanskrit is spoken by its speakers or not it has an immense impact not only on Nepalese social life but upon the much greater mass of population in India also.

The greatness of Sanskrit is unquestionable. However, in recent decades, it has faced sharp criticism in the indigenous language communities of Nepal. These communities have designated Sanskrit as a dead language. They blame the government for wasting wealth on a 'dead language' and staying unresponsive to demands of communities to preserve their 'living languages'. There is a kind of tug-of-war between two groups of intellectuals who favor the promotion of either Sanskrit or indigenous languages. Sometimes Sanskrit is made a compulsory subject in schools and sometimes optional, depending on what type of government is functioning in the country. Although Sanskrit is not spoken as a first language by the general public, it is not a dead language. There is an ample opportunity for Sanskrit to become revitalized as native language of certain group of people in the country. It is like English, which is also not spoken as the first language in Nepal.

### Indigenous Peoples' Movement for Linguistic and Cultural Rights

The indigenous ethnic peoples are nowadays known as Janajatis<sup>4</sup> of Nepal. Before the

<sup>3</sup> Vedic Scholars [sages]

<sup>4</sup> Indigenous ethnic peoples with their own mother tongues, traditions, distinct cultural attributes and social structures and who also do have written or unwritten histories are designated by law as Janajatis of Nepal.

restoration of democracy in 1990, there was no right to freedom of speech or expression in the country. Naturally in those days, it was very difficult to found a social organization that could spell out the fundamental rights of the people. However, Padma Ratna Tuladhar had been able to found 'Nepal Bhasha Manka Khala' - an organization for the preservation and promotion of Newari<sup>5</sup> language and culture in Kathmandu, and other two activists Suresh Ale and Parshu Ram Tamang had also started underground advocacy for linguistic and cultural rights by forming 'Nepal Langhali Association' from among the Magars<sup>6</sup> and 'Nepal Tamang Ghedung' - an organization of the Tamangs<sup>7</sup> respectively in the mid-seventies. Parshu Ram Tamang has presented Nepal's indigenous peoples' issues before a wider world including forums of the UN.

As soon as democracy was restored in the country, these three indigenous peoples' advocates together with other five indigenous peoples' organizations became able in mid 1990 to found an organization, the 'Nepal Federation of Nationalities',<sup>8</sup> and Suresh Ale was elected its Secretary-General. This was a landmark achievement in the indigenous peoples' movement of Nepal. The federation vigorously publicized and lobbied for inclusion of linguistic and cultural rights for indigenous peoples in the Constitution, then being drafted by a commission formed by the government of Nepal. As a result, some recommendations from the indigenous peoples' sector have been incorporated into the constitution.

After the restoration of democracy and also the promulgation of the Constitution of Nepal in November 1990 there was an open atmosphere in the Nepalese academic community. Krishna Bahadur Bhattachan, began critical advocacy louder and clearer than ever before for social reforms in the country. Consulting with some other experts and activists, he classified 61 Janajatis of Nepal and also offered a definition for them. The government recognized only 58 Janajatis by enacting an act some time later. However, Bhattachan's arguments for social reforms have facts and foundations, the conservative

school of Nepal, as anticipated, shows strong displeasure in them. Out of his enumeration, a number of 16 Janajatis<sup>9</sup> are not enumerated in the national population census report of 2001. The government population census report is not widely accepted in Nepal.

Kamal Prakash Malla and Hark Gurung who were indulging themselves in scholarly creations before the restoration of democracy have also published a number of polished works in favor of language communities of Nepal. Gore Bahadur Khapangi has an outstanding record of reaching the outposts and speaking for the rights of indigenous peoples in the country. This tireless advocate for social change in Nepal has made a significant contribution to the preservation and development of endangered language communities in Nepal at a time when many of the world's precious languages are vanishing day by day.

#### Constitutional Provisions

Since 1990, Nepalese society has undergone many unprecedented changes. The Untied Nations' concerns about the indigenous peoples' rights and subsequent declaration of International Decade of the World's Indigenous People [1995-2004] have been remarkable in the effort of preserving Indigenous peoples' cultural heritage across the globe. Nepal also received some kind of message from the declaration. Now, the government of Nepal has begun to preserve and promote indigenous as well as other languages and cultures across the country.

In the Article 4 [1] of Constitution of Nepal [1990] it is stated that Nepal is a 'multiethnic, multilingual, democratic, independent, indivisible, sovereign, Hindu, constitutional-monarchical' country. The constitution has accepted multiethnic and multilingual essence of the country but it is silent about a number of other religions and cultures of Nepal. Such a provision in the constitution has prompted indigenous people's activists to demand constitutional amendment guaranteeing their religious rights also. The indigenous peoples in the country realize that they were converted to Hinduism after the rise of the Gorkha Kingdom. Previously, they believe, their ancestors were either Shamanists or Buddhists.

Similarly, in another Article 6[1] of the constitution it is written that Nepali in Devanari script is the 'nation language' of Nepal and hence official language of the country. But, in the same article 6[2] it is also stated that languages spoken as mother tongues in different parts of the country are Nepal's 'national languages'. This provision is to specify that 'nation' and 'national' languages have different constitutional status

and relevance. Article No. 18 of the constitution gives the right to every linguistic as well as cultural communities to preserve their languages and cultures, to offer primary education in mother tongues. Another Article No. 26 of the constitution offers a wide range of directives for the preservation and promotion of languages and cultures of Nepal. There has been some development in language to accord with the spirit of Constitution in recent years. Understandably, there is much still to be done in the years to come.

#### Supreme Court Outlaws Use of Local languages in Local Governments

As guaranteed by the Constitution, local autonomous bodies known as - local governments - such as the Kathmandu Metropolitan City began using Newari as its additional official language from July 25, 1997. Following the metropolitan city, Dhanusha District Development Committee on November 18, 1997 and Rajbiraj Municipality on November 25, 1997 also respectively began using Maithili as their additional official language. The Supreme Court of Nepal issued an interim order to halt such usage and later on June 3, 2001 passed a verdict that the use of local languages in local governments is unconstitutional and unlawful.

The court has given no ruling to cut the expenses on Sanskrit language, which have not one native speaker in Nepal. The Vedas and other Sanskrit scriptures are very highly revered by the lovers of Sanskrit. But, indigenous language communities do not pay much attention to them. The spirit of the Constitution and the Supreme Court verdict are in conflict. Therefore, to protest the event, language communities of Nepal have staged a 'Black Day' program every June 3 in front of the Supreme Court of Nepal in Kathmandu. Meanwhile, consulting with other indigenous peoples' experts, activists, language communities and lawyers, Parshu Ram Tamang through Nepal Tamang Ghedung, drafted a public bill on Language Policy for the consideration in the Parliament of Nepal. It was registered in the House of Representatives of the Parliament at its 20th Session in mid-2001. Unfortunately, at the climax of political unrest in the country, the house was dissolved prior to table for further discussion on the bill.

#### Maoist Propaganda and Disadvantaged Communities

The beautiful country with pristine natural beauty and diversity is now engulfed in unrelenting conflicts and faces a number of serious challenges in her development. More than 12 thousand Nepalese have been killed and many others are unaccounted for during these years of conflicts. The Maoist insurgency surfaced from a monolingual rural part of western Nepal in 1996. The people of that part of the country cannot speak Nepali and also do not practice Hindu culture. The Maoists have a principal agenda of uprooting the monarchy and establishing radical

<sup>5</sup> Newars are one of the most advanced indigenous peoples of Nepal. They form 5.48% of the total population of Nepal.

<sup>6</sup> Magars are the largest indigenous group by 7.14%. They are third largest population group after Chhetri [15.80%] and Hill Brahman [12.74%] in Nepal. No individual caste/ethnic group is over 16.00% of total population in Nepal.

<sup>7</sup> Tamangs form third largest among indigenous population after Magar and Tharu [5.64%].

<sup>8</sup> i) Nepal Langhali Sangh, ii) Nepal Tamang Ghedung, iii) Nepal Bhasa Manka Khala, iv) Tamu Baudha Sewa Samii, v) Kirat Yakthung Chumlung, vi) Kirat Rai Sanskritic Sangh vii) Sunuwar Sewa Samaj viii) Sagarmatha Sewa Kendra (Sherpa Association) were the signatories of the federation in 1990.

<sup>9</sup> The 16 unmentioned Janajatis in the recent census report are Kushbadiya, Chhairotan, Tangbe, Topke Gola, Thudam, Fri, Mugali, Lhopa, Sural, Dolpo, Teen Gaule Thakali, Bankaria, Barah Gaule, Marphali Thakali, Larke and Lhomi [Shinsawa].

communist government. They have also made it public that they would offer right to self-determination or regional autonomy on the basis of origin, language and culture of particular group of peoples, primarily of the disadvantaged section of peoples who form almost two-thirds<sup>10</sup> of total population of the country. Questions have been raised whether national sovereignty and unity of the country could be maintained with such an offer.

The start of the Maoist rebellion was declared with the profound support of Kham Magar language community of Thabang in Rolpa, western district of Nepal. The rebellion has spread all over crossing borders of other language communities in the country. There are many monolingual communities in Nepal. To address to their need for change, language activists, started campaign for linguistic rights of the peoples. They also oppose Sanskrit education in the country - the reason being that Sanskrit is a classical language; its morpheme or rules of word formation, syntax structure, phonology, vocabulary, grammar etc. are very complex. An indigenous learner cannot even utter a single Sanskrit word. Understandably, such a person cannot compete with others to secure a position in the government.

Nowadays, among the three senior activists who started linguistic and cultural issues, Suresh Ale is under arrest as the government found him becoming a top ranking Maoist leader. Padma Ratna Tuladhar is a believer of communist principles and a human-rights activist. Sometimes he endeavours to restore peace in the country. He was one of the mediators during the two failed dialogues between the government and the Maoist rebels. Parshu Ram Tamang, showing no inclination to any political agenda, currently chairs the Indigenous Peoples' Permanent Forum [IPPF] at the United Nations.

The Maoist rebels are out to abolish Sanskrit education and discard Hindu culture. They have forced many Sanskrit schools to close down. The government cannot stop them doing so. For quite a number of times Sanskrit examinations were cancelled as the

<sup>10</sup> In Nepal Janajati [indigenous peoples], Dalit [so called water untouchables] and Muslims are treated as disadvantaged section of peoples. They altogether form 63.44% of the total population of the country. It may be argued there are some others who also are economically disadvantaged.

S.No	Group	Population
1	Janajati [so called lower caste]	37.38%
2	Brahman, Chhetri and Others [so called upper-caste]	36.56%
3	Dalit [so called water-untouchable]	21.79%
4	Muslim	4.27%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: His Majesty's Government, Central Bureau of Statistics, National Population Census Report 2001 pp. 72-73.

Maoists entered examination halls and indiscriminately looted Sanskrit questions. This kind of opposition has been an on-going affair in the country. Contrarily, the government has been known to pronounce that it would make Sanskrit a compulsory subject in the country.

There are some practical reasons behind the Maoists' violent opposition to Sanskrit education. Firstly, Sanskrit and Hindu culture are always complementary. All Hindu scriptures, rituals etc. are written in Sanskrit language. Also the king is revered as Vishnu, the preserver in the Hindu trinity. He adheres to Hindu religion. Without Hindu culture and tradition, a king cannot rule in Nepal. The Sankaracharya<sup>11</sup> of Kanchhi Kamkothi, India visits Kathmandu occasionally and the King goes to pay him homage. This is how Sanskrit and Hindu King are amazingly intertwined together. Now both of them have become targets of radical Maoists rebels.

But indigenous language activists also disapprove of Sanskrit education because only Brahman-born students are entitled to receive this education free of charge. This caste-based system was introduced by the Rana regime that ruled Nepal for 104 years until its overthrow in 1951 and it continues despite criticisms. This sort of education has also resulted in domination of national resources by Brahman caste groups whose total population is only 12.74% in the country.

Further, English has been made a compulsory subject up to graduate level in the Mahendra Sanskrit University colleges. The language activists do not find any solid reason to teach English in a Sanskrit school.

They charge it as ridiculous education system. But Sanskrit does also deserve preservation as it is one of the ancient languages of the world.

#### Languages Endangered as the Process of Globalization Accelerates

As the process of globalization or Anglicization is in effect all over the world, Nepal cannot withstand it. English has been another language, which seems to be replacing Nepali itself. Essential official papers are prepared in English. It is compulsory from primary to graduate levels of education. Most of the university or college education materials are in English. Language-policy makers in Nepal are fascinated by English literature too. They prescribe English literature even for junior graders, despite the complete absence of the appropriate cultural background in Nepal.

Everyone in urban areas prefers speaking English in Nepal. Nowadays, urbanite people mix up half English and half Nepali when they speak a sentence. The frequency modulation radios [FM Radios] announcers

mix up nearly 75% English and 25% Nepali words and phrases while they speak aloud a sentence from radio microphones. Doing this they differentiate themselves from among other general public. Speaking English like this, young people feel they have attained an upper class social status, which is not true. The status of English language in not specified in the Constitution of 1990.

In some reaction to this, the government has recently formulated a policy to replace education materials by publishing them in Nepali.

Thus preserving indigenous languages is a very hard job. Since the past two to three decades Nepal has adopted a policy that education should be provided by private institutions also. As soon as this policy was adopted a wave of English schooling came over and touched remotest areas across the country. Everywhere, one could see signboards hanging that read 'English Boarding School'.

This may have some brighter aspects also as blocking national wealth from draining out to other countries in the name of better education. It also could produce some kind of manpower that the country needed there. But such education is unreasonably expensive for general public. Therefore Maoist rebels have begun opposing this sort of schooling also. They have closed many English Boarding Schools.

#### Recent Change and Development

Following the reasonable demands of language communities, the government radio airs news in 18 different languages<sup>12</sup> from different parts of the country. The national population census also reports that a number of 5473 peoples communicate in Nepali sign language. The state TV airs news for the Nepali sign language community also. These are the remarkable changes in recent times in Nepal. Primary education is offered at least in 11 different mother tongues: Limbu, Tamang, Newari, Tharu, Awadhi, Bhojpuri, Maithili, Bantawa Rai, Magar, Gurung and Sherpa. The ministry of education has, one month ago, published five different mother tongues<sup>13</sup> in one primer book for grade one students to reduce cost. This is also another remarkable achievement. Some mother tongue communities have begun to publish booklets, calendar, newspapers and pamphlets in their mother tongues. They have even started to offer language classes in recent times.

Also there has been a noticeable change in the king's language too. The king has his own special form of language. Royal family

<sup>12</sup> Radio Nepal airs news in Nepali, English, Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu, Newari, Maithili, Bhojpuri, Tamang, Abadhi, Tharu, Magar, Kham Magar, Gurung, Sherpa, Bantawa and Dotyali [Nepali dialect]

<sup>13</sup> Maithili, Awadhi, Tharu, Sherpa and Magar

<sup>11</sup> The highest ranking Hindu Guru [preacher /teacher]

members are addressed by the people with some specific words like: *'maushuph'* [he/him or she/her] *'gari+baksyo'* [did], *'gari+baksanechha'* [will do], *'sukala'* [sleep], *'bhuja'* [lunch or meal] *'jyunar'* [eat food], *'darshan+bhet'* [seeing, meeting] etc. These terms are only used if one has to address members of the royal family. Before 1990, the general public, except for King's relatives, were not entitled to use the King's Nepali. Nowadays, general people in urban areas copy King's Nepali and speak in it a kind of fashion. But there is a restriction on the general public formally or publicly speaking this language for themselves. Instead, political leaders as well as others do not hesitate to address the king or the royal family members in general terms with media or others like: *'woha'* [him], *'garnu+bhayo'* [did], *'bhet'* [seeing, meeting]. But they must use the King's Nepali when they are to speak in front of the king or any formal programs.

The capital city of Kathmandu, a hub for Nepalese peoples has undergone some language change in recent times. As the Maoist insurgency has intensified, people have no alternative to migrating to Kathmandu for safety. So, a strange language mix-up is taking place nowadays. For example people of eastern Nepal say *'niska+nu'* [to enter] whereas people in the west say *'niska+nu'* [to exit]. The latter say *'pas+nu'* [to enter]. These two words are antonyms. The other noticeable usage is *'bhyau+nu'* [to finish or complete a piece of work, affirmative], *'bhyau+daina'* [can't complete or finish, negative]. But nowadays, this verb is widely used to mean 'to become enough or less'.

*'Tyo kam bhya+nu'* [you finish the job/work]. Generally used by general public few years ago. But the Kathmandu people now a days say *'Timro paisle bhyau+daina'* [your money is not enough to buy it] etc.

### Conclusion

The unprecedented linguistic dynamism in Nepal in recent times is the outcome of Nepal's democratization in 1990 and the change that took place in Indian subcontinent also: for example the Gorkha Hill Council Movement in Darjeeling. The UN preference for indigenous peoples' issues also inspired the language communities of Nepal. But nowadays conflicts have paralyzed the country.

Therefore, on February 1, 2005 the King took over and formed a government under his leadership. As there is no democracy and King's rule has prevailed in Nepal, the right to expression has also been curtailed drastically. Some people have welcomed the king's move and some others have protested.

During the king's rule in the past, Nepal followed the policy of one language and one culture. Then, in a democratic system, peoples asserted their language rights. The Maoists radicals have also exploited language issues

of Nepal. In the event of king's direct rule, it is now widely feared that Rights Movement in Nepal will halt for sometime. The concerned language communities will also experience a setback. But, those communities will continue to strive to preserve their languages and somehow slow down the process of language death in the country.

### The Modern Status of Irish, and the Irish Commissioner's Report - Jeff Kallen

*Trinity College Dublin*

I've been interested by the comparisons between Hawaiian and Irish, and I thought I'd offer my view from Ireland on one half of the topic. Irish language policy is difficult to categorise in terms of L1 or L2 goals or achievements. The Irish Constitution puts it clearly: 'The Irish language as the national language is the first official language. The English language is recognised as a second official language'.

(Interestingly, though, the Irish-language version of the Constitution doesn't give English 'second' official language status, but states that it may be used 'mar theanga oifigiúil eile', i.e. as 'another official language'.)

The constitutional position may look like simple ideology, but it transfers into reality in many ways, bearing in mind that the designation of Irish as "the national language" (at least within the Republic of Ireland) doesn't imply that it is the "most widespread mother tongue" (which it isn't by any means). The legal designation both reflects and encourages the view that Irish occupies a special place in talking about what it means to have 'our own language', a point which has taken on more relevance as Ireland expands its relations within Europe. (Just recently the Irish government has pushed to upgrade the status of Irish within the European Union, pressurised by public opinion when the new accession states, especially Malta, came in to the EU with working status for their national languages.)

The sense of native language is important for the many people whose families are now English-speaking, but whose parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents may have been Irish-speakers or fully bilingual. It is also important in so far as Irish English reflects various aspects of the Irish language, whether through borrowing, codeswitching, effects of language contact in earlier generations, or in other ways. It is important, too, in the sense that generations of Irish people share the experience of having learned Irish in school, so that school vocabulary is part of the (unique) shared experience of being Irish.

Thousands of people from English-speaking homes also attend Irish-medium schools at primary and secondary level; these schools are now developing a kind of first-language

Irish which is not the same as mother tongue Irish (and is itself therefore a point of controversy). And of course, Irish is easy to see, both in official language usage and in unofficial domains such as sporting organisations, 'Irish weeks' held in schools and colleges, and broadcast media.

If you add all these factors together, you can see that Irish language learning is not L2 learning in the sense that English language learning is for people in Mongolia or even as it is for heritage language learners in the US. Neither is it L1 education as it would be when teaching Spanish to Mexican immigrant children living in Texas. It lies somewhere in between, or rather, I think it suggests that L1 and L2 are not discrete categories and that Irish in Ireland occupies something of a middle ground.

From this position, it follows that judging the success or failure of Irish language movements is problematical. In relation to a romantic goal of restoring Irish to the position of "mother tongue, native language" of the vast majority of the population (and the main language of reading, writing, and electronic media), Irish policy has not succeeded. But, then, government plans rarely do succeed in such absolute terms: goals such as the elimination of poverty, discrimination, and war are aspirations which governments often have (at least on paper) but do not achieve.

On the other hand, the goal of raising the status and respect for Irish relative to what it was in most of the 19th century has been achieved. (The fact that 41.9% of the population in the Republic returned themselves as Irish speakers in the 2002 census does not necessarily mean that this proportion is very good at the language -- but it does mean that they value it enough to include themselves as Irish speakers. That in itself says a lot.) The goal of ensuring that Irish maintains a role in Irish society has also been achieved, and the goal of ensuring that intergenerational continuity for Irish exists at all levels of language use has also been largely successful.

From the point of view of linguistic purism, Irish as a language is in some trouble under the pressures of bilingualism and lack of opportunities to use Irish, and the Gaeltacht regions where Irish is supposed to be the community first language are under pressure as well.

For example, the 1981 census showed 75,000 people in the combined Gaeltacht areas, of whom 77.4% were Irish speakers; the 2002 census shows 86,517 people in the Gaeltacht, but a small decline to 72.6% as Irish speakers. In both sets of figures, the percentage of Irish speakers broken down by age peaks in the school years, but of the post-school adults, the percentage of Irish-speakers in the Gaeltacht has dropped over the last 20 years (e.g. 79.8% of 45-54 year olds were returned as Irish

speakers in 1981, but the percentage for this age group had fallen to 70.6% in 2002).

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Irish-usage was more concentrated in deeply Irish-speaking areas; today it is spread much more evenly across the country (in the Republic). These figures point to an L2 role for Irish, in that the spread of Irish into the counties from which it had virtually vanished by 1900 has not displaced English (nor do census figures suggest that those returned as Irish speakers have any great degree of skill in the language), but I still think that the L2 status of Irish is not like that of French or German.

So is Irish language policy a success or not? It really does depend on what you are looking for. My feeling is that when you consider the very real threats posed to Irish in the 19th century, Irish has done very well. And I'm not forgetting the Belfast agreement, the terms of which established a cross-border language authority for Irish (alongside a cross-border authority for Ulster Scots), thus providing international legal support for Irish in Northern Ireland, and, incidentally, bringing the UK to ratify the European Convention on Regional or Minority Languages. (The Irish government has not ratified the Charter for fear of creating a contradiction between the position of Irish as an official language and the view that it might be seen as a minority language. But that's another story.) Of course it also has to be admitted that Irish, like so many languages, is still under pressure from English and that the success of Irish in the long term is still open to question. (Immigration into Ireland in recent years has also changed the linguistic landscape, but that, too, is another story.)

You may be interested in the report which has just been released from the Language Commissioner in Ireland. It is available (in bilingual format) from the Commissioner's website (which is also bilingual),

<http://www.coimisineir.ie/>

### **Scots Gaelic Act: Hip Hip Ho-Hum - Murdo MacLeod**

*Scotland on Sunday* 24 April 2005

See the original (in Gaelic too) at:  
<http://scotlandonsunday.scotsman.com/opinion.cfm?id=436172005>

The newest chapter in the history of Gaelic and the Gaels has just begun with the Gaelic Bill having passed through the Scottish parliament. Although the Scottish Executive makes far too much use of the word, this time they were right, this was a historic day. We have the first law in many years which is connected to Gaelic. And differently from other Gaelic-connected laws, this one - at least in theory - is trying to help and protect us rather than wipe us out.

We should be thankful for the small mercies, and they do not come much smaller than this. It would have been more honest for the government to have called this law the Gaelic Board Act, because that is what we have. There is no word of the rights of Gaelic speakers, or where they can use their language, rights which are basic in other countries. We are still unsure whether we are allowed to speak our language in court. There is still not the same kind of safeguards for Gaelic education as there is for English-language schooling.

And we are still in the situation where the Executive thinks that it is perfectly acceptable for government ministers to head for the Western Isles, the Gaelic heartland, and speak to the English-language media while not addressing the Gaelic-speaking locals in their own language. There is no word on broadcasting. There will be some who will say that there could have been no such section because broadcasting is a matter reserved to London with the Scottish parliament having no say on the matter. But that is simply a problem with the Scotland Act which established the Scottish parliament, and Act which was drawn up in 1997 and 1998, and not before the foundations of the earth were laid. The powers of the Scottish parliament to protect our language are restricted precisely because those who are now in power allowed them top be limited.

Am I just too hard and cynical?

This was a bill which was promised to the Gaels in 1997. We had to be patient because the honourable members had to look to more important things, such as building a 440m palace for themselves and debating fox-hunting. And look now at what we have. The Gaelic Board is established in law. A good thing they have a duty to produce a language plan. A good thing. They have the task of increasing the numbers of Gaelic speakers. Another good thing.

And it is also a good thing that they will have a role in education and that they will be able to public authorities and direct them to draw up a Gaelic policy, instead of waiting for a word from the organisations. But wait a minute. These two elements are only there because they were added to the bill after the Gaels went mad with rage at how weak and pathetic the first draft of the bill was.

So that is the criticism. Is there any way that the law can now work? The way the new law is formed, much depends on how energetic the new Gaelic board is and how willing they will be to ask searching questions and refuse to accept excuses. It can work if the board is energetic and refuses to accept any nonsense from public authorities. And they have to start at the heart of the Gaelic-speaking areas. Are they convinced that the Western Isles Council Gaelic policies, and those of the local health board are all they could be? Is enough being done to make sure that the elderly people of

the areas get home helps who speak their own languages, for example?

They have to be noisy and pushy, they have to show that they will not accept poor excuses from anyone. And in addition to the public authorities in the islands, they also should be harder on how the Scottish Executive deals with and informs the Gaels. When government minister appear each day on English-language radio and TV programmes, it is an absolute disgrace that they refuse Scotland's Gaelic speakers the same chance to get the information in their own language. Each time an official speaker appears to give information in English it means that Gaels are deprived of the chance to get knowledge from their own rulers.

I am not saying that every member of the Scottish Executive ministerial team must learn the language. But what I am saying is that there should be the brain-power in the Executive to deal with this issue. Is it that they could not care less or that they just think that we should have to listen in in English to get things straight.

I am dubious about whether this new law, and the board, will have the teeth to address these lacks. In contrast to the Welsh situation, the board will not have the final word in laying down to organisations that they must deal with the rights and needs of Gaelic speakers. The final word will be with ministers, and there is no guarantee that they will always show goodwill toward the language.

I for one hope that it will not emerge that we shall need to campaign for a new bill in a couple of years time.

But I have my doubts.

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## 6. Reports on Field Research

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### **A survey of Dogon languages in Mali: overview - Roger Blench** *Mallam Dendo Ltd., Cambridge, UK*

The languages spoken on the Dogon Plateau and adjacent areas in northern Mali are generally known to outsiders as 'Dogon', but this term is not used by individual groups. For a long time, research on the Dogon was dominated by the work of Marcel Griaule and his successors, which focused on a very specific group, the Dogon of Sangha. Bertho published short comparative wordlists of some Dogon lects but these made little impression. Calame-Griaule (1956) published a dialect map of Dogon, the relationship between the named communities and the Tɪŋ-Sɔŋ represented in her dictionary (Calame-Griaule 1968) remained unclear in the absence of data. Until recently, Dogon was treated in reference books as if it were a single language (e.g. Bendor-Samuel *et al.* 1989), but Hochstetler *et al.* (2004) estimated there are no less than 17 languages under the

Dogon rubric and that the family is highly internally divided.

The classification of the Dogon languages is a matter of considerable dispute. They have always been considered part of Niger-Congo, but their place in that family is difficult to determine. Hochstetler *et al.* (2004) review the various theories that have been advanced, which are essentially either Gur, Mande or an independent branch. Conventional wisdom now treats Dogon as its own branch of Niger-Congo (Williamson & Blench 2000).

Many Dogon languages are known to only have a small number of speakers, but information on populations, locations and language endangerment status was non-existent in most cases. Indeed, for many lects, the sole concrete data were hundred-word wordlists collected in 1998 and a list of villages with GPS-determined locations (Hochstetler *et al.* 2004). As a consequence, further survey of Dogon languages seemed to be a high priority. Roger Blench and Denis Douyon (ENSUP/FLASH, Université de Bamako) undertook this in February and March 2005, with funding from the Swiss Ethnoarchaeological Research Project<sup>14</sup>. A list of all the communities surveyed follows and greater detail on individual groups from the point of view of language endangerment will appear in this and forthcoming issues of Ogmios.

One language in the Dogon-speaking area is apparently not Dogon but which is difficult to classify, Bangi me (see separate report). This language contains some Niger-Congo roots but is lexically very remote from all other languages in West Africa. It is presumably the last remaining representative of the languages spoken prior to the expansion of the Dogon proper. This is dealt with in a separate piece below.

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#### 2005 field surveys

Linguistic materials on:

Ampari Pa, Ana, Bangime, Bunoge, Dogul Dom, Ampari Kema, Nyambeenge, Tebul Ure, Tommo So Pirō, Walo, Yanda.

Four languages, Ana, Bunoge, Tebul Ure and Walo were recorded for the first time.

A previously undocumented sign language was discovered among the Tebul people and a video record of sample sentences and narratives in sign language, Tebul Ure and French was made.

All these languages have only a small number of speakers and reports on the endangerment status of individual languages will appear in future issues of Ogmios.

#### Bangi me, a language of unknown affiliation in Northern Mali

Roger Blench, Mallam Dendo, Cambridge

Language isolates are extremely rare in the world, and those in Eurasia, such as Basque and Burushaski, have received their fair share of scholarly attention. However, the few African isolates, Hadza, Laal, Jalaa are much less well known, which is surprising, given their overall importance in understanding the linguistic history of the continent. Another likely isolate is spoken among the Dogon language cluster in northern Mali. An annotated wordlist of the Bangi me language was collected<sup>15</sup> with the assistance of Kabo Bamani from a group of villagers in Niana on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of March 2005. The informants were Yamba Babaji, Kunja Kasambara, Baba Tarawali, Ali Babbaji, Kola Basogo and Samba Babbaji, who all appear in this picture.



I would like to thank them for their patience as the elicitation sessions were long.

This language has quite a number of alternative names, given the small quantity of published research on the language. These are (Table 1);

Table 1. Comparative records of names applied to the Banga-na

Reference	Language name	Comment
Bertho (1953)	Dyeni or Yēni	Village name
Calame-Griaule (1956)	Bāŋgeri mē	Endonym
DNAFLA/DRLP (1981)	Numadaw	Unknown
Togo (1984)	Noumandan	Unknown
Plungian & Tembine (1994)	Numa-daw	Unknown
Plungian & Tembine (1994)	Elebo	Outsiders' name
Plungian & Tembine (1994)	Bangeri-me	Endonym
Hochstetler et al. (2004)	Baŋgeri-me	Endonym

The terms 'Numadaw' and similar were completely unknown. This survey found the language name to be Bangi-me and the name of the people to be Banga-na. The intrusive –ri– is found in many records of endonyms in this area (e.g. Duleri for the neighbouring Dul Dogon and probably derives from Fulfulde).

#### Location and settlements

Bangi-me is spoken in seven villages east of Kage and reached by turning off the Sevaré-Douentza road 38 km. north of Sevaré. Table 2 shows the names of these villages with map locations.

Table 2. Banga-na villages with locations

Official	IPA	pop. 1987	N	W
Bara	Bara	211	14:48:20	3:45:30
Bounou	Bunu	418	14:47:50	3:45:40
Niana	Nyana	241	14:48:10	3:46:50
Die'ni	Jene		14:47:10	3:45:50
Digari	Digar		14:47:40	3:46:50
Doro	Dɔr		14:49:20	3:47:20
Due	?Jeni		14:48:20	3:47:00

Source: survey and Hochstetler et al. (2004)

<sup>14</sup> The mission was conducted under the auspices of the Mission archéologique et ethnoarchéologique suisse en Afrique de l'Ouest (MAESAO), Genève. I would like to thank the director, Eric Huysecom for support in this work, also my colleague, Denis Douyon of the Université de Bamako, who was part of the broader research on Dogon languages.

<sup>15</sup> Roger Blench is grateful to Eric Huysecom and the Swiss Ethno-archaeological project for providing funding for this survey.

Visual observation does not suggest major increases in size since the 1987 census, but

the uncensused villages are at least equal in size to those recorded. The population of Bangji-me speakers is likely to be 2-3000.

The Bangji me language is presently being transmitted to the children. However, there appears to be a loss of complex vocabulary. For example, the numbers above ten have been replaced in ordinary speech and some lexical items were only recalled by elder speakers. The second language of Bangji me speakers is Niononkhe, the Mande language spoken in Karge. Niononkhe is a dialect of Bozo or Sorko and is referred to as S□g□ Fulfulde, a dominant language in the zone, is known to some individuals and there is a limited amount of French spoken, usually by migrant workers or students. These languages are the source of a small number of loanwords. There are no schools in the Bangga-na villages but some children go to the state school in Karge. The Bangga-na are now all Muslims, which represents a great cultural loss. Possibly aspects of their pre-Muslim culture are recoverable with more in-depth fieldwork.

#### The classification of Bangji me

All the authors that have written about Bangji me have noted how different it is from other Dogon varieties. The only published data on this language is the short wordlist of 'Yeni' in Bertho (1953:433) which appears to be accurate and the hundred words collected by the Durieux in 1998, cited in Hochstetler et al. (2004). These latter forms incorporate significant elements from the bound morphology and should thus be used with care.

Bertho (1953:413) considered that the affinities of the Dogon languages as a whole were with the 'Voltaic' languages (i.e. Gur) but placed Yeni in its own group. He says;

*"The Dyeni or Yeni dialect of the Dogon from the Leol-Géou canton shows the highest deviation from the norm; nonetheless, it is clearly distinct from Bozo-Mande and Fulani. It also possesses as much Voltaic root vocabulary as the other Dogon dialects; but these items are not from the same Voltaic roots as those conserved by the other Dogon dialects, as if the Dyeni dialect had parted from Voltaic ancestor either in a different period from the other dialects, or at a different location within the Voltaic group, a group which as it is well-known extends from Sikasso in the Sudan up to the borders of Nigeria."*

Unfortunately, Bertho presents no data to justify his argument and no particular relationship with Gur is apparent in the present data. Calame-Griaule (1956:66) says;

*"This is a dialect unique of its kind spoken in the Léolguéou-Nonnonké canton with fewer than 1,000 habitants; it is completely deviant and is unlike any other, although it is more like Dogon in structure. The other villages of the region speak Bozo."*

and again in Calame-Griaule (1968:viii):

*"From another point of view, the study of the little dialect called /bájeri mé/, spoken by a small Dogon group in the utmost north-west of the country, and which, although recognized by the others as "Dogon", seems to have some totally deviant features, would be very useful to establish the criteria for linguistic filiation in Dogon."*

The lexicostatistical table in Hochstetler et al. (2004) records percentages below 10 with other Dogon lects and this would usually be taken to exclude a language from an established grouping. This survey, based on much more extensive material, finds no reason to alter this view, and as a consequence, Bangji-me is treated as a language isolate. Indeed, given that it is surrounded by Dogon speakers and has a grammatical structure similar to Dogon, it is remarkable that the percentage of Dogon words is not higher by the usual process of language interaction.

If Bangji me is isolated, where is it to be classified? It has slightly more links with common Niger-Congo vocabulary than Dogon, but as with Dogon, the morphology and syntax do not suggest Niger-Congo at all. Certainly it has no links with a particular family of Niger-Congo and for the moment, the best strategy is to treat it as a true isolate, like Hadza and Laal, with some contact with Niger-Congo but heavily influenced by Dogon. Clearly, more extended research is a high priority.

Data on Bangji me is published in full on the web at:

[http://homepage.ntlworld.com/roger\\_blench/Language%20data/Bangime%20wordlist%20pa.per.pdf](http://homepage.ntlworld.com/roger_blench/Language%20data/Bangime%20wordlist%20pa.per.pdf)

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### Dogon survey I: Tebul Ure, a language of the Dogon group in Northern Mali

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#### General

The Tebul Ure language is spoken by people who call themselves Tebul U. This appears to be the same language referred to in previous documents as Oru yille and Tew tegu (Calame-Griaule 1956:67). However, the settlement data is highly inaccurate so there are some uncertainties in identifying this population. The term 'Oru Yille', first used by (Calame-Griaule 1956:67) and subsequently repeated in the literature, is entirely erroneous. It appears to mean 'two words' in the Tebul Ure language, although no-one could explain how this error came about.

Calame-Griaule (1956:67) says,

*"This dialect (called 'Tew Tegü' en Dyamsay and 'Bede So' in Toro) is spoken in the villages of Upper Bamba. (Those of Lower Bamba speak Dyamsay Bama Tegü)."*

Hochstetler et al. (2004) say 'Oru yille is spoken in three tiny villages of Bamba du Haut. In addition to the xenonyms mentioned in Calame-Griaule (1956), Yanda-dom speakers call it 'Tebl.'" They give the population from the 1987 census as 400. This seems surprisingly inaccurate; the Tebul U live in twenty villages plus the recently-founded Dasalam [=Dar es Salaam]. The villages are mostly in the hill areas above Bamba and are often no more than hamlets. There are probably 3-4000 speakers. Table 3



shows the villages recorded by the survey and the locations of three that are listed in the

1987 census. The villages are so sub-classified.

Table 3. Tebul U villages

Group	Wards	Pop. '87	N	W
Tebul Tembe	ende			
	gando			
	Zan Sege			
	Zan Denge			
	Bende	129	14:41:30	3:06:15
Mande	Mande	110	14:41:25	3:06:25
	Bedi			
Daya	Timbog	207	14:41:35	3:06:55
	endelgo			
	Padema			
	Toon			
	Kumbulu			
Beje	Dul			
	Gyel			
	Na			
Säära	Didim			
	Tabade			
	Säära			
	Diine			
	Säära			
Uluban	Pindu			
	Bamba			
	Tende			
	inkanda			
	Ulu kanda			
	Sege			
	Dotaya			
	Tabang			

### Language status

The Tebul Ure language is presently being transmitted to the children. The second language of Tebul Ure speakers is Jamsay Tegu (another Dogon language) and many also know Yanda. Fulfulde, a dominant language in the zone, is not very well known and there is a limited amount of French spoken, usually by migrant workers or students. However, the nearby village of Bamba has recently been added to the Dogon Plateau hiking trail, and the isolation of the Tebul U villages will shortly end, with the usual outcome for the language. Nothing is known of Tebul U history, but today all villages are strongly Islamised.

In addition to the spoken language, a sign language exists in Uluban and related hamlets, which is used to communicate with a small number of deaf individuals. Almost all the inhabitants seem to have some fluency in this sign language and videos were made of a number of narratives with 'translation' into Tebul Ure and French.

### The classification of Tebul Ure

Calame-Griaule (1956:67) says,

*"This is in no way a sub-dialect of Dyamsay, but a very distinct dialect whose only similarity is with Yanda. It is spoken by about 2,000 Dogon who have to use Dyamsay to communicate with their fellows."*

Calame-Griaule's observation appears to be quite false. Yanda is probably the closest relative of Tebul Ure on the basis of recent survey data. Despite the cognacy of many items, the degree of erosion in many words would make intercomprehension impossible and these are undoubtedly separate languages.

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### 7. Overheard on the Web

### EU Constitution to be Translated into Welsh, but Not Other UK Languages

*EuroLang* 10 March 2005

<http://www.eurolang.net/news.asp?id=4963>

Davyth Hicks

Plaid Cymru Euro-MP Jill Evans has welcomed the news that the proposed EU Constitution will be translated into Welsh as reported on *EuroLang* (17<sup>th</sup> February). A formal announcement came yesterday from UK Foreign Secretary Jack Straw in a response to a parliamentary question tabled by the party's UK parliamentary leader Elfyn Llwyd MP.

Ms Evans, who has been leading the party's campaign for greater recognition for the status of the Welsh language in Europe, described the announcement as a first step in winning official EU status for Welsh. Jill Evans was the first MEP to legally use Welsh on the floor of the European Parliament when rules were changed to allow non-official languages to be used last year.

Speaking from Strasbourg, Jill Evans MEP said: "We're delighted that we've won this battle to get the EU constitution translated into Welsh. This was the first step in our campaign for Welsh to be recognised as an official European language and we now hope that the New Labour Government in Westminster will go further and propose Welsh as an EU working language."

Meanwhile, the Scottish National Party (SNP) has stepped up its campaign to have the proposed EU Constitution translated into Scotland's indigenous languages. The Foreign Office informed *EuroLang* that the UK government does not intend to translate the document into Gaelic or Scots. The SNP

believes that translations should be provided prior to any referendum on the proposed Constitution.

Speaking to the press yesterday, Europe spokesperson Ian Hudghton MEP said: "The recent enlargement of the EU has seen a huge leap in linguistic diversity. Scotland's indigenous languages are part of that diversity and are an important part of the rich cultural tapestry of Europe."

"The European Commission has confirmed to me that the proposed Constitution can be translated into Scotland's languages - if the UK requests it. Such a step would mark a significant commitment to the future well-being of Gaelic and Scots."

"We congratulate the Welsh on securing a commitment from the government for a translation to be made in their language. However, if it's good enough for Wales, it's good enough for Scotland. The government must rethink its stance and show full respect for Scotland's culture."

The Foreign Office has informed *EuroLang* that the UK government has no plans to translate the Constitution into Irish or Cornish either.

Language issues were also raised in the European Parliament's plenary session in yesterday's debate to prepare for the forthcoming European summit in Brussels, Catalan Republican MEP Bernat Joan called for coherence from those Spanish MEPs who have been demanding greater pluralism and respect for diversity within the EU, due to the ongoing reduction in the use of the Spanish language in the EU institutions. "You cannot call for pluralism in Europe and then on the other hand refuse it, for example, as happened in the Spanish state Parliament", said Mr Joan.

In this context the Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC) representative in the European Parliament observed that without the participation of the stateless nations Europe would remain incomplete. Mr Joan went on to express his approval "for the differential vote in the Basque Country and Catalonia in the referendum on the EU Constitutional Treaty" which saw a higher 'No' vote.

Bernat Joan closed his remarks with a few words in Catalan: "without Scotland, Wales, the Basque Country, or Catalonia, Europe is not Europe. Without the Catalan language, a complete and worthy Europe will not be built".

### Dutch foreign minister announces Frisian translation of the European Constitution

*Onno P. Falkena, The Hague 22 Apr 2005*

www.eurolang.net

The Dutch foreign minister Bernard Bot has decided that the Netherlands will publish a translation of the complete European Constitution in Frisian. The minister made the promise in his answer to parliamentary questions from the Dutch MP's Karimi and Duyvendak of GroenLinks ('Green left', the Green Party). The costs of the Frisian translation will be shared by the Dutch state and the province Fryslân, who share the responsibility for the second official language of the Netherlands.

Last year minister Bot refused to produce a translation in Frisian because 'all Frisians are able to read the Dutch version'. The letter of the minister to parliament does not unveil why he changed his mind. Last week the provinsje Fryslân already published a summary of the European constitution in Frisian. "We want to leave it to the Frisians themselves in which language they want to read the constitution", spokesman Jochum Admiraal of the province declared. "Such a decision should not be made by authorities, but left to the people themselves."

In his letter Bot also promises that he will inform the European Union about the official version of the European Constitution in Frisian. An annexe to the constitution (Declaration 29) offers member states the possibility to announce translations of the Constitution in other languages than the official European languages.

Until now Spain and the United Kingdom announced that they will translate the Constitution in other languages. Earlier this month the Frysk Nasjonale Party mentioned the examples of Basque, Catalan and Welsh in a letter to minister Bot, urging the minister to produce a Frisian translation of the Constitution. In the Netherlands there is a public vote on the European Constitution on the first of June.

### University of Hawaii Students set up Documentation Centre for Endangered Languages

By Lisa Ann Ebeling lebeling@hawaii.edu  
<http://www.hawaiireporter.com/story.aspx?5ada08d6-26ed-477fb53a99c516104320>  
 25 March 2005

Two years ago in fall 2003, Meylysa Tseng, an international student from Taiwan was inspired by the rich cultural diversity at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Meylysa, a Ph.D. student in linguistics, was looking for a good community service project to organize. Suddenly, she realized that there were many speakers of different endangered languages studying at the university and that graduate students of linguistics could teach language documentation skills to these students. At first many were skeptical. They thought the project would not take off. But, that did not

discourage Meylysa who went on to recruit her other classmates to seek support from various departments within the University. One semester later, nine previously under-documented languages of the world received much needed attention, were further away from extinction and the effort saw the winning of two awards: the Jacob Peace Memorial Award and the NAFSA "Partnership in Excellence Award."

Today, the Language Documentation Project (LDP) continues its social mission by training students from countries with endangered languages on how to document their languages and to apply for grants to expand their projects. This semester there are 20 students being trained by graduate students in the Linguistics Department, led by an equally dedicated graduate student, Valérie Guérin from France. The project now utilizes computer software to improve the documentation and archiving process and places its resources on the Internet for speakers of the languages documented, as well as other researchers to access them. Valérie's dedication has been rewarded. This May, she will present the project at the NAFSA international conference in Seattle. According to Valérie the LDP director, the project's secret ingredient is, "the spirit of aloha and cooperation in reaching out to the international student community at the university. The students who speak endangered languages are placed in a constructive environment where people care about their languages and culture. And in cooperation, everyone wins. The Department of Linguistics benefits by having its student engage in real and useful research. The University as a whole is enriched by the presence of these laudable efforts. Graduate students in linguistics are provided with an opportunity to pass on their training and skills. In the process, everyone broadens their cultural knowledge and is motivated of the importance of language preservation."

One of the languages documented so far is the Kemak language spoken by approximately 50,000 people in the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, commonly known as the East Timor. There are more than 15 other languages spoken in this newly formed nation, which was recognized as an independent state from Indonesia in 2002. The Kemak language faces a serious threat of extinction as it is no longer widely spoken. To date, there has been very little documentation of the Kemak language. Matias Gomes, an East Timorese student joined the LDP in spring 2004 and worked together with linguistics graduate student, Ryoko Hattori to compile a basic 300-word vocabulary list, a writing system for the language and later the first alphabet picture book in the Kemak language. Their work was later recognized and awarded the Jacob Peace Memorial Award. Matias and Ryoko were funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to continue their work. Since then, they have produced other

products such as a recording of a Kemak funeral song and a Kemak sketch grammar.

What happens next? Recently, an entrepreneurial business student has been working to take LDP to greater heights. Philip Lee, a Japan-focused MBA student from Malaysia began working with Valerie and the LDP team to write a business plan to transform the LDP into the leading language documentation center in the Asia Pacific region. The business plan was short listed in the semi-finals of the 2005 U.H. Business Plan Competition and the final winner will be announced at the end of this month. When interviewed, Philip's eyes gleamed with optimism, "we plan to get state accreditation for The Language Documentation Center (LDC) within the next year. And our five year plan is to position LDC as the premier language documentation center in the Asia Pacific region. We have innovative ideas and determination. The spirit of cooperation that springs from the team will see great success". Philip adds that the University of Hawaii at Manoa is one of only two universities in the world currently offering a language documentation Masters program and the unique culture in Hawaii that respects diversity promotes the success of this center. "Our work is in line with the University's Strategic Plans to position itself as one of the world's foremost multi-cultural centers for global and indigenous studies. Yes, maybe my goals for LDC have been rather conservative, as we are truly capable of being the world's leader in language documentation!"

The LDC will hold an exhibition in Bishop Museum on April 2nd and 9th. Its booth will present an interactive world map that allows visitors to select languages on the screen and hear greetings in some of the endangered languages from around the world. The LDC will also demonstrate its virtual museum of languages archived on its website demonstrating a goal in line with the Bishop Museum's conservation mission. Native speakers who have been working on the project will also be present. These future local language leaders will proudly display creative works of their culture and language. The LDC expresses its appreciation to Bishop Museum for its partnership in this exhibition. "As we continue to form more partnerships with Hawaiian organizations, we will be able to enlarge our social mission. It is impressive how Hawaii has developed its culture and language and I believe as we have more intercultural exchanges, we will learn and enrich each other's cultures. We will even help others in preserving their culture", Philip eyes glitter with optimism again.

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### Mbeki calls for preservation of indigenous languages

7 April 2005

[http://www.sabcnews.com/south\\_africa/general/0,2172,101617,00.html](http://www.sabcnews.com/south_africa/general/0,2172,101617,00.html)

President Thabo Mbeki wants traditional leaders to stop indigenous languages from disappearing. Mbeki was speaking at the annual opening of the National House of Traditional Leaders in Cape Town today

Mbeki says he is very concerned that African languages and traditions are lapsing in both rural and urban areas. Mbeki says African pride shines when people express their culture in the way they dress, the traditions they uphold and the languages they speak. But these are in danger of being pushed aside.

The president says at school level, fewer and fewer of African children are taking African languages as subjects. He says many young people are more in tune with Western trends. Hence in many instances it is easy for the youth to identify with rock stars from places they have never seen. He called on traditional leaders to bring back language and tradition. He says they should work with communities, government departments and the private sector to raise the importance of African languages.

Mbeki also wants to see festivals celebrating traditions, songs and dances becoming a regular feature in cities and rural areas countrywide. This has been welcomed by the traditional leaders.

### Guatemalan Linguists Introduce New Software Prototype for K'iche'

Associated Press 3 March 2005

<http://www.forbes.com/home/feeds/ap/2005/03/03/ap1861446.html>

Guatemalan linguists have distributed a prototype for a computer program that operates in the Mayan Indian language of K'iche', a project aimed at preserving the ancient language and raising its profile worldwide.

The prototype was developed by language experts at the Academy of Mayan Languages in conjunction with computer students at the state-run San Carlos University, and was distributed this week to about 100 potential users for their feedback, including native speakers, publishing houses, consultants and cultural experts.

The project was inspired by a law, passed last year, that promotes the use and preservation of native Indian languages, Academy president and linguist Modesto Baquiáx Barreno said Tuesday in an interview with The Associated Press.

The law "challenged us with the important goal of distributing writings in the Mayan languages, and that led us to take advantage of existing technology," Baquiáx said.

Academy director Rigoberto Juárez said: "As K'iche' speakers... we want to give our

language a political profile equal to other languages."

The program was created with OpenOffice.org software to operate on the Linux system. It contains menus, instructions, help texts, and grammatical and spell-checking programs in the K'iche' language, a feat that took "hard and extensive work," Baquiáx said, noting that designers inserted 8,000 K'iche' words in the program. About 1.2 million of Guatemala's 14 million people speak K'iche'.

In the future, the academy hopes to design programs in the majority of the other 21 Indian languages spoken in Guatemala. The designers also will urge computer manufacturers and software designers to take the languages into account when designing their products, including redesigning keyboards

"Some in this country say it is difficult to write (in K'iche') and that it is impossible to learn because it doesn't have a fixed grammatical structure or because the sounds are different and strange," Baquiáx said. "Those are discriminatory arguments."

The software is the second recent project in Guatemala aimed at promoting its majority Mayan cultures. In December, President Oscar Berger announced the establishment of a university dedicated to rescuing and developing ancient Mayan knowledge.

### Bilingual Education and Frisian Politics

<http://linguistlist.org/issues/16/16-261.html>  
Henk Wolf

Bilingual education has not been a controversial subject in Frisian politics for years. Although bilingual primary education was prescribed by law, the educational goals for the minority language Frisian were reached by only 30% of all primary schools. In its 1999 evaluation report, the school inspection criticized the general lack of enthusiasm among school boards to teach Frisian. They also concluded that the teaching methods were often inadequate and time spent on teaching Frisian was very limited (on average 25 minutes per week).

This situation was criticized by both the Dutch Ministry for Internal Affairs and the Council of Europe, who regularly evaluate Frisian language politics as laid down in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and several national agreements. No measures were undertaken, however, to improve Frisian education. Recently, the debate on bilingual education was reopened by the Frisian provincial government (Deputearre Steaten), who declared in their report 'Herziening kerndoelen Fries in het primair onderwijs' (revision of educational goals for Frisian in primary education) that

they no longer considered a policy of equivalent bilingualism realistic. The provincial government now proposes to lower the education goals, which still prescribe a level of full literacy. In their proposal, only 'a positive attitude towards Frisian' would remain as an obligatory goal. The government advises to leave it to every school which extra goals they wish to attain for their pupils.

I have read the report, as have other sociolinguists, and we are surprised to see that no reference at all is made to research on bilingualism or experiences of bilingual schools elsewhere in the world. The official policy of full equivalence of both official languages is abandoned without a proper motivation. I invite you all to study the report and the criticism given. Most of the information is available at <http://www.temal.tk> the site of a pressure group that protests against the plans. The information is mainly in Dutch and Frisian.

### Proud first-graders now say: Cherokee spoken here

Diana West, *The Christian Science Monitor*  
<http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0322/p12s01-legn.html> 22 March 2005

LOST CITY, OKLA. - Their parents were mocked for speaking it. Their grandparents were punished. But for three classes at Lost City Elementary School in Oklahoma, Cherokee is the only language spoken in the classroom. Lost City is one of the first public schools in the United States to immerse students in an American Indian language.

The program started in fall 2003 with kindergarten and classes for 3-year-olds. This year the program expanded to include first grade. "We do what other classes do but it's all in Cherokee," says Anna Christie who teaches a combined kindergarten and first-grade class at the school. Ms. Christie talks to them in Cherokee, calling the children by their Indian names. At naptime, she tells Matthew Keener or "Yo-na" (Bear) not to put his mat too close to Lane Smith "A-wi" (Deer). Cherokee songs play softly in the room. A Cherokee calendar hangs on the wall. Students practice writing words and numbers in Cherokee. First grader Casandra Copeland, "Ji-s-du" (Rabbit), counts aloud in Cherokee.

It's called an immersion class because the children speak nothing but Cherokee. The Cherokee Nation in nearby Tahlequah, Oklahoma creates the curriculum. "The goal is to get them fluent," says Harry Oosahwee, the tribe's language project supervisor. "If we don't do anything about it, [the language] is not going to be here for the next generation." It is estimated that presently fewer than 8,000 of 100,000 Cherokee people speak the language and most of them are over 45 years old.

Mr. Oosahwee, who grew up speaking Cherokee as his first language, says, "I feel fortunate that I was able to communicate with my grandparents and aunts and uncles." Now these children can talk to their parents and grandparents. "I can talk to my grand- pa," says Matthew Keener. He is also teaching his mother to speak Cherokee.

Oosahwee says at first there was mixed feelings from the community about the program. Some parents were excited while others were hesitant. "They didn't want the kids to experience negative reactions like they had." He can identify with that because he was mocked and ridiculed as a child for speaking his native language at public school. But since Lost City also started a night class to teach Cherokee to Grades 5-8, staff, and parents, he says interest has started to grow.

An instructor volunteers his time, and use of the school facility is free, so there is no cost to the community for the night class. About 65 of the 100 students enrolled in the Lost City Elementary School are Cherokee. Some non-Cherokee students have opted to learn a second language and belong to the immersion classes although participation in the program is entirely voluntary.

All eight grades are exposed to Cherokee at a weekly "Rise and Shine" assembly where they begin by saying "o-si-yo" meaning hello. They discuss the Cherokee character word for the week. One week it was truth-fulness or "du-yu-go-dv."

Next year immersion classes will include second graders. Kristen Smith, who teaches the 3-year-olds, was 5 when she learned the Cherokee lan-guage from her grandparents. Her son, Lane, who is in the first grade class, comes home every day with a new word or phrase. "Now Lane and I can talk in Cherokee," she says. Lane also teaches some Cherokee words to his 11-year-old brother, Kristian. "This is something the whole family can share," their mother says. Fonda Fisher, Lane's great aunt, says, "He automatically responds in Cherokee. He even sings Cherokee in the shower." She adds, "Lane is learning what it is to be Cherokee and to be proud."

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## 8. Places to Go -

### On the Net and in the World

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#### Foreign Language Resource Centers

<http://nflrc.msu.edu/>

The United States Department of Education has awarded grants to a small number of institutions for the purpose of establishing, strengthening, and operating national foreign language resource and training centers to improve the teaching and learning of foreign

languages. Presently there are fourteen Title VI Language Resource Centers nationwide. These centers place particular emphasis on, among other areas, the teaching and learning of less commonly taught languages (LCTLs).

#### Strategic National Planning and Coordination for the Less Commonly Taught Languages — a project for the national US/ED Title VI community

<http://elctl.msu.edu/>

In a time of national and global need for an enlarged pool of speakers and learners of key languages around the globe, a strategic effort is needed in the United States to make those less commonly taught languages (LCTLs) available to learners at the post-secondary level. This requires collaboration among the nation's universities in deciding what LCTLs to offer, at what levels, when and where, in what formats, and what new learning materials will be required. These are the tasks of the e-LCTL Initiative.

#### Indigenous Languages and Technology

<http://projects.ltc.arizona.edu/gates/ilat.html>

The Indigenous Languages and Technology (ILAT) discussion list is an open forum for community language specialists, linguists, scholars, and students to discuss issues relating to the uses of technology in language revitalization efforts. The ILAT list was initiated in 2002 and is currently sponsored by the University of Arizona's listserv.arizona.edu.

The ILAT archive now has a mirrored site at the LINGUIST list website. Just go to the link: <http://www.linguistlist.org/lists/get-lists.html>

#### Northern California Indian Development Council - Archive

The Northern California Indian Development Council has a web-based archive of traditional images and sounds. Photo Galleries: Three galleries of stunning photography with accompanying descriptions, as well as the NCIDC Staff Photo Gallery and Council Member Photo Gallery. The NCIDC Song Gallery contains sound clips that are small segments of Traditional Karuk songs. They were recorded by Andre Cramblit, the Operations Director of NCIDC, a Karuk Tribal Member.

To find the site go to:  
<http://www.ncidc.org/>

Click the galleries link underneath the picture of the traditional Pit House.

Andre Cramblit:  
[andre.p.cramblit.86@alum.dartmouth.org](mailto:andre.p.cramblit.86@alum.dartmouth.org)  
is the Operations Director Northern California Indian Development Council

NCIDC (<http://www.ncidc.org>) is a non-profit that meets the development needs of American Indians.

To subscribe to newsletter of interest to Natives send an email to [IndigenousNewsNetwork-subscribe@topica.com](mailto:IndigenousNewsNetwork-subscribe@topica.com)

or go to

<http://www.topica.com/lists/IndigenousNewsNetwork/subscribe>

#### Southern Oregon Digital Archives (SODA) <http://soda.sou.edu>

The modestly named Southern Oregon Digital Archives, created by the Southern Oregon University Library, in Ashland, contains a hidden treasure of full-text pdf versions of hundreds of primary ethnographic, linguistic, and historical sources on the native groups of southern Oregon and adjacent northern California (Takelma, Klamath, Shasta, Modoc, Achumawi, Oregon Athabaskan, and others). You will find here, for example, Dorsey's "The Gentile System of the Siletz Tribes" (1890); Sapir's "Takelma Language of Southwestern Oregon" (1922); all four parts of Gatschet's "The Klamath Indians" (1890) -- even Waterman's "Yurok Geography" (1920). A very useful resource for anyone with an interest in the indigenous languages and cultures of this region.

*André Cramblit:*  
[andre.p.cramblit.86@alum.dartmouth.org](mailto:andre.p.cramblit.86@alum.dartmouth.org)  
Operations Director Northern California Indian Development Council NCIDC  
(<http://www.ncidc.org>) is a non-profit that meets the development needs of American Indians

#### SIL Electronic Working Papers SILEWP 2005-008

<http://www.sil.org/silewp/abstract.asp?ref=2005-008>

**Author:** Joan L.G. Baart, Khawaja A. Rehman

**Title:** A First Look at the Language of Kundal Shahi in Azad Kashmir

**Language:** Kundal Shahi

**Country:** Kashmir

**Subjects:** Kundal Shahi, Kashmir, Qureshi, language shift

#### Abstract:

This paper presents some preliminary notes on the previously undescribed Indo-Aryan language of Kundal Shahi, a village in Pakistani-administered Kashmir. We present data from which it appears that the Kundal Shahi language must have descended from an

archaic form of Shina, while showing more recent influences from Kashmiri and Hindko in particular. It is not mutually intelligible with any of these languages. Like many other languages in the northwestern corner of the South-Asian subcontinent, Kundal Shahi has contrastive tone. With less than 500 active speakers, most of whom are over 40 years of age, the language is definitely endangered.

**Paper:** PDF (351kb, 22 pages)

Questions/Comments: [SILEWP@sil.org](mailto:SILEWP@sil.org)

### Language and cultural diversity in North-West Frontier Province

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

#### Stories from Kalam Kohistan

It was night, there was no light in the sky, the time was around 4 o'clock, and the Azan had not yet been called. This was not summer, but it was in the last days of autumn. Our elders called it Sir Khid (winter solstice). **Read more**

This is a fifty-year old story. My elder brother and I were each sitting on a side of my elder uncle. In that time we did not know about electricity, kerosene lamps, or lanterns. **Read more**

The Frontier Language Institute (FLI) was established under the auspices of the Frontier Language Welfare Organization (FLWO) to conduct research on languages spoken in different parts of the Frontier. Among 69 languages in Pakistan, 26 are spoken in NWFP and 12 are being used in district Chitral alone. The primary aim of all that we do is to equip our people to produce and use all kinds of literature in their mother tongue.

Frontier Language Institute  
19 F, KKK Road  
University Town Peshawar  
Ph: 5853792  
Fax: 5700250

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#### 9. Forthcoming Meetings

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### Power and Powerless: Ideology and Practice in Indigenous Communities 6 Jun - 1 Jul 2005

<http://www.u.arizona.edu/~aildi/AILDI2005.htm>  
26th Annual American Indian Language Development Institute

Our 2005 theme, Power and Powerless: Ideology and Practice in Indigenous Communities, will take into consideration the dichotomy that exists among the stakeholders in American Indian language education. Issues of language, identity, values, and education rights and the question of who the decision-makers are for Native American language practices and methods of teaching will be primary considerations. The theme

will be highlighted with special presentations, guest lectures, films and panels.

The American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI) provides a unique educational experience for teachers of Native children. The AILDI format offers native and non-native teachers the opportunity to become researchers, practitioners, bilingual/bicultural curriculum specialists, and especially effective language teachers. The common concern of language loss, revitalization and maintenance brings educators, parents, tribal leaders and community members to this university setting to study methods for teaching Native languages and cultures and to develop material

### Linguistic Society of America 2005 Institute - Language Courses 27 Jun - 5 Aug 2005

<http://web.mit.edu/lisa2005/>

The Institute is offering courses in many areas of theoretical, experimental, and historical linguistics, including acquisition, computational linguistics, dialectology, language change, morphology, neurolinguistics, phonetics, phonology, pragmatics, psycholinguistics, semantics, and syntax. There will also be classes with a specific language or language-family orientation, including African American English, Algonquian, American Sign Language, Anatolian, Austronesian, Chinese, Gbe, Indo-European, Irish, Japanese, and Salish. All courses will be held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 27 June to 5 August.

### E-MELD 2005 Linguistic Ontologies and Data Categories in Morphosyntactic Annotation, 1-3 Jul 2005

Cambridge, Massachusetts  
<http://emeld.org/workshop/2005/>

The 2005 E-MELD (Electronic Metastructure for Endangered Languages Data) workshop on digital language documentation, sponsored by the National Science Foundation, is entitled 'Linguistic Ontologies and Data Categories in Morphosyntactic Annotation.' The goal of the workshop is to invite community participation in the development of GOLD, the General Ontology for Linguistic Description developed by the E-MELD team at U. of Arizona (see detailed description in the Call for Papers). However we welcome participation by all linguists interested in morphosyntactic annotation and/or the use of ontologies in linguistic description.

This workshop will debut our vision for the "GOLD Community", an international partnership of institutions and individuals who will build a global infrastructure to make our combined knowledge of the world's

languages fully accessible and inter-operable. It is based on the model used for the creation of OLAC, the Open Language Archive Community, and is intended to extend OLAC's scope of interoperability from metadata to data, i.e. the actual content of the linguistic resources discoverable through metadata. The core element of this infrastructure is GOLD, the General Ontology for Linguistic Description, which has been under development for three years by a team of E-MELD researchers who were initially based at the University of Arizona. In addition, standards will be required for linking language resources to GOLD and for making extensions to GOLD that reflect the consensus of specific "communities of practice", from a single researcher working on a single language to a network of researchers doing large-scale comparative or typological work. Finally, tools and services will be needed that are based on those standards to enable researchers to create those links and extensions, and to execute queries and searches over the resources made interoperable through their connection to GOLD.

To date, most of the work on GOLD has been on its overall design, and on the characterization of the features used in morphosyntactic annotation, and has been carried out without review by linguists working outside of the E-MELD project. In this workshop, we invite community review of GOLD and involvement in the design and creation of the infrastructure needed to make the vision described above a reality. As with OLAC, we envision a follow-up meeting in six months' or a year's time, at which the GOLD Community will be officially "launched", with the standards that have been developed up to that point frozen, so that tool builders and service providers will have an opportunity to create tools and services in a stable environment, and come up with recommendations for changes and additions to those standards.

For more information about GOLD, see:

<http://www.linguistics-ontology.org>  
<http://emeld.org/tools/ontology.cfm>

If you use morphological terms, you will be interested to know which ones have been proposed for GOLD. This emerging standard will allow comparison across large sets of languages with specified ways of determining morphological categories. If you have a particularly challenging set of phenomena that you are sure are not yet covered, please bring it to a working group on the ontology. If you are concerned about making linguistics more coherent and explicit, please plan to attend a working group. Limited support may be available for workshop participants selected in advance.

Please submit a short description of your work or research interests related to the themes of the workshop.

Contact Person: Naomi Fox  
fox@linguistlist.org

### The 14<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Applied Linguistics, 24-29 Jul 2005 <http://www.aila2005.org>

Presentations at the World Congress will bring together applied linguists from diverse communities and from varied intellectual traditions to explore the future. The theme of the conference is "The Future is Now" – a future where language is a means to express ideas that were unthinkable, to cross boundaries that seemed to be unbridgeable, and to share our local realities with people who live continents away.

### New Directions in American Indian Research: A Gathering of Emerging Scholars 7-8 Oct 2005

Representatives of the First Nations Graduate Circle and the Carolina Indian Circle, organizations of American Indian students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with the support of faculty and the Graduate School, will host "New Directions in American Indian Research: A Gathering of Emerging Scholars," a conference highlighting the research of graduate students and senior-level undergraduate students. The conference is a student initiative specifically targeted toward bringing together members of local Indian and non-Indian communities as well as scholars from across the region and nation.

The conference will highlight research by American Indian scholars as well as non-Indian scholars who are researching topics pertaining to American Indian studies, issues, and communities. The program will include addresses by Dr. Duane Champagne (Chippewa), Professor of Sociology at the University of California-Los Angeles, and Dr. Amanda Cobb (Chickasaw), Professor of American Studies and Director of the Institute for American Indian Research at the University of New Mexico; presentations by other prominent American Indian scholars; and faculty-moderated panels through which students can present and discuss their research with other scholars. We are inviting participants from an array of academic backgrounds, including those in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

Please send a one-page abstract and a ½-page biography that includes complete contact information (email, mailing, and phone) by June 15, 2005 to the following address:

Lindsey Claire Smith  
Graduate Assistant, American Indian  
Recruitment, The Graduate School  
CB#4010, 200 Bynum Hall, UNC  
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-4010  
nativeconf@unc.edu

### The Cornell Conference on Language and Poverty, 14-16 Oct 2005

The Cornell Conference on Language and Poverty will have two central objectives: (1) to highlight the complex interconnections of language and poverty for a general audience, and (2) to promote exchange at both theoretical and practical levels among linguists and scholars of language (including those still being trained in graduate programs) and others (especially those active in community-based programs) on work with endangered languages in impoverished communities. Day one of the conference will pursue the first objective of outreach and general education; day two will be devoted to the second and more specialized effort.

For information on the conference, full program, directions or hotel go to  
[http://ling.cornell.edu/language\\_and\\_poverty/](http://ling.cornell.edu/language_and_poverty/)

or contact

Wayne Harbert: weh2@cornell.edu  
Sally McConnell-Ginet: smg9@cornell.edu  
Amanda Miller-Ockhuizen:  
am332@cornell.edu  
John Whitman: jbw2@cornell.edu

### IV Mercator International Symposium "Translation of Culture, Culture of Translation: Languages in Film, Television and Literature" Mercator-Media, Aberystwyth 26-28 Oct 2005

Language transfer, which includes, for the purposes of this symposium, subtitling and dubbing of both film and television as well as literary translation, is a multi-faceted phenomenon from the point of view of minority languages. It can be used to disseminate cultures which find themselves outside the audiovisual and literary 'mainstream' and to maximise audience or reader numbers for minority cultural products. Moreover, translation into minority languages not only increases the volume of available material in a marginalised language, but may have a wider cultural impact and contribute to the development of the language as a dynamic creative medium. On the other hand, the effect of 'importing' cultural references on a large scale may not always be viewed positively.

This symposium will seek contributions to this discussion from those active as practitioners and policy-makers in the audiovisual and literary fields (producers, directors, broadcasters, subtitlers and dubbers, scriptwriters, publishers, authors, translators) as well as those concerned with these issues in an academic context. While the emphasis will be on autochthonous minority languages (that is to say the languages of groups long-established on their current territory and using

a language other than the primary official language of their state or a language in some sense socially and/or politically marginalised) connections may be made with issues of concern to smaller state languages, migrant languages and cultural production originating from beyond the metropolitan mainstream. We shall welcome contributions which make those connections. Key areas of discussion will include (but need not be limited to):

- The politics of translation
- The effects of 'global' culture
- Cultural policy and translation
- Language transfer and cultural transfer
- Translation and language planning
- International partnerships
- Digital technology and the internet
- Sign languages in the audiovisual media
- Learners and fluent speakers as audiences/readers
- Children as audience/readers

Abstracts of approximately 500 words or suggestions for panel discussions should be sent (as Word files or as plain text within the e-mail) to [george.jones@aber.ac.uk](mailto:george.jones@aber.ac.uk) by 1 June 2005. Notification of acceptance will be sent by 1 July 2005.

Written abstracts/proposals submitted for consideration will be accepted in Welsh, English, German or French. Abstracts in other languages can be considered subject to prior agreement with the organising committee. Full details of registration and programme will shortly appear on the Mercator-Media website <http://www.aber.ac.uk/mercator>.

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## 10. Recent Publications

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### Pacific Linguistics

#### Deixis and demonstratives in Oceanic languages

Gunter Senft, editor PL  
562

When we communicate, we communicate in a certain context, and this context shapes our utterances. Natural languages are context-bound and deixis 'concerns the ways in which languages encode or grammaticalise features of the context of utterance or speech event, and thus also concerns ways in which the interpretation of utterances depends on the analysis of that context of utterance' (Stephen Levinson).

The systems of deixis and demonstratives in the Oceanic languages represented in the contributions to this volume illustrate the fascinating complexity of spatial reference in these languages. Some of the studies presented here highlight social aspects of deictic reference illustrating de Leon's point that 'reference is a collaborative task'. It is hoped that this anthology will contribute to a better understanding of this area and provoke

further studies in this extremely interesting, though still rather underdeveloped, research area.

2004 ISBN 0 85883 551 7vii + 204 pp  
Prices: Australia AUD\$54.00 (incl. GST)  
Overseas AUD\$59.40

### **Alive and kicking: Areyonga Teenage Pitjantjatjara**

Annie Langois PL 561

The goal of this work is to describe the changes occurring in the Pitjantjatjara speech of teenagers in Areyonga, a Central Australian community, from both a grammatical and a sociolinguistic point of view. The study is based on data collected in 1994 and 1995. At the time the data was being collected, the Areyonga community had about 200 inhabitants, more than half of them under 25 years of age. A key question of this work is the extent to which Areyonga Teenage Pitjantjatjara is being influenced by contact with English.

In order to identify changes in Areyonga Teenage Pitjantjatjara, contemporary speech was compared with several independent descriptions of Traditional Pitjantjatjara (and similar neighbouring dialects). Personal observations of the author and discussions with older Pitjantjatjara people at Areyonga help to round out the picture obtained.

The Areyonga population is predominantly young. Most of the older people have left the settlement to return to their community of origin. As a result, many traditional ways of living have not been transmitted fully to the following generation. However there is an undeniable striving to reintegrate traditions into the community and the teaching of the children. Consequently, there is a constant effort to educate children in their first language. What then is the state of Areyonga Teenage Pitjantjatjara? This book aims to answer this question.

2004 ISBN 0 85883 546 0xiv + 253 pp  
Prices: Australia AUD\$63.00 (incl. GST)  
Overseas AUD\$69.30

### **Innamincka Words: Yandruwandha dictionary and stories**

Compiled by Gavan Breen PL 559

Innamincka Words is one of a pair of companion volumes on Yandruwandha, a dialect of the language formerly spoken on the Cooper and Strzelecki Creeks and the country to the north of the Cooper, in the northeast corner of South Australia and a neighbouring strip of Queensland. The other volume is entitled *Innamincka Talk: a grammar of the Innamincka dialect of Yandruwandha with notes on other dialects*.

Innamincka Words is for readers, especially descendants of the original people of the area,

who are interested but not ready to undertake serious study of the language. It is also a necessary resource for users of *Innamincka Talk*.

These volumes document all that could be learnt from the last speakers of the language in the last years of their lives by a linguist who was involved with other languages at the same time. These were people who did not have a full knowledge of the culture of their forebears, but were highly competent, indeed brilliant, in the way they could teach what they knew to the linguist student. Although the volumes document only a small part of a rich culture, they are a tribute to the ability and diligence of the teachers.

2004 ISBN 0 85883 548 7x + 218 pp  
Prices: Australia AUD\$54.00 (incl. GST)  
Overseas AUD\$59.40

### **Innamincka Talk: a grammar of the Innamincka dialect of Yandruwandha with notes on other dialects**

Gavan Breen PL 558

This is one of a pair of companion volumes on Yandruwandha, a dialect of the language formerly spoken on the Cooper and Strzelecki Creeks and the country to the north of the Cooper, in the northeast corner of South Australia and a neighbouring strip of Queensland. The other volume is entitled *Innamincka Words*.

*Innamincka Talk* is a more technical work and is intended for specialists and for interested readers who are willing to put some time and effort into studying the language. *Innamincka Words* is for readers, especially descendants of the original people of the area, who are interested but not ready to undertake serious study of the language. It is also a necessary resource for users of *Innamincka Talk*.

These volumes document all that could be learnt from the last speakers of the language in the last years of their lives by a linguist who was involved with other languages at the same time. These were people who did not have a full knowledge of the culture of their forebears, but were highly competent, indeed brilliant, in the way they could teach what they knew to the linguist student. Although the volumes document only a small part of a rich culture, they are a tribute to the ability and diligence of the teachers.

2004 ISBN 0 85883547 9 xvii + 245 pp  
Prices: Australia AUD\$64.90. (incl. GST)  
Overseas AUD\$59.00

### **A short grammar of Inanwatan, an endangered language of the Bird's Head of Papua, Indonesia**

Lourens de Vries PL 560

This short grammar documents the Inanwatan language, an endangered language of the

Bird's Head of West Papua (Indonesia). It deals with major patterns of phonology, morphology and syntax of Inanwatan. It also contains a vocabulary, extensive texts and materials from a linguistic survey of the Inanwatan district. The introductory chapter contains a discussion of the sociolinguistic and historical context of the Inanwatan language. Special emphasis is given to the field linguistic problems that arise from describing a Papuan language in an advanced stage of generational erosion and on the basis of data in which Malay and Malayicised vernacular are often very hard to tell apart.

2004 ISBN 0 85883 545 2xii + 156 pp  
Prices: Australia AUD\$39.60 (incl. GST)  
Overseas AUD\$36.00

Orders for Pacific Linguistics books may be placed by mail, e-mail or telephone with:

Publishing, Imaging and Cartographic Services (PICS), Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, ANU, Canberra ACT 0200 Australia

Tel: +61 (0)2 6125 3269 Fax: ... 6125 9975  
mailto://Thelma.Sims@anu.edu.au  
Credit card orders are accepted.

### **Mercator-Education: European Network for Regional or Minority Languages and Education**

Below is a list of Regional Dossiers produced by Mercator Education. The dossiers aim at providing concise descriptive information and basic educational statistics about minority language education in a specific region of the European Union. This kind of information, such as features of the educational system, recent educational policies, division of responsibilities, main actors, legal arrangements, support structures, and also quantitative information on the number of schools, teachers, pupils and financial investments, can serve several purposes.

Policy makers, researchers, teachers, students and journalist may use the information provided to assess developments in European minority language schooling. They can also use a regional dossier as a first orientation towards further research or as a source of ideas for improving educational provision in their own region.

**Basque:** The Basque language in education in Spain

**Cornish:** The Cornish language in education in the UK

**Kashubian:** The Kashubian language in education in Poland

**Turkish:** The Turkish language in Education in Greece

**Welsh:** The Welsh language in education in the UK

**Sami:** The Sami language in education in Sweden

For more regional dossiers and information on minority languages in Europe go to the Mercator-Education website:

[www.mercator-education.org](http://www.mercator-education.org)

## The European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages

### Language of the Heart: About the Frisian Language and Culture

This booklet was published in Dutch, Frisian, English and German. For more information visit the website for the Province of Frisland <[www.fryslan.nl](http://www.fryslan.nl)>, or Fryske Akademy <[www.fryske-akademy.nl](http://www.fryske-akademy.nl)>

**Collection Langues Européennes 1: Vallée D'Aoste en éventail de ressources** ISBN 90-74851-08-8

**Langues Vivantes 1: Parer L'Europe** ISBN 90-74851-02-9

**European Lgs 2: Scotland a linguistic double helix** ISBN 90-74851-18-5

**European Lgs 2: Language rights, individual and collective** ISBN 90-74851-06-1

**European Lgs 5: Sami - Indigenous People of Northernmost Europe** ISBN 90-74851-39-8

## De wrald yn bitterswiet ( The World in Bittersweet)

The Poem *Bittersweet* in 82 different languages from around the world starting with Frisian going on to Albanian, Arabic, Estonian, Yiddish, Kongo, Scots, Low Saxon, Indonesian and so many more. It also has a CD attached to listen to the recital.

Compiled by the FLMD in Omrop Frisland in conjunction with the European Talent Year 2001. ISBN: 90-74071-07-4

## Sound Materials of the Nivkh Language 3 - Pygsk

This publication has been prepared as part of the project "Voices from Tundra and Taiga", financially supported by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), project number 047-014-020.

The work on Nivkh is the research topic of Hidetoshi Shiraishi, whose dissertation is on the Sound Patterns and acoustic databases of the Northern language of Russia, in particular Nivkh.

Nivkh is a language spoken by the older generation. Nivkh parents speak Russian with the children at home and may still have a passive knowledge of the language. This is a direct consequence of the language policy

adopted in the Soviet era. The use of the Nivkh language was prohibited at boarding schools and the Russian language was the language of communication.

The publication comes with a CD which contains a series of conversations between Nivkh people. There are also translations in English and Japanese.

The first two volumes of Sound Materials for the Study of the Nivkh Language are:

**Folktales of V.F. Akiljak-Ivanova.**  
ELPR Publications A2-015. 2002

**Songs and Folktales of the Amur Dialect.**  
ELPR Publications A2-036. 2003

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## 12. Book Reviews

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### The Languages of Native North America - Marianne Mithun

Cambridge University Press 1999, 2001  
hbk ISBN: 0521232287 (£70 US\$100)  
pbk ISBN: 052129875X (£26 US\$45)  
*reviewed by Nicholas Ostler*

#### Publisher's synopsis

This book provides an authoritative survey of the several hundred languages indigenous to North America. These languages show tremendous genetic and typological diversity...

Part I of the book provides an overview of structural features ..., concentrating on those that are cross-linguistically unusual or unusually well developed. These include syllable structure, vowel and consonant harmony, tone, and sound symbolism; polysynthesis, the nature of roots and affixes, incorporation, and morpheme order; case; grammatical distinctions of number, gender, shape, control, location, means, manner, time, empathy, and evidence; and distinctions between nouns and verbs, predicates and arguments, and simple and complex sentences; and special speech styles.

Part II catalogues the languages by family, listing the location of each language, its genetic affiliation, number of speakers, major published literature, and structural highlights. Finally, there is a catalogue of languages that have evolved in contact situations.

#### Brief review

This book is so encyclopaedic it is almost unreviewable. It is, however, an amazing asset to anyone with a wide-ranging interest in the languages of North America. It sets its southern border according to the USA's realization of its 'manifest destiny', vintage 1852, though some of its languages do extend south into Mexico.

The publishers' synopsis above tends to emphasize the aspects expected to stimulate the interest of structural linguists and typologists, and certainly the work is a cornucopia for them. But the work is equally useful for those concerned for language communities, both socially and historically. It is notable that Mithun in her surveys devotes full attention to all the languages that are known to have existed in North America since the access of the White Man (and therewith the notice of western science.) For example, in her treatment of the Algonquian family (i.e. Algonquian with the addition of the Californian languages Wiyot and Yurok, which were only definitively recognized within the family in the 20<sup>th</sup> century) she notes that 'there is significant depth of scholarship here, because they were the first with which European had prolonged contact, because they are numerous and because several are still thriving'. She says that 'only a portion of the wealth of material that exists can be mentioned here' but then goes on to discuss the history of knowledge of all the known constituent languages dead or alive over ten pages with copious bibliographic reference (always annotated). Having done that there are three more pages giving the characteristic structural features of this family. When a language family has spread south of that pesky US-Mexico border (as Uto-Aztecan, which reaches from California's Northern Paiute to El Salvador's Pipil) she lists all the members, with bibliographic pointers, only forbearing to discuss the southern stories in detail.

But the vast range and quantity of information that is set out here does not make for breathless read. Mithun has time to stop and smell the flowers. In a review of North American phonemic inventories she remarks (p. 17) that Central Alaskan Yupik has a verb *pikagte-* that means a form of lisping, using front velars instead of back velars (e.g. [k] instead of [q]), thus neatly illustrating her claim that uvular or postvelar obstruents are common, particularly in the West. And what a drama is implicit in her account of the crucial documentation of Luiseño, a language of Southern California, that now has just three dozen speakers.

Between 1899 and 1906 Philip Stedman Sparkman, an English storekeeper near Rincón, studied Luiseño with Silvestre Gomez. Kroeber visited him in 1904 and encouraged him to publish a grammatical sketch (1905). Sparkman continued ... but was murdered in 1907... With help of Luiseño speakers ..., the material was published by Kroeber and Grace in 1960.

Sparkman's assailant made the world wait half a century for the grammatical information in the University of California's *The Sparkman grammar of Luiseño*.



# 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:-

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

