

<www.terralingua.org>

March 2002. #22

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IMPORTANT NEWS!

Terralingua News

For the first time since our inception in 1996, Terralingua has an office! This major step is made possible by the grant we received last year from the Ford Foundation.

From 1 June, 2002, we will have office space within the U.S. office of I.U.C.N. — The World Conservation Union, a like-minded institution based in Switzerland and with a branch in Washington, D.C. Therefore, our new address is:

Terralingua: partnerships for linguistic and biological diversity 1630 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Suite 300 Washington, D.C. 20009, U.S.A.

Telephone: +1.202.5182040 Fax.: +1.202.3874823 Web: www.terralingua.org

E-mails addresses stay the same.

<u>We are also hiring personnel</u> to staff the office. Please see the two attached job postings. Inquiries by qualified people are welcome.

We are looking forward to doing more and better work in our first physical location. If you are in town, do stop by!

Regards, Luisa Maffi.

<u>Job Announcement — Program Associate</u>

Terralingua, a small non-profit organization based in Washington D.C., is hiring a Program Associate to assist with program implementation and organizational development. Through research, information sharing and advocacy, Terralingua seeks to protect cultural, linguistic and biological diversity around the world. The organization is currently going through a rapid transition from a virtual network of volunteers to an organization with a small paid staff and an office in Washington. The Program Associate position will be either part-time or

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General News & Correspondence

Terralingua's financial base derives first and foremost from your donations. If you have not yet financially supported Terralingua, or have not renewed your membership, we ask that you do so as soon as possible, as our current budget barely covers the most basic operating expenses. We ask for (not require!) a minimum sum of US\$25.- per member per year; more is, of course, most welcome! A donation of US\$100.- or more will make you a Donor Member. Organisations can join for US\$35.-/year. Terralingua is a registered charity in the U.S.A., so donations are tax deductible. Please send all donations to our Treasurer, Mr. David Harmon (address at the end of the newsletter). We thank all those who have already helped fund Terralingua this year.

full-time, depending on funding and candidate qualifications.

The program associate will contribute to an innovative program of research on global patterns of diversity and indicators for assessing the variety and status of the world's cultures and languages. The results of this work will be used to advocate revisions to current policy and legal practices around the world. As a member of a small staff, the program associate will also assist with fundraising, financial management, administrative tasks, project design, and strategic planning for the organization. Additionally, the Program Associate may be responsible for day-to-day oversight of programs and the Terralingua office for extended periods of time. The individual will work closely with the organization's president, as well as partners and collaborators from academic institutions, government agencies, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations from around the world. This is an unusual opportunity to contribute to research and policy advocacy on emerging issues at the crossroads of several traditional disciplines, while gaining practical experience in all aspects of non-profit program development and management.

The successful candidate must be self-motivated, comfortable working closely with others in a team, and committed both to rigorous scientific research and to the application of research results to achieve positive social change. He or she will enjoy interdisciplinary work with a variety of collaborators from different cultures and parts of the world; will possess strong written and oral communication skills; will be highly organized and capable of managing and setting priorities among many pressing and important tasks during the course of a typical day; and will be comfortable handling the logistical, administrative and financial duties involved in helping to run a small organization. A master's or doctorate in anthropology or linquistics is preferred, with experience in conservation biology or related disciplines also valued. Fluency in English required, and competence in at least one other language strongly desired. Experience managing projects also desirable. There may be significant travel, including international travel, after the first year.

Full-time salary in the high 20s or low 30s (with benefits), depending on experience. Salaries are expected to increase as additional funding is secured. Terralingua is an equal opportunity employer. Please send cover letter and résumé to: Terralingua, 1630 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, U.S.A, or send a fax. to +1.202.3874823, or e-mail to <info@terralingua.org>. Please, no inquiries and no telephone calls.

<u>Job Announcement — Office Manager/Assistant</u>

Terralingua, a small non-profit organization, is hiring an Office Manager/Assistant in its main office in Washington, D.C. Through research, information sharing and advocacy, Terralingua seeks to protect cultural, linguistic and biological diversity around the world. The organization is currently going through a rapid transition from a virtual network of volunteers to an organization with a small paid staff and an office in Washington. The Office Manager/Assistant position will be either part-time or full-time, depending on funding and candidate qualifications.

As office manager, the individual will be responsible for establishing Terralingua's new office and maintaining its day-to-day operations. Duties will include: bookkeeping; developing budgets and cash-flow projections; maintaining basic office supplies, equipment and software; making arrangements for travel and meetings; handling payroll; preparing financial reports for tax

purposes; establishing a filing system and maintaining files; and building databases of contacts. As office assistant, the individual will cover telephones and respond to public inquiries, and will contribute (as time allows) to the maintenance of Terralingua's Web site and the preparation of publications, funding proposals and grant reports.

The successful candidate must be both self-motivated and comfortable working closely with others in a team. Careful attention to detail, good judgment and ability to carry out tasks responsibly and independently required. Excellent organizational skills are essential, as are strong written and oral communication skills. All applicants should have a basic familiarity with office computer systems and software, including word processing, spreadsheets, e-mail and Web browser programs. Experience strongly preferred with office and financial management, including the establishment and use of bookkeeping systems, general ledger accounting, monthly financial statements, bank reconciliations, and basic office systems. A Bachelor's degree (or equivalent experience) is also strongly preferred. Familiarity with the design and maintenance of Web pages and sites is a major plus.

Salary for half time will be in the range of US\$12,000 to US\$18,000 (with benefits) depending on experience. Salaries are expected to increase as additional funding is secured. Terralingua is an equal opportunity employer. Please send cover letter and résumé to: Terralingua, 1630 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, U.S.A, or send a fax. to +1.202.3874823, or e-mail to <info@terralingua.org>. *Please, no inquiries and no telephone calls.*



Terralingua Update

Spring 2002

Dear Members,

Once again we come to you with a bit-later-than-scheduled newsletter, but that's because, once again, we haven't been sitting on our hands! There is much to report, mostly in relation to the meeting of Terralingua's Board of Directors. The meeting (the first of the new Board, which took office on January 1, as reported in the past issue of *Langscape*) was held in Washington, D.C., on 8-9 April, 2002. Besides various organizational matters, we had on the agenda the discussion of our strategic plan for the next few years: what we want to do and how to organize in order to do it — including, of course, how to fund it all!

Here is a brief summary of organizational matters of relevance to you:

Dave Harmon, who had served as Secretary-Treasurer since the beginning of Terralingua, stepped down as Secretary while retaining the office of Treasurer. We elected David Downes, one of our two new Board members, as Secretary. (Welcome, David!). We designated an Executive Committee, composed of the four officers of Terralingua — the President (Maffi), Vice-President (Skutnabb-Kangas), Secretary (Downes), and Treasurer (Harmon). We approved our amended and re-stated Articles of Incorporation (the basic document establishing our status as a non-profit corporation). The amendment referred to our change from membership-based to directorship-based governance (the amendment that you, as members, passed last December at the same time as you voted for the new Board; see last Langscape). Some of the Articles were re-stated to better reflect the legal requirements of the State of Michigan, where we are incorporated. We also passed our amended Bylaws (constitution). The principal changes from the existing Bylaws are: governance by the Board rather than Members; revised definitions of the duties of Officers; clarification of the duties of the Executive Committee; and a system by which a minority of the Directors will be elected in a slate each year, rather than all at once every three years, so as to avoid complete turnover of the Board at any one time. On both documents, we had the invaluable (and hugely appreciated!) help of the law firm of Steptoe & Johnson in Washington, D.C., who graciously offered their pro bono services. In line with our commitment to you, our members, to maintain transparency on our corporate structure and activities, we will

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make copies of these two documents available to any of you who may wish to see them. Just ask!

(**Please note** that, because in the new by-laws we chose our fiscal year to be the calendar year (January-December), the current fiscal year will extend to the end of December 2002. As a consequence, our next annual report will not come out in September, as in the past, but in March of 2003. Therefore, expect it in the first issue of *Langscape* for 2003.)

We then reviewed our activities since we received the Ford Foundation grant in July of last year, and outlined what remains to be done this year to complete the work funded by this grant (Phase 1 of our proposed multi-year project, the Global Biocultural Diversity Assessment). In a nutshell, we are making steady progress on all fronts, and all products expected under this grant will be available before the end of the year. As announced in the last *Langscape*, these are:

- ▶ a new map of the distribution of the world's languages in the world's ecoregions, highlighting threatened languages and ecoregions, and showing that in numerous instances the areas of endangerment overlap. This map was again produced in collaboration with the World Wide Fund for Nature (W.W.F.), as was the previous one (available on our Web site and read more about it below). With support from U.N.E.S.C.O., the map was turned into an educational poster to be made available, along with a companion educational booklet, in the official languages of the United Nations;
- ▶ the above-mentioned educational booklet, titled "Sharing a World of Difference: the Earth's biological, cultural, and linguistic diversity", whose text we just delivered to U.N.E.S.C.O., and which is now in the editing phase. The booklet and the map will be distributed as a set through U.N.E.S.C.O. This product is scheduled for launching at the U.N.'s World Summit on Sustainable Development (W.S.S.D.), to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, on August 26-September 4, 2002. Terralingua is accredited for participation in the W.S.S.D. and its Preparatory Committees (one of which took place in New York in late March-early April, with another one scheduled for late May in Bali). Terralingua representatives have attended or will attend these meetings, with support from the Ford Foundation through the Institute for International Education;
- ▶ a G.I.S. (Geographic Information Systems) database correlating ecoregions and languages. This database is the source of the map, but contains more information than is shown on the map, and much more can be added in the future, allowing for more detailed analysis of the correlations and for more detailed work on any one part of the world. We are currently conducting the quality control on this database, which should be completed before the end of summer;
- ▶ the conceptual and methodological framework for our proposed Index of Biocultural Diversity, an integrated tool for the joint assessment and monitoring of biological and linguistic-cultural diversity. The framework will be completed by early summer. We will then begin to circulate it among colleagues in a variety of fields in the natural and social sciences for review. We are also looking to discuss it in a variety of venues (beginning with the International Congress of Ethnobiology in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 16-20 September, 2002);
- ▶ an ecoregional case study of biocultural diversity and its integrated conservation and restoration. It centers on the Colorado Plateau ecoregion in the "Four Corners" area of the southern U.S.A. (Utah, Arizona, Colorado, and New Mexico), one of the most diverse and unique areas in North America, both biologically and culturally. Our colleagues at Northern Arizona University (N.A.U.), led by Terralingua Advisory Panel member Dr. Gary Nabhan (Director of N.A.U.'s Center for Sustainable Environments), just completed the preparation of this study in the form of a report titled "Safeguarding the Uniqueness of the Colorado Plateau: an ecoregional assessment of biocultural diversity". The report is in the editing stage and will be published jointly by Terralingua and N.A.U. It, too, will be showcased in a variety of venues, including the W.W.S.D., to point the way toward "conservation as if biocultural diversity matters".

As for plans beyond the end of 2002, the Board decided on the following:

to continue our work on the global analyses of biodiversity-linguistic/cultural diversity

overlaps, further developing our current database to include the best information available on the state of the world's languages, as well as on the relevant linguistic human rights and linguistic policy issues (including assembling a set of "best practices" in linguistic policy);

- continue the development of the Index of Biocultural Diversity, through an extensive and rigorous review of the framework, refining the methodology, and then stimulating the gathering of relevant data in different part of the world, in order to obtain the needed data points and time series. Also, promote the use of this tool in various processes related with the assessment of the state of ecosystems (including in the context of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, mentioned in past issues of Langscape);
- develop new case studies, with a good possibility of collaboration with researchers at University of Hawai'i, focusing on ecology, health, traditional knowledge, and language. (Participation in a workshop being planned in Hawai'i later this year should help forge links there and explore a possible case study). Discuss with our colleagues at N.A.U. a possible sequel on the Colorado Plateau study. Look into other possibilities in North America and elsewhere as opportunities arise;
- forge a link with the field of ecosystem health, whose founder, Dr. David Rapport, is now on our Board, and which appears to be ripe for integration with the biocultural perspective. (This link will be relevant to our work on global analyses and on indicators, as well as in the context of case studies such as the possible one in Hawai'i). Explore this link through participation in a variety of forthcoming ecosystem health events, including in this year the International Conference on Ecosystem Health at Quetico Centre, Ontario, Canada (12-16 May, 2002) and the "Healthy Ecosystems, Healthy People" conference of the International Society for Ecosystem Health (Washington, D.C., 6-11 June, 2002);



- conduct a detailed reflection on, and conceptual analysis of, key issues in biocultural diversity, reviewing both milestones and gaps, and identifying new directions for research and action. This cross-cutting activity should lead to a working conference/brainstorming, also to be used to discuss specific issues under 1, 2, and 4, as well as to stimulate new case studies (3);
- explore opportunities to pursue biocultural diversity education through the Web as well as the arts. This includes Web site development to better serve the dissemination of research results and for use as a learning tool. As for the arts, the goal is to inspire and promote innovative works in a variety of media that will bridge the gap between science and art to convey the message about the vital importance of preserving and cherishing biocultural diversity.

In order to accomplish this over the next several years, we obviously have both organizational and funding needs. The Board agreed — and this is, of course, big news! — that the time has come for Terralingua to establish a small office, to be located in Washington, D.C., from which to run our operations, and to begin to hire personnel to aid with both administrative and program tasks. It is clear that we have stretched ourselves to the limit to do the work described above, with only the occasional help of some consultants, and with no administrative support precisely when the administrative load has sky-rocketed. And if we are to pursue our future plans, a logistic base becomes indispensable. Therefore, we are already at work on both fronts, and by the time the next Langscape is out, we should be able to announce developments in this connection. At the same time, we are also at work on a variety of funding sources. We are cautiously optimistic, but do wish us luck!

In addition, if you can afford it, please do continue to support us with your donations. As always, every little bit counts, and it is especially crucial for us to maintain (and indeed increase) a regular stream of member donations to support our most basic operations. As you know, you can now easily make credit card donations via our Web site. And, of course, we do continue to accept donations the old-fashioned way, through the mail! Please remember that, as a benefit of membership, you are entitled to a discount on the following book: On Biocultural Diversity: linking language, kowledge and the environment, edited by myself (2001; Smithsonian Institute Press). Be sure to include

the discount code "TL1" when ordering (tel.: 1-800-782-4612; fax.: 202-275-2201).

Furthermore, as an additional incentive, we are pleased to announce the following offer. As long as supplies last, each member who donates US\$100 or more will receive a copy of the W.W.F.-Terralingua report *Indigenous and Traditional Peoples of the World and Ecoregion Conservation: an integrated approach to conserving the world's biological and cultural diversity* (116 pp.), published in 2000, and the companion wall-size map of the distribution of ethnolinguistic groups in W.W.F.'s "Global 200" ecoregions. Copies of the report and map were generously put at our disposal by W.W.F. International. The mechanism is simple. If you make a donation on the Web, DO NOT make an anonymous donation, but instead include your name and mailing address. This way, we will receive notification of your donation, with your name, address, and the amount you donated. If you make a donation through the mail, please remember to include your mailing address. Once a month, we will gather the addresses of qualifying donors and send out the report and map sets, as a token of our appreciation for your continued support. As always, it is this support, and the feedback we receive from you, that keeps us going, giving us a concrete sense of the real-world value of what we are doing. Many thanks from us all in Terralingua!

Cordially, Luisa Maffi.



Terralingua in the News

From: <skutnabb-kangas@vip.cybercity.dk> 20 Feb., 2002.

A full-page interview in Finnish (by Janne Saarikivi) of Terralingua's Vice-President, Dr. Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, was printed in *The Green Weekly Newspaper*, 15 February, 2002, p. 10, under the title "Kieli suojelee luontoa. Asiantuntijat varoittavat että pienten kielten katoaminen näivettää ihmiskunnan ekologista tietämystä". (Language protects nature. Experts warn that the disappearance of small languages results in the withering of humankind's ecological knowledge).

There is a picture of protesting Saami from Norway, and the first page of the newspaper announcing the interview is entitled "Saamen kieli vaalii Suomen biodiversiteettiä". (The Saami language supports Finnish biodiversity). Terralingua's Web page is at the end of the article.



The April 2002 issue of *Utne Reader* ("the best of the alternative press") re-publishes on pp. 64-70 the article "Fruits we'll never taste" by Beth Ann Fennelly, which had appeared in the Fall 2000 issue of the *Michigan Quarterly Review*, an excellent piece on how "preserving diversity — in the natural world and human culture — lets us delight in an abundant world". On p. 70, Terralingua is featured amongst "resources for saving endangered languages", which is in turn an excerpt from the Spring 2000 issue of *Whole Earth* magazine.



Article from A.B.C. News on Endangered Languages

From: Dora Johnson <dora@cal.org>

Via Luisa Maffi Date: 10 Apr., 2002

Date: 10 Apr., 2002.

The following link is to a story first reported on A.B.C. NEWS on 8 April, 2002:

"Linguists and Native Speakers Fight to Preserve Dying Languages. Scores of Languages Just Disappearing".

http://abcnews.go.com/sections/world/DailyNews/endangered_languages.html.

Editor's note: this Web article is a response to an editorial in the Wall Street Journal, which appeared earlier this year and provoked a lot of dismay amongst our readers and colleagues. Terralingua is listed as a resource in the article.

Inspiration

From: Luisa Maffi <maffi@terralingua.org>

Date: 26 May, 2002.

I received this recently from a Minnesota farmer and community activist with whom I've been corresponding. In my experience, this is one of the most poignant descriptions of what's wrong with the "developed" world's idea of "poverty" and "subsistence" I have ever read. The only hope is for a sea change in paradigms to come from the ground up... but what a wave it will have to be to wash out whole oceans of misconceptions and misrepresentations...!

Luisa.

Date: Sun, 26 May 2002 11:36:35 -0600 To: Luisa Maffi <maffi@terralingua.org> From: Tim King <timking7@rea-alp.com>

Subject: inspiration.

May 27, 2002 15261 County 38 Long Prairie, MN. 56347.

U.S.A.
Editor
Orion Magazine
187 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA. 01230.

Editor:

Recently, I was the recipient of a copy of the Winter 2002 issue of *Orion*. Some kind soul thought that our watershed stewardship organization ought to discuss, and consider signing, the wonderfully thoughtful Earth Charter that is included in that issue. We are busy planting trees and fields now but hope to soon convene to discuss the charter.

Meanwhile I am in awe of your glorious publication. William Coupon's portraits are deeply moving. I find myself returning to them over and again. I really liked John Price's "Nuts". But as much as I appreciated Peter Sauer's elegant prose, and thinking, I am unable to focus on it because of a major distraction. Mr. Sauer wrote:

"In developing nations, home to the poorest eighty percent of the world, people rarely have the luxury of thinking of the environment except as part of their subsistence or sub-subsistence economies."

In that phrase Mr. Sauer has reaffirmed a paradigm. And that paradigm will fail in its attempt to salvage the planet as a livable place for humans and many other species that currently live on it

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Mr. Sauer's phrase equates poverty and subsistence. I am not clear what he means by subsubsistence. The emphasis is on "sub" or below, however. Perhaps the editors could have assisted the readership with comprehending the coinage.

At the time I was reading Sauer's article I had briefly obtained a copy of *On Biocultural Diversity: linking language, knowledge, and the environment*, edited by Luisa Maffi. The premise of Dr. Maffi, and her collaborators, is that there is a relationship between high levels of linguistic diversity, cultural diversity, and biological diversity. An implicit point of the articles I reviewed is that linguistic diversity often has its origins in subsistence cultures.

Dr. Maffi's introduction is a case in point. As a doctoral researcher she found herself at a government sponsored clinic in the highlands of the state of Chiapas, Mexico. At the clinic she found a long line of people of Maya descent waiting for the government health officials. Among the waiting was a father with a very ill daughter. He had walked a long way to get to the clinic. There was concern for his daughter's survival.

But wait! In subsiste terms this man was a survival.

Maffi began questioning the man about his daughter's ailment. It turned out that she knew of an herb that would likely cure the girl's ailment. Maffi knew this due to her research. The herb was well known by the highland elders. But the young people of the area were turning away from the old, subsistence ways. The man knew there might be such an herb but he couldn't recall its name.

But wait! In subsistence terms this man was wealthy. The plant he needed to cure his daughter grew untended in his, or his neighbors', partially tended jardin.

Maffi's point was that in turning his back on the traditional ways the man was forgetting his language. And in forgetting the name of the plant he could not be a steward of it.

My point is: what more acceptable vision of poverty is there than for a dark skinned man walking through the dark night with his daughter in his arms only to wait through the morning at the clinic doors for the generous government to dispense its scarce medical resources? This in under development at it's most tragic, no? But wait! In subsistence terms this man was wealthy. The plant he needed to cure his daughter grew untended in his, or his neighbors, partially tended jardin. Our poor peasant was only poor because he was boxed in by Peter Sauer's anti-subsistence paradigm.

As I write this I am looking at a photo, reproduced in the Spring 1982 *CoEvolution Quarterly*, taken by Edward Curtis of a Pueblo man a century ago. The man is guiding a burro loaded with firewood. Curtiss' caption reads: "Only a people as frugal as the Pueblos in the use of fuel could still have an available supply in a region so poorly provided by nature."

Curtiss, a man of Sauer's paradigm, just missed the mark by a fraction and we've all fallen into the abyss. The Pueblo man likely did not believe nature had done poorly by him. He had all the firewood he needed. He did not see himself as an impoverished victim. And the elders in the subsistence economy of the Chiapaneco highlands knew they had a plentiful supply of medicinal remedies. In subsistence economies there is enough. It is not the traditional Pueblo or the Maya who suggested man was insatiable. I am not certain enough to point to the origins of that notion but it is for insatiability that Peter Sauer speaks of.

In my own life, on my farm, I practice as much subsistence as is practicable in a culture permeated by messages of insatiability. I make wood to cook and to heat my home as well as winter's water. I raise my fruits and vegetables. I cook March's crystalline maple sap into maple syrup and sugar. I barter, with neighbors, for honey and manure for my garden. In doing these things my family has, for eighteen years, had more than we need with a cash income below the official cash "poverty" level.

If they would salvage the planet for our species it would do well for Peter Sauer, and *Orion*, to celebrate the vestiges of subsistence in the hyper-cash economy of the United

States, such as home gardening, home cooking, and fire wood making, rather than talk down to the wisdom of traditional subsistence economies in the remnant places on the planet where development is just now imposing scarcity.

In closing I'd like to quote from the 1982 *CoEvolution Quarterly* article that included the Curtiss photo. The words were written by Ivan Illich:

"Subsistence that is based upon a progressive unplugging from the cash nexus now appears as a condition for survival. Without negative growth, we cannot maintain ecological balance, achieve justice between regions, or foster comeliness between populations."

Sincerely,

Tim King

Tim, Jan, & Colin King Maple Hill Farms.

cc: Luisa Maffi.



<u>Mother Tongues</u> — <u>an Invisible, Neglected and Disappearing Resource</u>



Delivered at U.N.E.S.C.O.'s "Mother Language Day", 21 February, 2002, Paris.

By: Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, University of Roskilde, Denmark. http://babel.ruc.dk/~tovesku/

Languages are disappearing faster than ever before in human history. Linguists estimate that between 50 and 90 percent of today's spoken languages may be dead or moribund, i.e., not spoken by children, in a hundred years' time. Sign languages may be disappearing at a similar or even faster rate. Every disappearing language is the mother tongue of somebody. Probably half of the world's spoken languages have not been reduced to writing. Many more are not used in writing habitually, even if they have been written down.

How many languages are there in the world? Most linguists say that there are around 6-7,000 languages. The most useful source is still *The Ethnologue*, edited by Barbara Grimes from the Summer Institute of Linguistics, a missionary organisation — see <www.sil.org/ethnologue/>. *The Ethnologue* lists over 6,800 languages in 228 countries. But there might be even twice as many: 12-14,000 languages. There are deaf people in all societies, and where hearing people have developed spoken, oral languages, the Deaf have developed Sign languages, fully-fledged, complex, abstract languages. Those who speak about "languages" but in fact mean spoken languages only, participate through invisibilising sign languages in killing maybe half the linguistic diversity on earth. Here I discuss only oral languages — we still know too little about Sign languages, even if the literature is growing fast. But all the numbers are educated guesses. I shall present some of them.

The top ten languages in the world (Table 1) are spoken by almost half of the world's population as their mother tongues:

Table 1 — The Top 21 Languages in the World

<u>Rank in</u> 2001	<u>Rank in</u> 1999	<u>Language</u>	Country of Origin	Mother tongue population	<u>Speakers</u>
1	1	CHINESE, MANDARIN	China	874	1,052
2	5	HINDI	India	366	487
3	2	SPANISH	Spain	358	417
4	2 3	ENGLISH	United Kingdom	341	508
4	4	BENGALI	Bangladesh	207	211
6	6	PORTUGUESE	Portugal	176	191
7	***	ARABIC	***	175	
8	7	RUSSIAN	Russia	167	277
9	8	JAPANESE	Japan	125	126
10	9	GERMAN, STANDARD	Germany	100	128
11	12	KOREAN	Korea, South	78	
12	10	CHINESE (WU)	China	77,175,000	
13	13	FRENCH	France	77	128
14	11	JAVANESE	Indonesia, Java, Bali	75,500,800	
15	15	TELUGU	India	69,666,000	75
16	14	VIETNAMESE	Vietnam	68	
17	16	CHINESE, YUE	China	66	
18	17	MARATHI	India	64,783,000	
19	18	TAMIL	India	63,075,000	
20	19	TURKISH	Turkey	59	
21	20	URDU	Pakistan	58	

*** [The Table is based on my re-calculations of 1) the data in *The Ethnologue*, 13th edition; 2) information given in an e-mail 23 January, 2002, by Pam Echerd of *The Ethnologue* team on the top 14 languages which she has updated for her personal archives; and 3) Luisa Maffi's count, for our booklet for U.N.E.S.C.O. (Maffi, Skutnabb-Kangas & Harmon, forthcoming), on the basis of *The Ethnologue*,13th edition data, of Arabic. Just like Chinese, Arabic has, in the recent *Ethnologue* data, been divided into various Arabic languages (the division is based on countries and dialects/languages). This has meant that Arabic only figures as number 25 (Egyptian Arabic), 41 (Algerian Arabic), 51 (Moroccan Arabic), etc., whereas we feel that it should not disappear from the top 20 languages and have therefore counted together the various Arabic languages].

But most of the world's languages are spoken by relatively few people: the median number of speakers of a language is probably around 5-6,000 (Posey 1997). There are just under 80 languages with more than 10 million speakers, together accounting for far over 4 billion people. Fewer than 300 languages are spoken by communities of 1 million speakers and above, meaning that over 95% of the world's spoken languages have fewer than 1 million native users. Some 5,000 languages have less than 100,000 speakers and more than 3,000 languages have fewer than 10,000 speakers. A quarter of the world's spoken languages and most of the Sign languages have fewer than 1,000 users, and at least some 500 languages had in 1999 under 100 speakers (*The Ethnologue*). Some 83% f the world's languages are endemic: they exist in one country only (Harmon 1995).

U.N.E.S.C.O. acknowledges the importance of the various mother tongues and their maintenance and development. But it may be difficult to maintain something that we know very little about. Despite the figures I gave, I have to admit that we do not even know precisely how many mother tongues/languages there are in the world. We do not know how many speakers they have. We do not know where they are. Most of our figures are, as I said, more or less informed guesses.

It is impossible today to "know" the number of (oral and Sign) languages precisely, for two reasons. The first one is scientific, the second one about hard cash. First, the scientific

reason. As we all know, there are no research-based definitions about the difference between language and dialect. On linguistic grounds Danish, Swedish and Norwegian could be seen as one language, with several dialects: they are structurally similar, and the speakers can understand much of what the others say, or at least what they write. The border between languages and other varieties, e.g., dialects, is political not linguistic: a language is a dialect with an army and with state borders. Or: a language is the dialect of the élites.

The second reason — and this is one of my important messages today — is a lack of resources for the study of mother tongues. A couple of examples. In Denmark where I live there are some 24 million pigs and some 5 million people. At any one point there is exact information about each pig, their age, weight, life-span, etc. But there is NO idea of how many languages and which languages people in Denmark speak and who speaks them. Bacon is a major export item in Denmark but people's linguistic capital in languages other than Danish and English has so far been treated as invisible or even as a handicap.

Another example: hundreds of millions of dollars went to the "human genome project". Massive computers were counting day and night for some years, even if it impossible to say when and to what extent medical research can use the results for the benefit of humankind. But most of even the basic research that would enable us to describe and count the <u>languages</u> of the world, has not been done and hardly any resources are forthcoming for that purpose, even if the task is eminently manageable: we are not talking about billions of items to be counted and described as in the human genome project, but maximally some 7,000 to 10,000 spoken languages and maybe the same number of Sign languages. The organisation which has done more than any other in the world to give us even approximate figures is a missionary N.G.O., the Summer Institute of Linguistics, responsible for *The Ethnologue*.

Still, in the future knowledge society or information society, the most important commodities to be produced, exchanged and sold are ideas, knowledge, information, results of human creativity. Not only are these expressed in languages, but a diversity of languages and cultures is a guarantee for creativity and diverse ideas. Creativity precedes innovation, and investment follows it. In claiming this, we can draw on our recent scientific knowledge about the relationship between biodiversity and linguistic and cultural diversity.

Everybody knows about the threat to the world's biodiversity — it is serious enough. But while new trees can be planted and habitats restored, it is much more difficult to restore languages once they have been murdered. When languages are disappearing today at such appalling rates, what happens is not voluntary suicide, but linguistic genocide on a massive scale, with formal education and media as the main concrete culprits but with the world's political, economic and military structures as the more basic causal factors. What happens in schools to most indigenous and minority children fits U.N.'s genocide definitions in the U.N. International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (E793, 1948):

Article II(e), "forcibly transferring children of the group to another group"; and Article II(b), "causing serious bodily <u>or mental</u> harm to members of the group"; emphasis added).

Likewise, most minority education is guilty of linguistic genocide according to the 1948 special definition (not part of the present Convention):

Article III(1) "Prohibiting the use of the language of the group in daily intercourse or in schools, or the printing and circulation of publications in the language of the group".

Big languages turn into "killer languages", monsters that gobble up others, when they are <u>learned at the cost</u> of the smaller ones. Instead, they should <u>and could</u> be learned <u>in addition</u> to the various mother tongues (for these claims, see Skutnabb-Kangas 2000).

One of the few organisations investigating the relationship between biodiversity and linguistic

diversity is Terralingua (<www.terralingua.org/>). "Terralingua is a non-profit international organisation devoted to preserving the world's linguistic diversity and to investigating links between biological and cultural diversity". Conservationist David Harmon of Terralingua has investigated correlations between biological and linguistic diversity. Harmon has compared endemism of languages and higher vertebrates (mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians), with the top 25 countries for each type (1995: 14) (Table 2). I have **BOLDED AND CAPITALISED** those countries which are on both lists. Sixteen of the 25 countries are on both lists, a coincidence of 64%. According to Harmon (1995: 6) "it is very unlikely that this would only be accidental". Harmon finds the same results with flowering plants and languages, butterflies and languages, etc. — a high correlation between countries with biological and linguistic megadiversity (see also Harmon, in press):

Table 2 — Endemism In Languages and Higher Vertebrates: a comparison of the top 25 countries.

Endemic languages	Number	Endemic higher vertebrates	Number
1. PAPUA NEW GUINEA	847	1. AUSTRALIA	1.346
2. INDONESIA	655	2. MEXICO	761
3. Nigeria	376	3. BRAZIL	725
4. INDIA	309	4. INDONESIA	673
5. AUSTRALIA	261	5. Madagascar	537
6. MEXICO	230	6. PHILIPPINES	437
7. CAMEROON	201	7. INDIA	373
8. BRAZIL	185	8. PERU	332
9. ZAIRE	158	9. COLOMBIA	330
10. PHILIPPINES	153	10. Ecuador	294
11. USA	143	11. USA	284
12. Vanuatu	105	12. CHINA	256
13. TANZANIA	101	13. PAPUA NEW GUINEA	203
14. Sudan	97	14. Venezuela	186
15. Malaysia	92	15. Argentina	168
16. ETHIOPIA	90	16. Cuba	152
17. CHINA	77	17. South Africa	146
18. PERU	75	18. ZAIRE	134
19. Chad	74	19. Sri Lanka	126
20. Russia	71	20. New Zealand	120
21. SOLOMON ISLANDS	69	21. TANZANIA	113
22. Nepal	68	22. Japan	112
23. COLOMBIA	55	23. CAMEROON	105
24. Côte d'Ivoire	51	24. SOLOMON ISLANDS	101
25. Canada	47	25. ETHIOPIA	88
26. Somalia	88		

New and exciting research shows mounting evidence for the hypothesis that it might not *only* be a correlational relationship. It may also be causal: the two types of diversities seem to mutually enforce and support each other (see Maffi 2000). U.N.E.P. (United Nations Environmental Program), one of the organisers of the world summit on biodiversity in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 (see its summary of our knowledge on biodiversity, Heywood, ed., 1995), published in December 1999 a mega-volume called *Cultural and Spiritual Values of Biodiversity. A Complementary Contribution to the Global Biodiversity*

Assessment, edited by Darrell Posey (1999), summarising much of this evidence of causality. The strong correlation need not indicate a *direct* causal relationship, in the sense that neither

type of diversity should probably be seen directly as an *independent* variable in relation to the other. But linguistic and cultural diversity may be decisive mediating variables in sustaining biodiversity itself, and vice versa, as long as humans are on the earth. As soon as humans came into existence, they started to influence the rest of nature. Today it is safe to say that there is no "pristine nature" left — all landscapes have been and are influenced by human action, even those where untrained observers might not notice it immediately. All landscapes are cultural landscapes. Likewise, local nature and people's detailed knowledge about it and use of it have influenced the cultures, languages and cosmovisions of the people who have been dependent on it for their sustenance. This relationship between all kinds of diversities is of course what most indigenous peoples have always known, and they describe their knowledge in several articles in the 1999 Posey volume (see also Maffi, ed., 2001).

Some Basic Information about Languages:

There are 6-7,000 spoken languages, and maybe equally many Sign languages.
The median number of speakers of a language is probably around 5-6,000.
Over 95% of the world's spoken languages have fewer than 1 million native users.
Some 5,000 spoken languages have fewer than 100,000 speakers.
Over 3,000 spoken languages have fewer than 10,000 users.
Some 1,500 spoken languages and most of the Sign languages have fewer than 1,000 users.
Some 500 languages had in 1999 fewer than 100 speakers.
83-84% of the world's spoken languages are endemic: they exist in one country only.

We in Terralingua suggest that if the long-lasting co-evolution which people have had with their environments from time immemorial is abruptly disrupted, without nature (and people) having enough time to adjust and adapt (see Mühlhäusler, 1996), we can expect a catastrophe (see references to Maffi, Harmon, and Skutnabb-Kangas in the bibliography; see also Terralingua's Web page). The adjustment needed takes hundreds of years, not only decades (ibid.). Just to take two examples: nuances in the knowledge about medicinal plants and their use disappear when indigenous youth in Mexico become bilingual without teaching in and through the medium of their own languages — the knowledge is not transferred to Spanish, which does not have the vocabulary for these nuances (see Luisa Maffi's doctoral dissertation, 1994; see also Nabhan 2001). I was told a recent example by Pekka Aikio, the President of the Saami Parliament in Finland (29 November, 2001). Finnish fish biologists have just «discovered» that salmon can use even extremely small rivulets leading to the river Teno as spawning grounds — earlier this was thought impossible. Pekka said that the Saami have always known this — the traditional Saami names of several of those rivulets include a Saami word which means «salmon spawning-bed». This is ecological knowledge inscribed in indigenous languages. In order to adapt to the massive changes in today's globalisation, people need adaptability, fitness, that requires innovation. Colin Baker (2001: 281) summarises some of the arguments (in his review of Chapter 2 of Skutnabb-Kangas 2000):

Ecological diversity is essential for long-term planetary survival. All living organisms, plants, animals, bacteria and humans survive and prosper through a network of complex and delicate relationships. Damaging one of the elements in the ecosystem will result in unforeseen consequences for the whole of the system. Evolution has been aided by genetic diversity, with species genetically adapting in order to survive in different environments. Diversity contains the potential for adaptation. Uniformity can endanger a species by providing inflexibility and unadaptability. Linguistic diversity and biological diversity are ... inseparable. The range of cross fertilisation becomes less as languages and cultures die and the testimony of human intellectual achievement is lessened.

In the language of ecology, the strongest ecosystems are those that are the most diverse. That is, diversity is directly related to stability; variety is important for long-term survival. Our

success on this planet has been due to an ability to adapt to different kinds of environment over thousands of years (atmospheric as well as cultural). Such ability is born out of diversity. Thus language and cultural diversity maximises chances of human success and adaptability.

If we, during the next 100 years, murder 50-90% of the world's linguistic (and thereby mostly also the cultural) diversity, the mother tongues which are our treasury of historically developed knowledge, and includes knowledge about how to maintain and use sustainably some of the most vulnerable and most biologically diverse environments in the world, we are also seriously undermining our chances of life on earth.

Killing linguistic diversity is, then, just as the killing of biodiversity, dangerous reductionism. Monocultures are vulnerable, in agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, as we see in increasingly more dramatic ways, when animals, bacteria and crops which are more and more resistant (to antibiotics, to Roundups, etc.), are starting to spread — and we have just seen the tip of the iceberg. With genetic manipulations the problems are mounting rapidly.

In terms of the new ways of coping that we are going to need, the potential for the new lateral thinking that might save us from ourselves in time, lies in having as many and as diverse languages and cultures as possible. We do not know which ones have the right medicine. For maintaining all of them, we need massive support for indigenous peoples and minorities who are the main guardian of the linguistic diversity on earth. In order to even get started, we need at least to know the basics about those mother tongues we are talking about. While we are sitting here and celebrating the mother tongues, we are losing them. We are not only losing the most precious knowledge and creativity resource we humans have — we are also losing the keys to the future of our planet. Nice words do not help us — hard cash would take us a fair amount on the way. It is time that U.N.E.S.C.O. start screaming.

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AFRICA: Local Languages under Threat

From: I.R.I.N. <I.R.I.N.@irinnews.org>

Via Linguist list server Date: 1 Mar, 2002.

UNITED NATIONS — Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (O.C.H.A.); Integrated Regional Information Network (I.R.I.N.).

ADDIS ABABA, 21 February (I.R.I.N.) — Almost half the languages spoken in the world are under threat, with Africa one of the hardest-hit continents, according to the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (U.N.E.S.C.O.).

Africa — linguistically, the least known continent — is one of most affected, where 250 languages could be lost forever. Of the 1,400 languages — used by the continent's 700 million-strong population — at least 500 are on the decline.

According to U.N.E.S.C.O., Nigeria, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Sudan face the most serious problems, and have been designated "crisis areas". "They are crisis areas which have the most moribund or seriously endangered tongues," a spokesman for U.N.E.S.C.O. said in a statement released in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, on Thursday.

U.N.E.S.C.O. argues that some African countries encourage major languages like Swahili, or even colonial languages like French and English, which then threaten local tongues. A community's language is defined by experts to be endangered when at least 30 percent of its children no longer speak it.

Often economic and social factors can threaten local languages as people leave their communities to look for work. Their environments can also be threatened, so villagers and their language are dispersed. Linguists argue that a native language helps preserve the culture of communities, as well as providing the building blocks of life.

"At least 3,000 tongues are endangered, seriously endangered or dying in many parts of the world," the U.N.E.S.C.O. spokesman stressed. "About half of the 6,000 or so languages spoken in the world are under threat. Over the past three centuries, languages have died out and disappeared at a dramatic and steadily increasing pace, especially in the Americas and Australia."

"But an endangered, moribund or even extinct language can be saved through a determined language policy," he added. "Sometimes languages that have actually died out have been 'raised from the dead', such as Cornish, in England, which became extinct in 1777, but has been revived in recent years, with nearly 1,000 people now speaking it as a second language".

U.N.E.S.C.O. has released an atlas highlighting the "World's Languages in Danger of Disappearing". The maps have been launched to coincide with International Mother Language Day — marked on 21 February.

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Press Release

An Electric Shock for Mexico's Rural Development

From: Maria de Jesus Ordoñez <mordonez@correo.crim.unam.mx> Conservación Humana, A.C.

Mexico City, March 15, 2002.

A fortnight before he welcomes world leaders to the Monterrey conference to discuss more efficient ways to finance development, President Vicente Fox inaugurated a rural electricity project that will benefit too few, cost too much and damage the environment, besides breaking the law and

...President Vincente Fox inaugurated a rural electricity project that will benefit too few, cost too much and damange the environment, besides breaking the law and contradicting the government's own energy policy.

contradicting the government's own energy policy. The project, which brings the electrical grid to six indigenous villages in the states of Jalisco and Nayarit, will cost over 60 million pesos (US\$6.5 million) but will benefit just 6,940 people, according to the Federal Electricity Commission and even that is an overestimate, according to the government's own census data, which put the population at 5,000. It is a worrying start to a government plan to spend over 3.7 billion pesos on rural electricity in the next five years. For 40 million pesos, solar power could supply over 43,000 people, the entire Huichol and

Cora populations, according to Conservación Humana A.C. (C.H.A.C.), an n.g.o. that works with the indigenous peoples in the area. "Electrification is good, but only if it is done right," said Humberto Fernandez, C.H.A.C.'s director. "This project will cost thirteen times as much per person as solar energy, and it will divide the villages between those who have electricity and those who do not". Worse, the project, which President Fox inaugurated on March 6, will mean felling trees to make room for 200 kilometres of power lines and roads, in areas recognized as key conservation zones by the government's own National Biodiversity Council (C.O.N.A.B.I.O.) and by the World Wide Fund for Nature (W.W.F.). Worse still, the project was approved without an environmental impact study, required by Mexican law (Article 28 of the "Ley General del Equilibrio Ecológico y la Protección al Ambiente", 1997).

And yet, in January, Mexico's energy ministry announced that this year 860 indigenous communities would get electricity using renewable energy sources. "This project is an

inefficient use of scarce resources," said Mr. Fernandez. "It is divisive. It is environmentally damaging. It was approved illegally. And now President Fox is going to host an international conference on development financing. This is like a bad joke".

In sunny Mexico, just 0.04% of electricity comes from solar power. Approximately 5 million of Mexico's 100 million inhabitants do not have electricity, almost all of them in small villages far from the main power grid. The country faces the threat of severe electricity shortages in the coming years. This year President Fox plans to send Congress a wide-ranging reform of the electrical sector.

"The electricity reform will probably be this year's most important political theme," said Mr. Fernandez. "It is essential that renewable energy sources, respect for the environment and intelligent planning be on the agenda".

Conservación Humana, A.C. is a Mexican, not-for-profit and independent organisation. Its mission is the conservation of the biological and cultural diversity, the promotion of sustainable economic development and to further the knowledge of processes that affect the quality of life in our country. A multidisciplinary group founded it in 1994. Among these are several professionals whose first-hand field knowledge of the Huichols goes back to 1966, and maintain what is probably the most complete archive of field notes, legal documents, scientific papers, photographs, audio tapes and motion pictures that exists on this culture.

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Apoyo Autonomía Huichola!

From: Pablo Alarcón Chaires <palarcon@oikos.unam.mx>

Date: 8 Mar, 2002.

Contra la voluntad de la mayoría de las comunidades indígenas huicholas de Santa Catarina y San Andrés, Jalisco, los gobiernos de los estados involucrados respaldados por el Instituto Nacional Indigenista y empresas transnacionales refresqueras, van a electrificar la Sierra de Nayarit/Jalisco. Además, construirán carreteras que cruzarán varios sitios sagrados huicholes y coras, y "modernizarán" la pista de aterrizaje de San Andres Coamiata; todo esto, contra la voluntad indigena. En fin, resulta que el programa del gobierno se propone hacer llegar la cultura televisa, el turismo, máquinas tragamonedas y refrigeradores refresqueros para que los tewari (mestizos) puedan gozar de la "cultura exótica huichola". La idea es iniciar esto durante esta temporada de secas (2002).

- AYUDA: 1. Envia este mensaje a todos tus conocidos;
 - 2. Asegúrate de que vaya con copia (Cc) a las direcciones que se especifican en este mensaje.

El mensaje se enviará al gobierno de la republica mexicana, a los gobiernos de los estados de jalisco y nayarit, al director del instituto nacional indigenista, a la comisión nacional de los derechos humanos y a la comision interamericana de los derechos humanos:

indigenas@presidencia.gob.mx, webmaster@ini.gob.mx, correo@cndh.org.mx, cidhoea@oas.org, comunica@gobierno.jalisco.gob.mx, comsoc@nayarit.gob.mx

Gracias!!



Support Huichol Autonomy!

Against the wishes of the majority of the Huichol indigenous communities in Santa Catarina y San Andrés, Jalisco, the governments of the states involved, backed by the National Indigenist Institute and trans-national soft-drink enterprises, are going to install electricity service in the Sierra de Nayarit, Jalisco. To do this, they will build roads that cross various sites sacred to the Huichol and the Cora, and they will also "modernise" the landing strip at San Andres Coamiata. All this, contrary to indigenous wishes! Finally, as a result of this proposed government programme, tourists, television, slot machines and soft-drink vending machines will be brought in so that the "tewari" (the mestizos) can enjoy the "exotic Huichol culture". The idea is to begin this programme during this year's dry season (2002).

TO HELP [protest against this plan]:

- 1. send this message to everyone you know;
- 2. be sure to copy (cc:) this to the addresses included in this message.

The message should be sent to the government of the Republic of Mexico, the governments of the states of Jalisco and Nayarit, to the Director of the National Indigenist Institute, to the National Commission on Human Rights, and to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights:

indigenas@presidencia.gob.mx, webmaster@ini.gob.mx, correo@cndh.org.mx, cidhoea@oas.org, comunica@gobierno.jalisco.gob.mx, comsoc@nayarit.gob.mx

Thank-you!!



From: "Camp Coorong" <nlpa@bigpond.com>

Show Support for Australia's Indigenous Peoples

"Justice and Peace" Candle-Light Walks in 2002

If you will be in Adelaide or Perth, Australia, any time during 2002, please consider joining one of the candle-light walks that have been organised for each month throughout 2002.

Candle-Light Walks are held in Adelaide at Genocide Corner in front of Government House on the first Friday of the month. These walks express the concern of those who wish justice for Indigenous peoples. There is an opportunity to listen to Ngarrindjeri, and other Indigenous Elders speak on issues affecting their people.

The microphone remains open for anyone to offer their thoughts on current issues, to sing a song, or to share stories of struggle. Please feel free to attend, and show support for a Treaty with Indigenous people, a Bill of Rights, justice and peace, as well as opposition to any nuclear dump in South Australia.

Another candle-light walk has begun in Perth every month, and soon candle-light walks in other States may follow. Don't worry if it will just be a small group of you to start with.... as Vincent Lingiari said, "from little things big things grow"!

The candle-light walk has an on-line flyer at <www.country-liberal party.com/pages/adelaidemob.htm>.

Feel free to use the item in italics below as a template for your publicity for the "Justice & Peace Candle-Light Walk" in support of a Treaty & Bill of Rights.

JUSTICE & PEACE CANDLE-LIGHT WALK: "Australians can show their support for a treaty with Australia's Indigenous peoples. Candles will be lit for justice and peace advocating an Indigenous treaty on Friday 5 April, and every following first Friday of the month throughout 2002. Walkers can gather with candles at Government House from 6.00 p.m. for a Peace Chant and from 6.30.p.m. for a 7 p.m. start. The walk aims to protect Ngarrindjeri culture, spiritual beliefs, lands and waters, and to stop any nuclear waste dump on traditional lands, and from affecting the environment via a Treaty & Bill of Rights".

- Respect Indigenous people's traditional land and waters. Light a candle and walk for justice and peace. Join the Indigenous call for a TREATY.
- Respect Indigenous rights. Recognise Ngarrindjeri culture and spiritual beliefs. Look after the Coorong and its wildlife. Protect this unique Australian wetland.
- Look after Lake Eyre. Conserve this unique cultural environment. Protect its cattle and tourist industries.

No South Australian Nuclear Waste Dump

For further information contact the organisers and register your fax. number or e-mail address.

DONATIONS: Ngarrindjeri Justice Fighting Fund

c/: BANK SA - BSB 105-165 A/c No. 015569840

Ngarrindjeri Contacts:

Victor Wilson — Kalparrin Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation Farm at Murray Bridge — {W} 85 324 940 / Fax. 85 325 511 / mobile 040 718 2353; e-mail: kalparrin@lm.net.au

Pastor Ken Sumner — Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress — {W} 8212 4066 / {H} 8396 3934;

Tom Trevorrow — Ngarrindjeri Land and Progress Association — {W} 85 751 557|657 / Fax. 85 751 448

e-mail: <mailto:nlpa@bigpond.com>nlpa@bigpond.com

Web sites: <ngarrindjeri.tripod.com/>

<www.adelaide.net.au/~nlpa/BIGGERPICTURE.html><www.ngarrindjeri.com>www.ngarrindjeri.com>

aaaaaaaaa

P.S. If anyone in other States (or the Territories) is interested — please give the Ngarrindjeri Land and Progress Association (N.L.P.A.) a telephone call or send an e-mail. We hope that there will soon be monthly walks all over Australia EVERY first Friday...

<u>Women's-Only Language preservation</u> — <u>China's women-only language under threat</u>

From: Harold F. Schiffman haroldfs@ccat.sas.upenn.edu

Sent: 19 April, 2002.

From B.B.C. News:

news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/asia-pacific/newsid+AF8-1937000/1937023.stm

"China plans to spend1million to save what is believed to be the world's only language used exclusively by women. The language, on the verge of extinction, is spoken only by elder women of the Yao ethnic group in Hunan province.

Some linguists say the language may be one of the oldest in the world. Now China plans to set up a special protection zone and a museum in Hunan province's Jiangyong county. The Xinhua news agency says the museum will house written examples of the language, which has 1,200 characters, though fewer than 700 are still in use.

Experts believe much of the language's written heritage, mainly preserved on paper fans and silks, has already been destroyed. Dr Zhang Xiasheng, of London's School of Oriental and African Studies, says the language was handed down from mothers to daughters and developed in cut-off rural areas. Men were not interested in the secret coded language, he says.

A publishing house in Hunan is putting together a dictionary covering the language's history and the pronunciation, meaning and written style of its characters. According to China's People's Daily, the Yao ethnic group has a total population of 2.9 million".

Editor's note: 'women's language" is not unique to China. Well-known, and documented, languages also exist in Australia.

Armonía/BirdLife International — Bolivia

From: Armonía <armonia@scbbs-bo.com>

Date: Fri, 19 Apr., 2002.

Estimados Amigos de Armonía,

Mediante la presente me gustaría presentarles e introducir a Grover Bravo como nuevo Asistente Administrador para Armonía / BirdLife International en Bolivia.



El trabajo principal de Grover es el de ordenar el Centro de Conservación de las Aves en Bolivia, Armonía, en particular las acciones legales, la Membresía, ventas, y todo lo relacionado con el nuevo sitio de la Institución, así como también de un próximo boletín regular de Armonía.

Grover será el principal contacto de Armonia en Bolivia y la persona que esta mas involucrado en todo lo que tiene que ver con el funcionamiento de Armonía. Para contactarse con el puede hacerlo a <armonia@scbbs-bo.com>.

Armonía por su parte ha tomado la decisión de construir el Centro para la Conservación de Aves, de manera que sea permanente a través de la compra de un terreno y una nueva infraestructura. Hemos comprado un terreno cerca al Parque Lomas de Arena en Santa Cruz. Mientras dura la construcción de nuestras oficinas, estamos ubicados en un espacio prestado en el mismo sitio por el anterior propietario, se estima hasta mediados de junio.

Un ambiente del las nuevas oficinas va a ofrecer exclusivamente una Biblioteca Especializada de Aves para el publico, un sitio educativo sobre la Conservación en Bolivia y nuestros Proyectos, la Base de Datos de Aves de Bolivia, asi como un segundo ambiente para trabajar, una sala para ventas de libros, poleras, stickers, etc.

Nuestra nueva Dirección:

ARMONIA / BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL Telefono} 591-3-3568808

400 Avenida Lomas de Arena Fax.

Casilla 3566 E-mail: armonia@scbbs-bo.com

Santa Cruz de la Sierra - Bolivia.

Esperamos verlos a Uds. en nuestro nuevo Centro de Conservación de las Aves en el futuro.

Atentamente,

A. Bennett Hennessey, Presidente, Asociación Armonia / BirdLife International.

ENGLISH:

Santa Cruz de la Sierra, April 17, 2002.

Dear Friends of Armonía,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce everyone to our new Office Administrator for Armonía/ BirdLife Int., Grover Bravo.

Grover's principal work will involve keeping Armonía's Bolivian Bird Conservation Centre in order, particularly with legal activities, our membership, sales and everything related to our new location, including our future Armonía bulletin.

Grover is now Armonía's principal contact person and to contact regarding the all the different functions of our Bird Conservation Centre. You can contact Grover at <armonia@scbbs-bo.com>.

Armonía is now in the process of building our new Bird Conservation Centre, in a more permanent way with the purchase of land. We have bought land near the city park of Lomas de Arena (Hills of Sand) in Santa Cruz. During the construction, we will be operating through a leased office at our new address. The Bird Conservation Centre will hold our Bird Library, a space dedicated to conservation information in Bolivia and our projects, the Armonía Bolivia Bird Database, working space, and an area to sell bird books, T-shirts and stickers, etc. We hope to open the doors to our new centre by the middle of June.

Our New Address: [see above in Spanish version].

We hope to see you in our new Bird Conservation Centre in the future.

Sincerely,

A. Bennett Hennessey, President, Asociacion Armonia/ BirdLife International.



<u> Updated Web site —</u> "Language Policy Research Unit"

Annotated Listing of Interesting/Useful Sources

From: Wayne Wright <Wayne.Wright@asu.edu>

Language Policy Research Unit

Date: 02 May, 2002.

The Language Policy Research Unit (L.P.R.U.) of the Education Policy Studies Laboratory at Arizona State University announces an updated Web site:

<www.language-policy.org>http://www.language-policy.org>

L.P.R.U., under the Direction of Terrence G. Wiley, is a unit of the Education Policy Studies Laboratory at Arizona State University.

Our new and recently updated Web site now provides:

- * Original articles by leading scholars (including James Crawford, Josue Gonzalez and Harold Schiffman), notes on recent books, and an extensive bibliography;
- * Archives of news items from leading newspapers around the world;
- * Lists of Court Cases and bibliography related to language;
- * Links to academic journals and other resources for language policy research.

The L.P.R.U. Web site is rapidly expanding, and new resources are added monthly. If you wish to be informed of updates, subscribe to the LPRUNEWS list server by sending an e-mail letter to ristserv@asu.edu and making the one-line contents read

sub LPRUNEWS your-first-name your-last-name

The Language Policy Research Unit promotes research and policy analysis on the challenges of global multilingualism through studies promoting equitable language policies in education & society; demographic studies bearing on language rights and preservation; historical & contemporary studies on language contact, conflict, and minority language accommodation; and media, legal and legislative analyses.

The Education Policy Studies Laboratory (E.P.S.L.) at A.S.U. offers high quality analyses of national education policy issues and provides an analytical resource for educators, journalists, and citizens. It includes the Commercialism in Education Research Unit (C.E.R.U.), the Education Policy Analysis Archives (E.P.A.A.), the Education Policy Reports Project (E.P.R.P.), the Education Policy Research Unit (E.P.R.U.), and the Language Policy Research Unit (L.P.R.U.). The E.P.S.L. is directed by A.S.U. Professor Alex Molnar. Visit the E.P.S.L. Web site at <www.edpolicylab.org/>.



Equal Rights for Native Languages

From: R. S. <agoracosmopolite@on.aibn.com>

Date: 09 Mar., 2002.

Toward a Canadian Languages Act: rejuvenating the Official Languages Act.

I.S.B.N.: 1894839005, c. 2002.

Internet site reference: <www.anzwers.org/trade/featuredbook/ntv.html>.

Equal rights for Native languages; re: proposed Native languages protection BOOK publication.

Proposed amendment to the Official Languages Act. Help make Native languages EQUAL to English and French in a new multilingual Official Languages Act proposal. A few copies are available, limited edition.

The author of the cited publication is a member of the University of Toronto community, and has a professional background as an academic lecturer.

Megwetch.

Native-Canadian Publishing Consortium

Tel.: 1-888-377-2222

E-mail: agoracosmopolite@on.aibn.com

Web: www.anzwers.org/trade/featuredbook/ntv.html.

Indigenous Languages Across the Community

From: Jon Reyhner < Jon.Reyhner@NAU.EDU>

Indigenous Languages Across the Community.

Editors: Barbara Burnaby and Jon Reyhner; pp. 278.

Available: on the Web in .pdf format at <jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jar/ILAC/>.

This monograph contains papers from the Seventh Annual Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Conference held in May 2000 in Toronto, Canada. It is now available on the Web at the address above, and will be available in paperback sometime in March or April 2002.

Since 1994, the Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Conferences have provided an unparalleled opportunity for practitioners and scholars dedicated to supporting and developing the endangered indigenous languages of the world, particularly those of North America, to meet and share knowledge and experiences gained from research and community-based practice. They have established a forum in which Indigenous people involved with work on their own languages feel comfortable about coming together with academics from this field to discuss issues common to them both. The conferences were established through leadership at Northern Arizona University and carried on through the voluntary efforts of academics and universities that have hosted the meetings.

The 27 papers in *Indigenous Languages Across the Community* describe efforts in Canada, the United States of America, New Zealand, Zimbabwe, Mexico, Russia, and the Caribbean. They are divided into six sections: broad perspectives and policy; language and whole community development; educational advances; languages and literacy development; the media; and the meeting of Inuit and Yupik participants. The papers discuss issues such as bilingual education, adult education, literacy, teacher training, orthography and dictionary development, the rôle of religion and culture, and language planning and advocacy strategies. Paperback copies can be purchased for US\$15.00 each plus postage from Josie Allred, Box 5774, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ. 86011 5774, U.S.A. Send an e-mail to <Jon.Reyhner@nau.edu> for more information.

The Ethnologue

From: Luisa Maffi <maffi@terralingua.org>

Date: 5 Mar., 2002.

S.I.L. International has recently established an independent Web site for the *Ethnologue* and other language resources. The URL is <www.ethnologue.com>.

In addition to a searchable version of the *Ethnologue* database (14th edition), including language maps, the "Ethnologue.com" site has links to the online bibliography of S.I.L. publications, and to the full range of S.I.L.'s computer resources ("LinguaLinks", "Shoebox" and other programs, and a number of special fonts), many available for free download. There is also a link to S.I.L.'s International Academic Bookstore.



Technology and Indigenous Languages

From: Nicholas Ostler <nostler@chibcha.demon.co.uk>

Date: 1 May, 2002.

Some of you may be interested to know that this is the theme of a special May 2002 issue of the online journal *Language Learning & Technology*. Jon Reyhner and myself have been the guest editors. It is now available free of charge at <llt.msu.edu/>.

U. K. Registered Charity 1070616

Nicholas Ostler

Foundation for Endangered Languages

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Mercator Working Paper #5

From: Mercator < mercator@ciemen.org >

Date: 11 Jan., 2002.

The new Mercator Working Paper #5, "Languages and institutions in the European Union" by Manuel Alcaraz Ramos (Full Professor of Constitutional Law at the Universitat d'Alacant), is already on line at www.troc.es/ciemen/mercator/work-pape.htm, in Catalan and English.

The Mercator Working Papers series of continuing monographical works or researches on linguistic rights, legislation or policies is part of Mercator-Linguistic Rights and Legislation program consisting of three different areas: research, diffusion and documentation and information service.



Review of Mufwene: The Ecology of Language Evolution

From: linguist@linguistlist.org

Date: 9 Jan., 2002.

The Ecology of Language Evolution.

Author: Mufwene, Salikoko S.

Publisher: Cambridge University Press; 255 pp.; 2001.

Cambridge Approaches to Language Contact.

I.S.B.N.: 0-521-79138-3 (hardback).

Price: GBP 40.00.

Reviewed by Nicoletta Puddu, Department of Linguistics, University of Pavia.

This book proposes an approach to Creole linguistics and, more generally, to language evolution in an "ecological" perspective. It includes some essays of the author yet published in different fora (chapters 2 to 6) regarding the relationship between Creole vernaculars and language evolution. Chapters 1, 7 and 8 are, on the contrary, unpublished studies, which "try to bridge topics on the development of Creoles with issues in genetic linguistics and language endangerment". Consequently, this book is intended not only for specialists in Creole linguistics, but for those who are interested in sociolinguistics and, generally, in the dynamics of language change.

Chapter 1 — Introduction.

The introduction spells out the theoretical framework of the author. Mufwene gives his own definition of "Communal language", "Pidgin", "Creole", "Koiné" and "Expanded Pidgin" and shows that language contact was important in restructuring processes which produced both Creoles and koinés. He explains his idea of "Language Evolution" and compares language to a "Parasitic species", in contrast with the idea of language as an "organism" as it was traditionally considered since the beginning of the 19th century. Finally, he argues that ecology, as "the decisive factor that rolls the dice over the competition" (Gould 1993), must be invoked to understand restructuring of languages, but also aspects of language vitality.

Chapter 2 — The Founder Principle in the development of Creoles.

The author introduces the "Founder Principle", which is one of the most important principles for the development the development of Creoles (see also Mufwene 1993: 198). He claims that "structural features of Creoles have been predetermined to a large extent (though not exclusively!) by characteristics of the vernaculars spoken by the population that founded the colonies in which they developed". Mufwene explains the choice of features competing with each other as a natural adaptation in changing ecological conditions. He uses terms modelled on genetics (e.g., "feature pool" comparable to "gene pool", "system reorganization" comparable to "genetic recombination").

He criticizes both the substratist hypothesis, which connects Creoles' features mainly to the languages of the African Slaves, and the Universalist hypothesis, which compares the rules for the creation of Creoles with first or second language acquisition principles. To explain the development of Creoles he proposes a "complementary hypothesis" mainly based on the "Founder principle" (see also Baker and Corne 1986, Baker 1993 and Hancock 1986). He provides both ethnographic and linguistic evidences for this principle.

The author points out that the lexifiers of the Creoles were not standard varieties, but the vernaculars of low-ranking employees. Moreover, they were not monolithic, but restructured varieties, possibly arisen in metropolitan port cities. Some features, which were not present in the standard varieties, existed in the lexifiers. In colloquial English, for example, one finds a type of "serial-like constructions", such as "Let's go get the book", which also occurs in some Bantu Languages, (more precisely in some varieties of Kikongo and in Kituba). Therefore, the ecological situation favoured the choice of this kind of construction in Creoles. Mufwene claims that Creoles "developed gradually into plantation economic systems" and not "abruptly" in one generation, as is traditionally argued.

He also gives a detailed history of the colonies, distinguishing between "the homestead phase" and "the agricultural-economy phase", and so between first, second- and third-generation colonies.

Chapter 3 — The development of America Englishes: factoring contact in and social bias out.

Mufwene assumes that koinéization played an important rôle in the development of White American English vernaculars (W.A.E.Vs.). In his opinion, W.A.E.Vs. developed by the same restructuring processes which led to the Creole genesis. He also claims that Afro American Vernacular English (A.A.V.E.) and W.A.E.Vs. are outcomes of the same language and developed in the same way through language contact. W.A.E.Vs. developed by competition of features of different English varieties, but also of non-English varieties, mainly the other European varieties, but also, in an "unknown quantity" Native American languages. He criticizes traditional approaches to the genesis of A.A.E.V.E.: 1) the "Creole origin hypothesis"; 2) the hypothesis that A.A.V.E. was a South-eastern phenomenon which spread northwards and westwards; 3) the hypothesis that it was an archaic retention of what was spoken by low class Europeans; 4) the hypothesis that it was an archaic colonial English which low-class Europeans had abandoned. He proposes an approach based on models of population genetics using the notion of mixing and blending inheritance.

Chapter 4 — The legitimate and illegitimate offspring of English.

The author claims that there is a social bias in the distinction between the labels "new English", i.e., the vernaculars developed in English colonies, and others varieties of English. He claims that this distinction has to do with the "autonomization" of speakers, that is "the ability of speakers to develop norms that are community based rather than imposed by speakers of other varieties of the lexifier" (106). In his opinion the criterion in using the label "New English" is not that of mutual intelligibility, but the racial identity of the speakers. He underlies that the history of English, even in the British Isles, has been characterized by contacts, mixing and competition of features. Mufwene concludes by saying: "It is pernicious to continue suggesting in our scholarship that some new Englishes are legitimate offspring of an earlier stage of English and that some others are illegitimate ones. The processes that produced them all are of the same kind, although the changes that apply are not the same in all cases".

Chapter 5 — What research on development of Creoles can contribute to genetic linguistics.

The main assumption in this chapter is that heterogeneity and hybridity are the normal characteristics of languages. Therefore, the author rejects the idea that Creoles are aberrations because they do not fit in Schuchardt's Stammbaum. He also claims that there is no reason to regard changes in Creoles any different from changes in other languages. He proposes an "Uniformitarian principle" (see also Labov 1994), which can account for both Creoles and new varieties of other languages. He states that



Creoles neither developed more rapidly than other languages nor were created by children; rather, they developed by the same competition-and-selection process of the other vernaculars. They were not lexified by standard varieties. However, the rôle of the lexifier was important in the selection of Creoles' structural features, but some of the features were selected also on the basis of the substratum language. He stresses again the fact that the sociohistorical context accounts for an important proportion of creoles'

structure. We must take into account: a) the populations which were present in the contact setting; b) the typological features of the languages they spoke; c) how much the lexifier was heterogeneous; d) the patterns of interaction between the ethnic and social groups; e) how all these factors varied from one stage of colonization to another. The author defines "Creolization" as "a social process by which vernaculars associated with particular social groups, typically descendants of non-Europeans in exogenous colonial settings, were disfranchised from other colonial varieties that developed around the same time but are related primarily to descendants of Europeans". This means that the author denies

the existence of any "special" restructuring process of creolization. Only phenomena of language contact are recognised, such as the ones which led to the development of Romance

languages from Latin and to the evolution from Old to Middle English.

Chapter 6 — Language contact, evolution, and death: how ecology rolls the dice.

In chapter 6 the approach to language evolution in ecological terms is made more systematic. The author discusses the notion of "evolution", which is not interpreted as a progress (see Gould 1993), but as "the long-term changes undergone by a language (variety) over a period of time. He claims that "linguistic evolution proceeds by natural selection from among the competing alternatives made available by the idiolects of individual speakers, which vary among them [...]"(146). He provides several good pieces of evidence to consider a language as a parasitic species, rather than an organism. He shows how it can be useful to use an ecological perspective both "external" and "internal" and both "structural" and "not structural", to explain why a language comes to be endangered, restructured or why it comes to acquire some features rather than others.

Chapter 7 — Past and recent population movements in Africa: their impact on its linguistic landscape.

The perspective of language ecology is here applied to Africa's linguistic situation. The author aims to prove that the ecological perspective explains not only why a given language undergoes to determinate changes: it also sheds light upon its vitality. Mufwene tries to give a general idea of how the "present linguistic landscape of Africa came about, toward its linguistic and ethnographic history". In a retrogressive approach, he analyses the linguistic effects of European colonization, that led to groups of new language varieties in Africa: the varieties lexified by European languages (both "indigenized" such as Black South Africans and "native", such as the South African English) and the varieties lexified by African Languages (as Sango, Kituba and Lingala). Then he goes back to precolonial Africa from the Nilotic migration southwards to the Arabian colonization (with their "communalist" language, see Mazrui and Mazrui 1998). The author points out again, the significance of patterns of interaction among the populations at specific points in time, and the nature of contact. And he underlines again how the ecological perspective may be helpful in understanding problems of language endangerment and language change.

Chapter 8 — Conclusions: the big picture.

In this chapter the author puts the results of his investigation and his main assumptions into a coherent picture:

- both development of Creoles and language evolution must be seen from a population genetics perspective, the language being considered as a Lamarckian parasitic species;
- language vitality and endangerment are aspects of language evolution and therefore their analysis from an ecological perspective can be useful;
- integration and segregation are fundamental features of language evolution;
- differences in colonization styles can account for different results in language evolution;
- there are internal and external factors that bear on language evolution and they apply concurrently in all cases of language evolution.

Comments.

The language ecology perspective is undoubtedly very interesting and stimulating and helps to eliminate entrenched bias in the studies of language evolution. Sociohistorical factors, which are too often forgotten or levelled in Creole linguistics are here assigned the right relevance. On the other hand, historical linguists can obtain useful contributions by using this approach. The author provides us very detailed data, both linguistic, historical and ethnographical, thus giving us a clear and comprehensive picture. He is also able to capture similarities between the linguistic and the biological "ecosystem", forming a strong theoretical framework, which may be useful for general linguists, too.

However, it must be remembered that recent studies on language acquisition (see, among others, Veronique 1999), show interesting contacts between Creole grammars and the

interlanguage" of language learners. If we assume that the processes which languages undergo in change are similar, it is possible to assume also that language acquisition principles are similar. Cognitive principles, finally, may account for language change, not only in Creoles, but in all cases of language contact. To sum up, Mufwene's book is a very good opportunity to reconsider methods in language change study and to build complex models for interpretation of the linguistic scenario.

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Nicoletta Puddu is a Ph.D. student in Linguistics at the Department of Linguistics, University of Pavia, Italy. Her research interests include Indo-european linguistics, linguistic typology and multidisciplinary studies, in particular the comparison between genetic and linguistic data related to the history of population.

Comments and suggestions are welcome, and we do welcome articles and news items for publication. Please send all communications regarding this newsletter to the Editor, Ms. Anthea Fallen-Bailey, either by e-mail (afallenb@terralingua.org), or by regular mail (41620 Fish Hatchery Drive, Scio, Oregon 97374-9747. U.S.A.). Membership inquiries and renewals should also be sent to Ms. Fallen-Bailey, but fees/donations should be sent to our Treasurer, Mr. David Harmon, Terralingua, P. O. Box 122, Hancock, Michigan 49930-0122. U.S.A.