

Hornberger (1996. New York: Mouton de Gruyter). The volume, part of the *Contributions to the Sociology of Language* series (Joshua Fishman, general editor), contains papers by linguists and by the indigenous colleagues with whom they work. Jesús Salinas Pedraza and Josefa González Ventura, my colleagues at CELIAC in Oaxaca, Mexico, have separate papers in the volume. HRB

Language Preservation and Publishing

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Introduction

There is increasing awareness that languages are vanishing and that they must be preserved. Many papers and anthologies attest to this interest (Hill 1979, 1989; Dressler 1981; Elmendorf 1981; Bernard 1985; Dorian 1989; Robins—Uhlenbeck 1991; Garzon 1992; Hale 1992; Krauss 1992); in 1992, the journal *Language* devoted an entire section to a series of articles on the topic; and there have been global discussions about endangered languages on the Internet.²

There is some debate, however, as to whether vanishing languages *should* be preserved, and if they should, then what might be the best contributions of professional linguists and anthropologists. In this essay I lay out reasons why we must take decisive action and why part of that decisive action is to publish books in previously nonliterary languages.

The Political Argument

The most prominent discussion of whether linguists should work to preserve vanishing languages was initiated by Kenneth Hale in 1992. Hale asked a group of colleagues to write essays on various aspects of language preservation, and the set was published as the lead article in *Language*.

The key fact is stated by Michael Krauss in his contribution: at least 50% of the 6000 languages still in the world will become extinct in the next century. If we include languages that have at least 100,000 speakers in the "safe" category, then just 600, or 10% are safe from extinction. Krauss points out that even this assumption may be optimistic. Breton had a million speakers early in this century but is now struggling for survival; Navajo had over 100,000 speakers a generation ago and now faces an uncertain future (1992: 6).

Krauss is right. There were at least 7000 languages in the world in 1500 AD (when European nations began the era of colonial expansion) and there are about 6000 languages today. This 15% reduction in linguistic diversity is just the beginning. In just the last few decades, the pace of extinction has quickened. Several hundred languages have vanished

(their last speakers having died) and hundreds more are on the brink of extinction (their last speakers being old and no children being taught the language).

In 1962, Chafe listed 51 American Indian languages as having ten or fewer speakers. A generation later, those 51 languages are probably extinct, according to Zapeda and Hill (1991: 136). In 1992, the *Ethnologue* (Grimes 1992) lists some 70 American Indian languages with fewer than 200 speakers. In another generation, those languages will be extinct or beyond recovery. The same story is being played out in Australia, South America, New Guinea, and Africa. The circumstances beg linguists to do something.

Not all linguists agree. Writing in *Language* later in 1992, Peter Ladefoged says that the views expressed by Hale and colleagues, "are contrary to those held by many responsible linguists" (1992: 809). It would not be appropriate in places like Tanzania, he says, for linguists to help preserve language diversity. In Tanzania, the authorities see local languages as a source of tribalism and encourage the spread of Swahili, at the expense of local languages, as a means to build the nation.

Ladefoged reports an encounter with a linguistic informant who speaks Dahalo. The informant was proud of the fact that his teenage sons did not speak the language. "Who am I to say that he was wrong?" asks Ladefoged. For linguists working in Tanzania, says Ladefoged, "it would not be acting responsibly to do anything which might seem, at least superficially, to aid in" the preservation of tribalism (Ladefoged 1992: 809).

In her response to Ladefoged, Nancy Dorian (1993) agrees that responsible linguists ought not foment rebellion against authorities who are determined to eliminate language and cultural diversity. On the other hand, she says, language death does not occur only under these circumstances. Much of it is taking place in democracies where economic, not political, exigencies operate to discourage people from teaching their ancestral language to their children. In those countries it is not a dangerous political act to work for language diversity.³

There are, of course, millions of speakers of local languages in democracies like the United States, Canada, and Australia who, like Ladefoged's Dahalo informant, proudly renounce their language. There are many millions more who do so without making any fuss about it. Those people, though, don't speak for everyone. There are speakers of small languages who do not want those languages to disappear and who are anxious to work actively for language preservation. Bilingual education is almost everywhere inimical to language preservation, but I have met bilingual educators from Mexico, Cameroon, Ecuador, and other countries who are looking for ways to stem the erosion of their indigenous languages.

Linguists interested in promoting language diversity need not work with people who are against it. We can easily find native speaker colleagues in many countries with whom to mount effective language preservation programs. The people with whom I work in Mexico on the CELIAC project (about which more below, and see Salinas's and González's papers, this volume) are all bilingual school teachers and native speakers of indigenous languages. They all report that there are people in their villages who reflect the sentiment of Ladefoged's Dahalo informant. And none of these school teachers is willing to let those people carry the day.

Language Preservation: The Evolutionary Perspective

Hale asserts that we should ask whether there is a danger in the loss of language diversity that is analogous to the loss of biodiversity (1992). Elsewhere, I have also drawn attention to the analogy of cultural/linguistic and biological diversity (Bernard 1992). Krauss (1992) makes the analogy explicit. There are, he notes, 326 of 4400 mammal species, or 7.4% of mammals, on the endangered and threatened list. Next come the birds with 231 of 8600 species, or 2.7% listed as endangered or threatened.

Even such a relatively small number of extinctions, says Krauss, is considered a catastrophe in the making. There are, he notes, international and national bureaucracies, plus private organizations by the hundreds devoted to bioconservation. "Should we mourn the loss of Eyak or Ubykh", asks Krauss, "any less than the loss of the panda or the California condor?" (1992: 8).

The problem with all our analogies is that they are based on speculation, not on empirical observation or on theoretical grounds. Biologists have empirical evidence that biodiversity is good for life on the planet in general. They have strong theoretical models for the mutual dependence of diverse species. They have case studies that show the adaptive success of hybrid vigor. For all we know, there is really no comparison to be made between biodiversity and cultural diversity. For all we know, one language and one culture might be just fine.

I think we *can* make the evolutionary case for linguistic and cultural diversity. For 40,000 years, since the beginning of modern *H. sapiens*, we humans have been an evolutionary success story. From perhaps half a million individuals (Kates 1994: 94) living in just a few spots, we have expanded to 5.6 billion individuals occupying every ecological niche on the globe, including deserts, tundra, and high mountains. This spectacular case of adaptive biological radiation was characterized by an expansion of knowledge about survival in various environments, and that knowledge was stored in all the languages that developed during the radiation. And now those languages are vanishing.

It is not necessary to argue that language diversity *caused* the evolutionary success of humans. We need only recognize that the knowledge generated by all those successfully adapting cultural groups over the millennia is stored in all those thousands of languages now spoken around the world. Of the 6000 languages spoken today, 276 of them comprise more than 5 billion speakers.⁴ All the rest of the languages, 95% of them, are spoken by just 300 million people. Just 5% of the people in the world speak 95% of the world's languages.

Turn these numbers around to see the problem: 95% of the cultural heterogeneity of the planet—95% of the *differences* in ways of seeing the world—is vested in under 5% of the people, and the problem gets worse each year.

One could argue, of course, that language die-off is just part of natural evolution, something that should be neither fretted over nor tampered with. After all, the absorption of cultures into larger states has been going on since the late Neolithic, and with that absorption many languages have disappeared. Nothing catastrophic seems to have happened, so why worry now?

This is a high-risk approach because the pace of language extinction is rapid today. There would be lower risk to humanity if we had 20 or 30 Earth-like planets, unlimited time, and god-like power to test whether language diversity was really good for human evolutionary success. On some planets we could ordain that language diversity remain high, while on others it would decline toward zero. Then (over a few millennia perhaps),

we might learn whether the decline in diversity placed the survival of humanity on any planet at risk.

In the course of this experiment, we might also learn whether knowledge in any modern human language can be translated perfectly into any other such language. If it can, then a program to rescue *knowledge*, rather than *languages*, would be sufficient to rescue humanity from the ill effects of diminishing language diversity.

In fact, we are conducting the experiment to find out if eliminating language diversity is harmful to our survival as a species. With no planets to fall back on, it's truly a reckless experiment. It should be stopped now.

How to Preserve Languages

Those committed to preserving language diversity engage in many activities toward this end. I think it's helpful to talk of *archiving* (or documenting) activities and *vitalizing* activities rather than simply preservation activities. Making dictionaries, writing grammars, and recording speakers all help to archive a language. Teaching children to speak a language makes the language vital. Both kinds of effort, archiving and vitalizing, can be said to help preserve a language.

I don't mean to create any hierarchy here. Vitalizing activities are not to be preferred over archiving activities. It's a matter of what, finally, can be done with the human and financial resources available. The tapes, grammars, and texts recorded by linguists are the only record we have of (too many) languages that have already died.⁵ Training speakers of indigenous languages to be linguists extends greatly the accurate archiving of those languages (Hale 1969, 1972, 1976). And, as I will argue later, so does training indigenous authors to write books in their native languages.

Linguists can archive languages, but truly vitalizing programs must be in the hands of speakers themselves, and not in the hands of linguists. Programs like the one at Peach Springs school in Arizona for Hualapai (Watahomigie—Yamamoto 1988) and the preschool total immersion (or language-nest) programs for Maori in New Zealand and for Hawaiian in Hawaii (Zepeda—Hill 1991) are creating new, fully fluent young speakers of those languages. Few children were learning those languages before the programs were put in place.

Linguists can suggest new language vitalizing programs. We can help find financial support for and be advisors to those programs. I have suggested, for example, that in the United States, Canada, and Australia, some communities might provide working mothers of infant and toddler children with paid day care by native-fluent elders who would speak only the local language to those children. Working mothers would get needed day care; elderly women and men would get needed income doing jobs that only they can do; children would get the requisite training for becoming bilingual speakers of the local and the national languages. But while linguists initiate such programs, in the end, the main responsibility for vitalizing the vanishing languages of the world is with the speakers of those languages.

Publishing and the Preservation of Languages

For those linguists who want to help preserve language diversity, there are, in my view, two best things to do. One is to help native people develop more language-nest programs (including day-care programs like the one I've suggested). The other is to help native people develop publishing houses.

I want to make clear that I am talking about real publishing of books that are sold on an aggressively sought market. And I want to make equally clear that bilingual education and teaching people to write their previously nonliterary languages is not, by itself, a solution.

I use the term "nonliterary" rather than "nonwritten" because many languages of the world have been written, often by linguists but sometimes even by native speakers, without developing a literary tradition. Tuvaluan, for example, is spoken by about 9000 people in Tuvalu (the former Ellice Islands) of the South Pacific. Nearly all speakers of Tuvalu are literate, but there is practically no written literature available. Besmier (1991) studied how the people of Nukulaelae Atoll used their literacy skills and found that most people wrote letters to one another and a few people wrote sermons for delivery in church.

Bilingual education programs for indigenous children almost universally involve teaching those children to read and write their ancestral language. But bilingual education for indigenous children is also almost universally understood to be transitional education.

For example, according to Iutzi-Mitchell, children who come to school as monolingual Eskimo speakers are introduced to schooling via Yup'ik, which is abandoned after the third grade. The official purpose of the program is to "wean students away from the need for their own language". This is not just local policy; it reflects "federal models of what bilingual education is to accomplish". That is, the programs are "designed to make [the children's] Eskimo language largely useless" (Iutzi-Mitchell 1992: 9).⁶

This model is found across the world. Children who come to school at the age of five or six without competence in their national language (English, French, Spanish, etc.) are taught in their ancestral language as a transition to the national language (see de Bravo Ahuja 1992 for a discussion of the policy in Mexico).

This is not an argument against bilingual education. It is essential that indigenous children everywhere control their national language. If they don't, they will never be able to vote, to engage in commerce, to go into the professions, or to otherwise participate in the national economy and body politic. There is absolutely nothing to be said for avoiding full competence, including a high level of literacy, in a national language, just as there is nothing to be said for being poor. Most bilingual education, however, is based on the false choice between becoming monolingual in a national language and being poor.

A feature common to many transitional programs is the use of primers and readers written in the so-called vernacular language. (In the United States, in fact, indigenous language publishing is limited almost entirely to primary school textbooks [Zepeda—Hill 1991: 140]). This implies that an orthography has been developed and that some professional work has been done on the grammar.

In fact, most of the small languages of the world have an orthography developed by missionaries or linguists or both. There may be a translation of the Old and New Testaments, a formal grammar, and a small dictionary. What these languages do not have is a literary tradition—the kind that produces indigenous written works of poetry, fiction, biography, history, ethnography, and so on. Most of the languages of the world are still essentially oral, and their literature (poetry, biography, etc.) is oral.

There is disagreement about the effects of writing on thought (see Finnegan 1988 and Ong 1982 for opposing views), but it is my thesis that *if* oral languages do not develop a written literary tradition, most of them will soon die. One of the last Ainu speakers told Stephen Wurm that Ainu would disappear because, unlike Japanese, it could not be written. "An indigenous language with no traditional writing system tends to yield", said Wurm, to a language that has a written literary tradition (1991: 8).

A written literary tradition means establishing a publishing industry in each such language—an industry that goes beyond the production of school primers. It may not be sufficient to establish publishing industries, but history shows clearly that printing and publishing greatly facilitate the development of literary traditions (Eisenstein 1979, Davis 1981).

Orthographies and Dictionaries

Across the world, a lot of effort goes into arguing about the relative merits of this or that orthography for previously nonliterary languages. The situation in Trinidad and Tobago is typical. According to Lise Winer (1990), "a considerable amount of writing in Creole is now being done by people whose concern is not whether to write Creole, but how to spell it" (cited in Brown 1993).

The best way to establish orthographies is to publish and sell books using any orthography that people will pay to read. Among the major world languages, standard orthographies have emerged only recently, and in no case were they established by linguists. Rather, they were established by publishers. Books published in English just 200 years ago exhibit an amusing lack of orthographic consistency. The shape of letters, spelling conventions, punctuation conventions, paragraph conventions, and all the other components of the English orthography emerged in the context of commercial and government publishing.

The process is ongoing. Not very long ago, publishers in the United States used the character *œ* in the word "œdipus". Now the word is spelled "oedipus" and the diphthong is gone from American orthography. The circumflex accent over the "o" in "rôle" is gone, too, as is the *ç* in "façade" (now spelled simply "facade"). The *æ* in the word "archæology" has become "ae" but early in this century the diphthong was dropped in U.S. government publications and many publishers now spell the word "archeology". Eventually, one spelling will emerge the winner and linguists will have had little or nothing to do with the outcome.⁷

Dictionaries of the major languages of the world were not compiled by fieldworking linguists from oral text. The dictionaries were compiled from words taken out of printed literature. The first dictionary of English published in the United States was a very slim volume compared to the monumental dictionaries being produced these days because lexicographers now have so much more printed material than they did 200 years ago.

If a language has no literary tradition, then making a dictionary can only come from taking down oral text and combing that text for words and usages. Under the circumstances, the efforts of some linguists have been nothing less than heroic. After 26 years of fieldwork on Dyirbal in Australia, Dixon (1991: 200) reports having developed a dictionary of "five or six thousand words". Nater's (1990) dictionary of Nuxalk (a Salishan language in Canada) contains 2000 entries, after many years of work.

A literary tradition changes things radically. In 1989 I taught five speakers of Kom, a language spoken by 127,000 people in North West Province of Cameroon, to write their language with a word processor. In two weeks, the five had produced over 25,000 words of free-flowing text: a school teacher wrote about the local environment; another teacher wrote out 103 proverbs and was well into annotating those proverbs when the two-week training period ended; a Catholic priest (a native speaker of Kom) wrote about religious syncretism; an anthropology student at the university wrote about local medical practices; and a lawyer wrote about local marriage contracts.

Note that all of these people were bilingual speakers of English and all of them were educated. Learning to write fluently in Kom did not require that they learn the skills of literacy. It meant only transferring those skills from English to Kom, which they did in a matter of hours. There was (and remains) disagreement about the best orthography for Kom. If we had focused on that disagreement we would have done nothing. Every educated speaker of English knows that there are more rational ways to write that language than the hodge-podge writing system we now have. It is simply not necessary to find the perfect orthography to begin developing a literary corpus.

Dale Kinkade (1991: 165) attributes the lack of published dictionaries for indigenous languages to high printing costs and small markets. Since publishers are unwilling to put out dictionaries in native languages, linguists are reluctant to compile them, he says. The 25,000-word corpus of Kom produced over 2,600 unique words. Many of these words were forms of underlying verbs and nouns, but the Kom project still produced the corpus for a context-sensitive dictionary of at least a thousand words in two weeks.

The insights of professional linguists about the workings of languages are unlikely to be generated by amateurs. But note that the 25,000-word corpus of Kom is now as available to linguists working in that region as it is to native speakers who may wish to read it for content and to native speakers who happen also to be professional linguists (there is at least one).

In other words, building dictionaries, like establishing orthographies, is best done by developing very large corpora of written text. And when texts are written on word processors, they can be studied for their grammar with all the power of computer-based tools. Teaching highly educated native speakers of nonliterary languages to use computers for writing large texts in those languages is thus the fastest, and most accurate, way to get data for studying the grammar of a language.

Of course, a dictionary based on written text will have different content than one based on oral text. A thorough description of a literary language obviously requires a dictionary that accounts for usage in speech as well as in written text. Until very recently, though, the only dictionaries of literary languages were based on the literary corpus, while speech-based dictionaries were made only for languages that did not have a literary tradition.

In 1994, Longman, a British publishing house, had 150 volunteers walk around for two weeks with tape recorders tied to their waists. The tapes were transcribed to produce a corpus of about ten million words. This corpus is published on CD-ROM by Oxford University and will greatly enhance our ability to study and analyze English. For example, we have already learned that the most common use of the word "like" is not as a verb but as a preposition ("he eats like a pig") (Nurden 1994: 22).

Dictionaries based entirely on written text do not reveal this kind of language artifact. Similarly, the addition of computer-based corpora of written text will enhance our ability to study and analyze the majority of the world's languages. This should be reason enough for linguists to want to help people across the world develop native publishing houses.

But publishing does more than help us make dictionaries and acquire corpora for studying the grammar of a language. It increases immensely the archive of a culture, and it produces pride in the language. "The very existence of a book on a shelf", says Krauss, "... can be of crucial symbolic value" in the effort to preserve a dying language (1992: 8, and see Josefa González's paper in this volume).

CELIAC

My comments on the means and motives for preserving languages brings us to CELIAC, the *Centro Editorial de Literatura Indígena, Asociación Civil*, in Oaxaca, Mexico. (*Asociación Civil* means 'not-for-profit corporation' in Mexico.)

The charter of CELIAC is to promote the preservation of native languages and cultures in Mexico through the publishing of books in those languages. At CELIAC, prospective Indian authors from Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America learn to use computers to write books in their native languages. So far, 121 people have been through the program. Instruction is in Spanish and is done by other Indians. The leaders of CELIAC are Jesús Salinas and Josefa González, both of whom have articles in this volume. Salinas discusses the history of the project in his article (see also Bernard 1992).

Books written by indigenous authors at CELIAC are published and sold in Mexico and on the international market. Many speakers of Mexican Indian languages can not afford to purchase these books. Our hope is that sales beyond the indigenous communities will make the publishing of indigenous-languages books self-supporting and that profits will pay for the distribution of books to speakers of indigenous languages in towns and villages.

CELIAC now has a list of books that have been published and a list of books in preparation (see the appendix to this chapter), but it remains to be seen whether sales will support the continuation of the effort. The risk is clear. Five hundred years into the Gutenberg revolution, 95% of the world's languages remain untouched by it because, so far at least, no one has been able to turn a profit by publishing in those languages. The economies of desktop publishing dare us all to take another try.

CELIAC is a not-for-profit publishing house, but like all corporations it must cover its costs, which include salaries, electricity, telephone, advertising, insurance, and so on. Until now, most of the costs have been covered by the project's association with various Mexican and international government organizations (these associations are described in Salinas's article, this volume).

For example, until 1993, the project (known as the Oaxaca Native Literacy Project in English and as the *Proyecto en Literatura Indígena* in Spanish) was part of the Oaxaca branch of CIESAS (the *Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social*), a Mexican government research group. CIESAS provided housing for the project in Oaxaca and, in cooperation with the government of the state of Oaxaca, published the first books that came out of the project.

The support of government agencies was thus crucial to the development of the project and will continue to be a factor. In late 1993, however, CELIAC became an independent organization, and in 1994 the project moved into its own building. Purchase and renovation of the building were covered by a grant from the Jessie Ball Du Pont Foundation as are the current costs of book production. Eventually, CELIAC (and the many CELIAC-type organizations we hope will follow around the world) needs to cover the costs of book production and distribution on its own.

Commoditizing Nonliterary Languages

This implies commoditizing nonliterary languages——turning them into things for sale. Can it be done? Should it be done?

It takes about a month for a prospective author to train at CELIAC and another several months to produce a draft of a document. It takes the author another three or four months to develop the book, and it takes CELIAC personnel another three months to do the formatting and production——all in all, about a year. It will take a few years, but eventually CELIAC should be able to produce six books a year. If the books sell 200 or 300 copies at a reasonable price (say, \$30 each in 1995 dollars), the gross would not be nearly enough to cover the real costs of keeping a building, paying salaries, paying the per diem of authors in residence at CELIAC, advertising and distributing books, and paying royalties to authors.

On the other hand, CELIAC is not limited to publishing just books. They also now publish disks of the texts produced. Not every prospective author who trains at CELIAC produces a book. But the published disks can include texts that are not printed as books as well as texts that are. In 1995, CELIAC will install a small recording studio. The authors who work at CELIAC will record their texts on high-quality tape. Again, those whose texts are not published in book form, as well as those whose work is eventually published, may record their work on audiotape. As texts accumulate in a language (Mixtec, for example), CELIAC will publish corpora on CD-ROM.

Who will buy these products? Linguists (and the libraries with which they are associated), missionaries, and several other constituencies comprise an intensely interested and completely unserved market for texts in previously nonliterary languages——particularly for machine-readable texts accompanied by clear voice renditions on tape or on CD-ROM. The corpus of Ñähñu (Otomí) text produced by Jesús Salinas since 1971 is well over 250,000 words. What I wouldn't have given for that corpus (in print, on disk, and on tape) in 1962, when I began as a graduate student to work with Jesús.

CELIAC's Future

But are there even 200 or 300 potential sales in the world for books, disks, and tapes in indigenous languages? Again, it remains to be seen if linguists and others are sufficiently interested in having access to a continuing supply of text in the indigenous languages of the world. In the near term, CELIAC could not survive if it had to depend only on publishing, but CELIAC is not limited to publishing. CELIAC is already branching out, taking on new functions. I will discuss two of them, each an example of commoditization of local culture and language.

In 1994, CELIAC received its first contract from a Mexican government agency. The national social security administration was conducting a public health survey on home remedies for infantile diarrhea. The leader of the project, Dr. Homero Martínez, recognized that hit-and-run surveys in Spanish had produced data of dubious quality in previous studies and asked CELIAC to collect the data in open-ended interviews. The interviews would be conducted with mothers of young children—in the native languages of the communities where the study was being done.

Graduates of CELIAC training conducted the interviews in Highland Mixtec, Coastal Mixtec, Isthmus Zapotec, Highland Zapotec, Mazatec, and Chinantec, the six most widely spoken of the native languages of Oaxaca. The interviewers transcribed the data and wrote up reports for the project. The reports will be published, in the local languages and in Spanish, jointly by the Secretaría de Salubridad y Asistencia and CELIAC.

Also in 1994, CELIAC received from Colorado College in the United States, a contract to house 12 students for a month. There are dozens of fine programs in Mexico where U.S. college students can study Spanish and learn about Mexican culture, often by staying with Mexican families. Dr. Mario Montaña of Colorado College takes students regularly to Mexico for this kind of direct cultural contact. He thought that a one-month course at CELIAC would be unique because the students would be exposed to indigenous cultures.

Publishing indigenous language books; offering foreign students an opportunity to learn about indigenous cultures first hand; collecting ethnographic data in the indigenous languages—these activities have one important thing in common: they represent commoditization of native languages by native people.

Some people may be uncomfortable with the commercialism of this approach. In my opinion, the faster native languages and cultures become salable commodities the better chance they have of not disappearing.

The reason people *say* they give up speaking their native languages is that the languages offer no economic and/or social benefits. I used to try arguing the case: all cultures are ethnic groups, embedded as they are in nation states; maintaining one's language is an excellent way to maintain one's ethnic identity in a plural society; in democracies, people who keep their identity have a more legitimate claim on parts of the common weal. And so on.

Good arguments, but not good enough to combat national language policy and the legions of bilingual school teachers who carry the assimilationist message. If people want to abandon their language for economic reasons, then economic reasons must be found to make them want to keep their language. The way to preserve languages is to make languages economically and/or politically paying operations, even if only for a few people, like indigenous authors and indigenous publishers.

The sale of indigenous culture is nothing new among speakers of nonliterary languages. People sell native foods, native costumes, native jewelry, ceramics, tapestries, cloth, and other material artifacts. Native music and dance is sold (the Mexican National Ballet Folklórico is an example). Native people, however, have not participated directly in the sale of their languages. That has been the province of linguists, anthropologists, government functionaries, and missionaries. At CELIAC, Indians are selling their own intellectual property and their own skills in writing, interviewing, and teaching.

Commoditization of language and culture may seem crass. I don't think it is. After all, I make my own living as a university professor selling what I know. Some of what I know

was acquired through contact with colleagues at CELIAC and elsewhere in other parts of the world. When I sell what I know—when I negotiate my salary with a university—I do not stress the primary cultural and linguistic knowledge I've acquired. No one knows that primary material better than the people with whom I've studied. I stress the value that I've added to the primary cultural material—my analyses of the data, my testing of certain hypotheses, and so on. It is the value-added that makes what I know, my culture, worth paying for.

It is the same for my colleagues at CELIAC. It is not simply that they know how to speak Mixtec, Zapotec, Nāhñu, or some other indigenous language. What makes that knowledge economically valuable is its value-added packaging between the covers of a book, its packaging as a course for college students, its packaging as skill in interviewing and writing up ethnographic reports.

In my view, then, the commoditization of language and culture by indigenous people is a vehicle for the economic development of indigenous people. In the end, it is this development that will make it possible for indigenous languages to thrive.

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2. The most important discussions have taken place on Linguist-L (linguist@tam2000.tamu.edu), Nat-Lang (nat-lang@gnosys.svle.ma.us), and Endangered-Languages-L (endangered-languages-l@coombs.anu.edu.au).
3. Moreover, language differences do not cause tribalism and imposing a common language does not by itself eliminate tribalism, if by tribalism one means the (often violent) conflict among ethnic groups. Competition for land may erupt in violent confrontations and when the combatants vilify one another's language, it is easy to imagine that the conflict is about the hegemony of the languages themselves. Bosnians, Serbs, and Croats speak the same language, yet are locked in violent conflict over control of land. The conflict between Israelis and Palestinians is also about land and would not go away if both sides adopted a common language.

Isaac Nyamongo, a Kenyan anthropologist, points out that making people speak Swahili will not by itself conceal a person's ethnic origins. "In Kenya", he says, "I can tell a person's ethnic affiliation just by listening to the way they speak English. I can tell who is Kikuyu, Luo, Kamba, Gusii, Luhya, and Kalenjin." If speaking English does not obliterate ethnic accents, he points out, then we should not expect speaking Swahili to do the job (personal communication).

4. I am indebted to Barbara Grimes (personal communication) for the data on which this calculation is based. See Grimes 1988 for further information.
5. According to Dimmendaal (1989:20), we know of a language in northeastern Uganda called Dorobo only because of a word list published by E. J. Wayland in 1931. The language was spoken by a now extinct group of hunter-gatherers.
6. Oswald Werner (personal communication) reports visiting a Navajo-English, bilingual-education kindergarten 20 years ago where the reward for speaking English was to be allowed to play in the English corner of the room. "In that corner", he says, "were toy trucks, little stoves, and other trappings of middle class American life. The Navajo corner had sheep corrals, and other trappings of Navajo life that that even the kids considered either quaint or boring."
7. I am indebted to William H. Adams and Jerald Milanich for information about this example.