From Assessing Language Endangerment or Vitality to Creating and Evaluating Language Revitalization Programmes

Ogone John OBIERO
University of Leipzig, Germany

ABSTRACT

For over two decades now, linguists, educators and anthropologists have directed their efforts at researching about factors that occasion and result from language shift (Trudgill, 1991; Fishman 1991, 2001, Crystal, 2000; Edwards, 1992; Sasse, 1992; Landweer, 2000; Crawford, 1995; Blair and Freeden, 1995; Dorian, 1981, 1989; Brenzinger et. al. 2003; Paulston, 1994; and Lewis, 2006). However, since the formulation of the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) by Fishman (1991) to guide the assessment of language endangerment or vitality, numerous subsequent conceptual models have tended to focus more on evaluating world languages with respect to their shift rather than their revitalization. Drawing from a chronological overview of some metrics that have been proposed by various researchers together with institutions to guide the evaluation of language vitality or endangerment, and with due regard to some attempts at evaluating language revitalization efforts, this paper seeks to highlight key postulates that could inform efforts at building guidelines with which language revitalization activities may be set-up or examined.

Keywords: Language vitality indicators, language shift, language revitalization.

1. INTRODUCTION

The picture about language endangerment across the world is quite grim. Going by Ethnologue (Lewis and Simons, 2009: 4):

> Of the 6,909 living languages now listed in Ethnologue, 457 are identified as Nearly Extinct, a category which represents a severe level of endangerment. Less serious levels of endangerment are not currently distinguished in the Ethnologue. If small speaker population alone were taken as an indicator of language endangerment, the current worldwide count of languages with fewer than 10,000 speakers is 3,524 which amounts to just over 50% of the identified living languages in the world today.

Why then should we care when a language dies? Crystal (2000) presents five arguments: That, like biological species, a multiplicity of languages amounts to a diversity; that languages are an expression of identity; that languages are in themselves repositories of history; they form an integral part of the sum of

human knowledge; and that, as a slice of that knowledge, they are interesting subjects in their own right. Perhaps differently, these justifications have also variously been expressed by other authors.[1]

So as to reverse the tide of language loss, rescue measures mounted by linguists, individual communities, and interested organizations have focused their efforts on activities that have come to be known as language revitalization.[2] To these efforts, the diagnostic factors of language endangerment or vitality that form subject of this paper have been of immense relevance. This is because it would be important to determine where a language falls within the endangerment continuum before activities geared towards its maintenance are formulated.

In order to lay the ground for an overview of proposals in assessing language endangerment or vitality, it would be helpful to point out at this stage that while assessing language vitality or endangerment may be two sides of the same coin[3], their motivations are sometimes totally different. A close look at the diagnostics discussed here reveals two trends with the evaluative systems: Those that seek to guide a classification of the world's languages with respect to endangerment, and those that outline the vitality factors with a view to shaping intervention mechanisms on the languages concerned. The discussion in this paper has been made to follow this dichotomy.

Perhaps emergent with the discussion is the likelihood that the two engagements are often confused, occasionally even collapsed into one thing. Because of this possibility, more proposals appear to have emerged about assessing language endangerment or vitality than about evaluating language revitalization[4] efforts after the programmes kick off. In this paper, it is argued strongly that while the former has been invaluably foundational in designing language revitalization programmes, a formulation of guidelines to assist with the evaluation of revitalizations is necessary, as this would focus such activities better than they presently are.

---

[1] Like Marshall, 1994; Dawson, 1992; Smolicz, 1992; Hale, 1992; Schrock, 1986; and Fishman, 1991 and and Trudgill, 1991.

[2] There seems to be no agreement among different authors on what revitalization refers to. For instance, according to Paulston et. al (1994), revitalization is a type of language regenesis that implies the reinvigoration of a language, so as to get it out of limited use. To Spolsky (1995), revitalization is a type of language revival whose aim is the restoration of vitality to a language that had lost or was losing this attribute. According to Tsunoda (2005), language revitalization involves language maintenance (which concerns languages that may be endangered but are still alive) and language revival (which has to do with dead languages).

[3] An assessment of the vitality of a language necessarily reports on its endangerment state, and vice versa.

[4] Judgements of whether a revitalization programme is successful or not has tended to be based on the application of the vitality or endangerment diagnostics when a language programme has been on for some time.

2. A BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF DIAGNOSTICS ON LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT SINCE FISHMAN'S GIDS CONCEPTUAL MODEL

As if in response to the flurry of proposals enlisting factors that occasion language endangerment since the introduction of his model in 1991, Fishman (2001) advises a change of focus; from the global theorizing on language endangerment or vitality to the pursuit of a theoretically grounded thrust, based upon a wide spectrum of intervention efforts for endangered languages across the world. Crystal (2000: 130) had made the following observation to that end:

> If there is now a significant body of data on language maintenance projects which have achieved some success are there any factors which turn up so frequently that they could be recognized as postulates for a theory of language revitalization…?

As may be noted from the two positions, Fishman is rooting for applied, if empirical dimensions, while Crystal is more concerned about how the growing body of research on endangerment and revitalization could be made to enrich revitalization programmes. Nevertheless, both seem to agree on the functional dimension to all this research. May be out of this cue, some authors like Hinton and Hale (2001), Lizette et. al (2003), Spolsky (2003), and Grenoble and Whaley (2006) have come to adopt a more evaluative approach to language programmes.

As we turn now to the individual proposals below, our focus must remain on the contributions they stand to make on language revitalization as a plan of action. Grenoble and Whaley (2006: 3) have likewise noted:

> Assessing and understanding language vitality is a complex enterprise…
> yet the degree of language vitality is the basic indicator used in determining the appropriate type of language revitalization program.

2.1 FISHMAN'S GRADED INTERGENERATIONAL DISRUPTION SCALE (GIDS)

Fishman (1991) postulates a continuum of 8 stages for assessing language loss or disruption, and with which to guide any plan of action that would lead to turning around the fate of an endangered language. The scale is calibrated in such a way that stage 8 indicates near total extinction while stage 1 indicates the least disruption. Table 1 below shows an adaptation of the GID scale by Lewis and Simons (2009).

Table 1. *The Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale*.

GIDS LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
1	The language is used in education, work, mass media, government at the nationwide level
2	The language is used for local and regional mass media and governmental services
3	The language is used for local and regional work by both insiders and outsiders
4	Literacy in the language is transmitted through education
5	The language is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in written form throughout the community
6	The language is used orally by all generations and is being learned by children as their first language
7	The child-bearing generation knows the language well enough to use it with their elders but is not transmitting it to their children
8	The only remaining speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation

According to Fishman, a transition from stage *8* to *1* is an important step in keeping any endangered language alive. He prefers that revivalist efforts proceed from the bottom up, depending on where along the scale a language might fall. In assessing the endangerment or vitality state of any given language, the descriptive levels are hoped to provide the basis.

From the perspective of reversing language shift, stage *8* may prescribe applying the language apprentice model where fluent elderly speakers are teamed with young adults. Stage *7* would see the establishment of language nests as in the case of Maori or Hawaiian, where fluent speakers or adults teach the language at pre-school level, or organize immersion as did the Keres of North America. Stage *6* would see the setting aside of domains in the community in which the language is encouraged, protected and used exclusively. It would also have more young parents encouraged to speak the indigenous language at home with and around their young children. Stage *5* includes the offering of literacy in the minority language, the promotion of voluntary programmes in the schools and other community institutions to improve the prestige and use of the language in local government functions – especially social services, and also the rewarding of people who show enthusiasm to learn the language. Stage *4* would sanction improved instructional methods where the language is already in school. It would also see the development of a two-way bilingual program where an indigenous language is learnt alongside a national or an international language. This would be accompanied by the development of language textbooks to teach literacy and academic subject matter content. Stage *3* involves a campaign to promote the

language throughout the community as well as develop the vocabulary to adapt to the realities of a rapidly changing environment. Stage *2* takes the form of promoting the use of a written form of the language for government and business dealings/records. It also involves the promotion of the heritage language in newsletters, newspapers, radio stations, televisions and so on. Finally, stage *1*, at which the tribal language is used to teach the subject matter at college level, in publications and in dramatic presentations. At this stage, national awards can be organized in recognition of indigenous language publications and other notable efforts to popularize the language.

Though none of the 8 stages can ever accurately characterize the real situation of any given indigenous language[5], the GIDS model has been the most cited as an evaluative framework of language endangerment for nearly two decades now. As may be noted, the scale is more than clear on 'what' factors indicate vitality or endangerment. And, with the help of this guide, rescue measures can be formulated as is shown in the foregoing paragraph; so are judgements on where in the scale the language falls. What is unclear from this model is how to tell if a revitalization programme is properly designed, or whether it is achieving its goals. Invaluable as this model might seem, the criticism[6] leading to several revisions has been heavy as well.

2.2 LANDWEER'S INDICATORS OF ETHNOLINGUISTIC VITALITY

The 8 indicators of ethnolinguistic vitality discussed by Landweer (1998) are foundational as well in determining the state of a language with respect to endangerment or vitality. Like Fishman's scale, her factors are rather static, in that they do no more than report on the ethnolinguistic vitality of a language. Even then, some of the factors could be problematic to measure. The indicators can be summarized as:
- The extent to which it can resist influence by a dominant urban culture;
- The number of domains in which it is used;
- The frequency and type of code switching;
- The distribution of speakers across social networks;
- The internal and external recognition of the group as a unique community;
- Its relative prestige, compared with surrounding languages;
- Its access to a stable economic base; and
- The existence of a critical mass of fluent speakers.

---

5   Citing this limitation, Lewis and Simons (2009) have proposed an extended model of the GIDS so as to cater for a wider range of peculiarities with minoritized languages and their situations.

6   Some of these will be highlighted when evaluative systems specially designed as improvements or reconceptualizations of the GIDS are considered.

Important about this proposal is the fact that it focuses on degree of language vitality, which would go a long way in determining the choice of strategies to be applied where language reinvigoration has been considered. The problem is how to operationalize these indices in a practical situation. For instance, the issues of domain, code-switching, and distribution of speakers across social networks seem to address the same situation; as are relative prestige and economic base. Besides, exactly what is meant here by a critical mass of speakers, given some languages have few speakers?[7] Even more unclear is the place of domains as an index of language vitality. The argument here seems to be that the stronger a language, the more domains in which it is visible. This may not especially be true considering the numerous cases of stable bi/multilingualism in societies with high concentration of languages like Africa. Thus, as a diagnostic, this factor must be applied with caution.

Unlike Fishman's model though, her factors could easily be adaptable into a programme for action since the programme activities could be made to target each factor for boosting by the revitalization. Nonetheless, for a group that is willing to try their hand at language rescue for the first time, Landweer's factors are a bit too general.

2.3 EVALUATIVE SYSTEM OF THE *ETHNOLOGUE* FOR LANGUAGE VITALITY

As a catalogue, *Ethnologue*'s involvement with world languages for classification purposes is a landmark. Equally remarkable are the constant revisions made with the release of each edition as new data or dimensions are received by their research team. Owing to this unique engagement, of the important categories in the classification of languages to be considered here was *Ethnologue*'s. From their 14th Edition (2000) onwards, *Ethnologue* categorizes language vitality based on the 5-level scale[8] below.

1. Living: These are cases featuring a significant population of first-language speakers.
2. Second Language Only: Are cases in which a language is used as second-language only. No first-language users (emerging users could be included here)
3. Nearly Extinct: Characterizes cases with fewer than 50 speakers or a very small and decreasing fraction of an ethnic population

---

[7] Romaine (2007) poses "how many speakers are thought to be needed for a language to be viable?" About 20% of some indigenous languages spoken in Australia, the Pacific, and the Americas have hardly 200 speakers.
[8] Revisions on this scale and a proposal by the Ethnologue is discussed in this paper under EGIDS.

4. Dormant: Cases where there are no known remaining speakers, but a population links its ethnic identity to the language
5. Extinct: Where there are no remaining speakers and where no population links its ethnic identity to the language

Glaring from the 5-level scale is the lack of scaling for the category of languages considered 'living.' Like we already noted, this bias may have been caused by a keenness to classify endangerment rather than vitality. As opposed to 'living', levels 2 down to 5 give the impression of 'non-living', which is in/sensitive as this might stir attitudes among certain language communities. Moreover, given that such labels also necessarily influence research, they may be misleading. Even then, levels 2 downward also tend to over-generalize the situations of languages falling in these categories, hence the need for a further fine-graining. For instance, it might sometimes be premature to render as 'nearly extinct' languages with 50 speakers or below.[9]

Nonetheless, a strong point made out of this scale is the concern with first as well as second language speakers. Many classifications merely mention 'speakers' without bringing this distinction to bear on patterns of language use. In intervention terms, the distinction would make it easier for planners to determine who to target. Otherwise, the 5 categories would largely serve the purpose of classifying unstable languages in terms of their endangerment than those considered living or viable.

2.4 FACTORS OF VITALITY AND ENDANGERMENT PROPOSED BY UNESCO

At the UNESCO Experts Meeting on Safeguarding Endangered Languages, a framework was proposed by Brenzinger and others[10] that uses 9 factors of vitality and endangerment in measuring the level of endangerment of the world's languages. These are:

1. Intergenerational language transmission;
2. Absolute numbers of speakers;
3. Proportion of speakers within the total population;
4. Loss of existing language domains;
5. Response to new domains and media;

---

9 A language identified as Masep with 30-40 speakers may be thus classified as endangered yet it is used vigorously by all ages within the speech community and has been in this state since 1955 (See Clouse, Donohue, and Ma 2002, p. 4). I believe there are a handful such languages across the world in this state, whose situation is yet to be reported.

10 See Brenzinger, M., Akira Y., Noriko A., Dimitri, K., Anahit, M., Arienne D., Colette, G., Michael, K., Osahito, M., Osamu, S., Rieks, S., and Ofelia, Z. (2003) about the composition of this UNESCO Ad Hoc. Committee.

6.   Materials for language education and literacy;
7.   Governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies;
8.   Community members' attitudes towards their own language; and
9.   Amount and quality of documentation.

So as to operationalize these factors, they suggest that for each language, a 5-point score should be assigned to each of the factors (except factor 2). From a summation matrix of the scores from the scale, a measure of the level of endangerment together with a sense of the level of urgency for revitalization efforts can then be determined.

As if to put this framework to the test, *SIL* (Lewis, 2005) selected 100 of the languages of the world and subjected them to an analysis guided by the proposed framework. From the findings, he said the following of the framework itself: "It provides not only a clear framework for assessment but also delineates a very useful research agenda for investigators of the world's languages that is based on a sound theoretical orientation to language maintenance and shift" (pp 28).

However, Lewis' study found their categorization of the 5-point scoring unhelpfully less definitive. For instance, factor 2 requires information on the absolute numbers of speakers, yet this information is not only hard to find but also difficult to interpret. Furthermore, what is meant by 'speakers' in factor 3 is also ambiguous: Is it the L1 speakers, monolingual speakers, or those who use the language as a second language? Factor 4 too is problematic. Lewis argues: "Certainly, the synchronic descriptions are indicative of language endangerment if the core domains (home, friends, neighbourhood) are no longer associated with the language in question, but the fact that languages are assigned different functions does not necessarily indicate that language shift is underway" (Lewis, 2005: 26).

Factor 6 on the other hand is complex. Data can be found on the use of the language as a medium of instruction, on existence of education programmes which use the language, on the existence of pedagogical materials and so on. But, what if there is more than one orthography, with opposing factional interests? What if the schools are the only source of language transmission? Of factor 8, attitudes are difficult to assess because they are hardly ever uniformly held across an entire population.

Together, these issues make the UNESCO framework rather cursory, but not worthless. Overall, all the factors except 9[11] raise fundamental questions about language vitality that may be interesting to language revivalists. For instance, the language 'user' related factors ranging from 1 to 3 highlight the centrality of speakers in the viability of their language. Beginning with intergenerational

---

[11] This is because amount and quality of documentation in itself does not constitute an index for assessing vitality. Several languages lack proper documentation around the world, yet they maintain speakers. Likewise, some others feature reasonable documentation, but have nearly lost their usual speakers.

transmission[12], a language only becomes viable when it is passed on across generations (so revitalization efforts would have to focus on this). Similarly, its vitality dwindles when the number of people able to use it shrink, or when a larger percentage of its would-be speakers within a community prefer a language other than their own. In the same way, those planning a language revitalization will find the 'uses' related factors from 4 to 8 very helpful. A viable[13] language is that which is used across social networks and in a wide range of contexts. The proper planning about and of the domains in which a language is used in the case of a revitalization begins with the assessment of factors 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 above.

Thus, as a guide post, this framework is invaluable to linguists, organizations, and communities involved with language endangerment and revitalization since it is a clearer reconceptualization of the factors indicative of language loss or vitality. Furthermore, and as Grenoble and Whaley (2006) rightly put it, assessing (changes in) language vitality over time provides the easiest measure of success for   attempts to revitalize a threatened language.

2.5 *ETHNOLOGUE*'S EXPANDED GRADED INTERGENERATIONAL DISRUPTION SCALE (EGIDS)

Arising from the problems with UNESCO's framework, the GIDS, and the Ethnologue's evaluative categories, Lewis and Simons (2009) have put together

---

[12]   Since intergenerational transmission is the turning point in the life of a language, it is the most important element of language vitality, and very often the ultimate goal of revitalizations. Unfortunately, a range of language planning initiatives have found intergenerational transmission difficult to determine, and hence difficult to plan alongside other activities in a revitalization. As is cautioned by Grenoble and Whaley (2006), intergenerational transmission is never uniform across a speaker population, causing the possibility that the factor would be challenging to focus, let alone report on. Still on this difficulty, Romaine (2007) provides the example of Welsh whose introduction in the public domain has in some areas been accompanied by a weakening of its use in critical domains such as the home; confirming earlier fears that the family is no longer the main agency of language reproduction (see Romaine 2006). King (2001) notes that language revitalization is about giving a language new users and uses, arguing this must not lead to a generational transmission. Perhaps to address the gaps with this factor, Krauss (1992) introduced a 10-point distinction in order to fine-grain the assessment of this factor so as to determine the extent of language disruption.

[13]   Using strength in domains (be they existing or new) as an index of viability is problematic as well. A positive trend in this parameter signals viability, yet a less than expected score does not necessarily imply a lack of viability. For instance, In settings where bi/multilingual language policies have been adopted, the existence of only certain languages in domains such as education, administration, literacy, mass media should not be taken to mean languages that do not feature in these domains are by that fact under pressure of shift.

a 13-level model called EGIDS[14] with the help of which all of the world's languages (including those for which there are no longer speakers) can be classified.

From the scale, a language can be evaluated by answering 5 key questions regarding its identity function, vehicularity, state of intergenerational language transmission, literacy acquisition status, and a societal profile of its generational use. "With only minor modification the EGIDS can also be applied to languages which are being revitalized" (Lewis and Simons, 2009: 2). Table 2 below summarizes the EGIDS levels.

Table 2. *The EGIDS levels as presented by Lewis and Simons.*

LEVEL	LABEL	DESCRIPTION	UNESCO
0	International	The language is used internationally for a broad range of functions.	Safe
1	National	The language is used in education, work, mass media, and government at the nationwide level.	Safe
2	Regional	The language is used for local and regional mass media and governmental services.	Safe
3	Trade	The language is used for local and regional work by both insiders and outsiders.	Safe
4	Educational	Literacy in the language is being transmitted through a system of public education.	Safe
5	Written	The language is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in written form in parts of the community.	Safe
6a	Vigorous	The language is used orally by all generations and is being learned by children as their first language.	Safe
6b	Threatened	The language is used orally by all generations but only some of the child-bearing generation are transmitting it to their children.	Vulnerable
7	Shifting	The child-bearing generation knows the language well enough to use it among themselves but none are transmitting it to their children	Definitely Endangered

---

[14] The EGIDS is basically an expanded version of Fishman's GIDS model. The only difference is that its fine-grained levels have been made to correspond to UNESCO's evaluative system, taking care to cover Ethnologue's categories as much as possible.

8a	Moribund	The only remaining active speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation.	Severely Endangered
8b	Nearly Extinct	The only remaining speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation or older who have little opportunity to use the language.	Critically Endangered
9	Dormant	The language serves as a reminder of heritage identity for an ethnic community. No one has more than symbolic proficiency.	Extinct
10	Extinct	No one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language, even for symbolic purposes.	Extinct

Though the numbering in Table 2 shows 10 levels, the labels themselves feature 13 categories. Levels 6a and 6b correspond to Fishman's GIDS at Level 6; similarly, 8a and 8b correspond to Level 8 in the GIDS. Levels 0, 9, and 10 are entirely new. The fourth column is made to correspond to UNESCO's endangerment or vitality categories.

Emerging from Table 2, Lewis and Simons (2009) have attempted to achieve three important things: The layering of 'safe' languages so as to capture the diversity of their situations, the definitive expansion of categories falling below safe (as this would be of interest to revitalization programmes), and the flexibility of the entire grid (so a large number of the world's languages are represented). To demonstrate this adaptability, they explain how the 5-key questions can guide the diagnosis and evaluation process.

Question 1 poses *What is the current identity function of the language?* There are four possible answers to this question (Historical, Heritage, Home, and Vehicular) whose selection determines which of the rest of the questions would be focused next. Key Question 2 asks *What is the level of official use?* This question helps to distinguish between the possible EGIDS levels when a language is serving the vehicular identity function. There are four possible answers which correspond to EGIDS levels 0 to 3. These are: International, national, regional, not-official. Key Question 3 that must be asked when the answer to Key Question 1 is *Home* is: *Are all parents transmitting the language to their children?* Here, the two possible constraining answers are Yes or No. If Yes is the selected answer, Key Question 4 must be answered in order to determine if the community is at EGIDS Level 4, 5, or 6a. If No, Key Question 5 must be answered to determine if the community is at EGIDS Level 6b, 7, 8a, or 8b. Key Question 4 asks *What is the literacy status?* If the response to Key Question 3 is "Yes", then the status of literacy education in the community needs to be identified. Again, there are three possible answers to this question:

Institutional, Incipient (written), and None. Key Question 5 poses *What is the youngest generation of proficient speakers?* When the response to Key Question 3 (Intergenerational Transmission) is "No", it is necessary to know how far along language shift has progressed in order to assess the current EGIDS level: Great grandparent, Grandparent, Parent, Children.

Nonetheless, this model is yet to be tried out, so it would be premature to judge it at this point. Yet some sticking points already look obvious. Like with the original GIDS, the levels are still inherently static, if inevitably so. For instance, is it correct to classify the world's languages as either safe or unsafe? (See the turning point at 6b). Secondly, the possibility of heavy overlaps among the categories identified across the labels is also astounding (e.g. the continuum reflected between level 0 and 6a could refer to the same language in a number of settings around the world). Also worrying are the assumptions underlying some of the categories. According to this grid, an erroneous insinuation is made that a language is 'unsafe' if it does not fit in the functional domains described between 0 and 6a.

In summing up, it would be important to reflect upon the overall strength of the overview on the diagnostics for language endangerment and vitality since Fishman's GIDS. As these models and proposals highlight principles upon which postulates for a theory of language revitalization must be based, they could fit the double pronged role of entry points for intervention programmes as well as the check-list against which the efficacy of ongoing programmes are evaluated.

3. TOWARDS SETTING UP AND EXAMINING LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION EFFORTS

Like we have noted with the growing range of perspectives on assessing language endangerment or vitality, a great deal of research is beginning to focus on 'how' language revitalization programmes could be designed as well as evaluated. Inspired by the success story of the revival of Hebrew and enlightened by the false starts reported from some language revival projects (for instance, of Dyirbal, Bisu, and Rama), some external experts (usually linguists) working with minority communities have resorted to formative assessments of the language revitalization projects. In many instances, these evaluations have been of immense benefit to the individual projects. For space considerations, I will mention only a few of such cases.

Peter et. al (In Reyhner, Trujillo, Carrasco and Lockard 2003) open their title "Assessing the Impact of Total Immersion on Cherokee Language Revitalization: A Culturally Responsive, Participatory Approach" with the remark that attempts to measure the effectiveness of language maintenance and revitalization efforts have been slow to follow the emergence of these programs. They attribute this gap to the general mistrust in the ability of formal

measurements to convey all that can and needs to be said about the qualities of a given language revival program. To bridge this gap, they propose a culturally responsive and participatory approach in programme evaluations. In doing this, program objectives, processes, and outcomes must be assessed. However, communities need not be subjected to evaluation procedures that focus on things deemed unimportant to them.

Still working on Cherokee language, Peter, Sly and Hirata-Edds (2008) formulated a language assessment checklist aimed at informing instruction in Cherokee's immersion project. As they note, the purpose of language assessment in a language revitalization programme is to give feedback to teachers, learners, and parents about learner abilities; to improve curriculum and instruction; to plan for the future; and to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme in reversing language shift. They observe, in addition, that assessment should be used for programme improvement, should be ongoing, should be revisited and revised regularly, and should be culturally responsive and responsible so as to ensure full participation of the stakeholders.

Other not so similar[15] assessments are reported elsewhere with other languages. For instance, considerable work in assessment has been developed by Māori language educators and researchers in New Zealand. These assessments were developed in consultation with community members and elders and were based on the communicative approach to assessment. Details of these can be found from a draft report titled "Review of the Literature on the Assessment of Indigenous Languages" by Hamley, et. al. (2010). The languages covered in their assessment include Mohawk, Navajo, Keresian, and Cherokee (from the USA), Cree (from Canada), and Maori, Kija, Australian Aboriginal Languages, Quechua and Aymara (from New Zealand, Australia, and Peru).

The report features assessment tasks involving receptive skills, interactive skills, extended productive skills, and socio-cultural language skills. The authors conclude, however, that for assessments to be feasible and valid, they must reflect the local culture where the language is being learned. Like Peter et. al (2003), they recommend a community-based, culturally responsive design from the initial stages of test development to the final stages of test delivery and evaluation for formal programmes.

These programmatic assessment efforts aside, the following two proposals seem to summarize factors that underlie success or failure of language revitalization programmes.

---

[15] In a draft report titled *Review of the Literature on the Assessment of Indigenous Languages*, Jeffrey Hamley, Erin Haynes, Charles Stansfield, Caylie Gnyra, Mallory Schleif, Sandra Anderson and prepared for the Bureau of Indian Education By Second Language Testing, Inc. Rockville, MD on 7/2/2010, the authors point out that culturally appropriate formal or informal methods of assessment such as conceived in Peter et al. (2003) are missing from many Native American language programs.

3.1 KEY FACTORS IN LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE PROPOSED BY AKIRA YAMAMOTO

Yamamoto (1998) distinguishes the following 9 factors as key in the maintenance and promotion of small languages:
- The existence of a dominant factor in favour of diversity;
- A strong sense of ethnic identity within the endangered community;
- The promotion of educational programmes about the endangered language and culture;
- The creation of bilingual/bicultural programmes;
- The training of native speakers as teachers;
- The involvement of the speech community as a whole;
- The creation of language material that are easy to use;
- The development of written literature, both traditional and new; and
- The creation and development of environments in which the language may be used.

Outstanding is how the themes highlighted with the parameters of language vitality or endangerment recur with these factors. Otherwise, Yamamoto's factors are inseparable, at least with respect to their influence on one another. For instance, the existence of a dominant factor in favour of diversity, promotion of educational (if bilingual) programmes, the training of teachers, creation of language material, and the development of written literature seem to me to revolve around institutional support through school.

Accompanied by a steady stream of literature and documentation, schooling is one of the proven ways by which steady language revitalizations have been ensured. The problem is where we are left with these proposals when the planning initiatives for the development of a language do not prioritize schooling. Also problematic is how to realistically set aside environments in which an endangered language is to be used within a community. Despite all that, his proposal reads like a check-list, which could be of huge relevance at the goal setting and assessment stages of language programmes.

3.2 PREREQUISITES FOR LANGUAGE PROGRESS PROPOSED BY DAVID CRYSTAL

Crystal (2000) identifies 6 factors that indicate progress of a language that was formerly shifting. In summary, these are:
- An endangered language will progress if its speakers increase their prestige within the dominant community;
- An endangered language will progress if its speakers increase their wealth relative to the dominant community;

- An endangered language will progress if its speakers increase their legitimate power in the eyes of the dominant community;
- An endangered language will progress if its speakers have a strong presence in the educational system;
- An endangered language will progress if its speakers can write their language down; and
- An endangered language will progress if its users can make use of electronic technology.

As is already noted with Yamamoto's above, the overlap across the prerequisites to language progress seem to persist with Crystal's proposal. The increase in prestige, wealth, and legitimate power address a raise in relative status, just like a presence in education and literacy are tied to some form of institutional support through schooling. But altogether new is Crystal's proposal that an endangered language will progress if its users can make new 'uses'[16] of it, such as in the electronic media. In sum, Crystal is laying out 'what' minority groups should do so that their language could progress. As a starting point for language programmes, this could be helpful at the goal setting stage.

As may have been noted, Yamamoto's and Crystal's factors come across as a summary of the key prerequisites to language maintenance. Drawing from or in addition to these, the need to evaluate language programmes before and while in progress has gathered steam. A quick review follows below of the proposals designed specifically for setting-up or evaluating language revitalization programmes.

3.3 PHASES OF LANGUAGE PLANNING BY BRANDT AND AYOUNGMAN

According to Brandt and Ayoungman (1989)[17], a revitalization programme needs to go through a planning phase before it is implemented. The 9 planning phases are:

1. The introductory phase
   This is the phase at which highly motivated people initiate or catalyze the language revival programme.
2. The goal setting phase
   At this phase, the desired outcome of the language programme is formulated. Questions such as what is to be achieved? A full-revival

---

[16] The new domains a language might acquire include (but not limited to) its use on radio, television, in films, on the internet, for literacy, and in education.

[17] Hornerberger N.H. (ed.) (1997) reconceptualises Brandt and Ayoungman's stages into types of language planning featuring status, acquisition, corpus, and orthography.

of the language? Aspects of it? What role is the language to play in the community? and so on are asked.

3. Replanning and research phase
The planners and enthusiasts survey the language community, discover the resources available, research about the language and find out what other revitalization programmes did or are doing.

4. Needs assessment phase
This stage determines what is needed for the programme to take off. The survey here determines the funding, consultancy, equipment, teacher training, and a supportive legislation, if need be.

5. Policy formulation phase
Here, the community in question generates a programme of actions to guide the revitalization process. This might highlight a general mission statement about the language and its value, the role of key players in the programme, a list of the main goals, and a statement on orthography and literacy.

6. Goal reassessment and strategies towards reaching them
This is the phase where the timeline is fixed, the proposal is written, a decision on the funding sources is finalized, training methods agreed upon, and a schedule for training seminars released.

7. Implementation phase
With the previous phases complete, the community starts the actual revitalization at this stage. If a school programme is desired, the curriculum will have been ready for implementation as well. Presumably, the language materials would have been ready for distribution at this stage.

8. Evaluation phase
Once the programme is implemented, the people involved must evaluate its progress and effectiveness on a regular basis. Such an evaluation might be made to focus on assessing the language proficiency of the learners, the amount and quality of the materials developed, the degree to which the desired goals are being met, and the degree to which the desired groups are involved.

9. Replanning phase
The report from the evaluation leads back to the planning. At this phase, the programme is modified so as to address the matters arising with the programme. This is also the phase to formulate more advanced goals, if the previous goals are satisfactorily achieved.

As opposed to the earlier proposals that tended to identify only the stage where a language falls between safe and unsafe, Brandt and Ayoungman's stages grab the bull by the horns in focusing on the full cycle of revitalization activities from planning, through implementation and evaluation, back to planning. Like Hinton and Hale (2001) have rightly pointed out, a community driven language planning of this sort is necessary because it leads to the formulation of realistic

goals together with the strategies to achieve them; creates a basis for community ownership; creates ground for easy co-ordination of activities; and lays a basis upon which sectarian crises may be addressed. Also remarkable about this model is its capacity for universal application. Since all the activities are tied around the circumstances of a given language, both goal setting and the evaluation are easier to focus.

Feasible as these language planning phases are, the over-emphasis on the involvement of the local community (which is the ideal) in the revitalization process is deceptive since "such indigenous communities will usually have had their essence of togetherness disrupted to the extent that a concerted effort towards a goal envisaged as 'communal' is near inconceivable" (Ogone, 2008: 247). Given this observation, it is unlikely that minority communities will spearhead research, mobilize funding, outline a programme of activities, overcome the attendant legislative bottlenecks, and conduct an evaluation as seems to have been suggested across the planning phases. Thus, obviously lacking with Brandt and Ayoungman's phases is clear information about who would lead the key dimension of institutional support.

3.4 STEPS OF LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE BY HINTON AND HALE

Noting Fishman's GIDS model included some steps that many minority languages may not reach, Hinton and Hale (2001) suggest 9 other steps, that though a reflection of the GIDS, focus less on higher goals such as bringing an endangered language into national use. Outlined in their phenomenal title *The Green Book Of Language Revitalization In Practice*, the steps go as below.

Step 1. Language assessment and planning: Includes an assessment of the linguistic situation of the language. Ask how many speakers are there? Their ages? The resources available? Attitudes towards the revitalization? What are the realistic goals for language revitalization in that community?

Step 2. If the language has no speakers, use available materials to reconstruct the language (as was done with Native Californian).

Step 3. If the language has only elderly speakers, document their language alongside other steps.

Step 4. Develop a second language learning programme for adults, as this cohort would feed back to the programme later (see the Master-Apprentice model).

Step 5. Develop or enhance cultural practices that support and encourage use of the endangered language at home and in public by first and second language speakers (as in the Irish example).

Step 6. Develop intensive second language programmes for children (with a component in schools). If possible, use the endangered language for instruction (e.g. the Maori, Hawaiian examples).
Step 7. Use the language at home primarily, so that the children learn it as a mother tongue. Develop support groups for parents to help them in that transition (like in the Hawaiian example).
Step 8. Expand its domain into local government, media, local commerce, and so on (e.g. the case of Irish on radio).
Step 9. Where possible, expand its domain beyond the community, perhaps into the language of wider communication, regional, or national government (as in the Hebrew case).

Unlike Brandt and Ayoungman's planning phases, these steps do not have to follow in the order they are laid out. And depending on the circumstances of a given language, some of the steps could be taken simultaneously. Even then, despite the fact that the programme activities are well identified for every stage, there is no reference to coordination among them. Secondly, the element of who leads the activities at every step is omitted. Moreover, if these steps are aimed at language maintenance, then step 9 does not fit well in the list. Thus Hinton and Hale's steps are not as helpful to communities whose objective is to set-up, and thereafter evaluate their language maintenance programme.

3.5 CREATING A LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION PROGRAMME BY GRENOBLE AND WHALEY

In *Saving Languages*, Grenoble and Whaley (2006) spared every effort in focusing on what activities to carry out before a language revitalization programme is implemented. The result is an elaborate language programme design that could easily lend itself to an evaluation. Below are my highlights of their key components in the creation of a language programme[18].

---

[18] Some such designs have been elaborate as well, but with individual languages. For instance, the Practical guidelines for local communities, institutions, and linguists engaged in language revitalization were oriented this way by the Alaska Native Knowledge Network. The guidelines here are targeted on the Alaskan indigenous languages. Their emphasis is placed on cultural transmission, with a special focus on the role of native elders in ensuring this. The guidelines outline specific goals for each dimension or group involved with the revitalization. For each stakeholder, a set of specific activities are prescribed. The targeted groups include native elders, parents, aspiring language learners, native communities and organizations, educators, schools, education agencies, linguists, and media producers. Along with the guidelines are general recommendations offered to support the effective implementation of the guidelines as well as a list of resources for strengthening indigenous languages.

1. Preliminaries to consider before a language revitalization programme kicks off
    1.1. Assessment of financial, language, and human resources: Where most or all these may be lacking, a campaign towards securing them may be necessary.
    1.2. Assessment of language vitality: Conduct a proficiency survey, so as to establish the number, type, distribution (areal and age) of speakers within the community. This helps in focusing the goals of the language programme.
    1.3. Assessment of language variation: Determine dialectal variation within the community. Establish if it is diverse, the perceptions thereof, or if there is mutual intelligibility. This information will inform the need to develop a standard or to develop more than one variety.
    1.4. Assessment of needs, goals, and attitudes: Establish how the community perceives its language and what the programme would be desired to achieve. This way, the activities in the programme would be properly targeted.

2. Minimizing the effect of potential challenges
    2.1. The problem of inadequate resources: Adjust goals accordingly if there is no way out. Train teachers where the programme involves schooling, or co-opt resource people from the community in more informal settings
    2.2. Keeping the initial enthusiasm: Create a culture of rewarding progress with the language.
    2.3. Leadership problems: Reduce wrangling by creating a clear structure led by locals. Mobilize community support and ownership.
    2.4. The challenge of prohibitive language policies and laws: Advocate for linguistic rights in education alongside minority rights.

3. Updating the lexicon
    3.1. Owing to a period of disruption, there is need to update the lexicon of endangered languages: To do this, borrow the lexicon from the language of wider communication, from related languages, or create new words.

4. Creating a literacy programme
    4.1. Literacy assessment: Establish from the community if literacy is desired by them, and in what range of contexts. A literacy may raise the status of the language.
    4.2. Creating a written language: If there was no written form in the language before, an orthography must be developed and standardized.
    4.3. Creating materials: Aggressively develop pedagogical materials alongside other reading matter (typically oral cultures may however forego this component).

- 4.4. Teacher training: Train teachers among the adult population that can speak the language so they teach it. If only elders can speak the language, mobilize them to apprentice the would-be teachers.
- 4.5. The role of technology: Use relevant software for purposes of archiving, documentation, and material development. Also use the electronic media to disseminate information as well as mobilize resources for the language.
- 4.6. The role of the outsider: Outsource funding and expertise from beyond the community from organizations, educators, governments, linguists, and missionaries.

5. Evaluation of the programme
   - 5.1. Conduct regular evaluations on the programme: This is conducted as the programme is designed and after it is implemented. The evaluations should target he goals for which the programme was set (see if they are being achieved, if they need to be adjusted, or if the strategies need to change).

For fear of unnecessary repetition, I will cut out the details of how Grenoble and Whaley feel a language programme should be evaluated. But briefly, and in line with the 5-level highlights above, their argument is that an evaluation of a language revitalization programme needs to be hinged on its 'vitality', be that before or during the programme. The evaluation itself should address the entire range of language vitality factors[19], the attitudes, the language perceptions, group identity perceptions, and the literacy survey. Overall, a mention is made within their framework of who does what, and when. In addition, their pressure points are clear, implying the resultant evaluation would be well focussed. Their only undoing is the mix-up with the 'language vitality' phrase. In their evaluation framework, it comprises a part of the process, yet it is the name of the whole process as well. For instance, by theme, it appears evaluating attitudes or group identity have nothing to do with 'language vitality'! (we have seen from the diagnostic section of this paper the range of factors that indicate language vitality).

4. CONCLUSIVE REMARKS

This review is no doubt inconclusive as there are numerous other diagnostic proposals of language vitality or endangerment that I found neither the space nor

---

[19] These may include the approximate size of the speaker population, the population that uses the language as a mother tongue, the mono/bi/multilingual levels within the community, the distribution of proficiency by age and by area, and the existing or new domains of use.

the time to include.[20] Nonetheless, the studies considered in this review were sufficiently representative of the trends in research on this area. Since GIDS, the proposals appear to have moved away from mere classification of the world's languages with respect to whether they are viable or not, to what can be done to the less viable ones. In the review, Yamamoto and Crystal's proposals are placed midstream, but at the onset of the section 3 (focusing on language revitalization) because they epitomize the turning point; their outlines of what could be done to develop endangered languages read like a reconceptualization of the endangering factors as revealed by the vitality indices from section 2.
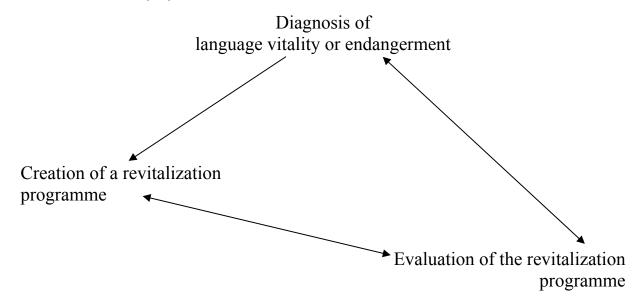
On selecting proposals that address the creation or evaluation of language revitalization programmes, however, the criteria favoured universal approaches over studies reporting on individual languages. Even at a quick glance here, the activities that underlie the evaluations in the case studies reflect the universals focused in section 2 above. In assessing Maori regeneration, for instance, Spolsky (2003) has dealt with each revivalist effort as it was applied on the language, weighing their efficacy as he does so. This is in recognition of the fact that language programmes are oriented differently, given the variation in goals. Similarly, the assessment of the impact of total immersion on Cherokee language revitalization as reported by Lizette et. al (2003) was pegged on the goals and activities as identified mainly by the local Cherokee community. To these authors, top-down evaluative approaches tend to be characterized by a single point of view, which is likely to condemn[21] rather than help the community with its language, hence their preference for a more empowering local-community driven evaluation.

However, this paper sought to argue in favour of the need for a more universal approach from assessing language endangerment or vitality to the creation and evaluation of revitalization programmes. Like other projects, language revitalization programmes themselves need to be well planned beforehand, so they could lend themselves to a systematic evaluation. If the state of a language is inaccurately diagnosed, the resultant intervention programme will likewise be inappropriately designed. As a consequence, the outcome of evaluating the programme objectives and processes will be misleading. Thus, the relationship connecting a diagnosis of factors indicative of language vitality or endangerment, the creation of revitalization programmes, and the evaluation of these programmes should proceed and feed back in the manner reflected in the diagram below.

---

20 For instance, among the proposals left out is Edwards' (1992) 11- factor framework designed for minority languages and features of a shifting language by Blair and Freeden (1995).

21 Perhaps this is why Grenoble and Whaley (2006: ix) note that "an honest evaluation of most language revitalization efforts to date will show that they have failed".

Diagnosis of
language vitality or endangerment

Creation of a revitalization
programme

Evaluation of the revitalization
programme

From the diagram, the creation of a language revitalization programme proceeds only from the outcome of a detailed account about the state of a language as determined by the application of the diagnostic procedures of language vitality or endangerment. At the same time, the factors occasioning its endangerment as revealed at the diagnostic stage provide the basis for its evaluation when the programme has been on for some time. Otherwise, soon as the programme is created, evaluation becomes its integral part (both at the set-up, and after the implementation stages). This is so that the goals, strategies, and approaches could be adjusted accordingly. But even as the evaluation feeds back on the programme creation, its outcomes continue to enrich the body of knowledge about factors that indicate language vitality or endangerment.

REFERENCES

Blair, H. and Fredeen, S. 1995.
> *Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night. Rage, Rage, Against the Dying of the Light*. **Anthropology & Education Quarterly** 26(1): 27–49.

Brandt, E.A. and Ayoungman, V. 1989.
> *A Practical Guide to Language Renewal*. **Canadian Journal of Native Education** 16(2): 42–77.

Brenzinger, M., Akira Y., Noriko A., Dimitri, K., Anahit, M., Arienne D., Colette, G., Michael, K., Osahito, M., Osamu, S., Rieks, S., and Ofelia, Z. 2003.
> *Language vitality and Endangerment*. Paris: UNESCO Expert Meeting on Safeguarding Endangered Languages.

Clouse, D., Donohue, M. and Ma, F. 2002.
> Survey Report of the North Coast of Irian Jaya. *Technical Report, SIL International, Dallas*. SIL Electronic Survey Reports 2002–078 http://www.sil.org/silesr/abstract.asp?ref=2002-078. Pp. 1–13.

Crawford, J. 1995.
> *Endangered Native American Languages: What Is to Be Done, and Why?* [Online].Available at http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/files/rcd/BE021828/Endangered_Native_American.pdf

Crystal, D. 2000.
> *Language Death*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dawson, F. 1992.
> *Resource Materials at Pauline Alfred office*. April 13. Letter in U'mista.

Dorian, N.C. 1981.
> *Language Death: The Life Cycle of a Scottish Gaelic Dialect*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Dorian, N.C. (ed.) 1989.
> *Investigating Obsolescence: Studies in Language Contraction and Death*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Edwards, J. 1992.
> Sociopolitical Aspects of Language Maintenance and Loss: Towards a Typology of Minority Language Situations. In: W. Fase, K. Jaspaert, and S. Kroon (eds.), *Maintenance and Loss of Minority Languages*, pp. 37–54. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Fishman, J.A. 1991.
> *Reversing Language Shift: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Language*. Clevedon-England: Multilingual matters.

Fishman, J.A. (ed.) 2001.
> *Can threatened languages be saved? Reversing language shift, revisited: A 21st century perspective*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Grenoble, L.A. and Whaley, L.J. 2006.
> *Saving Languages: An Introduction to Language Revitalization.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hale, K. 1992.
> On Endangered Languages and the Safeguarding of Diversity. In: K. Hale et al (eds.), *Endangered Languages*. **Language** 68(1), pp. 1–3.

Hamley, J., Haynes, E., Stansfield, C., Gnyra, C., Schleif, M., and Anderson, S. 2010.
> *Review of the Literature on the Assessment of Indigenous Languages*. A Draft report prepared for the Bureau of Indian Education By Second Language Testing, Inc. Rockville.

Hinton, L. and Hale, K. (ed.) 2001.
> *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice*. San Diego: Academic Press.

Hornerberger, N.H. (ed.) 1997.
   Indigenous Literacies in the Americas: Language Planning From the Bottom Up. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

King, J. 2001.
   Te Ko¯hanga Reo: Ma¯ori Language Revitalization. In: L. Hinton & K. Hale (eds.), *The green book of language revitalization in practice,* pp. 129–132. New York: Academic Press.

Krauss, M. 1992.
   The World's Languages in Crisis. In: K. Hale et al. (eds.), *Endangered languages.* **Language** 68(1): 4–10.

Landweer, L.M. 2000.
   Indicators of ethnolinguistic vitality. **Notes on Sociolinguistics** 5(1): 5–22.
   1998   Indicators of ethnolinguistic vitality case study of two languages: Labu and Vanimo. In: N. Ostler (ed.), *Proceedings of the second FEL conference: Endangered Languages—What Role for The Specialist?,* pp. 64–72. Bath, UK: The Foundation for Endangered Languages.

Lewis, P.M., and Simons, G.F. 2009.
   Assessing Endangerment: Expanding Fishman's Gids. *Revue Roumaine de Linguistique.* SIL International. Dallas. Pp1–30.

Lewis, P.M. 2005.
   Towards a Categorization of Endangerment of the World's Languages. SIL International. Pp. 25–35.

Lewis, M.P. 2006.
   Towards a categorization of endangerment of the world's languages, SIL International, http://www.sil.org/silewp/abstract.asp?ref=2006-002.

Lizette, P. (with Christie, E., Cochran, M., Dunn, D., Elk, L., Fields, E., Fields, J., Hirata-Edds, T., Huckaby, A., Raymond, M., Shade, H., Sly, G., Wickliffe, G., Yamamoto, A.) 2003.
   Assessing the Impact of Total Immersion on Cherokee Language Revitalization: A Culturally Responsive, Participatory Approach. In: J. Reyhner, O. Trujillo, R.L. Carrasco & L. Lockard (eds.), *Nurturing Native Languages*, pp. 7–23. Flagstaff, AZ Arizona: Northern Arizona University.

Marshall, D. 1994.
   Language Maintenance and Revival. **Annual Review of Applied Linguistics** (1993/1994) 14: 20–33.

Ogone, J.O. 2008.
   Evaluating Language Revitalization in Kenya: The Contradictory Face and Place of The Local Community Factor. **Nordic Journal of African Studies** 17(4): 247–268.

Peter, L., Sly, G., and Hirata-Edds, T. 2008.
Constructing language assessments in indigenous languages to inform instruction. *Immersion Education: Pathways to bilingualism and beyond*. Saint Paul, Minnesota.

Paulston, C.B. 1994.
Social Factors in Language Maintenance and Language Shift. In: C.B. Paulston et al. (eds.), *Linguistic Minorities in Multilingual settings, Studies in Bilingualism 4.* Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Reyhner, J., Trujillo, O., Carrasco, R.L., and Lockard, L. (eds.). 2003.
Nurturing Native Languages. Flagstaff, AZ: Northern Arizona University. Pp. 7–23.

Romaine, S. 2007.
Preserving Endangered Languages. **Language and Linguistics Compass** Vol. 1–2. Wiley Inter Science, Blackwell. [Online]. Available at www3.interscience.wiley.com. Accessed on 12.12.2007.

2006   *Planning for the Survival of Linguistic Vitality*. **Language Policy** 5: 443–475.

Sasse, H.-J. 1992.
Theory of Language Death. In: M. Brezinger (ed.), *Language Death: Factual and Theoretical Explorations with Special Reference to East Africa*, pp 7–30. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Schrock, J.R. 1986.
The Science Teacher and Foreign Languages. **Kansas science Teacher** 3(1): 12–15.

Smolicz, J.J. 1992.
Minority Languages as Core Values of Ethnic Cultures: A Study of Maintenance and Erosion of Polish, Welsh and Chinese Languages in Australia. In: W. Fase, K. Jaspeart and S. Kroon (eds.), *Maintenance and loss of minority languages*, pp. 277–306. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Spolsky, B. 1995.
Conditions For Language Revitalization: A Comparison of The Cases of Hebrew and Maori. **Current Issues in Language and Society** 2: 177–201.

2003   Reassessing Ma̅ori Regeneration. **Language in Society** 32: 553–578.

Trudgill, P. 1991.
Language Maintenance and Language Shift: Preservation Versus Extinction. **International Journal of Applied Linguistics** 1(1): 61–69.

Tsunoda, T. 2005.
Language Endangerment And Language Revitalization. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Yamamoto, A.Y. 1998.
    Retrospect and Prospect on New Emerging Language Communities.
    Endangered Languages: What Role for the Specialist? In: Nicholas
    Ostler (ed.), *Endangered Languages: What Role for the Specialist?*,
    pp. 113–20. Bath, UK.: Foundation for Endangered Languages.

About the author: *Ogone John Obiero* (PhD) is a DAAD research fellow at the
Institute of African Studies of the University of Leipzig, Germany. He is a
lecturer at the department of Linguistics at Maseno University in Kenya. His
recent research interests have revolved around contact linguistics, and especially
on contact induced change. This interest originated from his previous researches
on language shift and revitalization.