

危機言語復活の理論と実践

ジョン・ハーバート

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Endangered Language Revitalization in Theory and Practice

John HERBERT

1. Introduction

The future of many of the world's minority languages has been the subject of a growing number of academic papers in recent years. It has also been the subject of mainstream publishing, with two of the more recent, highly-readable offerings being Helena Drysdale's "Mother Tongues: Travels Through Tribal Europe" (2001a) and Mark Abley's "Spoken Here: Travels Among Threatened Languages" (2004). Newspapers have started to carry articles on the subject more frequently. In Japan, a land with a language policy that aims for, "the promotion of a monolingual state" (Carroll, 2001), a recent edition of The Japan Times carried an article, albeit reproduced from the Los Angeles Times, with the title, "Easter Island's battle to save the language of a king" (2004), describing the efforts of the Rapa Nui to revitalize their language off the coast of Chile.

That the plight of endangered languages has made it to the mainstream media is thanks to the efforts of individuals, communities and researchers that are promoting the language rights of minority language groups. There are many ways in which many people are attempting to revitalize minority languages around the world. It is a pressing task, as it is believed by many that during the next 150 years, the approximately 6,000 languages in the world at present, will be reduced to 3,000 at best, and at worst to a mere 300 (Krauss, 1998, p.105).

The current situation of endangered languages has been set out in a previous paper, along with an overview of when language death has occurred; where and why it is happening; and whom it is affecting (Herbert, 2002). It is the intention of this paper to focus on the theory and practice of attempts being made to revitalize endangered languages, attempts that will determine the future of many of the world's smaller languages.

2. The Theory of Language Revitalization

Attempts to revitalize endangered languages are taking place on a daily basis all over the world. Some of those attempts are ambitious, large-scale attempts with high profiles. Others are far smaller in scale and scope. Before looking at the measures employed in language revitalization it is necessary to understand what is actually meant by the term "language revitalization", and also to analyze existing theories of language revitalization to see to what extent they are useful in providing vital information to those interested in revitalizing endangered languages.

2.1 What exactly is language revitalization?

The word "revitalization" is the noun derivative of the verb "revitalize". The Oxford English dictionary defines this as "to imbue (something) with new life and vitality". The Collins Cobuild dictionary explains it thus: "To revitalize something that has lost its activity or its health means to make it active or healthy again". Therefore, "language revitalization" clearly applies to weaker rather than stronger languages, and it implies action and planning to bring about its aims. It also implies that at one time the language was more "vital", or in a better state of health than it is at present, and therefore language shift must have occurred.

Language shift occurs when two or more languages come into contact, and it usually occurs in three stages. At first, the community members will speak their mother tongue. Then, when the language comes into contact with a more dominant language, a period of bilingualism will ensue. In this stage both the minority (original community language) and the dominant language will be spoken, but they will tend to be spoken in different domains. The dominant language becomes the language of schooling or government, and the minority language becomes the language of the home. The final stage occurs when the dominant language becomes the language of all domains and the use of the original mother tongue ceases (language death).

Language death is not always the final outcome of language shift caused by languages coming into contact, but it is a potential consequence for some of the weaker minority languages. In order to stave off this demise, language maintenance efforts may be made by the communities affected, by language activists, or by other interested parties. These efforts can be considered a part of language planning policy. Ager (2003) recognizes four areas of language planning: corpus policy, status policy, acquisition policy, and symbolic or prestige policy. He explains the four areas in the following manner:

... corpus policy may recognize a spelling reform, as with dictionary entries; a particular language may be allowed to enter parliamentary use in order to certify its status, as with Scottish Gaelic; textbooks may be written to encourage its acquisition, as with Cornish; and the prestige of a language may be raised by erecting new road signs [as] in Welsh. (p.6-7)

Language revitalization can clearly be considered a part of language planning, and it is used to attempt to maintain or strengthen the health of a minority language. However, "language revitalization" is just one expression that has been used by academics to encapsulate the idea of attempts to strengthen a minority language. King (2001) gives a specific definition of language revitalization as being:

... the attempt to add new linguistic forms or social functions to an embattled minority language with the aim of increasing its uses or users. More specifically, language revitalization ... encompasses efforts which might target the language structure, the uses of the language, as well as the users of the language. (p. 23)

King then adds a more general definition:

More generally, this definition of language revitalization can be seen as ... the process of moving towards renewed vitality of the threatened language. (p. 23)

As King points out, this definition of language revitalization has a broader scope than some of the other related and similar expressions in the literature. Perhaps the most famous of these terms is "reversing language shift" (RLS), coined by Fishman and part of the title of one of his books (Fishman, 1991). RLS concentrates on the transmission of the language between generations in the home and, in contrast with language revitalization, it is concerned primarily with mother-tongue transmission of the language. Other terms include: language revival (sometimes used for languages with no native speakers, and sometimes for languages with native speakers remaining); language renewal; and language reclamation (used specifically by Amery (2000) to refer to situations where a language is no longer spoken). (See Amery (2000, ch.2) and King (2001, p.25) for a detailed analysis of varying definitions). In this paper, the term 'language revitalization' has the broad definition of the process of moving towards renewed vitality of a language, and it is used to include languages that have no remaining native speakers.

2.2 Typology of Language Endangerment for Language Revitalization Efforts

Approaches for 'reversing language shift' (using Fishman's terminology), or for revitalizing minority languages, vary from language to language. Some minority languages still have a large number of speakers and are spoken in a number of domains, whereas others have only a very few native speakers (if any), and are spoken in very few domains. No two languages face the exact same conditions, so it is not necessarily the case that what works for one language, in terms of revitalization efforts, will be at the top of the list of priorities for other languages. However, there are many differing viewpoints as to what should be the primary concern for language revitalization attempts in general.

As has been mentioned above, Fishman stresses the importance of language transmission between the generations in the home. Bradley (2002) views the community members' attitudes towards their minority language as of extreme importance. Attitudes

towards the community language are linked with strength of feelings of ethnicity, and perhaps also linked with religion (as was the case with the successfully revitalized language, Hebrew). Many believe that the education system should be the focal point of language revitalization efforts. However, from analyzing revival attempts for modern Irish, Carnie stresses that, "... language is not a subject that can be taught in schools effectively. For a language to be revived, it must be made relevant for use in a wide variety of contexts, including, but not exclusively, schools" (1996, p.112). Of course, political power and economic clout are also factors, and some believe that without these, an endangered language is doomed to fail.

It appears to be extremely difficult to make generalizations about language revitalization that can be applied to all minority languages. However, attempts have been made to produce a typology of language endangerment that will aid attempts for revitalization. The typology is typically a scale showing the state of the language and the steps that need to be taken in order to strengthen it. One of the most prominent of these is Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS). This scale has stages, starting with stage 8 (showing a high level of threat to the chances of the language being handed on from generation to generation) and finishing with stage 1 (the least threat to the chances of the language being passed on from one generation to the next). Fishman (2001) carries a large number of most informative examples of minority language case-studies to which the GIDS has been applied. The eight stages (in slightly adapted form) are reproduced from May (2001), and are shown in table (1) below:

Stage 8	Remaining speakers of a minority language (ML) are old and usually vestigial users.
Stage 7	While the ML continues to be spoken, most speakers of the ML are beyond childbearing age.
Stage 6	Intergenerational family transmission of the ML.
Stage 5	Informal maintenance of literacy in the home, school, and community.
Stage 4	ML use as medium of instruction in education.
Stage 3	Use of the ML in the work sphere involving (informal) interaction between ML and other language speakers.
Stage 2	ML used in lower governmental and media spheres.
Stage 1	Some use of the ML in higher level educational, occupational, governmental and media realms.

Table (1): Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS).

The strong point of the GIDS system is that it clearly shows the status of the language, charting it in relation to the nation-state. Stages 8 through to stage 5 show the steps that need to be achieved to attain diglossia (where two languages are used in different situations within the same community by the members of that community), and stages 4 through to stage 1 show the steps subsequent to the attainment of diglossia. The scale is a useful way to see what language revitalization efforts need to be made at home and within the community before a state of diglossia is reached, and the efforts that need to be made in the wider public domain once diglossia has been attained.

Another attempt at creating a typology of language endangerment has been made by Edwards (1992). This model attempts to take into account a large number of variables which "interact to sap the vitality of a language, or alternatively, to bolster it." (Grenoble & Whaley, 1998, p.24). Edwards' model groups variables along two parameters, named categorization 'A' and categorization 'B'. Categorization 'A' contains variables by which groups can be characterized. The variables are: demography, sociology, linguistics, psychology, history, political / law / government, geography, education, religion, economics and media. Categorization 'B', on the other hand, has variables for speaker, language, and setting, and shows the scope over which the 'A' variables can be applied. The combination of variables produces a 33-cell table that clearly delineates micro-variables (those connected to speaker and language) and macro-variables (those connected to setting). The micro-variables are specific to individual minority language communities, whereas the macro-variables are applicable to many of the world's minority languages. As is the case with Fishman's GIDS scale, Edwards' model is useful in comprehending the health (or otherwise) of a minority language.

However, neither Fishman's GIDS scale nor Edwards' model is perfect. As King says, although the models "provide an outline of the factors which are important for language survival across contexts, as well as suggestions concerning how these factors might best be organized or prioritized, we still have limited understanding of how they should be weighted individually and measured together to form a comprehensive model." (2001, p.17). However, it must be stressed that both scales are useful for understanding the current situations in which many of the minority languages find themselves.

One further weakness in the GIDS scale that Hinton points out is that it concentrates on large-scale minority languages and includes many steps that small-scale minority languages can never hope to reach. For this reason, Hinton has produced a series of steps towards language revitalization that concentrate on the earlier steps before diglossia has been reached.

2.3 Steps for smaller languages

Hinton (2001a, p. 6-7) sets out a different 9-step system that is tailored more for the smaller languages. Those steps are set out in table (2) below:

Step 1	Language assessment and planning: Find out what the linguistic situation is in the community. How many speakers are there? What are their ages? What other resources are available on the language? What are the attitudes of speakers and non-speakers toward language revitalization? What are realistic goals for language revitalization in this community?
Step 2	If the language has no speakers: use available materials to reconstruct the language and develop language pedagogy.
Step 3	If the language has only elderly speakers: Document the language of the elderly speakers. (This may also take place at the same time as the other steps.)
Step 4	Develop a second-language learning program for adults. These professional-age and parent-age adult second-language learners will be important leaders in later steps.
Step 5	Redevelop or enhance cultural practices that support and encourage use of the endangered language at home and in public by first- and second-language speakers.
Step 6	Develop intensive second-language programs for children, preferably with a component in the schools. When possible, use the endangered language as the language of instruction.
Step 7	Use the language at home as the primary language of communication, so that it becomes the first language of young children. Develop classes and support groups for parents to assist them in transition.
Step 8	Expand the use of indigenous language into broader local domains, including community government, media, local commerce, and so on.
Step 9	Where possible, expand the language domains outside of the local community and into the broader population to promote the language as one of wider communication, regional or national government, and so on.

Table (2): Hinton's 9-step scale for revitalizing endangered languages.

The positive point of Hinton's scale is that it concentrates on practical measures, and appears applicable for the language revitalization efforts of many of the smaller minority languages, which make up a large proportion of the world's total number of minority languages that are endangered.

Fishman, Edwards and Hinton have all produced scales aiming to create a typology of language endangerment that can be used to aid revitalization efforts. Each is useful and helps to map the course that an endangered language needs to take if it is to regain vitality. However, there are weak points in each of the scales when they attempt to cover the whole range of endangered languages, a fact that outlines just what a difficult task it is to set out a typology for so many languages that all exist in unique situations.

3. Language Revitalization in Practice

As outlined in the theory of language revitalization section above, methods for revitalizing languages vary depending on the language. These methods could be categorized in many different ways. The revitalization attempts could be split into the four areas of language planning (corpus, status, acquisition, symbolic or prestige). They could also be categorized into Crystal's (2000) six ways for endangered languages to progress (if speakers increase their prestige within the dominant community; if they increase their wealth relative to the dominant community; if they increase their legitimate power in the eyes of the dominant community; if speakers have a strong presence in the education system; if speakers can write their language down; and if speakers can make use of modern technology). Hinton (2001a) uses five categories: (1) school-based programs; (2) children's programs outside school; (3) adult language programs; (4) documentation and materials development; and (5) home-based programs.

In this paper, eight categories have been chosen to illustrate examples of revitalization attempts (and the difficulties associated with those attempts) from a number of languages from various parts of the world.

3.1 Documentation and Materials Development

A vitally important task in the revitalization of endangered languages is documentation of the language and development of materials that can be used for teaching the language. Traditionally, documentation has tended to mean the creation of a dictionary and a grammar. However, this doesn't constitute a thorough documentation of the language. A corpus of texts is important, as are audio and video recordings. A holistic approach to documentation rather than a narrow approach will be more useful. Many of the world's endangered languages have dictionaries and grammars, and some also have a corpus of texts, and audio recordings, too.

However, language is an emotive subject, and some of the documentation produced is not without controversy. For example, the Cornish-English dictionary created by

Dr. Ken George (2000) has received praise from some quarters, yet criticism from others due to deeply felt differences over what is perceived to be “real Cornish”. The documentation that would appear to gain least criticism is when the academic researchers and community members work in cooperation, respecting the rights of the minority language group members, and producing documentation that is readily available (and practically useful) for the community members that want to speak or learn their community language.

Documentation of the language is an important task, but there is only so much that a community member eager to learn the endangered community language can glean from a dictionary and a grammar. Textbooks play an important role for those community members who are learning the minority language as a second language, especially when the number of speakers of the endangered language is few. Whether the student is a youth learning at school or after school, or is an adult learning in a second language class, a good textbook is very important. The style of the textbook is also an issue open to debate. Should the textbook be simply a language text, or should it concentrate equally on teaching something of the traditional culture of the community? Should the textbook place less emphasis on traditional culture and more on providing practical language that is useful in the modern day? Many language textbooks have been produced for many endangered languages, one example being 'Akor Itak' (1997), a textbook in the Ainu language, that takes an eclectic approach with: wordlists; conversation; examples of traditional ceremonies; examples of traditional oral stories and music; explanations of Ainu place names; and grammatical explanations. Another of the main Ainu textbooks, 'Ekusupuresu Ainugo' (1999), takes a narrower approach with dialogues in Ainu followed by vocabulary lists, a Japanese translation, and then explanations of salient points.

3.2 Programs in the home

Perhaps the most well known home-based program for language revitalization is known as the master and apprentice approach. This is typically when a fluent speaker teaches a young apprentice (often a relative) the community language in the home. As Furbee, Stanley and Arkeketa state, “The forum for learning is the natural one - the household, with the learner “at the knee” of the teacher, like a grandchild with a grandparent (Furbee et al., 1998, p.77). This approach has been used in California for a number of Californian Indian languages, including Karuk, and has spread to various places around the United States (Hinton, 2001b).

Other home-based programs depend on just how important the parent believes transmission of the endangered language actually is. If it is deemed important, then the parent will use one of the methods used by families bringing up their children bilingually (methods that are irrespective of whether the family comes from a minority or majority language community), such as one-parent one-language, or perhaps

making the home language the endangered language. For endangered languages, clearly the dominant language is prevalent in most domains. Therefore, wherever possible, making the home language the endangered language, and thereby creating a potentially non-threatening domain in which the endangered language is spoken by all family members, would appear preferable to using the one-parent one-language approach.

3.3 School programs

As Fishman has stressed, the passing on of language to the next generation is of paramount importance if a language is to remain healthy. There are a large number of languages in the world that are considered moribund, no longer spoken as a first language by children. One of the ways to revitalize a minority language is within the education system. Broderick stresses the importance of the education system for the future of Manx in the Isle of Man, stating, "... it is my view that the future of Manx must lie primarily with the Dept. of Education and the professional teaching body" (1999, p. 187). Yet with all revitalization attempts, including Manx, the necessary approach depends on each specific language. As one component of revitalization attempts in Manx, and also in Cornish, (both Celtic languages with low numbers of speakers) the respective minority language has been offered as a second-language subject qualification to be aimed for within the school system at the age of sixteen.

A more comprehensive school-based program is when immersion programs are introduced. These have been used in Hawaii and in New Zealand. King (1999) reports that the first Maori immersion school (Kura Kaupapa Maori) in New Zealand opened in 1985. These immersion schools teach totally in the Maori language, as opposed to other bilingual programs within mainstream schools. Despite certain concerns about teacher training and language resources, King reports that, "educational and social outcomes for Kura Kaupapa Maori ... appear positive" (1999, p.117).

3.4 Children's programs (outside school)

In many cases, the formal education system may be unwilling to embrace the aims of members of a minority language community. In that case (or as a supplementary program to the formal school system's program), it may be possible to set up a children's program outside of the school environment. This kind of school has been set up to teach Ainu language and culture to children in the Nibutani community in Hokkaido. The class takes place on a Saturday, and in the summer of 1998 it had 18 students. These classes are believed to have influenced the formal school system to start Ainu culture classes at the elementary school level (Anderson & Iwasaki-Goodman, 2001). The Nibutani children's classes have a year-long curriculum. Other children's language programs in other minority language communities include summer programs, and weekend programs.

3.5 Adult language programs

Adult second-language programs have been set up in many communities as a way to increase the numbers of competent speakers of the minority language. These learners not only have the chance to become competent in the minority language, but also have the potential to become teachers of the language to other adults, or to children within the formal or informal education system. Teachers in schools in Wales are encouraged to take courses in the Welsh language (one of the success stories in the revitalization of languages). In Hokkaido in Japan, Ainu language courses are taught in 14 different locations. It is hoped that some of those learning the language will become future teachers of the language themselves. Many of the language programs focus not simply on the language, but also on the culture of the minority language community.

3.6 Literacy

Literacy is an important aspect of language revitalization attempts, as it leaves a written record. As mentioned previously in section 3.1 on documentation, a corpus of texts provides a valuable resource for various other revitalization approaches.

Literacy, as with most other aspects of language revitalization is not without its problems and controversies. Decisions will have to be taken over which dialect of the language to use, and whether it is practical to produce works in all dialects. Then there may be problems in choosing an orthography that suits a hitherto unwritten language (See Rudes, 2000). The Ainu language (traditionally with an oral and not written literature) is most often written in the katakana syllabary used in Japanese (although it is also seen in the roman alphabet). However, for certain words such as the word "yukar", it is difficult to render a correct pronunciation of the final sound when katakana is used. In order to create an accurate orthography, revisions to existing orthographic systems may be necessary, and when large-scale revisions become necessary the orthography can become awkward. Not only is the choice of orthography a matter for debate, but there may also be opposition to writing down a language that has always been an oral language. The oral transmission of the language may be perceived as sacred and part-and-parcel of the nature of that language. However, many people do agree that literacy is an important way in which to aid the process of language revitalization, and endangered languages that are not written down are in serious danger of dying out.

3.7 Media

At first glance, media would seem to be the agent of globalization, and therefore an enemy to minority languages. However, media can also be a boon to minority languages. Various forms of media are useful in the various steps of language revitalization. These media include: audio cassettes and video tapes; newspapers, magazines and newsletters; radio and television; and the internet. Just how useful the various forms

of media actually are at varying stages of language revitalization is a matter open to much debate, and once again, depends very much on the situation of the minority language in question.

In the stages of documentation and materials development, audio cassettes and video tapes of native speakers are very important. They are an integral part of any language revitalization project, adding a voice to any written materials in the language. For languages that are highly endangered with only a few remaining speakers, this kind of language documentation and provision of the materials to would-be learners becomes a priority. Tamura (1996) has stressed the importance of this kind of documentation for the Ainu language which is seen as highly endangered.

Print media such as newspapers, magazines and newsletters can also help to forge stronger links within a minority language community. This has been recognized by those people aiming for Ainu language revitalization who have produced a newspaper, the Ainu Times. The Yuendumu Aboriginal community in Australia also produces a magazine that appears three times a year with articles in both English and Warlpiri, used by some members of the local community (Hale, 2001).

Radio is used by many minority language communities for revitalization purposes. The Ainu language has a short language lesson slot in the schedules of Sapporo TV radio once a week. Languages that are in a healthier position than Ainu, such as Irish, have dedicated radio stations. Cotter points out that the two Irish language radio stations have a different focus on the language, one aiming for "conservation and dialect integrity", the other for "linguistic innovation" (Cotter, 2001).

Television has been described by the researcher, Krauss (1992), as "cultural nerve gas". It brings dominant languages into the homes of minority language speakers. Therefore, television stations broadcasting in the minority language is a goal for many language revitalization movements. The Welsh language has S4C, established in 1982, a channel that broadcasts approximately 25% of its programs in Welsh. It also broadcasts a popular soap opera, *Pobol y Cwm*, which has attracted up to 250,000 viewers (Davies, 2000). To some members of a minority language community, minority language broadcasting is not seen as applicable to them, and they remain indifferent to it. (See Moal (2001) for an example of Breton TV broadcasts). However, television most certainly gives a public face to a minority language, but to what extent it aids a revitalization process is debatable.

The internet is used as a cheap medium by many minority language group communities for a number of projects. Falkena (2001, p. 77) outlines the advantages of the internet as, "... a very suitable medium for an endangered language. If the site is good it is easy to find a public any place, any time." Certainly for documentation purposes the internet would seem to be an enticing medium. It also has a potential role in promotion of the minority language (see Ouakrime, 2001). However, easy access to computer facilities is a prerequisite for internet use to have a bearing on the revitalization efforts of a minority language. Therefore, for certain minority languages in

areas of the world with a greater amount of information technology infrastructure, the internet may be an effective medium, but for those minority language users in areas of the world without such infrastructure, the internet remains of little use. A further aspect that needs to be examined has been made by Martinez Arbelaz who notes that, "In the case of the Basque community, [the Internet] may be useful for the unification of Basque speakers in America, Australia, France or Spain... [However] the reality nowadays is that when Basque speakers use it, they either resort to Spanish in forums, or they read information in English web sites." (2001, p.102-103) The Internet is a wonderful means for people to keep in touch over long distances, in whatever language, and this is no different for speakers of minority languages as the Basque case above shows, but perhaps it is more suitable for these "virtual communities" than for "actual communities".

The cause of minority languages in the computer world has also been taken up to a degree by Microsoft who are adding 40 minority languages (including Welsh, Catalan, Gujarati, and Bahasa) into Microsoft Windows start menus and instructions (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/3522026.stm).

All of these media forms can play a part in the revitalization of minority languages to a certain degree. Certain media forms are more pertinent to certain languages, and certain media may be prioritized for languages depending on their endangered status and their stage of revitalization. Media is not a cure-all for the minority language, but when accompanied by certain other conditions it can help to produce favorable progress in minority language revitalization. As Drysdale (2001b) has pointed out for smaller languages in the European Union, when minority language status is high and the minority language is used in education, then the "media can flourish". However, as further notice to the fact that media is not the only (or indeed major) factor in language revitalization, she also states that political and financial support are prerequisites for this media development.

3.8 Attitude change (community; local government; national government; supra government level)

Attitude change is enormously important for the cause of minority languages. Creating a prevailing positive attitude to bilingualism and language diversity is not simple. Members of the minority language community need to feel that their ancestral language is important culturally and for their identity. If community members don't harbor these feelings, then revitalizing a dwindling language will be very difficult. Jones (1998, p. 345) specifies the difficulties that Cornish revitalization movements face, stating that apart from the "small number of ... militants ... the remainder of the population ... have no cultural or emotional links with the concept of a 'Cornish nation'. For all their campaigning, the militants are worlds apart from the ordinary people whose help and support are crucial for the survival of the language".

The “help and support” mentioned by Jones, are applicable not only in the relationship between the language activists and the local community, but between all parties involved in language revitalization. The relationship between community members and linguists/researchers is important. Researchers must respect the rights, the culture, and sensitivities of community members, and realize that ultimately, the best method of revitalizing a language is when members of that community language are fully involved in all stages of planning the revitalization attempts of that language. Communities can also draw on the expertise of linguists/researchers to document the language and help provide teaching materials.

At the governmental level, local governments need to be made aware of the rights of minority language groups, and make necessary provisions. One example of this would be to provide bilingual signs in the community, such as are seen in Wales. National governments need to be pressured in much the same way as local governments. The Ainu in Japan have benefited to a certain degree from the passing of the Ainu Shinpo in 1997, aspects of which include the promotion of the Ainu language. At an international level, similar pressure and action is required from supra-governmental organizations. In recent times, UNESCO, and in particular UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage Section, has been working towards safeguarding endangered languages by collaborating with experts in the field to draw up a set of plans and recommendations to be put to the Director-General of UNESCO. (See http://www.unesco.org/culture/heritage/intangible/endangeredlanguages/html_eng/RecomActionPlans.doc for full details).

4. Conclusion

Linguists have been making valid comparisons between the structures of differing languages for many years. However, trying to compare the social situations of languages from different parts of the globe, and how those situations impact on the respective languages is a task fraught with difficulty. It is difficult to compare the situation of an endangered language, such as Mati Ke in Australia (see Abley, 2004), with another endangered language such as Ryukyuan in Okinawa, or Ainu in Hokkaido. At first glance, all three languages may be deemed to be in a similar situation with low numbers of native speakers remaining. In fact, in all probability, Mati Ke and Ainu are very similar in terms of the number of native speakers remaining. However, culturally, their situations are very different. In Mati Ke culture, brothers and sisters are forbidden to talk with one another after puberty. Attempts to compare Mati Ke and Ainu (or Ryukyuan, or any other language) must take this cultural factor into account. It is of no surprise, therefore, that researchers into endangered languages have found it difficult to create a robust model for a typology of language endangerment that covers all languages, and that will be useful in language revitalization attempts. Each endangered language is affected by a variety of factors, and some of those factors are more relevant to some languages than others, meaning that each language is

in its own unique situation.

Even though a robust model for language endangerment typology is difficult to produce, comparison of the language revitalization programs for differing languages is a valid exercise, and an exercise through which many revitalization programs can learn vital information from each other. All over the world, communities are making valiant attempts to restore vitality to their languages, and their successes and failures can help other communities to adapt their own revitalization programs accordingly. Some of the methods used in revitalization programs in various parts of the world have been set out in section (3) of this paper. The efforts at the community level are of vital importance if an endangered language is to be saved. However, if the efforts at the community level are hampered by political intolerance at governmental level, or by economic hardship, then the task facing communities to restore vitality to their endangered languages is made all the more difficult.

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Appendix of minority languages appearing in this paper

Ainu (Japan)
 Bahasa (Malaysia)
 Basque (France, Spain)
 Breton (France)
 Catalan (Spain)
 Cornish (Cornwall, UK)
 Gujerati (India)
 Hawaiian (Hawaii, USA)
 Hebrew (Israel)
 Irish (Ireland)
 Karuk (California, USA)
 Manx (Isle of Man)
 Maori (New Zealand)

Mati Ke (Australia)
Rapa Nui (Easter Island, Chile)
Ryukyuan (Okinawa, Japan)
Scottish Gaelic (Scotland, UK)
Warlpiri (Australia)
Welsh (Wales, UK)