

Heritage and Exchanges

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Heritage and Exchanges:

Multilingual and Intercultural Approaches in Training Context

Edited by

Yvon Rolland, Julie Dumonteil,
Thierry Gaillat, Issa Kanté
and Vilasnee Tampoe

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PRÉFACE

YVON ROLLAND,
UNIVERSITÉ DE LA RÉUNION

Ces articles font suite au Colloque International « PATREC » (Patrimoine et Échanges : Approches Plurilingues et Interculturelles en contexte de formation) qui s'est déroulé à l'université de La Réunion les 5 et 6 novembre 2014.

Julie Dumonteil, Thierry Gaillat, Issa Kanté, Vilasnee Tampoe et moi-même tenons à remercier les participants à ce colloque et les auteurs de ces articles pour leur contribution à cet ouvrage.

Cette recherche s'inscrit dans la thématique de la structure fédérative de l'OSOI (Observatoire des Sociétés de l'Océan Indien, Université de La Réunion) qui porte sur les concepts de « Territoires » et « Mobilité » et dans le projet de recherche PLURIFORM (Plurilinguisme et Formation) lancé en 2012 par un partenariat entre les universités Montesquieu, ESPE d'Aquitaine, de Bordeaux 4 et l'université de La Réunion avec les laboratoires LACES (Professeure Émérite Marie Christine Deyrich et Michèle Catroux) et DIRE (Professeur Yvon Rolland). Ce projet s'est concrétisé par un premier colloque international en 2012 à l'université de La Réunion (« Mutations en contexte dans la didactique des langues : le cas de l'approche plurilingue, pluriculturelle et de la perspective actionnelle », août 2012), des journées d'étude et des mastérialles (2012).

Le projet PATREC engage l'OSOI, les laboratoires DIRE et ICARE de l'université de La Réunion, le laboratoire LACES de l'université de Bordeaux 2 et 4, le laboratoire Australex de l'université d'Adélaïde. Nous tenons à remercier les Professeurs Yvan Combeau (OSOI), Eileen Williams-Wanquet (DIRE) et Frédéric Tupin (ICARE) pour leur soutien.

N'oublions pas le BTCR et le DSIUN pour la logistique.

Nos remerciements s'adressent également aux membres du Comité Scientifique et du Comité d'organisation.

L'objectif du projet PATREC est de favoriser une réflexion pluridisciplinaire sur les constructions identitaires plurielles en contexte de formation avec un ciblage particulier sur l'Océan Indien.

Les concepts de « Territoires » et de « Mobilité » intègrent les notions de « Patrimoine » et d'« Échanges » dans les pays de la zone Océan Indien.

Le projet privilégie des approches plurilingues et/ou interculturelles en contexte multilingue et interculturel et se focalise sur les axes suivants :

Axe 1 :
**« Patrimoine » : Patrimoine multilingue,
interculturel et construction identitaire**

Le patrimoine littéraire, linguistique et cinématographique est abordé dans sa dimension multilingue et interculturelle, afin d'analyser la construction identitaire évolutive que cet environnement implique.

Nous remercions tout particulièrement Ghil'ad Zuckermann pour sa contribution à cet ouvrage avec son article « Aboriginal languages in Australia : Diversity, Linguicide and Revival » qui nous dresse un portrait linguistique complexe des langues aborigènes en Australie. L'auteur explore les bénéfices éthiques, esthétiques, épistémologiques, cognitifs, psychologiques et économiques du renouveau et de la diversité linguistique.

Issa Kanté aborde ensuite la linguistique contrastive en examinant le rapport de complémentarité entre l'Analyse contrastive (Contrastive Analysis), l'Analyse des erreurs (Error analysis) et l'Analyse de l'interlangue (Interlanguage analysis). Il préconise la nécessaire prise en compte de la Langue 1 dans un contexte plurilingue.

Moyra Sweetnam Evans se penche sur la situation plurilingue, pluriculturelle et sur l'utilisation, les attitudes linguistiques en Afrique du Sud de nos jours. La multiplicité des langues offertes dans le système éducatif a pour conséquence que l'anglais sort renforcé de ce contexte pluriel.

Thierry Gaillat analyse pour nous le Banga de Mayotte, case colorée qui a une mission sociale et initiatique pour les jeunes mahorais. L'étude des écrits observés sur les façades montrent une dimension pluriculturelle particulière qui fait du Banga un élément essentiel du patrimoine interculturel mahorais qui oscille entre une appartenance comorienne et française.

Julie Dumonteil étudie l'intérêt du philosophe allemand Nietzsche pour la pensée et la culture indienne. Cette formation interculturelle lui permet de s'appuyer sur une approche comparatiste de la philosophie et de confronter les systèmes de pensée européens et indiens pour dépasser la vision du monde à laquelle il est confronté au XIX^e siècle.

Christian Petit propose une étude qui se veut une contribution à une approche psychanalytique des pratiques scripturales en créole dans la littérature et la poésie réunionnaises et de ses rapports avec les représentations de l'identité. Le transfert de graphie au sens psychanalytique du terme et le travail qui est mis en évidence permettent de comprendre l'engouement des écrivains réunionnais pour l'écrit créole. Celui-ci se situe entre un processus de patrimonialisation, gage d'une reconnaissance symbolique d'une langue et d'un questionnement sur l'identité à partir des représentations sur l'origine.

Pierre-Eric Fageol traite de l'enseignement de l'histoire et de la construction identitaire en milieu indiaocéanique. Il analyse les enjeux d'une possible redéfinition d'un curriculum prenant en compte les réalités sociales et identitaires indiaocéaniques, et interroge les savoirs et outils ayant une pertinence sociale et une cohérence intellectuelle dans le contexte réunionnais.

Vilasnee Tampoe traite de la politique éducative au Sri Lanka, pays plurilingue avec le cinghalais, le tamoul et bien sûr, l'anglais. La langue est au cœur de l'identité et le point épineux dans le nationalisme des deux groupes ethniques. Est abordé le cadre juridique régissant la langue cinghalaise comme majoritaire.

Nathalie Wallian, Jérémie Bride, Ching-Wei Chang et Huai Yun Ruan nous livrent une étude contrastive entre le Japon, Taiwan et la Chine au niveau des temporalités culturelles, des pratiques physiques et temps didactique dans le domaine de l'éducation physique. Les perspectives en matière d'éducation interculturelle portent sur la nécessité d'une posture ouverte à l'altérité des temporalités.

Axe 2 : « Échanges » : Dynamique éducative, apprentissage et formation au plurilinguisme et à l'interculturalité

Les échanges sont liés aux politiques éducatives, et aux apprentissages langagiers et culturels ainsi qu'à la formation des enseignants impliqués dans cet environnement pluriel.

Nous remercions tout particulièrement Jean Paul Narcy-Combes pour cette contribution à cet ouvrage, et qui nous interpelle sur un éclairage théorique visant à un développement individuel pluriculturel et plurilingue équilibré dans l'Océan indien. Après avoir étudié le contexte indiaoocéanique et ses conséquences épistémologiques, il aborde la dimension psychologique humaniste et neurophysiologique, l'émergentisme, la perspective socioculturelle, les apports de la recherche au niveau du plurilinguisme, les multilitéracies et les résistances sociales ainsi que l'influence des nouvelles technologies.

Christian Ollivier recherche pour nous la place de la formation au plurilinguisme et à l'interculturalité dans les instructions officielles de l'école primaire en France.

Dominique Macaire, Rita Carol, Annette Jarlégan, Youssef Tazouti et Séverine Behra, constatent la difficile gestion du plurilinguisme à l'école maternelle, qui ne prend pas vraiment en compte la diversité linguistique et culturelle des enfants de 3 à 6 ans. Il en découle des orientations pour une formation des futurs enseignants davantage inclusive à la superdiversité et au « plurilinguisme en herbe » chez les futurs enseignants que cette étude propose de façon innovante.

Marie-Françoise Narcy-Combes s'appuie sur les travaux de l'équipe PLURI-L sur les représentations et les pratiques éducatives liées au plurilinguisme dans les Pays de la Loire. Son positionnement émergentiste se situe dans le cadre de la théorie des systèmes dynamiques avec une approche psycholinguistique et sociolinguistique complémentaire.

Yvon Rolland analyse le plurilinguisme et un spectre théorique multiple pour favoriser l'acquisition phonologique de l'anglais, langue étrangère. La dimension cognitive prend appui sur des paradigmes symboliques relevant de la linguistique, de l'apprentissage et de théories humanistes tandis que la dimension métacognitive relève des neurosciences. Malgré des obstacles liés à l'âge, au système éducatif

prisonnier de représentations sociales négatives, des propositions sont faites sur le plan de la compétence stratégique alliant cognition, métacognition, affect, dimension sociale afin de favoriser le plurilinguisme source de réussite dans l'apprentissage phonologique de la langue étrangère apprise.

Norah Leroy prend pour objet de recherche les enfants bilingues de la Dordogne et les relations interpersonnelles qui sont influencées par des facteurs socioculturels et socio-historiques. Représentations sociales et identité collective sont au cœur de cette catégorisation de groupes bilingues ou pas.

Kari Stunell s'interroge sur la mobilité des étudiants qui représente un atout pour améliorer la posture des enseignants stagiaires. Elle s'appuie sur le projet TTIMS (Teacher Training in Multilingual Settings) qui a permis de favoriser la prise de conscience interculturelle qui elle-même, se développe grâce des attitudes positives vis à vis de la diversité et des pratiques inclusives.

Nathalie Ribierre-Dubile termine par une étude sur l'apprentissage d'une langue vivante à l'école primaire. L'institution peine à intégrer cet enseignement et la communication qui est demandée. Une dynamique est proposée afin de favoriser la compétence de communication.

Ce patrimoine et ces échanges témoignent d'une pluralité linguistique et culturelle qui relève de langues et cultures en contact, mais qui traduit aussi un monde pluriel cloisonné influencé par des représentations subjectives et relayé par des politiques et pratiques éducatives décalées qui ne contribuent pas à la construction identitaire plurielle (Kramsch, C. 2008, *The Multilingual Subject*, OUP).

Articles soumis au Comité Scientifique PATREC et publiés sous la direction de

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- Julie Dumonteil, Maître de Conférences, Université de La Réunion
- Thierry Gaillat, Maître de Conférences, Université de la Réunion
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YVON ROLLAND, UNIVERSITY OF REUNION
(TRANSLATED BY DR VILASNEE TAMPOE)

The organizers, Julie Dumonteil, Thierry Gaillat, Issa kanté, Vilasnee Tampoe and myself wish to thank all those who participated in the event and contributed articles to this book. We likewise owe a great debt to members of our Scientific and Organizing committees and to Professors Yvan Combeau (OSOI), Eileen Williams-Wanquet (DIRE) and Frédéric Tupin (ICARE). For their unflagging support in the area of logistics, our gratitude is also extended to the BTCR and the DSIUN.

This book contains papers read at the International conference “PATREC” (*Patrimoine et Échanges : Approches Plurilingues et Interculturelles en contexte de formation*) which was held at the University of La Réunion on the 5th and 6th November 2014. PATREC is one of the research programmes supported by l’OSOI (Observatoire Scientifique de l’océan Indien) as well as two research centres, DIRE and ICARE of the University of La Réunion. Other partners and associates of this project are LACES, a research centre attached to Bordeaux 2 and 4 and Australix of the University of Adelaide. PATREC may also be considered as a prolongation of PLURIFORM (Plurilinguisme et Formation), a research project which was begun in 2012. A number of universities, tertiary institutes and academics were involved in PLURIFORM, including the universities of Montesquieu, Bordeaux 4 and La Réunion, the ESPE or teacher training college of Aquitaine as well as the research centres LACES (Emeritus Professors Marie Christine Deyrich and Michèle Catroux) and DIRE (Professeur Yvon Rolland). PLURIFORM culminated in an international conference (“*Mutations en contexte dans la didactique des langues : le cas de l’approche plurilingue, pluriculturelle et de la perspective actionnelle*”), held in 2013 at the University of La Réunion. This was followed by two other research seminars the same year. With its primary objective of developing pluri-disciplinary research projects, PATREC also purports to foreground issues related to plural identity constructions in teaching and training contexts, with a non-exclusive geo-

cultural anchorage in the Indian Ocean. Joining up the concepts of “Territory” and “Mobility” with the notions of “Heritage” and “Exchange”, the project likewise encourages plurilingual and/or intercultural approaches and methodology. This makes PATREC a two-pronged project, devoted on the one hand to multilingual and intercultural heritage and identity construction and to education dynamics, learning and training in plurilingual and pluricultural environments, on the other.

This volume offers a rich array of articles written by scholars belonging to disciplines as wide-ranging as Education and Didactics, Linguistics and Cultural Studies, History and Sport. The authors represent a diversity of socio-cultural spaces that straddle the Indian Ocean and Europe, from South Africa to Australia, and from France to Sri Lanka. A number of contributions investigate questions of identity construction in relation to the literary, linguistic and cinematographic heritages of the Indian Ocean, in multilingual and intercultural contexts.

Theme 1 : **“Heritage”: Multilingual and Intercultural Heritage and Identity Construction**

In this regard, one of the most distinguished scholars and specialists of the endangered languages, Ghil’ad Zuckermann begins this collection by offering a graphic and compelling insight into the linguistic complexities of aboriginal languages in Australia. In a richly detailed study, supported by statistics, graphics and visuals, the author cogently argues in favour of the multiple benefits to be gained from linguistic diversity at a number of levels, including ethical, aesthetic, epistemological, cognitive, psychological and economic.

Within the wider framework of contrastive linguistics, Issa Kanté investigates the relation of complementarity between Contrastive Analysis, Error analysis and Inter-language analysis. He emphasizes the crucial role played by the first language in plurilingual contexts.

The study conducted by Moyra Sweetnam Evans uses the plurilingual and pluricultural situation in modern South Africa to reflect upon language use and attitudes in the South African society asserting that the multilinguistic substrata of the South African educational system has in fact paradoxically led to the strengthening of the position of English confronting vernacular languages.

Using the lens of the *banga*, a traditional abode typical of the Indian Ocean island of Mayotte, Thierry Gaillat offers a vivid, all too brief glimpse of the Mahorais youth. The *banga*, one discovers is not only a physical structure but also a locus where African, Muslim and European-French cultures converge, emerging as a vital element of the cultural heritage of the *mahorais* people. These richly-decorated and yet fast disappearing habitats have a social function as sites of initiation for *mahorais* as they move from youth to adult. The study also frames the *banga* within a pluricultural perspective through the examination of inscriptions found on the exterior walls and facades of these dwellings, pointing to the harmonious overlaying or superimposition of different cultures in Mayotte as the inhabitants move easily from one identity to the other, free from any dilemmas of appurtenance.

The interest for Nietzsche in Indian thought and culture is at the core of Julie Dumonteil's analysis. On the strength of his intercultural training, Nietzsche uses a comparative approach in philosophy to put in parallel European and Indian systems of thought, and thus reaches beyond the bounds of the 19th century vision of the world he is confronted with.

Christian Petit concentrates on creole scriptural practices in Reunionese literature and poetry. Adopting a psychoanalytical approach to study their relation to representations of identity, the author argues that the transfer of writing, taken in the psychoanalytical sense of the term, points to the popularity amongst Reunionese authors for writing in creole.

In his insightful analysis, Pierre-Eric Fageol examines the issue of history teaching and identity construction in an Indian Ocean environment and advocates the reconfiguration of syllabuses so that they take into more serious account the social realities and identities specific to the Indian ocean area. Both the knowledge imparted to students, as well as the means used to do so, he asserts, should have some relevance to the Reunionese context.

Vilasnee Tampoe-Hautin discusses the trials and tribulations of devising a balanced education policy in Sri Lanka, and sheds light on the intimate link between language, religion and politics in the country. She points out that language is one of the most vital, but also volatile identity markers in Sri Lanka, especially for the Sinhala Buddhist majority, as demonstrated by the violent communal riots of 1956 which broke out in the wake of the *Sinhala Only Act*. Aimed primarily at satisfying the increasingly vociferous demands for Sinhala hegemony, and promoting the

Sinhala language, the ill-fated legal framework culminated in the assassination of the country's prime minister and pushed the country to the brink of disaster.

The foursome, Nathalie Wallian Jérémie Bride, Ching-Wei Chang, and Huai Yun Ruan provide us with a contrastive study of Japan, Taiwan and China in cultural temporalities, physical activity, and didactic time in sport.

Theme 2

“Exchanges”: education dynamics, learning and training in plurilinguism and intercultural relations

Framed within our second major theme, Jean Paul Narcy-Combes offers a theoretical framework for a balanced plurilingual and pluricultural development of the individual in the Indian Ocean. Set against the geo-cultural and epistemological contexts of this region, the author approaches a number of relevant issues such as the psychological, humanistic and neurophysiological dimensions, “emergentism”, socio-cultural perspectives and academic contribution to the study of plurilinguism, multiliteracies social resistance and the influence of new technologies.

Official instructions and training in plurilinguism and interculturality at primary school level in France are at the core of a reflexion by Christian Ollivier.

Dominique Macaire, Rita Carol Annette Jarlégan, Youssef Tazouti and Séverine Behra concentrate on the issue of managing plurilingualism, this time, in Pre-schools. Their analysis reveals that the linguistic and cultural diversity of children between 3 and 6 years must be given more priority.

Drawing from research conducted by the PLURI-L team, Marie-Françoise Narcy-Combes uses psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic approaches to raise the question of plurilingual representations and educational practices in the Pays de la Loire. Her “emergentist” posture is grounded in the theory of dynamic systems.

Yvon Rolland analyses plurilingualism and the spectrum of multiple theories that favour the phonological acquisition of English as a foreign language. The cognitive dimension is reinforced by symbolical paradigms deriving from linguistics, learning and humanistic theories whereas the

metacognitive dimension draws from neurosciences. Despite the obstacles pertaining to age or to educational systems that are hostage to negative social representations, cognition, metacognition, affect, social dimensions can be joined up to make plurilinguism an asset in the teaching of phonology in a given foreign language.

Norah Leroy focuses on bilingual children in the Dordogne and engages in the observation of interpersonal relations in the classroom as well as the sociocultural and socio-historical factors that influence such behaviour. She argues that questions of social representations and collective identity enable (or disable) the categorisation of being bilingual or not.

In her illuminating study, inspired by the project TTIMS (Teacher Training in Multilingual Settings) Kari Stunell shows that student mobility can be a useful developmental tool in the construction of student teacher professional posture. She shows how participation in a period of student mobility can help student teachers towards enhanced intercultural consciousness and the development of positive attitudes towards diversity in the classroom and inclusive practice.

Learning and teaching foreign languages at primary level are some of the themes in the article by Nathalie Ribierre-Dubile. The author argues that difficulties experienced in this area may be alleviated by developing the competence of communication.

If heritage and exchanges attest to linguistic and cultural plurality, resulting from the contact of languages and cultures they nevertheless also reveal a plural, partitioned world, influenced by subjective representations, relayed by politics and educational policies, that run counter to the construction of plural identities. (Kramsch, C. 2008, *The Multilingual Subject*, OUP).

Articles submitted to PATREC Scientific Committee and published under the direction of

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AXE 1 :
« PATRIMOINE » :
PATRIMOINE MULTILINGUE,
INTERCULTUREL ET CONSTRUCTION
IDENTITAIRE

THEME 1:
“HERITAGE”:
MULTILINGUAL AND INTERCULTURAL
HERITAGE AND IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

SLEEPING BEAUTIES AWAKE: REVIVALISTICS AND WELLBEING FROM DOWN UNDER TO THE REST OF THE WORLD

PROFESSOR GHIL‘AD ZUCKERMANN

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1. Linguicide and the Future

Language is an archaeological vehicle, full of the remnants of dead and living pasts, lost and buried civilizations and technologies. The language we speak is a whole palimpsest of human effort and history. (Russell Hoban, children’s writer, 1925–2011, in Haffenden 1985:138)

Palimpsest is a beautiful metaphor for language. In Greek it means “scraped again”, “re-scratched”, referring to a text written on top of another text. Of course, the historian is more interested in the original inscription. A language is multi-layered, it encodes the heritage and the culture of a people across history and pre-history.

But, unfortunately, linguicide (language killing) and glottophagy (language eating; see Zuckermann and Monaghan 2012) have made the world in general and Australia in particular an unlucky place. These twin forces have been in operation in Australia since the early colonial period, when efforts were made to prevent Aboriginal people from continuing to speak their languages in order to “civilize” them. Anthony Forster, a nineteenth-century financier and politician, gave voice to a colonial linguicide ideology, which was typical of much of the attitude towards Australian languages (report on a public meeting of the South Australian Missionary Society in aid of the German Mission to the Aborigines, Southern Australian, 8 September 1843, p. 2; in Scrimgeour 2007:116):

The natives would be sooner civilized if their language was extinct. The children taught would afterwards mix only with whites, where their own

language would be of no use — the use of their language would preserve their prejudices and debasement, and their language was not sufficient to express the ideas of civilized life.

Even Governor of South Australia George Grey, who was relatively pro-Aboriginal, appeared to share this opinion and remarked in his journal that “the ruder languages disappear successively, and the tongue of England alone is heard around” (Grey 1841: 200–201). What was seen as a civilising process was actually the traumatic death of various fascinating and multifaceted Aboriginal languages.

It is not surprising, therefore, that of approximately 330 known Aboriginal languages, today only 13 (4 per cent) are spoken natively by children. Blatant statements of linguistic imperialism, such as the ones made by Forster and Grey, now seem to be less frequent, but the processes they describe are nonetheless still active.

Approximately 7000 languages are currently spoken worldwide. The majority of these are spoken by small populations. Approximately 96 per cent of the world's population speaks around 4 per cent of the world's languages, leaving the vast majority of tongues vulnerable to extinction and disempowering their speakers. Linguistic diversity reflects many things beyond accidental historical splits. Languages are essential building blocks of community identity and authority. However, with globalisation of dominant cultures, cultures at the periphery will be marginalized, and possibly lead to language loss. Language reclamation will become increasingly relevant as people seek to recover their cultural autonomy, empower their spiritual and intellectual sovereignty, and improve their wellbeing.

The Arts and Humanities in the West in the second decade of the 21st century might remind one of the three marks of existence in Buddhism:

1. *Impermanence* (Pāli: anicca): Nothing is constant. Therefore attachment to things (which are ipso facto impermanent) is futile and leads to suffering (dukkha).
2. *Suffering* (Pāli: dukkha; Sanskrit दुःख duḥkha): Everything is painful and stressful. We ought to be realistic.
3. *Not-self* (Pāli: anatta; Sanskrit: anātman): There is no Self.

John Adams, the second President of the United States in (1797–1801) wrote to Abigail Adams in 1780:

I must study Politicks and War that my sons may have liberty to study Mathematicks and Philosophy.

My sons ought to study Mathematicks and Philosophy, Geography, natural History, Naval Architecture, navigation, Commerce and Agriculture,

in order to give their Children a right to study Painting, Poetry, Musick, Architecture, Statuary, Tapestry and Porcelaine.

I would add language, heritage, culture, Revivalistics, language revival.

I believe that so far there have been 4 linguistic revolutions:

1. *Speaking*: more than 70,000 years ago.
2. *Writing*: approx. 5200 years ago.
3. *Type-Printing*: c. 1450: Johannes Gutenberg develops the first European moveable type printing press, enabling mass production of books.
4. *Talknology* (talk+technology): twentieth century-present: digital mass media, CNN, Facebook, Twitter, resulting in “big data”.

But whilst the *Industrial* Revolution (1760-1840) turned people from seeking food to seeking things, I believe that the *Talknological* Revolution (C20-present) will eventually turn people, the hoi polloi, from seeking *things* to seeking *ideas*.

Abraham Maslow explored in 1943 the hierarchy of needs in his seminal article “A Theory of Human Motivation” (Psychological Review 50.4: 370–96), see the slightly modified pyramid below:

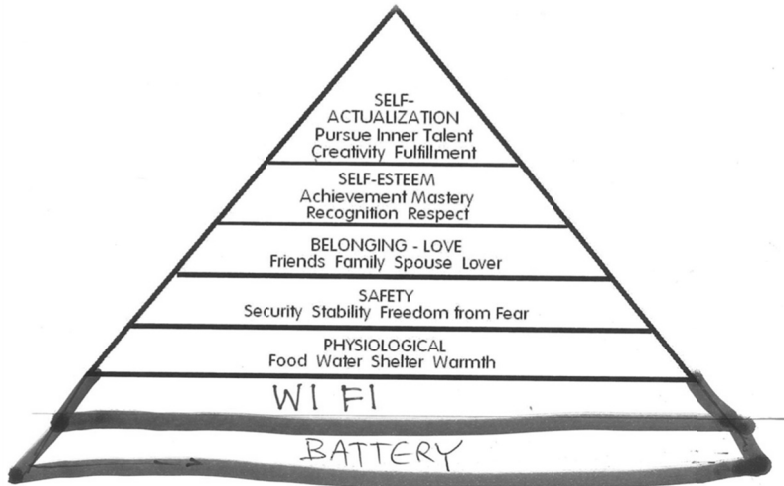


Figure 1: Abraham Maslow's 1943 hierarchy of needs, addenda by Zuckermann

In accordance with searching for ideas, resulting from the Talknological Revolution, more and more people in the future will go up Maslow's ladder and be interested not just in big houses and speedy cars but also in heritage, culture, and language. Language revival will eventually become more and more relevant.

2. Why should we invest time and money in reviving languages?

2.1 Ethical/Moral reasons

Australia's languages have not just been dying of their own accord; many were destroyed by settlers of this land. We owe it to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to support the maintenance and revival of their cultural heritage, in this instance through language revival. To quote Nelson Mandela, "if you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in *his* language, that goes to his heart." According to the international law of human rights, persons belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities have the right to use their own language (Article (art.) 27 of the ICCPR). Thus every person has the right to express themselves in the language of their ancestors, not just in the language of convenience that English has become.

Through supporting language revival, we can appreciate the significance of Indigenous languages and recognise their importance to Indigenous people and to Australia. We can then right some small part of the wrong against the original inhabitants of this country and support the wishes of their ancestors with the help of linguistic knowledge.

Native Title (see, e.g. Bartlett 2000) is the legal recognition by Australian law that some Indigenous people have existing and continuing rights to, and interests in, their land that come from their traditional laws and customs. After the recognition of Native Title, the government cannot extinguish the rights of Aboriginal people to their land without compensation. Compensation in relation to Native Title generally arises when groups have successfully claimed Native Title and then negotiate positive economic terms with mining companies and others who want to take over these lands.

I believe that even more important than Native Title is what I call Native Tongue Title: The Australian Government ought to compensate Indigenous people not only for the loss of tangible land, but also for the loss of intangible language (language) – see Zuckermann, Shakuto-Neoh and Quer (2014). Legislation to compensate for linguicide (language killing) will recognise the Indigenous peoples' rights to revive or maintain their languages. The compensation money ought to be used to support reclamation activities and linguistic empowerment efforts. Such morally-justified legislation would help reinstate Indigenous peoples' authority and ownership of their cultural heritage.

Zuckermann, Shakuto-Neoh and Quer (2014) propose the enactment of an *ex gratia* compensation scheme for the loss of languages. Such a statute-based compensation scheme accords with international human rights law, and fills gaps between Australia's commitment to the international human rights instrument and domestic mechanisms to ensure the fulfilment of its commitment. The proposed Native Tongue Title compensation scheme will recognise the rights of Indigenous people to own, use and revive their languages.

So far I have briefly discussed the moral essence of language revival. Let us now move from ethics to aesthetics.

2.2 *Aesthetic reasons*

The linguist Ken Hale, who worked with many endangered languages and saw the effect of loss of language, compared losing language to bombing the Louvre: “When you lose a language, you lose a culture, intellectual wealth, a work of art. It’s like dropping a bomb on a museum, the Louvre” (*The Economist*, 3 November 2001, <http://www.economist.com/node/842137>, accessed 5 May 2015). A museum is a repository of human artistic culture. Languages are at least equally important since they store the cultural practices and beliefs of an entire people. Different languages have different ways of expressing ideas and this can indicate which concepts are important to a certain culture.

For example, in Australia information relating to food sources, surviving in nature and Dreaming/history is being lost along with the loss of Aboriginal languages. A study by Boroditsky and Gaby (2010) found that speakers of Kuuk Thaayorre, a language spoken in Pormpuraaw on the west coast of Cape York, do not use “left” or “right”, but always use cardinal directions (i.e. north, south, east, west). They claim that Kuuk Thaayorre speakers are constantly aware of where they are situated and that this use of directions also affects their awareness of time (Boroditsky and Gaby 2010). Language supports different ways of “being in the world”.

Such cases are abundant around the world. Here are some more examples:

- *Mamihlapinatapai* is a word in the Yaghan language of Tierra del Fuego in Chile and Argentina. It refers to “a look shared by two people, each wishing that the other will offer something that they both desire but have been unwilling to suggest or offer themselves”. This word can be broken down into smaller parts, or morphemes, thus *ma-* is a reflexive/passive prefix (realised as the allomorph *mam-* before a vowel); *ihlapi* “to be at a loss as what to do next”; *-n*, stative suffix; *-ata*, achievement suffix; and *-apai*, a dual suffix, which has a reciprocal sense with *ma-* (circumfix).
- Ancient Persian *nakhur* is a “camel that will not give milk until her nostrils have been tickled”. Clearly, camels are very important in this society and survival may have historically depended on camel milk. Lest we forget that human imagination is by and large very limited. For example: almost all aliens that I see in Hollywood films look like ugly human beings: with two eyes, two nostrils and one mouth. What

do you think the chances are that an alien, if exists, looks like a human? Given that DNA exists approximately 3 billion years, and given all the mutations that have resulted in what *Homo sapiens sapiens* is, for an alien to look like an ugly human is like winning the lottery, say, one million times.

- *Tingo*, in Rapa Nui (Pasquan) of Easter Island (Eastern Polynesian language), is “to take all the objects one desires from the house of a friend, one at a time, by asking to borrow them, until there is nothing left” (De Boinod 2005).

Such fascinating and multifaceted words, *maximus in minimis*, should not be lost. They are important to the cultures they are from and make the outsiders reflexive of their own cultures. Through language maintenance and reclamation we can keep important cultural practices and concepts alive.

2.3 Utilitarian/Economic/Cognitive benefits

Language revival benefits the speakers involved through improvement of wellbeing, cognitive abilities and mental health (see Zuckermann and Walsh 2014). In 2007, Darcy Hallett, Michael Chandler & Christopher Lalonde published an article entitled “Aboriginal language knowledge and youth suicide” in the journal “Cognitive Development”. In their article, they report that in British Columbia, Canada, there is a clear correlation between youth suicide and lack of conversational knowledge in the native language. In other words: language loss results in suicide.

I would like to hypothesize that just as language loss *increases* the suicide rate, language gain *reduces* the suicide rate. I have noticed, qualitatively, that language revival has an empowering effect on the community wellbeing and mental health of people involved in such projects. Participants develop a better appreciation of and sense of connection with their cultural heritage. Language revival reduces delinquency and increases cultural tourism.

Learning the language of their ancestors can be an emotional experience and can provide people with a strong sense of pride and identity. As the Aboriginal politician Aden Ridgeway (2009) said, “language is power; let us have ours!” Small changes can impact people in big ways. A participant at a Barnjarla Aboriginal language reclamation workshop in May 2012 (the language of Eyre Peninsula, South Australia) wrote that she found learning the language “liberating”, that it gave her a

“sense of identity” and that “it’s almost like it gives you a purpose in life”. Another participant said, “our ancestors are happy”.

According to the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2010), 31 per cent of respondents aged 15-plus had experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress in the four weeks leading up to the interview alone. This is 2.5 times the rate of non-Indigenous Australians.

There are obvious reasons for that: for example Stolen Generation, colonization and linguicide. Language reclamation increases feelings of pride among Indigenous people. Many of them are disempowered because they “fall between the cracks”, feeling that they are neither whitefellas nor in command of their own Aboriginal heritage. As Fishman (2006:90) puts it:

The real question of modern life and for RLS [reversing language shift] is...how one...can build a home that one can still call one’s own and, by cultivating it, find community, comfort, companionship and meaning in a world whose mainstreams are increasingly unable to provide these basic ingredients for their own members.

There are also cognitive advantages to multilingualism. Several studies have found that bilingual children have better non-linguistic cognitive abilities compared with monolingual children (Kovács and Mehler 2009) and improved attention and auditory processing (Krizman et al. 2012: 7879): the bilingual’s “enhanced experience with sound results in an auditory system that is highly efficient, flexible and focused in its automatic sound processing, especially in challenging or novel listening conditions”

As another cognitive advantage of language revival, a recent study found that decision-making biases are reduced when using a second language (Keysar et al. 2012:661):

Four experiments show that the “framing effect” disappears when choices are presented in a foreign tongue. Whereas people were risk averse for gains and risk seeking for losses when choices were presented in their native tongue, they were not influenced by this framing manipulation in a foreign language. Two additional experiments show that using a foreign language reduces loss aversion, increasing the acceptance of both hypothetical and real bets with positive expected value. We propose that these effects arise because a foreign language provides greater cognitive and emotional distance than a native tongue does.



Figure 2: Port Lincoln, South Australia, 18-20 April 2012: Ghil'ad Zuckermann (middle back row) with Aboriginal participants in one of the first Barngarla Aboriginal language reclamation workshops. Howard Richards, the man in the blue shirt, is a Stolen Generation Barngarla elder.

Thus, language revival is not only empowering culturally, but also cognitively. Evidence also shows that being bilingual or multilingual can slow dementia, improving quality of life for many and reducing money spent on medical care. There are severe problems with mental health among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. According to the National Survey of Mental Wellbeing (see ABS 2010), 40 per cent of Australians (not necessarily Indigenous) suffer from a mental disorder at some stage of their life. Furthermore, 20 per cent of participants experienced some kind of mental disorder in the past 12 months. In comparison, 31 per cent of respondents aged 15-plus participating in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (ABS 2010) had experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress *in the*

four weeks leading up to the interview alone (ABS 2010). This is 2.5 times the rate of non-Indigenous Australians.

It has been shown that people involved in Indigenous language reclamation see an improvement in non-language subjects, linked to educational empowerment and improved self-confidence. Educational success directly translates to improved employability and decreased delinquency. Approximately \$50,000 per language per year was provided in 2010–11 by Indigenous Languages Support to 78 projects involving 200 languages (Office for the Arts 2013). The cost of incarceration is \$100,000 per person per year and the cost of adolescent mental health \$1395 per patient per day.

Finally, cultural tourism already represents an important part of Australia's economy, with many tourists wishing to learn about Indigenous cultures. A growth in cultural tourism has been recorded in some rural centres where language revival projects have been implemented (Clark and Kostanski 2005). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures represent part of Australia's image overseas and greatly contribute to tourism. We need to help preserve and revive these languages and protect cultural knowledge in order to maintain this point of attraction. This tourism not only benefits the economy, but can also provide work and opportunities for Indigenous people.

Establishing Revivalistics in Australia has the potential of turning some Indigenous Australians into experts of language revival, making language revival part of their cultural identity. They will then be able to assist others in language revival. Language revival has the potential to become an important part of Indigenous initiatives, bringing many benefits to the wider community. Language revival can aid in "closing the gap" and encourages cultural tourism while enriching Australia's multicultural society.

3. Revivalistics

Revivalistics is a new trans-disciplinary field of enquiry studying comparatively and systematically the *universal* constraints and global mechanisms on the one hand (see Zuckermann 2009), and *particularistic* peculiarities and cultural relativist idiosyncrasies on the other, apparent in linguistic reclamation, revitalization and reinvigoration attempts across various sociological backgrounds, all over the globe (Zuckermann and Walsh 2011). Revivalistics combines scientific studies of *native* language