



Twelve ELF Grants Awarded in 2002

The sixth year of awards from The Endangered Language Fund have now been decided on, and they are listed here. There were some coincidences in the number this year. We had 50 applications, 25 from U. S. institutions and 25 from others. We were able to fund 12 in total, and half were from U. S. institutions. As you will see, much of the work (even for the U. S.-based proposals) happens to be outside the U. S. this year. The rich and relatively undescribed Amazonian area received some deserved attention. Five proposals deal with South American languages, while four are based in North America. The others bring in Europe, Asia (Siberia) and the Pacific (Papua New Guinea). Once again, it was a difficult task to select such a small number from such an impressive pool of proposals. It is only thanks to the generosity of our members that we are able to offer these grants at all. So, thanks to all of you who have donated; we hope you enjoy this year's crop of projects.

Valerio Luciani Ascencio (Kawki) - Preservation of the Kawki language. Luciani is the youngest fluent speaker of Kawki, an Aymaran language of Peru. You find its village of Cachuy 250 kilometers from Lima, 25 kms of horse trail at the end (going to 3100 meters above sea level). There is no mail or telephone service. Luciani spoke Kawki until he went to school, where he was forced to switch to Spanish. "This seemed very strange to me and I felt very sad because I did not use my own language. Thus, little by little, I was forgetting it, and I liked Spanish," Luciani writes. Today, he is teaching about 40 children in Cachuy.

His ELF grant will purchase supplies and printing for the materials that he uses in these classes. The material will help, but the largest contribution will continue to come from Luciani's own efforts.

Thomas McIlwraith, Regina Louie, Angela Dennis and Sally Havard (Iskut First Nations) - Talking to the animals: Tahltan-language animal stories and forms of address. Tahltan is a critically endangered Athapaskan language spoken by fewer than one hundred adults in British Columbia. These communities lack a significant grammar and have very few texts recorded in the Tahltan language. The texts that will be collected in this project will serve linguistic, ethnolinguistic and pedagogical goals. The phrases and stories that are recorded will be made available to school children and community members alike through the distribution of the resulting CD-ROM. This will support the existing efforts in the schools and

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New ELF Office

The Yale Linguistics Department has moved to a newly renovated building, and the Endangered Language Fund has moved with it. Our address has changed slightly--the new P.O. Box number is 208366, and the zip-plus-four is 06520-8366. Our street address is now 370 Temple Street, New Haven, CT 06511. Please use these addresses from now on.

We are in the process of listing our library collection, and we hope to have that list out soon. The library is open to all interested people by appointment. Please drop us a line (at the new address or the usual email address, elf@haskins.yale.edu) if you would like to see the collection.

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bring more awareness to the community at large. The project also satisfies community interest in preserving Iskut stories and the voices of elders telling those stories.

Maximilian Viatori (U. California, Davis) - A practical Zapara phonology and morphology. Zapara is spoken in the rainforest province of Pastaza in eastern Ecuador. There are currently three fluent speakers of Zapara and several others who remember songs and words, but cannot converse in the language. Of these speakers, the youngest is 65 year old and the oldest is 95. As a member of the small Zaparoan language family, Zapara shares few features with other Amazonian languages. Viatori's work on the phonology and morphology of the language will help determine whether any further relationships can be reliably claimed. It will also help provide materials for the reintroduction of Zapara into the curriculum of schools in five communities.

Rosalind Williams (Splatins Tribe) -- Creation of Secwepenc Wordlist 2002. The Splatins are one of the seventeen tribes that make up the Secwepemc (Shuswap) Nation in British Columbia. There are sixteen remaining speakers fluent in the eastern dialect of this Salishan language, and there are four nearly fluent learners of the language (including Williams) who have been mentored by the elders. In reviewing the word lists and workbook for use in the classroom, the words were found to have been documented for a single meaning or situation. For instance in the wordlist book, the word for "frost" is simply listed: tsk'waylecw, tsk'way. The fluent speakers expanded this as tsk'waylecw: front on the grass; tsk'way: light frost on the branches; and su7lecw: frost on the dirt. Williams will help fill in these gaps and will record the fluent speakers saying the words as well.

Naomi Nagy (U. New Hampshire) - Preserving Faetar in the school. Faetar is a language spoken in two small, mountaintop villages in southern Italy: Faeto and Celle St. Vito. It is a variant of the Francoprovençal language that was spoken in a small part of France between Lyon and the Alps before the codification of French across France. Because of a small migration from eastern France to southern Italy about 600 years ago, Francoprovençal survives as Faetar. The population of the villages, however, has dropped drastically in the 20th century, as with most farming villages in Italy. While the population is small, loyalty to the language is strong, even among those who use Italian in school. Nagy will help develop an orthography to allow Faetar to gain a foothold in the schools and help keep it alive within the community.

Chris Beier and Lev Michael (U. Texas, Austin) - Iquito language documentation project. The last remaining Iquito community is San Antonio in the Amazon Basin of Peru. Recently, the community has developed a serious interest in starting a language revitalization project. They felt the need to have outside assistance for material resources

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and linguistic expertise. In cooperation with Cabeceras, a US-based group dedicated to providing resources to indigenous Amazonian communities in defending their health, well-being, and autonomy, Beier and Michael have devised a revitalization program. The first step has been a reaction against the centuries-old efforts to eradicate the language and culture. Only in the past five years has the political scene changed enough to allow this pride in Iquito to emerge. The next steps will be the simultaneous documentation of the language and training of the speakers themselves as linguists. This training will allow work to continue at a scale not possible for outsiders, but with the help that linguistic science can bring to language description and curriculum development.

Gessiane Lobato Picanço (U. British Columbia) - Documentation of Kuruaya, a moribund language of Brazil. Kuruaya, a language of the Mundurucu family of Tupi stock, is among those increasing the statistics of Brazilian languages that are nearly extinct. Only five elderly speakers remain, and they no longer use Kuruaya in their daily lives. Since the description of the language is so sketchy, basic work with word lists, texts and paradigms will be undertaken first. Recordings will be made in video as well as audio, helping to locate the language in place and time. The interviews will be individual, but an eventual reunion of all speakers has been planned. Copies of all material will be made available to the Kuruaya people, local institutions and other collaborators.

Nikolai Vakhtin (European U. at St. Petersburg) - Siberian Yupik Eskimo conversation book. When Yupik Eskimo was introduced into the Siberian school curriculum in the 1930s, all the children spoke it as their mother tongue and had only to learn how to write and read it. After 60 years of demographic, social and economic pressure, formal education, and residential schooling, the situation has changed drastically. Now, school-age children speak almost only Russian and learn their ethnic language at school as a foreign language from teachers who themselves often do not know the language very well. The language situation is somewhat better on the U.S. side of the Bering Strait, where most children on St. Lawrence Island now speak the language. With the lifting of the Iron Curtain, it is now possible for Yupiks to visit their relatives on either side. Ironically, the only common language now is Yupik, even though the Russians speak it haltingly or only listen to it. This unexpected promotion of Yupik to the status of an international language contributes considerably to its prestige and has spurred the Siberian Yupiks to learn it better. Vakhtin proposes to take material from his 30 years of work on the language to make booklets for those who are traveling to the U.S. and are now in need of a "Berlitz" for Yupik.

Pamela Bunte (California State U., Long Beach) - Using San Juan Southern Paiute narratives in a language revitalization program. The San Juan Paiute tribe, the easternmost of ten Southern Paiute tribes, is located in Ari-

zona and Utah on the Navajo reservation. When they received Federal recognition in 1990, they were unique in being the only Southern Paiute tribe still making everyday use of the language and having children still able to speak. Now, about 30 of the 300 tribal members are fluent speakers, but only one child (a four-year-old) is learning it. Feeling this loss, the tribe has responded by setting up a language revitalization program that will include short immersion camps. Southern Paiute traditional narratives are culturally important as they express Paiute world view and traditional lifeways. In addition, stories of all kinds are told in everyday life, becoming one of the primary ways that children were socialized to be proper members of the Paiute community. Bunte plans to record on videotape both the telling of some of these stories and some dramatizations using puppets, both for use in the immersion camps. The tapes and the English translations will provide a lasting legacy for the Paiute community.

Connie Dickinson (U. Oregon) - Tsafiki dictionary project. Tsafiki (Colorado) is spoken by about 2000 Tsachila living on seven communes situated at the western base of the Andes near the city of Santo Domingo de los Colorados in Ecuador. While the language is not in imminent danger and children are still learning it, the Tsachila are under tremendous pressure from the dominant Spanish culture, and their way of life is undergoing rapid change. The completion of a highway into their territory in 1958 brought new settlers, whose city now divides the traditional Tsachila group from each other. Schools now have Spanish monolinguals, so the shift away from Tsafiki is underway. Work on a dictionary has begun with the help of PIKITSA, an indigenous institution dedicated to the documentation and preservation of the Tsachila (Colorados) language and culture. Dickinson first began working on Tsafiki in 1994 and has visited every year since. The material she has collected will allow for rapid progress on the dictionary, in conjunction with the native speakers at PIKITSA. The communities are looking forward to having a dictionary to use in their fight to maintain their language.

Doug Marmion (Australian National U.) - Wutung language maintenance and literacy development. Wutung is a small coastal village in the far north-west of Papua New Guinea, lying immediately adjacent to the border with Indonesia. Sandaun Province is an area of great linguistic diversity, being home to approximately 110 languages in eight genetically distinct families, along with three isolates. Of these languages, none has yet been described in detail, although there are partial descriptions of perhaps half a dozen. Wutung is a member of the Sko Phylum of languages, none of which has yet been described in detail, and most of which are known only from wordlists. All Wutung children are learning Wutung, but they also learn the national language, Tok Pisin. This is a fragile situation that could easily tip the way of losing the language altogether. There currently exist no literature or dictionary. Marmion will collect as many texts as

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feasible, including those that deal with traditional culture, which is also threatened. The materials will be translated and information entered into the lexical database and used to facilitate the description of the language. Texts will be selected to be made into books to be printed in Australia and sent back for use in the school and by the general community.

Susan Doty (Creek Tribe) - Muskogee Creek language traditional song preservation. The songs used in Creek Indian churches are part of a strong tradition, since at least the removal from the Southeast to Oklahoma. However, with the encroachment of English on the Creek speaking population, the songbooks are getting smaller and smaller. The more complicated, meaningful songs are being lost to simpler, repetitive tunes that are easier to learn. As churches disappear and become more isolated, it is more important to share the knowledge and preserve it. Doty will use her ELF grant to visit as many churches in Oklahoma as

possible, recording songs in a clear, strong voice so that the words are easier to learn. Doty plans to make the songs available in as many media as possible.

Scientific American article

Endangered languages were the subject of an article in *Scientific American* this past August. President Douglas H. Whalen was quoted several times. If you missed the issue on the newsstand, you can take a look at it online at the Linguistic Data Consortium site:

<http://www ldc.upenn.edu/xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

Say more about it.....
