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The world's languages in crisis:

A 20-year update

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“The world’s languages in crisis” (Krauss 1992), the great linguistic call to arms in the face of the looming language endangerment crisis, was first delivered in an Endangered Languages Symposium at the 1991 annual meeting of the Linguistic Society of America. Using the best available sources, he surveyed the global situation and estimated that only 10% of languages seem safe in the long term, up to 50% may already be moribund, and the remainder are in danger of becoming moribund by the end of this century. Twenty years later, better information is available. In this paper we use information from the latest edition of the *Ethnologue* (Lewis, Simons & Fennig 2013) to offer an update to the global statistics on language viability. Specifically the data for this study come from our work to estimate the level of every language on earth on the EGIDS or Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (Lewis & Simons 2010). Our finding is that at one extreme more than 75% of the languages that were in use in 1950 are now extinct or moribund in Australia, Canada, and the United States, but at the other extreme less than 10% of languages are extinct or moribund in sub-Saharan Africa. Overall we find that 19% of the world’s living languages are no longer being learned by children. We hypothesize that these radically different language endangerment outcomes in different parts of the world are explained by Mufwene’s (2002) observations concerning the effects of settlement colonization versus exploitation colonization on language ecologies. We also speculate that urbanization may have effects like settlement colonization and may thus pose the next great threat to minority languages.

1. Introduction

In 1991, Michael Krauss and others participated in a symposium on endangered languages at the annual meeting of the Linguistic Society of America. The compilation of the presentations at that symposium was published a year later in the journal of the society and constituted a call to arms for the linguistics community in the face of the looming language endangerment crisis. Krauss (1992) has been the most cited of those who participated in the symposium and the striking warning regarding the potential demise of 90% of the world's extant languages has been referred to repeatedly. Using the statistics provided by the 11th edition of the *Ethnologue* (Grimes 1988), which Krauss identified as "by far the best single source available", along with corroborating "guesses" of others with whom he consulted, Krauss estimated that only 10% of the world's languages were safe for the longer term, that 50% might at that time be already moribund, and that the remainder might also become moribund by the end of the 21st century.

Since that time, linguists, anthropologists, language activists, and speaker communities themselves have become increasingly focused on the issue of language endangerment. As the organizers of a recent conference on language endangerment, FEL XV, in Quito, Ecuador, have observed, "Language endangerment is now accepted as an important issue of our times..." (Haboud & Ostler 2011:vi). Numerous publications on the topic have been produced and awareness of the potential for the catastrophic loss of linguistic diversity has reached new heights, sparking considerable interest not only among scholars and practitioners but among the broader public as well. Notable among these is the work of Harmon and Loh (2010) who have built on methods used in ecology for quantifying biodiversity to develop an Index of Linguistic Diversity. Using time-series population data from a sample of 1,500 languages worldwide, they have found that global linguistic diversity has declined 20% over the period 1970–2005.

Krauss noted in his LSA presentation that “statistics on language viability are very hard to come by” (Krauss 1992:4) and in many respects that continues to be the case 20 years later. In the intervening years, *Ethnologue* has continued to collect and publish data on language vitality, much of which is dated and somewhat idiosyncratic in nature. In the 16th edition of *Ethnologue* (Lewis 2009), serious efforts were made to adjust the categorization scheme used in order to recognize the advent of language revitalization efforts by including a new vitality category, “Dormant”, in addition to the previously used Active, Nearly Extinct, Second Language Only, and Extinct labels. This was a small step towards being able to report more accurately the state of vitality of the languages of the world. Nevertheless, the statistical profile of language vitality remained difficult to specify with any certainty because of the reporting delays inherent in the research and data gathering processes, but more significantly because of the lack of a feasible common metric with sufficient precision and granularity by which to assess vitality and endangerment (see for example, Lewis 2006, 2008).

In the latest edition of *Ethnologue* (Lewis, Simons & Fennig 2013), we make significant strides in addressing the lack of statistics on language vitality by, for the first time, providing an estimate of relative safety versus endangerment for every language on earth. This advance is made possible by the introduction and large-scale implementation of the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) (Lewis & Simons 2010).

2. Methodology

2.1 Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS)

The EGIDS builds on the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS), an 8-level scale that Fishman (1991) developed in order to describe and explain stages in reversing language shift

when efforts are made to turn threatened languages into safe ones. The GIDS is well elaborated on the safe end of the scale but has only two levels on the endangered end. By contrast, the Language Vitality and Endangerment (LVE) scale developed by the UNESCO Experts Meeting on Safeguarding Endangered Languages (Brenzinger et al. 2003) identifies four levels of endangerment, but does not distinguish different levels on the safe end of the scale. We have developed the EGIDS by harmonizing the GIDS, the LVE, and the categorization scheme that was being used in *Ethnologue* to form a 13-level scale which recognizes more comprehensively different degrees of vitality over the entire range of the vitality-endangerment continuum.

The basic premise of GIDS is that language shift (ending in language death) happens as a language loses functions in society. To reverse language shift, the community must work to bring those functions back. To guard against future shift, the community can work to add new functions that further strengthen the position of the language. The bulk of Fishman's book consists of case studies describing situations in which this has happened. The magnitude of the numbers in the scale notwithstanding, it has been conventional to view the strongest languages (those with the least disruption and thus the lowest numbers) as being at the top of the scale and the weakest languages (those with the highest levels of intergenerational disruption and the highest numbers) as being at the bottom (e.g., Fishman 2001:466). Thus the basic premise of GIDS can be visually summarized as shown in Figure 1.

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The *Ethnologue* (Lewis, Simons & Fennig 2013) is a comprehensive catalog of all known living and recently extinct languages of the world. It gives a basic description of the location and situation of every language listed. In planning for the 17th edition we wanted to provide an

estimate for each language as to where it stands on the GIDS scale. When planning for this, however, we encountered the following issues:

1. In order to have a level for every language, we needed to add extinct languages at the bottom of the scale, and in so doing we wanted to keep the *Ethnologue* distinction between dormant languages (which have no fluent speakers but still have an identificational function within an ethnic community) and truly extinct languages (which have no function within any living ethnic community).
2. We observed that in this age of globalization, even official national languages are beginning to feel threatened by the languages of globalization; note, for example, the response of language planners in Sweden in the face of increasing widespread English use (Hult 2005). We have thus added a new level for international languages at the top of the scale.
3. Language endangerment is a huge issue in the world today, but GIDS distinguishes only two levels of endangerment: level 7 in which there is active use of the language but only among adults and level 8 in which the only remaining speakers are “socially isolated old folks” (Fishman 1991:88). We felt that the users of *Ethnologue* would be better served by a scale that harmonized with the four levels of endangerment recognized in the UNESCO *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger* (Moseley 2010) which is largely based on UNESCO’s LVE assessment framework (Brenzinger et al. 2003).
4. We wanted to add names for the levels, rather than referring to them only by number.

The result is a 13-level scale that we have dubbed EGIDS, for Expanded GIDS (Lewis & Simons 2010). Figure 2 shows the entire scale with a definition for each level. It should be noted that while the scale shown in figure 2 is congruent with the originally published version, it is not identical; we have been refining the names and definitions of the levels in response to feedback received from users of the scale. In particular, the labels for levels 2 and 3 have been changed in order to align better with the terminology for those language functions identified by William Stewart (1968). The final column of the table gives the corresponding category from the UNESCO language vitality and endangerment (LVE) scale (Brenzinger et al. 2003).

@@ Insert Figure 2 here

We have retained Fishman's numbering for levels that have an equivalent in GIDS and have used *a* and *b* modifiers to indicate where we have split his levels. We have resisted the temptation to simplify by renumbering the levels from 1 to 13. We feel that it is important to preserve the underlying numbering scheme of the GIDS for the sake of compatibility with twenty years of prior scholarship and for the face validity that is inherent in following an established standard.

2.2 Generating an EGIDS estimate for every language

In the process of preparing the 17th edition of *Ethnologue* for publication, we have come up with an EGIDS estimate for each of the 7,480 languages (living and extinct) currently tracked in the database. We began by writing a computer script that automatically generated an initial estimate from information available in the database. When the database contained evidence of both development and endangerment, we gave priority to the indicators of threat or endangerment. For

instance, a language with published literature was assigned to level 6b rather than 5 if a significant proportion of children are not learning the language.

When the *Ethnologue* database did not contain any information that could provide an initial EGIDS estimate, we consulted UNESCO's *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger* (Moseley 2010) to see if the language was identified in that work as being in danger. If it was, we followed the assessment in the *Atlas* to give an initial estimate of the EGIDS level by mapping Threatened to level 6b, Definitely Endangered to level 7, Severely Endangered to level 8a, Critically Endangered to level 8b, and Extinct to level 10. After the above steps, approximately one-third of the languages still remained with no estimate of the EGIDS level. In these cases we assigned EGIDS level 6a (Vigorous Oral Use) as the default. In so doing we were following Fishman's (1991:92) assertion that "the lion's share" of the world's languages are at GIDS 6.

The next step in our process was to send the initial estimates for review to the network of *Ethnologue* contributors and collaborators around the world. Forty-three correspondents, each of whom helps to monitor one or more countries of the world, were asked to review the proposed EGIDS estimates for their countries of focus and to make corrections based on their local and more detailed knowledge. Reviews were returned for 88% of the languages tracked by *Ethnologue* and the corrections entered into the database.

As the last step in the process, we implemented an automated suite of 34 tests to find all the instances of language descriptions in the database in which one of the data elements was potentially inconsistent with the assigned EGIDS level. This caused us to examine about 2,000 language descriptions more closely with the result that hundreds of EGIDS estimates were revised to make them consistent with the story told in the description as a whole. As a sign of the progress that has been made in the process of reviewing and revising the EGIDS estimates, there were

nearly 3,100 languages initially assigned to level 6a (and most of those by default). By the time the 17th edition was published, that number was down to 2,503. No doubt there are errors that persist, but we are confident that the academy as well as the public at large will help us find and correct them as all of the estimates are now published on the *Ethnologue* website.

A final note on methodology must be made. The unit of reporting in *Ethnologue* is the “language in country”. That is, each entry in the *Ethnologue* describes the situation of a given language in a particular country. Thus our estimates of the EGIDS level for a language are on a country by country basis. It is these country-specific estimates that were reviewed and corrected. For the analysis below, we are reporting the EGIDS level for the language as a whole. Our method for this is not to take an average of all countries, but to report the highest level (that is, most safe) for any country. The logic here is that if the EGIDS level of a language is taken as a predictor of its likely longevity, then its longevity will be determined by where it is the strongest.

3. Results

3.1 A comprehensive analysis of the state of the world's languages

The EGIDS estimates in the 17th edition of *Ethnologue* represent the first fully comprehensive quantitative analysis of the state of vitality of the world's languages. While many of these estimates should be considered preliminary, the profiles of language vitality that emerge can provide us, for the first time, with a baseline from which trends and patterns can be traced over time as the use of the EGIDS as a metric of ethnolinguistic vitality continues and is refined. Analyses such as that done by Krauss (1992) were necessarily sketchy and impressionistic because the state of our knowledge at that time, even using “the best source available” was not adequate to the task. We believe that the EGIDS can serve as a tool that is feasible to use on a

global scale and that provides a better level of granularity and precision than other options that have been developed to date.

3.2 Global results

We start by looking at the global statistics for the distribution of the world's languages by EGIDS levels. Figure 3 shows a histogram of how the languages are distributed by level.

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Table 1 shows the numbers that lie behind the graph, both as counts and percentages. The total number of languages (7,480) represents all the living languages listed in the 2013 update of the ISO 639-3 standard (ISO 2007), plus the languages listed in the standard that have gone extinct since 1950 (which is when the *Ethnologue* began tracking languages).

@@ Insert Table 1 here

The most striking feature of this distribution is the preponderance of languages at EGIDS level 6a. Globally, 2,503 of the languages of the world are characterized by vigorous oral use. When the count for EGIDS level 6a is combined with the languages at higher, stronger levels (EGIDS 0–5), we see that 4,719 (63%) of the 7,480 languages in use in 1950 are still being passed on to the next generation in a sustainable way. In the discussion which follows, we refer to this group of languages as “vital” languages. In contrast, 1,480 (20%) of the languages of the world are “in trouble” (EGIDS 6b–7). In these languages the norm of complete intergenerational transmission is no longer in effect, but members of the child-bearing generation are still fully proficient in the language so that it would still be possible for a successful revitalization effort to restore intergenerational transmission. Finally, an additional 1,281 (17%) of languages are “dead

or dying” (EGIDS 8a–10) since it is too late to restore natural parent-to-child transmission. The restoration of intergenerational transmission would require establishing overt language transmission mechanisms outside the home.

Among the dead and dying languages are 377 (5%) that have been identified as having lost all living speakers and ceasing to serve as a language of identity for an ethnic community (EGIDS 10) in the last six decades. The loss of linguistic diversity represented by the loss of these individual languages is even more staggering if viewed from the perspective of language families. Whalen & Simons (2012) show that with the loss of these languages, we have lost 15% of the linguistic stocks (the largest subgroups of related languages that are reconstructable) that had at least one living member in 1950.

Alarming, 2,384 (32%) living languages in the world are currently at some stage in the process of language loss (EGIDS 6b–9). That is more than the number of languages (2,216, 30%) that have experienced enough language development (EGIDS 0–5) to rise above the default stage of vigorous oral use (EGIDS 6a).

3.3 Results by geographical regions

The above global statistics give a sense of the scale of the language endangerment crisis, but they mask the fact that the situation may differ radically from one part of the world to another. To better give a sense of what is happening throughout the world, we present results from our EGIDS survey for each of the 22 geographical regions into which the United Nations divides the world for the purposes of its reporting (United Nations Statistics Division 2011). Each language occurs only once in the regional statistics. Thus when a language is used in multiple regions, we have counted it with the region in which its primary country (as identified in the *Ethnologue*) is located.

Table 2 provides data on the number of languages in each region according to the three summary categories of “Vital” (EGIDS 0–6a), “In Trouble” (EGIDS 6b–7), and “Dead or Dying” (EGIDS 8a–10). The areas are ranked from most to least by the number of dead or dying languages. The top of the table thus shows the regions that have been most heavily impacted by the language endangerment crisis.

@@ Insert Table 2 here

Heading the list is Australia and New Zealand with 317 dead and dying languages. Next come South America (204), Northern America (163), South-Eastern Asia (131), and Melanesia (81). (Northern America, as distinct from North America, comprises just Bermuda, Canada, Greenland, Saint Pierre and Miquelon, and the United States; the UN regions group Mexico with Central America.) With 896 out of the total of 1,281, these five regions account for over two-thirds of the dead and dying languages in the world.

Table 3 presents the same data in a different way. The counts are converted to percentages and the regions are ranked from most to least by the percentage of vital languages. In this listing, Northern America assumes the bottom position with only 7% vital languages. Then come Australia and New Zealand (9%) and South America (35%). These three regions also have the highest percentages of dead and dying languages (61%, 82%, and 39%, respectively).

@@ Insert Table 3 here

Topping the list in table 3 as the part of the world least impacted by language endangerment is sub-Saharan Africa in which the three regions of Western, Eastern and Middle Africa all have more than 80% of their languages in the vital category. Interestingly Melanesia

(which ranked fifth in terms of most dead and dying languages) ranks sixth in this list with 76% vital languages, due to the large number of vital languages in Papua New Guinea.

Tables 2 and 3 make it clear that the language endangerment story is very different in different parts of the world. In Australia and the Americas, the crisis has been running its course with devastating consequences, while in sub-Saharan Africa it has yet to hit the radar screen as a crisis. Throughout Asia, Europe, and other regions of the Pacific the situation is between these extremes, but tends much more toward the vital than the dying.

4. Discussion

4.1 Krauss's warning: Is it coming true?

Our findings show that Krauss's estimate in 1992 that 50% of languages were doomed or dying was too dire. With very incomplete data, he sought to estimate the percentage of languages that were no longer being passed down from parents to their children. He noted that "the Grimeses themselves [editors of the *Ethnologue* at that time] might agree that as many as 20% of the world's languages are already moribund. However, two other linguists with wide experience have both independently guessed, along with me, that the total may be more like 50%" (Krauss 1992:6). Twenty years later we have, for the first time, vitality estimates for all the world's languages. Our finding is that out of 7,103 living languages (EGIDS 0–9), 1,360 (or 19%) are not being learned by children (EGIDS 7–9).

Krauss's predictions were certainly on track in those regions where language shift and loss are most extreme. Working with the data he had, and from his experience largely in Northern America, Krauss's pessimistic predictions are understandable. Indeed, our current data indicate that 78% (207 out of 266) of the languages of Northern America are either already extinct or not

being learned by children (EGIDS 7–10), as are 85% (329 of 388) in Australia and New Zealand. Three other regions are approaching the 50% level: South America (48%, 242 of 521), Polynesia (47%, 9 of 19), and Western Asia (41%, 38 of 93).

For the other 16 regions in the world, the proportion of languages that are already extinct or not being learned by children (EGIDS 7–10) ranges from 30% in Eastern Europe (37 of 122) down to 8% in Eastern Africa (31 of 390) and Western Africa (69 of 899). The language ecologies in these other parts of the world are considerably different from the situations in the Americas and Australia. This in no way diminishes the relevance of Krauss's warning since there are minority languages under threat in all parts of the world. However, on a global scale the threat does not yet reach the level suggested by Krauss. The greater scope and refinement provided by the global EGIDS data gives us a more nuanced understanding and, hopefully, the ability to respond to each situation more strategically and appropriately.

4.2 Mufwene's colonization types: A possible explanation

Extrapolating from what was already evident in Australia and the Americas, Krauss considered it to be “a plausible calculation that—at the rate things are going—the coming century will see either the death or the doom of 90% of mankind's languages” (Krauss 1992:7). But the global evidence does not seem to be bearing this out. Was it a plausible extrapolation? We believe that the work of Salikoko Mufwene offers an explanation as to why it was not.

Mufwene (2002) has proposed that the outcomes of language contact correspond in great measure to the pattern of colonization which was predominant in that part of the world. He has identified three colonization types: trade, exploitation, and settlement. His proposal, very briefly stated, is that “Each colonisation style has determined particular patterns of interaction between the colonisers and the indigenous populations as well as the particular kind of economic structure

that is now in place” (Mufwene 2002:168). In terms of the dynamics of language maintenance and shift, Mufwene asserts that “European colonial languages have endangered other languages, or driven them to extinction, typically in settlement colonies, not in exploitation nor in trade colonies.” (Mufwene 2002:168)

Mufwene identifies trade contact as the earliest colonization type to emerge. In this pattern of contact, there was occasional language contact as ships periodically landed at ports of call to collect trade goods. Contact languages emerged for conducting business, but contact was not prolonged and did not lead to language shift. In contrast to this, exploitation colonies involved on-going residence by Europeans in plantations or trading centers, but they did not come in large numbers nor did they settle permanently. Language contact was prolonged, but it was not deep. This kind of contact has resulted more often in the maintenance and retention of local languages and the addition of the colonizers’ language as a second language in the repertoire of those who were colonized.

In settlement colonies, Europeans came in large numbers, bringing their families to establish a new life in a new land. Language contact was both prolonged and deep, resulting in profound language shift. Mufwene identifies the marked pattern of language shift that is the after effect of settlement colonization as the predominant explanation of language endangerment:

Especially noteworthy about settlement colonies is the fact that they gradually produced local or regional monolingualism, favouring the language of the colonising nation but dooming to extinction the languages brought by the Africans ... and Europeans originating from countries other than the colonising one Native Americans lost their languages either because they were decimated by diseases and wars, or because they were

forced to relocate to places where they could not continue to speak their languages, or because they eventually got to function in the new, European-style economic world order which imposed a new language of business and industry. Unlike trade colonies, settlement colonies everywhere gradually evolved to some form of economic (and social) integration that has endangered languages other than those of the colonising European nation, or one adopted by it. (Mufwene 2002:169)

On general inspection of the results in tables 2 and 3, Mufwene's proposal seems quite plausible. The places where language loss has been the most profound—Australia, Canada, and the United States—are also places where virtually all of the land was settled by the colonizers, thus displacing the indigenous inhabitants. By contrast, the regions of sub-Saharan Africa and Melanesia, where language loss has been minimal by comparison, were not settled by the colonizers, but were only exploited for the benefit of the home country. Thus it is plausible, and is being argued by some (Bagamba and Boone 2011, Landweer 2012, Landweer and Unseth 2012), that in these regions we would not expect to see the kind of language loss predicted by Krauss, since his prediction is based on an extrapolation of the outcome in regions that were dominated by settlement colonization. A correlation analysis of the colonization patterns that were typical of particular regions or countries with the profile of current EGIDS estimates for the languages in each context could be done to develop concrete evidence that could support Mufwene's hypotheses.

4.3 Urbanization: The next big threat?

Global politics have changed dramatically over the past century with the result that settlement colonization no longer poses much threat of causing new language endangerment in the future.

But that is not to say that minority languages are now safe. They are facing a very real threat in this century from a fourth pattern of economic contact with the external world, namely, urbanization. For this reason, linguists should still be giving heed to the warning given by Krauss.

The dynamics of extended contact in urban settings seem similar to those described by Mufwene for the settlement colonization pattern. We would thus expect similar outcomes. Interestingly, the power dynamics and the process of contact in urbanization is the reverse of what it is for settlement. In settlement colonization, more powerful outsiders moved in and pushed local residents off their land against their will. In urbanization, the less powerful are willingly leaving their ancestral territories and being pulled into urban centers where they are brought into extensive contact not only with the more powerful but with many others who are equally disempowered. The need to acquire proficiency in the dominant languages of the urban centers is posing a new threat to the vitality of minority languages as large numbers of people are moving from rural to urban areas. Given the UN estimate that from 2007 to 2050 the global proportion of urban population will increase from 49% to 70% (United Nations 2008), we can anticipate that the pressures on minority language speakers toward language shift will only increase in the coming decades. It would behoove the linguistics community to give more attention to understanding the mechanisms of language maintenance versus language loss in the context of urbanization.

5. Conclusions

Krauss's "call to arms" in 1992 has helped to mobilize many in the linguistics community to engage in activities aimed at preserving endangered languages and cultures. Krauss's analysis, based on the best evidence available at the time, has been shown to be largely accurate for the parts of the world he and his correspondents were most familiar with (Northern America and

Australia), but overall represents an overly pessimistic representation of the state of the languages of the world based on our analysis 20 years later.

The development and global implementation of the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) enables us to have a much better view of the endangerment situation. While it confirms that language loss predominates in certain regions, the global analysis reveals that there are even more parts of the world in which language maintenance is far more prevalent than language loss.

This analysis has enabled us to confirm that, as Fishman predicted, the largest number of the languages of the world, 63%, are safely maintained in everyday oral use in their communities (EGIDS 6a) or are at a stronger level of development and recognition (EGIDS 0–5). Nevertheless, the statistics also reveal that 32% of the world's languages are in some stage of loss or shift (EGIDS 6b–9) and that 5% of the languages in use in 1950 are now completely extinct (EGIDS 10). This proportion (37%) of languages on the falling end of the scale (EGIDS 6b–10) is more than the 30% that are in some stage of development beyond oral use alone (EGIDS 0–5).

This analysis is preliminary since it is based on our first attempt to estimate the status of every language on earth for inclusion in the latest edition of *Ethnologue*. However, we trust that the results are adequate to begin serving as a baseline for future studies. As additional data on undocumented languages are gathered and as the existing EGIDS estimates are refined and improved, we expect that a much sharper image of the state of the world's languages will emerge. This improved understanding has potential to serve both scholars and members of endangered language communities alike by helping them to better assess the level of disruption of intergenerational transmission.

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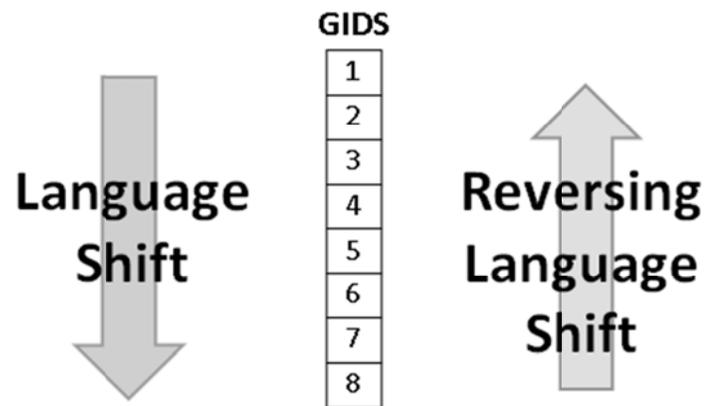


Figure 1: The basic premise of GIDS (Fishman 1991)

Level	Label	Description	UNESCO
0	International	The language is widely used between nations in trade, knowledge exchange, and international policy.	Safe
1	National	The language is used in education, work, mass media, and government at the nationwide level.	Safe
2	Provincial	The language is used in education, work, mass media, and government within official administrative subdivisions of a nation.	Safe
3	Wider Communication	The language is widely used in work and mass media without official status to transcend language differences across a region.	Safe
4	Educational	The language is in vigorous oral use and this is reinforced by sustainable transmission of literacy in the language in formal education.	Safe
5	Developing	The language is vigorous and is being used in written form in parts of the community though literacy is not yet sustainable.	Safe
6a	Vigorous	The language is used orally by all generations and the situation is sustainable.	Safe
6b	Threatened	The language is still used orally within all generations but there is a significant threat to sustainability because at least one of the conditions for sustainable oral use is lacking.	Vulnerable
7	Shifting	The child-bearing generation can use the language among themselves but they do not normally transmit it to their children.	Definitely Endangered
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 elderly and have little opportunity to use the language.	Critically Endangered
9	Dormant	There are no fully proficient speakers, but some symbolic use remains as a reminder of heritage identity for an ethnic community.	Extinct
10	Extinct	No one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language, even for symbolic purposes.	Extinct

Figure 2: Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (Lewis & Simons 2010)

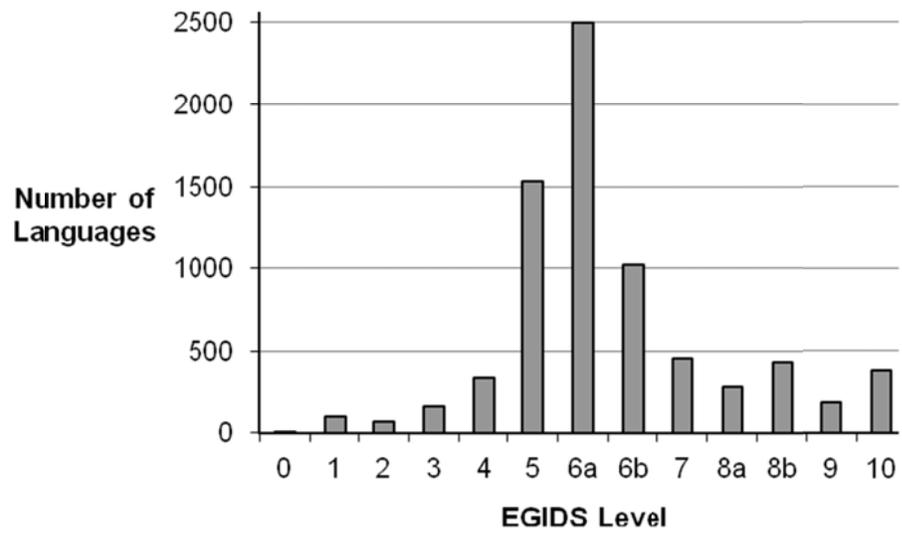


Figure 3: Global distribution of languages by EGIDS level

EGIDS Level	Languages	Per cent
0 (International)	6	0.1%
1 (National)	98	1.3%
2 (Provincial)	70	0.9%
3 (Wider communication)	166	2.2%
4 (Educational)	342	4.6%
5 (Developing)	1,534	20.5%
6a (Vigorous)	2,503	33.5%
6b (Threatened)	1,024	13.7%
7 (Shifting)	456	6.1%
8a (Moribund)	286	3.8%
8b (Nearly extinct)	431	5.8%
9 (Dormant)	187	2.5%
10 (Extinct)	377	5.0%
<i>Total</i>	7,480	100.0%

Table 1: Global distribution of languages by EGIDS level

Region	Total Languages	Vital	In Trouble	Dead or Dying
Australia and New Zealand	388	35	36	317
South America	521	184	133	204
Northern America	266	18	85	163
South-Eastern Asia	1,277	734	412	131
Melanesia	1,071	811	179	81
Middle Africa	688	555	77	56
Western Africa	899	794	49	56
Central America	332	198	86	48
Southern Asia	680	502	131	47
Eastern Asia	292	152	106	34
Eastern Europe	122	64	25	33
Northern Africa	154	92	29	33
Eastern Africa	390	318	51	21
Western Asia	93	45	32	16
Northern Europe	50	38	2	10
Southern Africa	53	41	3	9
Southern Europe	67	46	13	8
Western Europe	53	39	9	5
Caribbean	24	17	3	4
Micronesia	27	19	5	3
Central Asia	14	9	3	2
Polynesia	19	8	11	0
<i>Totals</i>	<i>7,480</i>	<i>4,719</i>	<i>1,480</i>	<i>1,281</i>

Table 2: Geographic regions by number of dead or dying languages (most to least)

Region	% Vital	% In Trouble	% Dead or Dying
Western Africa	88%	5%	6%
Eastern Africa	82%	13%	5%
Middle Africa	81%	11%	8%
Southern Africa	77%	6%	17%
Northern Europe	76%	4%	20%
Melanesia	76%	17%	8%
Southern Asia	74%	19%	7%
Western Europe	74%	17%	9%
Caribbean	71%	13%	17%
Micronesia	70%	19%	11%
Southern Europe	69%	19%	12%
Central Asia	64%	21%	14%
Northern Africa	60%	19%	21%
Central America	60%	26%	14%
South-Eastern Asia	57%	32%	10%
Eastern Europe	52%	20%	27%
Eastern Asia	52%	36%	12%
Western Asia	48%	34%	17%
Polynesia	42%	58%	0%
South America	35%	26%	39%
Australia and New Zealand	9%	9%	82%
Northern America	7%	32%	61%
<i>Global</i>	<i>63%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>17%</i>

Table 3: Geographic regions by percentage of vital languages (most to least)