

# 11. Language revitalization: maintenance and revival

## 11.1. Introductory notes

While on the one hand many languages are disappearing, on the other there are many attempts to maintain endangered languages. There are even attempts to revive extinct ones. This chapter looks at issues that surround these activities.

Various terms have been used with reference to such activities, e.g. language maintenance (Fishman 1964), language revival (Fishman 1964: 53), reversing language shift (Fishman 1991), language preservation (Rigsby 1987: 370; Silverthorne 1997; Wurm 1997), language reproduction (Williams 1992), language restoration (Spolsky 1995: 194), language reversal (Tezozomoc, Danza Azteca Huehuetotl, and Danza Azteca Tenochtitlan 1997: 74), language renewal (Fettes 1997; Daniel Rubin 1999; Amery 2000: 18), language revitalization (Jones 1998; Reyhner 1999: iii; Spolsky 1995: 178), language resurrection (Amery 2000: 17), language reclamation (Amery 2000: 17), language recreation (Thieberger 2002: 325), and linguistic revival (Edwards 1984: 304). (See Amery 1994, 2001: 17–18 for a brief survey.)

The present work employs the following terms. The term for the general subject is “language revitalization” (as indicated in the chapter title), which may be characterized as “restoration of vitality to a language that has lost or is losing this attribute” (cf. Spolsky 1995: 178). It is divided as follows.

(a) Language maintenance: this concerns languages that are endangered, but still alive.

(b) Language revival: this has to do with extinct languages.

Furthermore, Amery (2000: 17–18) classifies language revival (as characterized above) into the following two types.

(b-i) Language renewal: language revival in situations where there is no fluent speaker left, but a significant amount of the language is known within the community.

(b-ii) Language resurrection or language reclamation: language revival in situations where the language is no longer spoken and little is known orally within the community, i.e. an attempt to relearn a language from earlier materials on the language. (For examples of such attempts, see 11.5.14.)

There is already a large literature on language revitalization. General works and/or surveys on this issue include Crystal (2000: 91–166), Fishman (1964,

1972: 107–154, 1991, 1996b), Nettle and Romaine (2001: 175–204), Thieberger (1990, 2002), Tsunoda (2001e: 8352), and Wurm (1998). Anthologies include Bradley and Bradley (2002), Fase, Jaspaert, and Kroon (1992b), Hinton and Hale (2001), and Linda King (1998). Anthologies or surveys of specific areas include the following.

(a) Australia: Baldauf and Luke (1990), Bell (1982), Hartman and Henderson (1994), McKay (1996), Nathan (1996), and Schmidt (1990).

(b) North America: Cantoni (1996b), Reyhner (1997), and Reyhner et al. (1999).

(c) The former USSR: Shoji and Janhunen (1997).

Detailed accounts of specific language revitalization activities include Huss (1999), Jones (1998), Kendall King (2001), and Maguire (1991).

The above-cited works mainly deal with aboriginal languages, but some of them include accounts of enclave languages (cf. 1.4), including immigrant languages.

Language revitalization may sound romantic to some readers. However, it should be stressed at the outset that it is a formidable and daunting task, despite the existence of a very small number of success stories such as Hebrew and Maaori. Hebrew had died as the medium of everyday conversation more than 2,000 years ago, but it was revived with considerable effort in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century; see Fishman (1991: 289–336), Mesthrie (1994: 1989), and Spolsky (1995). Maaori did not become extinct, but was (and still is?) endangered; see 3.3.1 and also 11.5.2.

## 11.2. Can languages be revitalized?

As mentioned in 11.1, there are a large number of language revitalization activities being conducted in many parts of the world. But is it really possible to revitalize languages? In other words, can a language revitalization program succeed? See Schmidt (1990: 104–106), Fishman (1991: 10–38), and Amery (2000: 21) for discussions. In the following, we shall attempt to elaborate on this question. There is no unequivocal answer to this question. The answer depends on (i) the definition of language revitalization, and (ii) the aim of a given revitalization program, as shown below.

### [1] Definition of language revitalization

It is crucial to consider what is meant by language revitalization. We shall look at (i) degree of language endangerment and death, and (ii) intactness of the language structure.

(a) Degree of language endangerment and death. As seen in Chapter 2, language endangerment consists of successive phases, ranging from “weakening” to “extinct”. We shall consider the case of extinct languages, as an example.

Is it possible to revive a dead language? As is the case with language endangerment, language death comprises successive phases, and there are various definitions of language death (5.2). Certain scholars consider a language dead when it is no longer used as the vehicle of communication in the community. In this view, revival of the language means restoring it to the state where it is again used as the means of communication. This is an extremely difficult task to achieve, again despite the existence of the celebrated success story of Hebrew. There are other views, e.g. the view that a language is alive if place names in the language survive. In this view, language revival is an easy job; mere replacement of a few place names with the indigenous ones will result in the revival of the language. For example, the traditional names of some of the islands of the Palm Island group of North Queensland, Australia are Palm Island *burrhuman*, Curacoa Island *ngugu*, Phantome Island *yumili*, and Havanah Island *muyirr* (Tsunoda 1996b). Replacement of these English names with the Aboriginal names would result in the revival of the language of the area (the *buluguyban* language). The revival of place names will be further discussed in [2] below and in 11.5.13.

(b) Intactness of the language structure. If revitalization means maintaining or restoring a structurally intact language to the way it is/was spoken by its traditional, fluent speakers, then this task is formidable. Even in what is considered to be the successful revival of Hebrew, the children were developing a new Hebrew, which deviated from its traditional norm. Also, regarding the revitalization of Welsh, Jones (1998: 141, 149, 150, 280, 351) reports the development of “a form of school dialect” of Welsh. Victor Golla (e-mail of 21 June 2001) reports that, although the teaching program of Strait Salish of the USA and Canada is successful, the learners’ speech is substantially different in terms of phonology, grammar, and lexicon from that of the oldest generation. See 8.4.5.3-[4], [5] for more on structural changes in language revitalization.

In many cases where there are traditional, fluent speakers and where the children may be considered to be acquiring the language in a natural context (as against a language program, as is the case with Hebrew, Welsh, and Strait Salish), the children’s language often shows deviations; see, for example, Dorian (1992: 144, 1994c: 481–484) on the Tiwi, and Dalton et al. (1995) on Gurindji, both of northwest Australia.

## [2] Aim of language revitalization

Aims of language revitalization activities vary, depending on (i) the amount of documentation of the language in question, and (ii) the individuals.

(a) Amount of documentation of the language in question. Thus, for Warrungu of North Queensland, Australia, the writer recorded about 6 hours of running texts, about 1,500 words, and fairly detailed grammatical information (cf. 8.3), and it is therefore possible to plan a fairly comprehensive program. In contrast, for Buluguyban of the Palm Island group, he recorded about 50 words and a few frozen phrases (cf. 5.2-[7]), and, unfortunately, it is impossible to entertain an ambitious aim.

(b) Individuals. Some people may have modest aims, while others may be more ambitious. Some of the people the writer interviewed in North Queensland stated that they wish to use their ancestral language (i) to say “Hello” when they meet on the street, (ii) to start a meeting, and (iii) to have road signs such as “Welcome to the country of ...”. There are also people who seem to be happy if they can sprinkle a few Aboriginal words in their English sentences (see Schmidt 1990: 35). These aims are fairly easy to achieve. On the other hand, there are people who are not content with modest aims. They wish to speak their language – if not fluently like their ancestors. This aim is more difficult to achieve than the ones mentioned above.

To sum up, the answer to the question as to whether a language can be revitalized depends the definition and aim of language revitalization.

The generally adopted – even when not explicitly stated – view seems to be that language revitalization aims to maintain or restore a language to such a state that it is spoken by a reasonable number of people, reasonably fluently, and in a reasonably intact form. See Amery (1994: 147), Schmidt (1990: 106), and Tovey, Hannan, and Abramson (1989: 33). (This characterization leaves unanswered the question of what is meant by “reasonable”.) This or similar view is shared by community members who are involved in language revival activities. Thus, Rachel Cummins, (who is a granddaughter of the late Alf Palmer (cf. 5.2-[6]) and who is now the central figure in the revival movement of the Warrungu language in North Queensland (cf. 11.5.14-[2])), expressed one of the aims of their movement as follows: “I want 50% of the children to speak the language”. No doubt, an aim of this kind is not uncommon among the people throughout the world who are contemplating the revival of their ancestral language.

On this view of language revitalization, the writer’s impression concerning the languages Kimberley, Australia, is as follows: Under the current circumstances and unless something drastic takes place, language revitalization is extremely difficult. Although a number of languages have fluent speakers and are spoken in certain communities, the best that can be hoped for is not to halt, but

merely slow down, the process of language loss. However, note the caveat “Under the current circumstances and unless something drastic takes place”. Circumstances could change and something drastic could happen, as is witnessed by the success of Hebrew and Maori. A more detailed account of the situation in Kimberley is given towards the end of 11.4.2.

It seems that some – if not many – of language revitalization activities have a little chance of success. So, is it really worthwhile to undertake such efforts? Dorian (1987: 63–66) on Irish, Amery (1994: 147–148), McKay (1996: 137), and Schmidt (1990: 107) on Australian Aboriginal languages, and Bradley (2001: 158) on languages of Southeast Asia, argue that the answer is in the affirmative. Their arguments may be summarized as follows.

Language revitalization activities create a cultural climate where the people’s ethnic heritage (the language, culture, history, etc.) is appreciated and respected and where publications on them are available to those interested. They in turn foster the people’s sense of pride, self-esteem, identity, and ethnicity, and they contribute to the attenuation of the negative attitude towards the language and to raising its profile. Schmidt (1990: 107) cites a member of the Kuranda community of North Queensland, who is probably a Djabugay person: “Before we were shame to speak our language. No more. Now you can hear language more, in the street, in town, these fella now talk language even if white-fella are around”. (Accounts of the Djabugay language program are in Johnson 1994, McKay 1996: 136–138, and Schmidt 1990: 109–111.) Overall, language programs help to build bridges between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples and improve the relationship between them. Furthermore, revitalization programs may bring economic benefits, e.g. creating jobs, such as teachers, and teacher’s aides. This is an attractive benefit for many Aboriginal communities in Australia, where unemployment is a perpetual problem. An example of this type of success concerns Kaurna of the Adelaide area of South Australia; see 11.5.14.

Rigsby (1987: 374) suggests that language revival programs in Australia and North America have not been successful and that, consequently, scarce human and other resources should be concentrated on the maintenance of those languages which are still transmitted intergenerationally. However, this suggestion is unlikely to be welcomed by those community members who are hoping to revive their ancestral languages.

### 11.3. Strategies for language revitalization

We shall look at the following two issues: (i) what to revitalize: language, or language-and-culture? (11.3.1), and (ii) levels of language revitalization: the societal or macro level, and the individual or micro level (11.3.2).

#### 11.3.1. What to revitalize: language alone, or language-and-culture?

“Language and culture are of course inseparable” (Amery 1994: 141), as seen in Chapter 10. Amery (2000: 249), Stephen Harris (1994: 13–37), and Stiles (1997: 248) argue that both language and culture are needed for a successful revitalization program. Similarly, Wurm (1997: 49, 1998: 199–200) positively encourages inclusion of traditional culture and activities, e.g. singing, dancing, handcraft, hunting, and fishing, in the hope that they will refresh the knowledge of the language.

Such views are shared by community members who are planning to embark on a language revitalization program. Dalton et al. (1995: 94) state, regarding a prospective Gurindji language program in northwest Australia, that its aim is “Aboriginal language and culture maintenance”. Similarly, several representatives of the people who are involved in the revival of Warrungu, Gugu-Badhun, and a few other languages of North Queensland (11.4.3.2, 11.5.14-[2]) clearly stated that they want to revive their language and culture, such as songs and dances, among other things. This is echoed by a voice from North America; see Cantoni (1996a: viii).

The relationship between language and culture in revitalization activities may be divided into the following two types: (i) revitalization of language *and* culture, and (ii) culture *for* assisting language revitalization, e.g. by creating a natural context in which to speak the language (cf. Schütz 1997: 57). For example, dancing is used to revitalize the Classical Nahuatl language (of Mexico) by several dance groups in Los Angeles, USA (Tezozomoc, Danza Azteca Hueheteotl, and Danza Azteca Tenochtitlan 1997: 56). In practice, however, such a dichotomy need not be made. In either method, both the language and culture will be promoted.

Language programs differ with respect to the relative emphasis assigned to language and to culture. Amery (1994: 141) notes that the Kurna program of Adelaide, South Australia (cf. 11.5.14) has a very strong focus on teaching the Kurna language, while the Djabugay program of North Queensland (mentioned in 11.2) focuses on the Djabugay culture, by teaching culturally significant vocabulary, among other topics.

A survey of the literature indicates cultural aspects such as the following are incorporated in language revitalization activities: singing, dancing, handcraft, and collecting plants used for traditional medicine (Okuda 2001: 106, 109 on Ainu, Japan); hula dancing, shipbuilding, voyaging, martial arts, and herbal healing (Schütz 1995: 58, 1997: 57–58 on Hawaiian; see 11.5.2-[2]); traditional customs, genealogy, and roles and responsibilities to one's siblings (Jeanette King 2001 on Maaori; see 11.5.2-[1]), singing, kinship system, plants, traditional stories (McKay 1996: 136 on Djabugay, Australia); kinship system and terms (Dalton et al. 1995: 96–97 on Gurindji, Australia); and music (Almasude 1999: 121 on the language of the Amazigh people (or Berbers) of North Africa).

It is important in this connection to point out that there is a pitfall in the incorporation of cultural aspects into language revitalization activities. The crucial fact is that learning to speak a language is a far more time-consuming and demanding task than learning to dance, to sing, and so on; for an account of a frustrating language learning experience, see Nicholson (1990). This may make people turn away from learning the language and be attracted to learning the culture. This will in turn create a situation in which cultural activities are flourishing but in which the language itself is not revitalized. Okuda (2001: 106, 109) suggests that such a situation obtains in the Ainu revitalization activities. Indeed, in Australia, a fair number of Aboriginal dance theatres and music bands appear to be highly successful, such as the Tjapukai Dance Theatre of Djabugay group (cf. McKay 1996: 137–138). (“Tjapukai” is also spelt “Djabugay”, as seen in 11.2.) However, this does not automatically lead to the revival of the Djabugay language. Singing and dancing can play an important role in language revitalization activities, helping the learners to familiarize themselves with the language and making the lessons more enjoyable. (An example of use of singing in Maaori activities is given in 11.5.2-[1].) However, it is important not to have the illusion that a given language revitalization program is a success only because its associated cultural activities, such as dance theatres and music bands, are enjoying great popularity.

### 11.3.2. Levels of language revitalization: the societal level and the individual level

Postulation of strategies for a language revitalization program may be considered at the following two levels, although these two levels are closely interrelated and by no means discrete: (i) the societal or macro level, concerning the extent to which the language is used in the community, and (ii) the individual or

micro level, regarding the degree of an individual's proficiency in the language. Thus, Rachel Cummins' aim cited in 11.2-[2]-(b) – "I want 50% of the children to speak the language" – has to do mainly with the societal level. We shall first look at the issues that in the main surround the societal level, and then at those which largely deal with the individual level.

### 11.3.2.1. *The societal level*

The strategies of language revitalization programs may vary depending on various factors. McKay (1996: 226) notes that such factors include the following:

- (a) the current viability of the language as a full communication system;
- (b) the number of speakers, the integration of language use, and the isolation of their community;
- (c) the economic situation of the speakers and the political status of them and their language;
- (d) use of the language in areas such as religion, education, media, and;
- (e) the attitudes of the speakers to their language and to the dominant language.

These factors – in particular (a), (b), and (d) – have to do with the degree of viability of the language in question (that is, the degree of its endangerment, looking at the same coin from the other side). There have been a number of proposals for strategies of language revitalization that are largely based on the degree of viability of the language concerned. Indeed, this seems to be considered one of the most crucial factors and possibly the most crucial one when devising a revitalization program. We shall look at four such proposals.

[1] McKay (1996: 225–226), in his survey of language maintenance programs operating in Australia in the early 1990s, lists the following three aims, ranging from the most ambitious aim, (a), to the least ambitious one, (c):

- (a) continuing use of the language across all generations for communicative purposes;
- (b) the adoption and use of elements of the language in developing a special in-group form of the dominant language (English), and;
- (c) obtaining and preserving knowledge about the language in a reaffirmation of links with the group's cultural heritage.

Michael Krauss (cited by Rigsby 1987: 380) puts forward a proposal similar to McKay's.

[2] Amery (1994: 143–145) lists five types of language programs, which may be re-arranged as follows, in terms of the degree of viability of the language concerned.



(a) Full-blown second language programs: a language that is still fully viable is taught elsewhere, where the language is not the traditional language of the region.

(b) Language revitalization programs are employed in a situation where the language is still spoken, even though very few speakers of the language remain. (Amery’s use of the term “revitalization” differs from ours. The term “revitalization” in our use is the general term, and comprises language maintenance and language revival; see 11.1.)

(c) Language renewal programs attempt to tap into a language that is still known within the community in situations where there are no fluent speakers and the language is no longer actively used.

(d) Language reclamation programs operate in a situation where very little of the language is still known or remembered within the community but where there is a reasonable amount of documentation on the language.

(e) Language awareness programs teach about a language where there are no longer any fluent speakers of the language, little or none of the language is still known actively, and documentation is minimal. For an example, see 11.5.13 on the use of place names.

[3] Bauman (1980: 10), as cited by Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer (1998: 59), “identifies five categories of language status, with matching strategies for retention”, which is shown in Table 11-1. No access is available to Bauman (1980), and details are not known. Presumably, his classification concerns languages of North America, but it is no doubt applicable to those of other regions as well.

*Table 11-1.* Bauman’s classification of language maintenance strategies

language status	flourishing	enduring	declining	obsolescent	extinct
retention strategy	prevention	expansion	fortification	restoration	revival

[4] Fishman (1991), who is the most influential figure in the field of language revitalization, sets up “A Graded Typology of Threatened Statuses” (Fishman 1991: 87), which consists of eight successive stages, with the languages of Stage 1 being the most viable and those of Stage 8 being the closest to extinction. For each stage, he provides a characterization of the situation (cited in 2.2-[2]), and suggests what needs to be achieved to reach that stage. Such efforts he terms “reversing language shift”. Reyhner (1999: vi–vii) summarizes these eight grades as follows, and for each stage he provides up-dated suggestions based on presentations at the Stabilizing Indigenous Languages symposiums (cf. Cantoni 1996b; Reyhner 1997; and Reyhner et al. 1999) and other sources.

Stage 1: (i) Description: Some language use by higher levels of government and in higher education. (ii) Suggestions: Teach tribal college subject matter classes in the language. Develop an indigenous language oral and written literature through dramatic presentations and publications. Give tribal/national awards for indigenous language publications and other notable efforts to promote indigenous languages.

Stage 2: (i) Description: Language is used by local government and in the mass media in the minority community. (ii) Suggestion: Promote use of written form of language for government and business dealings/records. Promote indigenous language newsletters, newspapers, radio stations, and television stations.

Stage 3: (i) Description: Language is used in places of business and by employees in less specialized work areas. (ii) Suggestions: Promote language by making it the language of work used throughout the community (cf. Palmer 1997). Develop vocabulary so that workers in an office could do their day-to-day work using their indigenous language (cf. Anonby 1999).

Stage 4: (i) Description: Language is required in elementary schools. (ii) Suggestions: Improve instructional methods utilizing the total physical response method (cf. Cantoni 1999) and other immersion techniques. Teach reading and writing and higher level language skills (cf. Heredia and Francis 1997). Develop two-way bilingual programs where non-speaking elementary students learn the indigenous language and speakers learn a national language or international language. Need to develop indigenous language textbooks to teach literacy and academic subject matter content. (See 11.5.6 for the total physical response method, and see 11.5.10 for two-way education.)

Stage 5: (i) Description: Language is still very much alive and used in community. (ii) Suggestions: Offer literacy in minority language. Promote voluntary programs in the school and other community institutions to improve the prestige and use of the language. Use language in local government functions, especially social services. Give recognition to special local efforts through awards, etc.

Stage 6: (i) Description: Some intergenerational use of language. (ii) Suggestions: Develop places in community where language is encouraged, protected, and used exclusively. Encourage more young parents to speak the indigenous language in home and around their young children.

Stage 7: (i) Description: Only adults beyond child bearing age speak the language. (ii) Suggestions: Establish language nests after the Maaori and Hawaiian models, where fluent older adults provide pre-school childcare where children are immersed in their indigenous language (cf. Anonby 1999; Fishman 1991). (See 11.5.2 for the immersion method, and for the language nests of New Zealand and Hawaii.)

Stage 8: (i) Description: Only a few elders speak the language. (ii) Suggestions: Implement Hinton's (1994) master-apprentice model, where fluent elders are teamed one-to-one with young adults who want to learn the language. Dispersed, isolated elders can be connected by phone to teach others the language (cf. Taff 1997). (See 11.5.5 for the master-apprentice method, and 11.5.7 for the telephone method.)

Neither Fishman (1991) nor Reyhner (1999) mentions this, but it would be possible to set up a Stage 9, in which the language is extinct and for which language revival may be required; see 11.5.14 for examples.

As mentioned in 2.2-[2], almost all the languages the writer worked on in North Queensland and in Kimberley, Western Australia in the 1970s were at best at Stage 8, and many of them have since become extinct. This shows that a large portion of Fishman's scale, and of his and Reyhner's suggestions, are irrelevant to the situations in North Queensland and Kimberley. No doubt, this remark applies to many other areas in Australia and elsewhere. Revitalization methods that are applicable to such languages, i.e. moribund and extinct languages, will be discussed in 11.5.

### 11.3.2.2. *The individual level*

This concerns the degree of an individual's proficiency in the language. When discussing language learning or language teaching, it is important to distinguish the following:

- (a) learning *through* the language (cf. Stephen Harris 1994: 137);
- (b) learning *of* the language (cf. Amery 1994: 141; Stephen Harris 1994: 137);
- (b-i) acquiring that language for daily use, i.e. knowing how to use it in a real life situation (cf. Daniel Rubin 1999: 18);
- (b-ii) accumulating words and phrases (cf. Daniel Rubin 1999: 18), and;
- (c) learning *about* the language (cf. Amery 1994: 141).

These approaches are arranged in terms of the difficulty of implementation, with approach (a) being the most difficult and approach (c) the easiest.

In (a), the language is used as the medium of instruction, and this method is termed "immersion" (Stephen Harris 1994: 137). Its implementation will require the presence of a fair number of fluent speakers. For examples, see 11.5.2. Approach (b-i) is much more difficult than (b-ii). It is no doubt for this reason that many language revitalization programs are confined to learning just isolated words and phrases; see 11.4.2-[9]-(b-ii). Similarly it is probably for this reason among others that, as mentioned in 11.3.1, there are people who turn to cultural activities, rather than to learning the language itself. Approach (c) may be

used for a language awareness program (cf. 11.3.2.1-[2]-(e)). For an example, see 11.5.13 on the place name method.

Daniel Rubin (1999: 20) sets up the following five degrees of fluency that may be aimed at or achieved in language instruction, ranging from the most fluent category (a) to the least fluent category (e). (Degree of fluency was discussed in 9.4.1.1.)

(a) Creative: able to understand and speak the language fluently in ways that create new word usage and structures, showing a deeper understanding of the language and its potential new uses.

(b) Fluent: able to understand and speak the language with confidence and skill, with understanding of normal syntax, grammar and rules of form, and an extensive and growing vocabulary.

(c) Functional: able to speak the language, with basic understanding of its syntax, grammar, and rules of usage and a minimal vocabulary.

(d) Symbolic: able to use common phrases and sentences in formal settings, as symbols of language participation and cultural ownership.

(e) Passive: able to understand common words or phrases, with or without deeper comprehension of their meaning.

Rubin's typology will be useful when devising programs for revitalization. Note, however, that his classification and labels are inconsistent. Thus, the symbolic use of a language is one of its functions, and this use, too, is functional. Also, functions of language should not be confused with fluency. Both fluent and non-fluent speakers may use a language for a symbolic function.

## **11.4. Problems encountered in language revitalization activities**

### 11.4.1. Introduction

Language revitalization activities face a multiplicity of problems. 11.4.2 discusses these problems, and, where available, lists suggested remedies for them. We examined the ecology of language in 6.2, causes of language endangerment in 6.3, functional domains in 7.2, and language shift in 7.3. Some of the factors examined there are relevant to the success or failure of language revitalization programs, and they are referred to below. In addition, a few factors which were not looked at in Chapter 6 or Chapter 7 but which are specifically pertinent to language revitalization activities are introduced. One of the most difficult problems concerns orthography, and it is discussed in some detail in 11.4.3. Also, the relevant literature puts forward additional suggestions that are intend-

ed to enhance the likelihood of success of these activities, and they are looked at in 11.4.4.

#### 11.4.2. Problems and possible remedies

Many of the problems are very difficult to overcome, and it is difficult to suggest effective remedies for them.

The first six problems are generally already existent prior to the commencement of language revitalization activities.

##### [1] Complexity of the language

Schmidt (1990: 100, 103, 109), McConvell (1991: 154), and Dorian (1992: 146) on Australian Aboriginal languages, and Dorian (1994c: 492) on Irish, suggest that, in an endangerment situation, the complex grammatical systems of Australian Aboriginal languages and Irish, which radically differ from that of English, may render them very difficult to learn, particularly for those people whose primary language is English. This may reduce the likelihood of the transmission of the languages in question. (However, this issue is controversial, as noted in 7.3.1-[2]-(b).) One way to overcome this problem is a “compromise approach”, in which deviations from the traditional norms are accepted. See [11]-[c] below.

##### [2] Presence of other language(s) to revitalize

The task of revitalization will be easier if there is only one language to revitalize. Thus, the revitalization activities of Maaori and Hawaiian (11.5.2) have been assisted by the absence of any other language to maintain. This is in stark contrast to Australia, which has/had about 250 indigenous languages, and to California, which has fifty or so languages (Dixon 1991a: 249; Hinton 1994: 235). Recall in this connection that often speakers of different languages were brought to one place (6.3-[6]).

In Halls Creek, Western Australia, at least four languages are found (although not all of them are actively spoken): Kija (the traditional language of Halls Creek), Gooniyandi, Jaru, and Wanyjirra. There are plainly insufficient funding and human resources to cater for all of the four languages. The same applies to many other communities in Australia.

One way to solve the problem of the existence of more than one language to maintain is the geographical separation of speakers of different languages. In fact, a suggestion along this line was made by Janhunen (1997: 139–140). However, such a plan of action is beset with problems. First, it will be necessary to set aside a tract of land for the people, but this plan is likely to encounter financial and political problems. Second, such a course of action “is moral-

ly indefensible” (Edwards 1984: 278), and will impinge on human rights, and it can not be carried out unless the people concerned are willing to act in that way.

### [3] Distribution of speakers

Often, speakers of an endangered language “live far apart from each other” (Hinton 1994: 223). The language would be easier to maintain if the speakers lived in one locality. Perhaps one of the most effective ways to avoid this problem is the “separation and concentration” (Fishman 1972: 126) or “isolation” (Suwilai 1998: 150) of the speakers of that language. That is, the speakers will have a land where they can live together, away from the speakers of the dominant language and other languages (Bergsland 1998: 45; Spolsky 1995: 188). As noted above, such a suggestion was put forward by Janhunen (1997: 139–140). But such an action, if forced from the outside, will violate human rights.

There are examples of such voluntary separation. Thus, in Australia, from the 1970s, the outstation movement occurred, whereby people set up a community and lived there, away from problems such as alcoholism and violence in town. One example is Ringer Soak Community, about 160km from Halls Creek, Western Australia (see McKay 1996: 55–67). In the community, the Jaru language is much more actively spoken than in the town of Halls Creek. When the writer visited the community in 1995, he heard children responding to him in Jaru.

In order to obtain such land, the government’s support is essential. Socio-economic autonomy, even if it is to a limited degree, will be helpful. Aboriginal Australians have been trying to regain their traditional land. Many groups have succeeded in this endeavour, and now run their own cattle stations. An example is Koongie Park Station, south of Halls Creek, Western Australia; it is run by a group of Jaru people. Activities to regain land are reported, for instance, in newsletters such as *Land Rights News*, published by the Northern Land Council ([www.nlc.org.au](http://www.nlc.org.au), [www.clc.org.au](http://www.clc.org.au)).

### [4] Number of speakers

The number of speakers may not be a decisive factor (cf. 6.2-[2]-(c)), but, with other things being equal, a given language will have a better chance of survival when it has more speakers than otherwise. The existence of a sufficiently large number of speakers is indispensable for the success of the program (Tsunoda 2001e: 8352). However, many languages, e.g. those of Australia (Schmidt 1990: 100, 107–108) and those of California (Hinton 1994: 223), suffer from the shortage of fluent speakers. Thus, Hinton (1994: 235) points out: “Maori and Hawaiian, even at their lowest points, were still spoken by thousands of people. California languages nowadays may be spoken by only

a few dozens, or even as few as one or two individuals, almost always of an advanced age”.

#### [5] Dialects and standardization

If the language to revitalize exhibits no dialectal variation, then all the funding and resources can be devoted to one single cause. However, if the language has more than one dialect, this makes the already difficult revitalization efforts even more difficult. The funding and resources, if available at all, which are (almost?) always and everywhere limited and insufficient (see [7]-(c) below), will have to be divided between/among the dialects, which will make the revitalization efforts even less effective. There are at least three ways to tackle a bi-dialectal or multi-dialectal situation.

The first is to select one of the dialects for revitalization. This is, however, a highly sensitive issue, and it is likely to meet with opposition from the speakers of the other dialects, which are excluded from revitalization (Dorian 1994c: 484–485, 488–489).

The second is to set up a standardized form which will incorporate regional features of many, if not all, of the dialects (see Dorian 1987: 58–59). But this, too, is no easy task. Inclusion of certain regional features and exclusion of others will be likely to be confronted with antipathy.

The first and second alternatives will allow the funding and resources to be concentrated on just one dialect. However, as stressed above, they are by no means easy tasks; see Dorian (1987: 59).

The third and last alternative is to attempt to revitalize all the dialects, which would result in dividing the – already limited and insufficient – funding and resources between/among the dialects, thus further reducing the effectiveness of language revitalization efforts.

The third alternative has been adopted in the revival activities of Warrungu and other languages in North Queensland, Australia (discussed in 11.5.14–[2]). This appears to be motivated by a belief that is expressed by Rachel Cummins (a Warrungu person) as follows: mixture of languages is “an insult to ... our old people and our heritage”. (To be precise, Rachel Cummins said to the writer, “this will be an insult to the time you put into the programme and to our old people and our heritage”.)

Jones (1998: 137, 238, 309, 324, 356, 357) on Welsh and Breton, and Adelaar (2001) on Quechua of South America, discuss problems of standardization in revitalization efforts.

#### [6] Language documentation

A good documentation of the language, including a grammar, dictionary and texts, is indispensable, but this does not always exist (cf. Schmidt 1990: 100, 108, 111, Amery 1994: 147). If there are any speakers left, a good documenta-

tion of the language may still be possible, but if it is already extinct, then such documentation is simply impossible.

The six problems discussed above are, as noted above, generally pre-existent prior to the commencement of language revitalization activities. Most of these problems are extremely difficult to rectify, and, in particular, the complexity of the languages and documentation of extinct languages are beyond the control of both the community members and the outsiders, such as the government and linguists. In contrast, the problems discussed below are generally not pre-existent, although some of them may be covertly present prior to the commencement of language revitalization activities.

[7] Government support

Support provided by a government is important (Nagy 2000: 155; Tsunoda 2001e: 8352; Wurm 1998: 192), and it is therefore necessary to make the government – and also other relevant authorities and the general public – aware of the language endangerment situation (Needs and Rationale Group 1996; Suwilai 1998: 172). Needs and Rationale Group (1996), on languages of North America, claims: “Because of the federal and state governments’ long-term role in creating the current endangered status of American Indian and Alaskan Native languages, it is appropriate for them to provide assistance in helping American Indians and Alaskan natives to stabilize and renew their languages”.

Government support may be supplied in various ways, such as the following.

(a) Recognition of people’s human rights (cf. 10.3.2-[3]), and their culture and language (cf. Spolsky 1995: 188). This needs to be realized not only by the government but also by the majority of the society (Bergsland 1998: 45). Use of the minority language in school, government offices, and mass media should be accepted, or even encouraged. This will also help to maintain people’s self-esteem and self-confidence (Suwilai 1998: 172–72). It is important to note that the Maaori language is now an official language of New Zealand (Jeanette King 2001: 121). This has no doubt facilitated the maintenance of the language.

(b) Introduction of the language and culture into school (cf. Suwilai 1998: 173). It should be noted that the role of school in language revitalization is a controversial issue. Fishman (1991: 368–380) points out the limitations inherent in the teaching of a language in school, and emphasizes the importance of “intergenerational transmission” of the language in the home, neighbourhood, and community. That is, the school “can only supplement, not replace, the spoken interaction between members of the different generations in the community” (McKay 1996: xxvii, also cf. p.234). A similar view is expressed by Cantoni (1996a: viii) and Amery (2000: 1777). A false assumption that the school will



help the language will be likely to hinder the success of a revitalization movement (Cantoni 1996a: vii; Hinton 1994: 223; Schmidt 1990: 99–100). Thus, Hinton (1994: 223) comments that parents may say, “Oh, I don’t have to worry about it; the schools will take care of our language, so I’ll just teach the kids English!”.

However, this does not mean that school cannot contribute at all (Jones 1998: 354–355). Thus, the school played a vital role in the revival of Hebrew in Israel (Bar-Adon 1978) – so did kindergartens (Spolsky 1995: 186) – and that of Irish in Belfast (see 11.5.3). This shows the following: Indeed, where the language in question is still spoken, school may not be able to replace intergenerational transmission. However, in situations where the language is no longer spoken, teaching of the language in school can be a really useful way – although it may not always be a very effective way – for its revitalization. Jones (1998: 24) reports that in certain areas of Wales the “role of the classroom in language revitalization is highly notable” and that “the school has replaced the family to a large extent as the vehicle of language transmission”.

Furthermore, there are positive consequences that may derive from the teaching of a language in school. First, as noted in 11.2, it may create a cultural climate where the ancestral language is respected and its status and prestige are enhanced (Dorian 1987: 65–66; McKay 1996: xxvii). Second, it may help to involve participation in school education by community members (who are generally alienated from the school). An example from Kaurna of South Australia is reported in 11.5.14. Third, it may help to diffuse the language into the home; see 11.5.3 on Irish. Fourth, it may create employment opportunities for the community (Dorian 1987: 64).

(c) Funding, for instance, for purchase or construction of buildings (to accommodate the revitalization organizations), facilities, salaries (of teachers, teacher aides, and other employees), production of resources, and training of teachers and teacher aides. Funding is essential, but it is (almost?) always and everywhere inadequate (Schmidt 1990: 101); it is insufficient (Hinton 1994: 223), partial (Schmidt 1990: 91, 94), and short-term (Schmidt 1990: 101). Furthermore, there is a whole array of bureaucratic and administrative problems regarding funding, e.g. methods of fund allocation; see Schmidt (1990: 91–95) for details. All these problems surrounding funding lead to additional problems. The list below is cited from Schmidt’s (1990: 83–101) work on the revitalization activities of Australian Aboriginal languages, but no doubt many of the problems mentioned are present in other countries as well. (i) Absence of a permanent structure of support providing necessary resources, skills, finance and advice. (Suwilai 1998: 173, too, emphasizes the importance of such organizations.) (ii) Lack of an overall long-term plan for Aboriginal language mainte-

nance activity and fund allocation. (iii) Lack of accessible training schemes (cf. also Jones 1998: 35). (iv) Shortage of vital skills, language resources and materials. To sum up, funding is indispensable, but it is beset with many serious problems, and the situation needs to be rectified for the revitalization efforts to be successful.

(d) Another variety of government support is political non-interference by the government (Rouchdy 1989a: 94–95), and community control of the activities (Burnaby 1997: 293–295; Clarke 1996: 94; Jolly 1995: 11; McKay 1996: 228–229; Spolsky 1995: 194). Organizations which were purportedly set up for a given community's benefit may not always function in the way desired by them. Thus, the bureaucrats may be unsupportive (Schmidt 1990: 93) or even harmful (Bruce Sommer 1991), and they may even use the institution for their own benefit, rather than for the community's. In the context of school language programs, outsider teachers may provide no support (Dalton et al. 1995: 94; cf. also Jones 1998: 35). They may have no appreciation or understanding of the local language and culture, and they may even impose their views and culture on the children of the community. (Problems concerning educators will be discussed in [8] below.) Therefore, community members need to have a major say in the decision making as to who will teach what and how (cf. Cantoni 1996a: viii). Community control is desired by community members (see, for example, 11.5.10), and it has been a central and essential ingredient for the success of Maaori (11.5.2) and Irish (11.5.3) revitalization movements.

We mentioned in 11.1 that there is already a large literature on specific language revitalization movements. See the references in the present volume. See also the bibliography located at the: [http://www.tooyoo.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~tsunoda/dlg\\_1st.html](http://www.tooyoo.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~tsunoda/dlg_1st.html). Admitting that the information on the literature is by no means exhaustive and also being careful to avoid any political bias, if the number of works is any indication at all, then it seems that language revitalization movements are most actively and widely carried out in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the USA (in alphabetical order, not necessarily by number of works). Such activities need both the government's recognition of people's rights and the country's economic prosperity, among many other things. It may not be coincidental that the three countries listed above are former British colonies (with a small number of exceptions such as Quebec). (It should also be added here that in Japan, despite its remarkable economic prosperity, the government has paid very little attention to the issue of Ainu people and their language.)

We mentioned above that community members need to have a major say in the decision making. However, this issue may be culturally relative. (This ob-

servation is due to an anonymous reviewer.) Indeed, that statement is mainly based on works that deal with language revitalization activities in those former British colonies. It will be important to investigate the situation in other countries.

#### [8] Educators

There are problems with educators as well. Cantoni (1997: 5) reports that the following recommendations were made at the Symposia on Stabilizing Indigenous Languages held at Northern Arizona University (cf. Cantoni 1996b). Looking at the other side of the same coin, these recommendations indicate the kinds of problems that are observed in educators.

(a) All educators must show greater respect and appreciation for the cultures of their students' parents.

(b) All educators should not criticize those who use the native language in school.

(c) There should be no put-downs of people who use the tribal language on the part of anyone who does not know that language.

(d) Perceptions that English is better than the local language should not be accepted or transmitted.

(e) All educators (including the school principal) should try to learn the student's home language; even if they do not become very proficient, they will have indicated a certain degree of interest and respect.

(f) All educators must realize that, although they alone cannot be responsible for the intergenerational transmission of a language, they can do much to encourage positive attitudes towards it.

These recommendations were made in the North American context, but they are relevant to educators in many other places. For examples, see Jones (1998: 35) regarding Welsh, and the comments on the situation in Halls Creek, Western Australia, near the end of 11.4.2 below. In particular, recommendation (e) is reminiscent of a demand for "two-way education" put forward by the Gurindji people of Australia; see 11.5.10.

#### [9] Language programs

Language programs are conducted in many schools and other institutions, e.g. in Australia and North America. They are fraught with many serious problems. Such problems are listed below. Again they are largely cited from Schmidt (1990: 88–90, 95–101), but no doubt many of the problems mentioned are recurrent and observed in other countries as well.

(a) The success of a language revitalization program requires community support and parental involvement, as well as government support (McKay 1996: 137; Stiles 1997: 248). However, as is the case with government support, community support and parental involvement are not easily available. Commu-

nity members and parents may be too preoccupied with pressing problems to devote any time or energy to language revitalization activities; see [11]-(d) below.

We turn to the kind of problems that in the main derive from inadequate funding.

(b) Perhaps one of the most serious problems is that language programs are of low quality and offered just as a token (Schmidt 1990: 88–89, 101). This succinctly summarizes many problems, such as the following.

(b-i) Insufficient hours are allocated to teaching of the language (Hinton 1994: 223; Schmidt 1990: 99).

(b-ii) Unstructured programs and curricula, which are confined to the teaching of isolated vocabulary, rather than overall language ability, including communicative skills (Cantoni 1996a: vii; Clarke 1996: vii; Greymorning 1999: 11; Kendall King 2001: 168–169; Schmidt 1990: 88). An example from Kimberley, Western Australia is cited towards the end of 11.4.2.

(b-iii) Shortage of adequate language resources and language learning materials (Amery 1994: 147; Dorian 1992: 145; Jones 1998: 35; Schmidt 1990: 100–101, 108).

(b-iv) Lack of human resources, e.g. trained teachers, native speakers as teacher aides. (In the case of an extinct language, there is no speaker left to assist with the revitalization program; see Schmidt 1990: 100, 107–108. This problem is intrinsic, and is not due to inadequate funding.)

For an actual account of these problems, see Kendall King (2001: 168–169) on Quechua of Ecuador (known as Quichua; see Kendall King 2001: 45).

There are additional problems that seem to mainly derive from inadequate funding, such as the following.

(c) Lack of skills and knowledge among community members regarding the planning and execution of language revitalization (Schmidt 1990: 90–91, 100–101).

(d) Lack of communication with other communities involved in similar language maintenance activities (Schmidt 1990: 89, 101). Needs and Rationale Group (1996) and Native American Language Policy Group (1996a, 1996b: 47) on languages of North America, and Suwilai (1998: 173) on So (Thavung) of Thailand, emphasize the importance of a network of communication among organizations and the people involved.

In addition, there are problems that have to do with the expertise of consultants, such as linguists and educators.

(e) Lack of advice from experts, such as linguists and educators. However, there are cases where the involvement of linguists is rejected or avoided by the community. Examples are given in 11.4.3.3 and 11.5.12.

(f) Many linguists and teachers who are willing to assist in language revitalization programs have very little or no knowledge of language teaching methodology. (This applies to the present author.) Language teaching methodology needs to be included in the training of fieldworkers, as will be noted in 13.2.4.

There are still other problems that are observed in language revitalization programs.

(g) Writing systems. Many indigenous languages did not possess scripts for writing, and a writing system is needed for their revitalization. Writing systems employing Roman alphabets have been introduced for them, in Australia and many other countries. Unfortunately, writing systems, too, are surrounded by problems, of the following two kinds. First, a given writing system itself may have inherent problems. This will be discussed separately, in 11.4.3.3. Second, there may be more than one writing system for one language. Each of the writing systems may be free of problems, but the existence of more than one writing system may create an unfortunate situation where the members of the community “have to suffer factional struggles over which one should prevail” (Hinton 1994: 223–224). Jones (1998: 269, 307) mentions similar problems regarding Welsh and Breton.

(h) Literacy and publications. Literacy has merits and demerits. We shall look at this issue, paying attention to the role of publications as well. Janhunen (1997: 142) and McKay (1996: xxvii) consider the spoken language, and not literacy, to be crucial in language revitalization. However, it has also been argued or suggested that literacy plays an important role in language revitalization. The reasons are summarized as follows.

(h-i) If a given revitalization program aims to maintain conversational interaction in the language, then it is important to devote much of the time and effort on spoken language. However, if the program aims at preserving knowledge about the language and culture, then written language is appropriate (McKay 1996: 233).

(h-ii) Literacy helps to spread the language, e.g. by means of newspapers (Anonby 1999: 38–39).

(h-iii) Literacy can give the language permanence. “In general, languages with literacy traditions survive longer than languages with only oral traditions”, a notable example being Hebrew (Anonby 1999: 38–39).

(h-iv) In general, written language tends to be more conservative than spoken language. Black (1993: 216) and Cataldi (1990: 84, as cited by Black 1993: 216) observe that the written languages of Tiwi, Yolngu Matha, and Warlpiri of the Northern Territory of Australia, are more conservative than their respective

spoken counterparts and that this can be seen as a positive factor in support of language maintenance.

(h-v) Written language, e.g. writing systems, and publications such as grammar books, dictionaries, and story books, are often considered to provide indigenous languages with status, and to bring a sense of pride and self-esteem to the people: “Look, we have a book on our language. Our language is not primitive. It is just as good as English” (Anonby 1999: 39; Bielenberg 1999: 108; Dimmendaal 2001: 58; Janhunen 1997: 141; McKay 1996: 234). (In contrast with books, however, articles in journals, etc. do not seem to have this effect.)

There is, however, a pitfall in the use of literacy. In [7]-(b) above we commented on the illusion that the school alone can save the language. A somewhat related illusion is that “writing a language is what keeps it alive” (Cantoni 1996a: vii). (This is in fact one of Janhunen’s reasons for his suggestion of concentration on spoken language.) The writer has observed a similar illusion among certain community members that putting a language on CDs will keep it alive.

There are still many other problems with language programs.

(i) Limited or no opportunity to use or hear the language being spoken (Schmidt 1990: 100, 109; cf. also Amery 1994: 147; Cantoni 1996a: vii). Members of the community, particularly the children, must have opportunities to use the language (Hudson and McConvell 1984: 35). However, such opportunities are naturally non-existent in the case of extinct languages, and highly limited for endangered languages; often parents lack proficiency in the language (Cantoni 1996a: vii). One way to help create such opportunities would be the separation and concentration of the speakers (see [3] above). But such a course of action is simply not feasible under normal circumstances. There are, however, alternatives. See 11.5.2, in particular.

In addition, there are problems that concern the community members’ (i) way of life, and (ii) attitude and behaviour, specifically, towards language and language revitalization. They are treated below, under a separate heading, namely [10] and [11], together with a few other attitude-related issues.

#### [10] Way of life

Spolsky (1995: 188) argues that “the traditional values and practices need to be restored or replaced by modified values or practices that can be shown or argued to derive from traditional values”. As mentioned in 6.2-[3]-(e), retention of the traditional way of life, especially reindeer breeding, was a decisive condition for the survival of the Sami language of Scandinavia. Admittedly, however, this exercise is extremely difficult in the face of urbanization and industrialization, and it is simply impossible in many areas.

[11] Attitude and behaviour towards language and language revitalization  
 Language attitude was already discussed in some detail in 6.2-[5] and 6.3-[9], in relation to language endangerment. In the following, it will be discussed in so far as it is pertinent to language revitalization activities.

(a) Interest and lack of interest. The children (and also adults) must be interested in the language and want to learn it (Hudson and McConvell 1984: 35; Wurm 1997: 48, 1998: 198). But some members of the community may be enthusiastic about language revitalization, while others may show no interest whatsoever in it (Rigsby 1987: 362). Hinton (1994: 222) reports that in North America there are cases where “Those who would preserve their languages are criticized, embattled, ignored or ridiculed by various authorities, by the odd racist or superpatriot, and even sometimes by their own communities and families”. Similar instances of negative attitude towards revitalization are reported by Burnaby (1997: 299) and Cantoni (1996a: vii). Needless to say, it is important that many, if not all, members of the community are interested in the revitalization of their traditional language. Otherwise, no revitalization movement is likely to succeed. So, is there any possible way to make people interested in the language? One example is mentioned in 11.5.14-[2].

(b) Language optimism may hinder language revitalization. One example is delayed recognition of the language loss threat (discussed in 6.3-[9]-(c)). This is probably one of the causes for the lack of interest. Also, it is possibly one of the causes for the low priority assigned to language revitalization; see (d) below. For a revitalization program to be successful, it is vital that the people of the community recognize the imminent demise of their language. It is important for linguists to draw the community’s attention to the fate of those languages which have already become extinct (cf. 10.2.2.11, 10.3.3).

Another example is the belief that “some endangered or destroyed languages are not dead, but merely sleeping” (Nathan 1999; cf. Amery 2000: 41).

An additional example is the “belief in what might be termed ‘gene-assisted’ language-acquisition advantages” (Dorian 1995: 131; see also Nathan 1999). That is, “There is a belief among the people in the community that if one belongs to a tribe, one will have an easier time learning that language” (Yamamoto 1998: 222). Such a belief creates a risk of swift disillusionment when a given language revitalization does not produce prompt results (Dorian 1995: 131).

(c) Language purism (or language conservatism) and language tolerance. It seems inevitable that, during a language revitalization process, a new form of the language emerges, diverging from its traditional norm. See 11.2-[1]-(b). Language purism may then hinder the success of a revitalization program (cf.

Cantoni 1996a: vii); examples are provided by Dorian (1992: 146, 1994c) from Tiwi (Australia), Cornish (Great Britain), Irish, Mexicano or Nahuatl (Mexico), and Arvanitika (an enclave of Albanian in Greece). Littlebear (1999: 3) proposes that elders and fluent speakers must be more accepting of those people who are just now learning the language. Dorian (1994c: 492) suggests a solution to this problem, proposing a “compromise” approach, an approach which is tolerant of language change.

(d) Low priority accorded to language revitalization. In many communities, language revitalization is assigned a low priority. This is possibly due to the delayed recognition of the language loss threat, discussed in (b) above. But it is no doubt largely due to the existence of other, more pressing social problems (e.g. alcoholism, health, and housing), which demand time and energy that are then unavailable for language revitalization (Schmidt 1990: 90, 101; cf. also Burnaby 1997: 297–298). That is, the surrounding social conditions need to be improved in order for the people to be able to direct their time and resources to language revitalization. As mentioned in 11.5.14-[2] below, the revival movement of Warrungu and a few other languages of North Queensland, Australia, started in the late 1990s, almost a quarter century since the writer recorded them in the early 1970s. It is no doubt relevant that the living conditions of the people there have radically improved since then.

(e) Efforts to speak the language. We saw in [9]-(i) above that one way to increase opportunities to speak a language is separation and concentration of its speakers, but that such a course of action is not feasible. A more feasible way is to create environments in which to speak the language, and various methods have been proposed to achieve this goal; see 11.5.2 and 11.5.3, among others. What is the most important is this: Those who can speak the language must speak the language. Unfortunately, however, there are people who say they want to keep their language, but who do not speak it to their children, grandchildren, or other members of the community. See, for instance, Rigsby (1987: 369) on Gitksan of British Columbia, Canada. See also Hudson (1994: 165).

(f) Shame, pain, lack of confidence, and sensitivity. As seen in 6.3-[9]-(a), many people felt or still feel shameful to speak their ancestral language (cf. a Djabugay person’s statement cited in 11.2), and that language is deeply associated with pain (see Wallace 1996: 104). They lacked or still lack confidence in their identity as well as their language proficiency (Janhunen 1997: 142). Also, for learners of the language, “trying to relearn it can be a very demoralizing experience” (Amery 1994: 147). These all make it necessary to exercise a great deal of sensitivity when carrying out language revitalization activities (Amery 1994: 147; cf. also Cantoni 1996a: vii).



(g) Identity and pride. The people concerned need to have a strong sense of identity with the language and have pride in it. Identity and pride are not sufficient, but they are absolutely necessary. (See Rouchdy 1989a: 94, and Tsunoda 2001e: 8352.) Shame felt for the language does not promote the language. At the same time, language revitalization activities themselves may enhance their sense of identity and pride, as seen in the Djabugay person's statement cited above and also in the case of Warrungu (11.5.14-[2]).

(h) Marketing of language. In order to overcome these problems, regarding (f) shame, etc. and (g) lack of pride, etc., it will be necessary to promote the profile of the language in the society, by a public campaign, which Nicholson (1997) calls "marketing of a language". Methods of marketing include (i) use of the language in the mass media, e.g. television, radio, and newspapers, (ii) use and distribution of posters, T-shirts, and so forth, and (iii) development of a body of literature to increase its prestige (Anonby 1999: 36, 43; Family and Community Group 1996a, 1996b: 78–79).

(i) Sense of group solidarity. Anonby (1999: 36–37) argues that a sense of group solidarity is important: "if language promotion is part of a nationalist movement or is perceived as an expression of solidarity or ethnicity, it has great potential for success".

(j) Determination, commitment, dedication, and even sacrifice. The people concerned have to be determined, committed and dedicated to the cause, and prepared to make a sacrifice, if necessary (Tsunoda 2001e: 8532). Otherwise, their revitalization program will have no chance of success. Thus, the people have to talk to children in their language, even if they find it easier to talk to them in the dominant language (cf. (e) above). An example of determination at an individual's level is given in Nicholson (1990), who went through a one-week Maaori language course, a truly frustrating and excruciating experience. As another example, Rhonda TeWheoro, who is the principal of Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Te Whanau Tahī, a Maaori-medium school in Christchurch, New Zealand, told the writer that the school, which is now flourishing with perhaps more than one hundred students, was originally a private class in her home. A dramatic example of determination, commitment and sacrifice at a community level is exhibited in the revival of Irish in Belfast; see 11.5.3.

(k) Leadership and core individuals. Every successful program seems to have an individual or a group of core individuals with a vision for the program, who are determined, committed and dedicated, and who exercise a strong leadership (see Burnaby 1997: 298); see, for example, Bradley (1989: 33–34, 39–40) regarding Ugong of Thailand, Sawai (1998: 180) regarding Ainu of Japan, and Maguire (1991) for Irish in Belfast (11.5.3). These accounts show that, as Crawford (1996: 64) and Wurm (1997: 47–48, 1998: 198) emphasize (see also

Fishman 1996b: 195), it is the people of the community, and not outsiders such as language activists, linguists, educators, government officers, etc. who must do the job.

Incidentally, Burnaby (1997: 298) reports regarding revitalization activities in Canada: "For a reason I do not understand, most of these leaders have been women". As noted in 6.2-[9]-(e), it often seems to be grandmothers who influence the grandchildren linguistically and transmit the language to them. We termed this "grandmother effect". Thus, in Kimberley, Western Australia, it is always grandmothers, rather than grandfathers, who attend language meetings and accompany their grandchildren on bush trips. Now, almost all the people of North Queensland who are involved in the language revival activities described in 11.5.14-[2] are grandchildren of the last speakers whom Peter Sutton and/or the writer recorded. Their effort may be termed "grandchildren effort", in contrast with "grandmother effect". "Third-generation pursuit of an ancestral language" (Dorian 1993b: 576) is parallel to the "third generation return to ethnicity" (Edwards 1984: 278; Fishman 1964: 61, 1972: 143) often observed among migrants. This third-generation pursuit seems to be common, but what may be termed "second generation pursuit", too, appears to occur; see Florey and van Engelenhoven (2001: 207, 209, 212) on Moluccan languages (originally of Moluccan islands of Indonesia) in the Netherlands. This parallels the situation of language shift. It is often said to take three generations, but it takes only two generations in certain cases; see 7.3.2.

(1) Conflicts within the community. They exist even among the enthusiastic members, for example, regarding the writing system ([9]-(g) above), standardization ([5] above), and the intactness of the language ((c) above). They hinder the success of language revitalization activities.

Thus far we have looked at the problems that surround language revitalization activities and a few possible remedies for them. This discussion heavily draws on Schmidt (1990), who surveyed the situation in Australia as of the late 1980s. It is now a more than a decade since then, and things have since improved in certain respects. For example, published descriptions of Aboriginal languages, e.g. grammars and dictionaries, have increased. A fair number of permanent structures, such as regional language centres, exist, including the Kimberley Language Resource Centre (KLRC), situated in Halls Creek, Western Australia, with an annex in Fitzroy Crossing, 300 km west of Halls Creek. There are, however, many problems still waiting to be solved. As an example, the situation in and around Halls Creek as of the late 1990s is described below.

There is still not sufficient support from the Commonwealth government or the state government. The funding for the KLRC is insufficient and insecure. The centre has a linguist, but employment of just one linguist is nowhere near sufficient to cater for two dozen or more languages of Kimberley, including Jaru and Kija (immediately to the west of Jaru). Jaru and Kija are as different from each other as, say, English and Russian are, and to work on them single-handedly is an extremely demanding task, not to speak of other languages of Kimberley. A culture centre established in Turkey Creek, north of Halls Creek, was closed only after a couple of years' operation, due to lack of funding.

Language classes – on Jaru and/or Kija – are conducted in three Catholic schools and one state school. The intention itself is to be commended, but the classes the writer observed at the state school are not much more than “token” ones. The white teachers do not know the language. A few old ladies come to the class (another instance of “grandmother effect”), but what they do in the class is merely to repeat words or at best two-word sentences. Children do not acquire overall language ability, e.g. construction of sentences and their use in actual contexts. The principal is not interested in Aboriginal languages or culture, and would not seek advice from the linguist of the KLRC or from the present writer.

Despite the insufficient and insecure funding, the KLRC has achieved a great deal in the way of publications. It has published a large number of language materials, such as non-technical descriptions of languages, dictionaries, reading materials, videos, cassettes, and CDs. No doubt all these materials are indispensable for language revitalization activities.

However, the efforts to revitalize the languages of Halls Creek area are not successful. Reversing the language shift is simply out of the question. Thus, the invaluable materials produced by the KLRC are not utilized. The numbers of speakers are decreasing, as old speakers pass away. Young people and children are not acquiring their ancestors' language; they do not see any value in trying to learn it, and old speakers do not speak it to the younger generation. A similar situation is probably observed in other communities in Australia and elsewhere.

### 11.4.3. Confusion over writing systems

#### 11.4.3.1. *Introduction*

As mentioned in 11.4.2-[9]-(g), some of the writing systems used for language revitalization have inherent problems, and these problems are the source of widespread confusion. We shall now look at the issues that surround writing systems.

It should be pointed out at the outset that, as alluded to in 11.4.2-[11]-(l), the issue of writing systems is a highly political one (for example, see Stebbins 2001 on Sm'algayax of British Columbia, Canada), and sensitivity is required in devising and discussing writing systems.

Before enumerating the problems with the writing systems, we shall first look at the suggestions the writer made for the Warrungu language of North Queensland.

#### 11.4.3.2. Writing system suggested for Warrungu

The revival movement of Warrungu is now in progress (11.4.15-[2]). In March 2001, the writer had discussions with Rachel Cummins, the central figure in the movement, and proposed a writing system for Warrungu, roughly as follows.

(a) The English writing system is one of the worst in the world. It is inconsistent and confusing. One and the same letter may be pronounced in various ways. Thus, the letter *u* is pronounced at least in five different ways. (i) *but*, *cut*, (ii) *put*, *bull*, *cushion*, (iii) *cute*, (iv) *minute*, and (v) *bury*. Also, one and the same sound may be written in different ways. Thus, compare *field*, *photo*, and *rough*. The English writing system is really confusing. It is important to be consistent, with one letter for one sound.

(b) In addition, Aboriginal languages have sounds that do not occur in English. So, if you apply the English writing system to Aboriginal languages, there will be a big mess.

(c) The writing system that the writer suggests for Warrungu is the following:

*a, i, u, b, d, j, g, m, n, ny, ng, rr, r, l, w, y*

Dyirbal people use the same system for their language. (Dyirbal (cf. Chapter 8) is immediately northeast of Warrungu.) At the Kimberley Language Resource Centre, Jaru people have adopted a system very similar to this.

(d) In English, *p* and *b* are different sounds. So are *ch* and *j*; and *k* and *g*. For example, compare *pin* and *bin*, and so on. However, in Warrungu (and other Aboriginal languages), *p* and *b* are not distinguished. For example, *bama* 'man' can be pronounced either [pama] or [bama]. Similarly for the pair of *ch* and *j*, and for the pair of *k* and *g*. So, either *p-t-ch-k* or *b-d-j-g* can be used. Whichever you use, it is important to be consistent.

(e) In Warrungu, *rr* (generally a trill) and *r* (generally a semi-retroflex continuant) are two different sounds, although they are not in English. An example is *rirra* 'tooth'.

(f) Some people use *dj*, e.g. *Kudjala* (the language of Charters Towers area, Queensland), but *d* is unnecessary; just *j* is sufficient. (In addition, to be consistent, *g* can be used in place of *k*, resulting in *Gujala*.)

(g) About *u* (i.e. /u/). This can be pronounced either [u] or [o] in Aboriginal languages.

(h) It is important to be careful with the letter *u*. One such example is the spelling *kutjala* (/gujala/). Some people are confused and pronounce it [kacala]. As another example, the word *jambun* ([jambun] or [jambon]) ‘witchetty grub’ is used for the name of a community near Murray Upper, north of Townsville (cf. 8.2.1), and for the title of a children’s book. Unfortunately, however, it is spelt *jumbun*, rather than *jambun*. The writer asked a number of Aboriginal Australians from the locality (who did not know this word) to pronounce the spelling *jumbun*. They all said [jamban], and not [jambun] or [jambon]. This shows that, when confronted with this confusing use of the letter *u* for [a] and [u] (or [o]), the learner will not know whether the letter *u* is intended to present the sound [a] or [u] (or [o]). The name of the language of Fraser Island is spelt *Butchulla*. Because of the confusing use of the letter *u*, one would not know how to pronounce it. [bucula], [bucala], [bacula] or [bacala]? (Rachel Cummins agreed.) The writer heard some people say [bacala]. Then, it can be spelt *Bajala*, rather than *Butchulla*. This spelling is far clearer. Also, it is more economical.

(i) As noted in (g), in Warrungu, [u] and [o] are the same sound. If Rachel thinks [o] is more common than [u], or if people are confused by the letter *u*, then they can use the letter *o* in place of the letter *u*, e.g.:

*Warrongo* rather than *Warrungu*

(j) Someone said that, because her first language is English, it is hard for her to get used to this writing system. The writer emphasized to Rachel Cummins that it might take a while to get used to this system, but that it is better to use this system. If you apply the English system to Aboriginal languages, you will have a mess forever. Also, if you teach this writing system to children who have not learned the English writing system, they will learn it quickly. (Rachel Cummins agreed.)

(k) The writer cannot write any language materials on Warrungu if he is asked to use an English-based and confusing system.

Rachel Cummins agreed that this writing system is better than the English writing system, saying “This is clear”.

In connection with (j), it is relevant to cite the comment by Brother John Gi-con (e-mail message of 3 June 2003): Gamilaraay and Yuwaalaraay people of New South Wales consistently use the letter *u* for the phoneme /u/. As predict-

ed above, “People here, including and perhaps especially children, quickly get used to a consistent spelling system and can read it quite easily”.

#### 11.4.3.3. Problems in writing systems

Other examples of Aboriginal words spelt in a very confusing way include the following: (i) *Birri-Gubba* (/birigaba/) ‘a language of Queensland’, and (ii) *Murrie* (/mari/), ‘man’ in many languages of Queensland, also (in certain parts of Queensland) ‘Aboriginal Australian(s)’ as against white people. Note that the use of the letters *rr* for the phoneme /r/obliterates the phonemic opposition of /rr/(a trill) and /r/(a semi-retroflex continuant) and it fails to present the phonological system of the language accurately. Note also that these spellings, e.g. *Birri-Gubba*, are more cumbersome than, e.g., *birigaba*.

The reasons for the use of such a confusing system appear to be (i) the lack of linguistic training on the part of people who devised such a system, and (ii) the people’s avoidance or rejection of advice from linguists. For example, the spelling *Birri-Gubba* (/birigaba/) appears to have been decided on without seeking advice from linguists.

One of the most serious sources of the confusion concerns the letter *u*. An illuminating example is the name of a language of New South Wales that used to be (and still is) spelt *Bandjalang*, e.g. Crowley (1978). It is, however, spelt *Bundjalung* in some of recent publications, e.g. Sharpe (1993) and McKay (1996: 52–53). Sharpe (1993: 73) states: “We spell it *Bundjalung* so that the average English speaker will read and pronounce it correctly, as desired by *Bundjalung* people. In some publications for linguistically trained readers, the name is spelt *Bandjalang*, but the *a* is meant to indicate a vowel like that of English *bun* or *lung* rather than that *ban* or *Lang*”. Sharpe notes that this is the community’s wish. Nonetheless, in the writer’s view, adoption of such a spelling is not advisable. There are at least two reasons for this: (i) accuracy, and (ii) cultural and linguistic awareness and distinctiveness. They are closely inter-related.

#### [1] Accuracy

The argument regarding the pronunciation of the letter *u* is not convincing. There are at least two reasons for this.

(a) In many (or most?) Australian Aboriginal languages, including *Bandjalang* itself (see Crowley 1978: 13–14 and Sharpe ed. 1995: viii), the phonetic realizations of the phoneme /a/are not confined to the vowel of *bun* ([ʌ]). Its phonetic value varies mainly depending on the preceding consonant, ranging from one similar to that in *ban* ([æ]) to the one in *palm* ([a]). The use of the letter *u* to present such vowels is truly misleading.

(b) There is no need to use the letter *u* to present /a/([a]). Thus, in 1998 the writer was approached by an Aboriginal organization in Derby, Western Australia, which was seeking a name for a new building. The writer recommended the word *bandarang*, which is the name of a tree species that grows in the area. The writer requested a couple of average English speakers in Australia to pronounce *bandarang*, and they pronounced the letter *a* like that of *bun*, and not like that of *ban*. As another example, there is a child care centre in Townsville, North Queensland, whose name is Galbiri Child Care Centre. (*Galbiri* (/galbiri/) is the word for ‘children’ in Warrungu and a few other languages.) The people pronounce the letter *a* just as intended, as was the case with *bandarang*. As a final example, many Aboriginal languages of North Queensland have the word *bama* ‘man’, and this word is used in language activities there (cf. McKay 1996: 136–137). It is spelt *bama*, rather than, say, *bumma*.

To sum up, it is truly unfortunate that the letter *u* is used to present the phoneme /a/. The adoption of the spelling *Bundjalung*, in place of *Bandjalang*, merely helps to perpetuate this confusion.

It should be mentioned in this context that Maaori people (New Zealand) employ their own writing system. It is highly consistent and also distinct from the English system. But this does not seem to create any confusion among average English speakers. The same applies to the Hawaiian writing system.

The orthography of Manx, which was the vernacular of the isle of Man, resembles that of English. It is plainly inadequate for presenting the phonology of Manx, for example, failing to distinguish those distinctions which are absent in English, and as a result, it is one of the most controversial aspects of Manx in its revival activities. (See Sebba 2000.)

Jones (1998: 341) reports, regarding the orthography of Cornish of England: some people “advocated making it as similar as possible to English spelling in order to facilitate learning, whilst others preferred to make it as unlike English as possible in order to emphasize the different phonological systems of the two languages”. However, experiences by Gamilaraay and Yuwaalaraay people (cited in 11.4.3.2), by Maaori people and by Manx people make it doubtful if it is really worthwhile to make the Cornish orthography as similar as possible to the English spelling system.

## [2] Cultural and linguistic awareness and distinctiveness

There has been in Australia a painful lack of understanding of Aboriginal languages (and cultures) on the part of the general public. It is important to make them aware of Aboriginal linguistic (and also cultural) heritage. Tamsin Donaldson (p.c.) points out that average English speaking Australians would not expect to read German or French writing systems in the way they read the Eng-

lish one and that the same expectation should apply to Australian Aboriginal languages. Also, in the writer's view, it will be important for Aboriginal Australians to assert their cultural and linguistic distinctiveness. A writing system which is different from the English system may help to foster the sense of this distinctiveness. The adoption of a spelling such as *Bundjalung* will not assist in any way towards the raising of the public awareness. (This may be indeed another form of cultural assimilation.) It is relevant in this connection to mention this: The writer visited New Zealand in August 2001, in order to learn from Maaori people's revitalization activities. He mentioned the spelling change from *Bandjalang* to *Bundjalung*, to the linguist Tamati Te Hau, who is a Maaori person, working on the compilation of a dictionary of his tribal dialect. He responded, saying "Why do they bow to English?" (As mentioned above, Maaori people possess their own writing system, which is consistent and also distinct from the English system.)

It should also be pointed out that the use of a writing system that is consistent (and different from the English system) for recording a language, which later became extinct, enabled the reconstruction of that language. If the English system had been used, the reconstruction of the language would have been very difficult, if not impossible. See 11.5.14-[1].

In conclusion, we shall cite Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer (1998: 90–91): "for passing on the accurate pronunciation of names and other cultural information, accurate spelling is crucial".

#### 11.4.4. Further suggestions for language revitalization activities

A large number of suggestions have been put forward which are intended to contribute to the success of language revitalization movements. Some of them were already mentioned in 11.4.2. Additional suggestions are discussed below.

##### [1] Stable bilingualism

To sum up this view, stable bilingualism, coupled with separation of two languages into two distinct domains, will hinder language shift and facilitate language maintenance. Inclusion or maintenance of stable bilingualism has been recommended for language revitalization activities; see for instance, Janhunen (1997: 143), Rouchdy (1989a: 94), Suwilai (1998: 172); cf. also Wurm (1997: 39, 1998: 194). In this view, language revival activities will primarily aim at expanding the domains of use of the language (Amery 2000: 217). This theory looks attractive, but it is beset with a number of problems, as seen in 7.3.1-[1]-(b).



**[2] Value of bilingualism**

Bilingualism (also biculturalism) is said to have cognitive or intellectual advantages (Cantoni 1997: 2; Ellis 1994: 223; Jones 1998: 34; Letts 1994: 353–354; Thieberger 1990: 347–348; Tovey, Hannan, and Abramson 1989: 32; Wurm 1997: 48–49, 1998: 199). Thus, unlike monolinguals, bilinguals will be aware that the same thought may be expressed in more than one way, with different words and sentences in different languages, and that some words and expressions may have no exact equivalent in another language (cf. Wurm 1998: 199). Wurm argues that realization by the community of the advantages of bilingualism will encourage them to maintain their traditional language.

**[3] Use of the language as a secret language**

Wurm (1997: 48, 1998: 198–199) suggests that recognition of the value of a given language as a secret language unintelligible to the speakers of the dominant language may encourage the people to use it. Evidence in support of Wurm's view is mentioned in 7.2.2. Needless to say, the value of the traditional language as a secret language depends on the degree of endangerment (or viability) of the language in question. The value decreases if many people speak or understand the language (Jones 1998: 225–226).

**[4]** The aim should be realistic, and not too ambitious, taking into account the degree of the viability or endangerment of the language concerned (McKay 1996: 226). This point is emphasized by Fishman (1991) and Thieberger (2002); partial acquisition of the language is far better than no acquisition at all.

## **11.5. Types of language revitalization programs**

### 11.5.1. Introduction

A fair number of methods for language revitalization have been proposed; for surveys, see Amery (1994: 143–147, 2000: 27–18), and Tsunoda (2001e: 8352). As seen in 11.3.2.1 and 11.3.2.2, a number of factors need to be taken into account when devising a language revitalization program, and the degree of viability or endangerment of the language concerned seems the most crucial. The proposed methods may be shown as in Figure 11-1, in terms of the range of applicability of each method. As defined in 11.1, those activities which deal with extinct languages are for language revival, whole those which have to do with weakening or moribund languages are for language maintenance.

This classification of methods is only tentative, and so are the labels employed for them. Also, this classification is not mutually exclusive. Two or more

types may be combined in one program. In certain cases, one type of method may be considered a variety of another method. And so on.

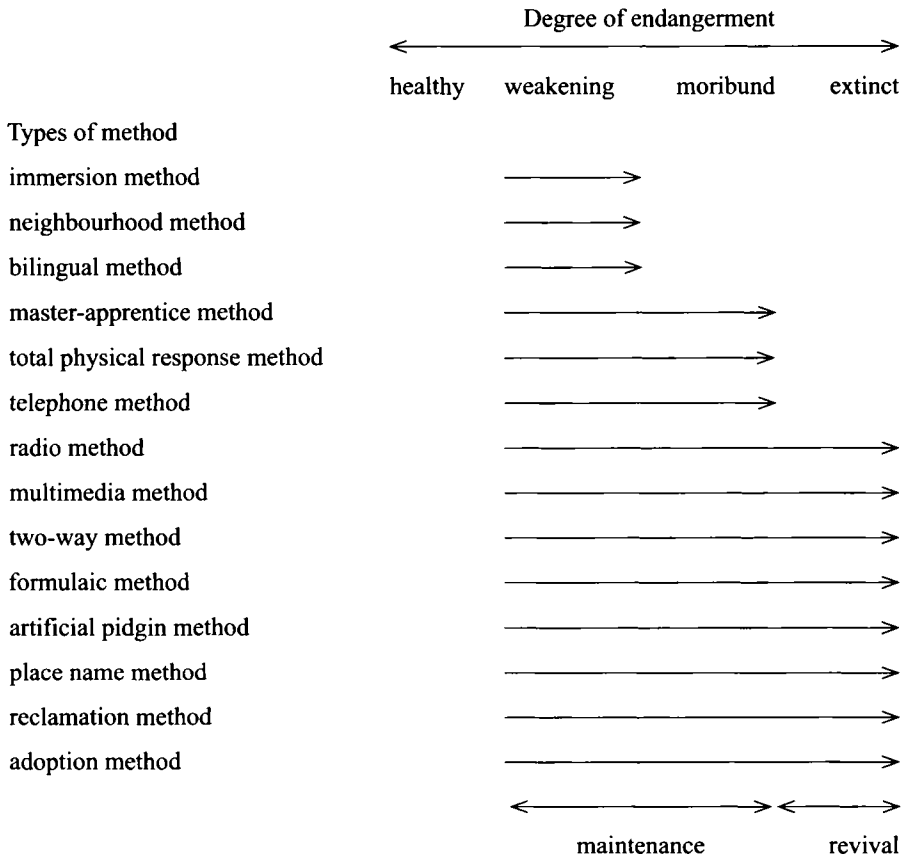


Figure 11-1. Types of language revitalization programs

Figure 11-1 indicates, for each method, the stage of language endangerment for which that method will be applicable. The number of available methods correlates with the degree of endangerment. That is, the more endangered a given language is, the fewer options it has. Thus, the immersion method could be applicable for healthy and weakening languages, but inapplicable for moribund and extinct languages. This shows that, in order to prevent the loss of a given language, the sooner the activity starts, the more options there will be available. Nonetheless, this should by no means discourage a more ambitious plan than in-

licated in Figure 11-1. Thus, with determination and ingenuity, the immersion method may be possible for moribund languages.

We shall now look at the proposed methods, one at a time, together with specific examples thereof.

### 11.5.2. Immersion method

An environment is provided in which learners will only hear and speak the language. Such an environment may be arranged, say, in a pre-school, a school, a one-week residential course, a week-end camp, or a one-day trip. This method is possible for weakening languages, very difficult (if not impossible) for moribund ones, and impossible for extinct ones. That is, this method is for language maintenance, rather than for language revival. The most successful and best-known language immersion program is “the language nest” for the Maori language of New Zealand. A similar program has started in Hawaii.

#### [1] Maaori

Revitalization activities of the Maaori language, which started early in the 1980s, are perhaps the best-known and most successful attempt at language maintenance of all the language revitalization activities. They are described by Jeanette King (2001), Nicholson (1990), and Spolsky (1995), among others. They are also cited in numerous secondary sources. (A brief account of the history of the Maaori people and language is in 3.4.1.)

The most prominent feature of Maaori language activities is the use of the immersion method. This method is carried out in various ways, such as (i) *Koo-hanga Reo* (nest + language, ‘language nest’) for preschoolers, (ii) *Kura Kaupapa Maaori* (school + philosophy/world view + Maaori), immersion schools for school-aged children, and (iii) *Waanaga Reo* (place of higher learning + language), immersion camps for adult learners. In August 2001, the writer had an opportunity to visit New Zealand to observe (and learn from) Maaori language activities. He visited one language nest and one immersion school in Rotorua, North Island, and also one language nest and one immersion school in Christchurch, South Island. The settings are highly contrasting; while Rotorua is the heartland of Maaori culture (Rangi Nicholson, p.c.), Christchurch is highly urbanized, being the third largest city of the country.

Each of the language nests that the writer observed consisted of perhaps up to 10 or 15 children (including babies!) and five or six adults (all women), including teachers and mothers. All the activities in the classroom were conducted in Maaori only, with no English intervening. Even during the free play time, at the language nest in Christchurch, the writer heard two children speaking in

Maaori. This is truly remarkable in view of the fact that that language nest is located in a suburb of Christchurch, and not, say, in a remote community. It may be added that the activities in the classroom involved much singing and dancing, using the Maaori language.

At the two immersion schools, all the classes were conducted in Maaori. It is by no means easy to teach all the subjects in Maaori, due to the shortage of teachers and teaching materials. This problem has been overcome, e.g. by televising a science class conducted in the Maaori language, to other schools. At the two immersion schools, the cultural aspects are incorporated into the school activities. Thus, visitors to the school are welcomed in what appears to be a traditional ritual, which involves much singing and hand gestures.

Regarding adult learners, a personal account of an adult going through an immersion course is given by Nicholson (1990) (mentioned in 11.4.2-[11]-(j)).

Maaori revitalization activities are highly successful – to the extent that the writer was able to observe in 2001; the pre-schoolers and students were speaking Maaori fluently. This observation is in contrast with Spolsky's (1995: 183) observation made in the mid-1990s: "all signs are that the actual level of Maori knowledge and use remains quite low, even among students in immersion programmes".

#### [2] Hawaiian

The language nest method was introduced to Hawaii in the mid-1980s, and immersion programs are now operating from the preschool level to the high school level, in which all subjects are taught in Hawaiian. Courses in the Hawaiian language and literature are offered at the University of Hawaii, and the first M.A. degree in Hawaiian was awarded in 2002 (8 May 2002 issue of the Honolulu Starbulletin; information supplied by Suzanne Romaine via Nancy Dorian). For further details, see Kamanaa and Wilson (1996), Kapono (1995), Niedzielski (1992), and Schütz (1995, 1997).

#### 11.5.3. Neighbourhood method

This method may be considered a variety of the immersion method, but it is set up here as a separate type in view of one particular case that was a most remarkable and dramatic success, as described below. For a neighbourhood program to succeed, the language will probably need to be only at the weakening stage. The program will be extremely difficult if the language is moribund, and almost certainly impossible if the language is extinct.

In order to create a cohesive speech community, a group of eleven families bought houses in the same neighborhood, i.e. Shaw's Road in Belfast,

Northern Ireland, in the middle of the English-speaking community. They had themselves learned Irish as adults, and many of them learned it in prison (Maguire 1991: 202). (This is a manifestation of their remarkable determination.) They then raised their children as bilinguals (in Irish and English). The first family took up residence on Shaw's Road in 1969, followed by other families, and a school for Irish-medium education opened in 1971, with nine pupils. This project proved successful. A second school was established in the city in 1987–88 to meet an ever-pressing demand. The project exerted a significant impact upon the surrounding neighborhoods, and inspired other community enterprises throughout the North, particularly in the area of Irish-medium education. For details, see Maguire (1991), on which the preceding account is based.

This project may be considered an instance of language revival, rather than language maintenance. This is because, although Irish was spoken elsewhere on the island, it was not spoken in Belfast (Maguire 1991: 12). Therefore, as far as Belfast is concerned, Irish has been revived, rather than maintained.

The success of this project is extraordinary in a number of respects. The program overcame the usual problems, such as lack of funding and lack of support from the authorities, among other factors. But what is more remarkable about this program include the following.

(a) The parents learned the language as adults (just as some Maaori people do), and revived it.

(b) They achieved their goal in an urban setting (cf. Maguire 1991: 10, 152), rather than a rural setting. It is impossible to imagine an Australian Aboriginal language being revived in a similar way, say, in Melbourne.

(c) Apart from the children of the initial eleven families (in which the parents first learned the language), the children first learned the language and took it to their home, with the language eventually reaching the parents (Maguire 1991: 4, 107–131). That is, the school played a central role in the revival of Irish (Maguire 1991: 95). This complements (though not contradicts) the view that the school cannot replace intergenerational transmission of the language in the family, neighbourhood, and community. See 11.4.2-[7]-(b).

#### 11.5.4. Bilingual method

The bilingual method may be applicable for weakening languages (and healthy ones as well), but it will be inapplicable for moribund or extinct languages. In this method, the minority language is employed as the medium of instruction, in addition to the dominant language. That is, this involves teaching *through*

the language, rather than teaching *of or about* the language (11.3.2.2). Thus, the Maaori language is used in immersion schools (11.5.2), and also in bilingual schools. Needless to say, in bilingual schools a smaller amount of time is devoted to the Maaori language than at immersion schools, and the students at the bilingual school the writer visited (in Christchurch) seem to be less proficient in it than are their counterparts at the two immersion schools he visited (one in Rotorua and the other in Christchurch).

Now, bilingual education may be classified into the following two models: (a) transitional, and (b) parallel.

(a) Transitional model (Edwards 1984: 300) (also known as transfer model; cf. Rigsby 1987: 362). In this model, the teaching is initially conducted in the minority language (in which the children are fluent). This is based on the view that “children learn better in their own language and can handle literacy better in their own language” (McConvell 1982: 67). It then gradually switches to the dominant language as the children move to higher grades and as subjects like mathematics and science are introduced. (See, for instance, Schmidt 1990: 66.) The transitional method has been employed in many bilingual programs in the Northern Territory, Australia. (See McConvell 1994: 235.)

(b) Parallel model. Both the minority and the dominant languages are employed throughout the course of the children’s education. The bilingual school that the writer visited in Christchurch seems to be of this type.

#### 11.5.5. Master-apprentice method

A master-apprentice language program (Hinton 1994: 231, 1997) was developed for revitalization of Californian languages. Hinton (1994: 231) outlines this method as follows.

The idea is to fund the living expenses of teams of elders and young people with grants, so that they do not have to work for several months, and can thus isolate themselves from English-speaking society and become immersed in traditional culture and language. It was estimated that three to four months in an immersion situation would go a long way towards the development of proficiency, especially for people who already have some passive knowledge.

This method is a type of immersion method (Hinton 1994: 241). However, it differs from the kind of immersion program mentioned in 11.5.2. That is, a team in a master-apprentice program generally consists of just one master (i.e. a fluent speaker) and one apprentice (i.e. a learner), and occasionally an interpreter or the like. Since such a team involves only one fluent speaker, it can be ap-

plied to moribund languages. In contrast, the kind of immersion program mentioned in 11.5.2 generally requires a fair number of speakers, and consequently it is not easily applicable to moribund languages.

For this program, Hinton (1994: 243–244) lists eight rules of teaching for teachers.

1. Be an active teacher. Find things to talk about. Create situations or find something in any situation to talk about. Use the language to tell the apprentice to do things. Encourage conversation.
2. Don't use English, not even to translate.
3. Use gestures, context, objects, actions to help the apprentice understand what you are saying.
4. Rephrase for successful communication. Rephrase things the apprentice doesn't understand, using simpler ways to say them.
5. Rephrase for added learning. Rephrase things the apprentice says, to show him correct forms or extend his knowledge to more complex forms. Encourage communication in the language, even with errors.
6. Be willing to play with language. Fantasize together; make up plays, poems, and word games together.
7. Understanding precedes speaking. Use various ways to increase and test understanding. Give the apprentice commands to follow. Ask him/her questions. It is not necessary to focus on speaking each new word right away; that will come naturally.
8. Be patient. An apprentice won't learn something in one lesson. Repeat words and phrases often, in as many different situations and conversations as possible.

Hinton (1994: 243–244) also lists eight rules of learning for apprentices. They are almost exactly parallel to those for teachers, except the following two.

4. Practice. Use new words and new sentences and grammar as much as possible, to yourself, to your teacher, to other people.
5. Don't be afraid of mistakes. If you don't know how to say something right away, say it wrong. Use whatever words you know; use gestures, etc. for the rest.

No doubt, this advice by Hinton is instructive. But it is surely frustrating to adhere to this advice, hence the need for determination.

In retrospect, the writer's fieldwork with Alf Palmer on Warrungu is a variant of the master-apprentice method. After three spells of "apprenticeship" from 1971 to 1974, totalling to about 8 months, he became a – reasonably – fluent Warrungu speaker. (Still now, 30 years since then, he is able to produce Warrungu sentences.) No doubt much the same applies to many other fieldworkers who have become (reasonably) fluent in the respective languages. This shows that

the master-apprentice method can be highly effective. It will prove to be invaluable for the maintenance of moribund languages.

#### 11.5.6. Total physical response (TPR) method

As described by Cantoni (1999: 53–54), the lessons in this method proceed as follows.

The teacher begins by uttering a simple command such as “walk to the window,” demonstrating or having a helper act out the expected action, and inviting the class to join in. Commands are usually addressed first to the entire class, then to small groups, and finally individuals. When a few basic verbs and nouns have become familiar, variety is obtained by adding qualifiers such as “fast,” “slowly,” “big,” “little,” “red,” “white,” “my,” and “your.” Since the students are not required to speak, they are spared the stress of trying to produce unfamiliar sounds and the consequent fear of making mistakes.

For more on the total physical response method, see Ellis (1994: 552, 571, 645). Cantoni (1999: 54) admits that this method has a limitation: “TPR promotes only the learners’ receptive language skills and ignore productive ones, which are essential to real communication”.

This method may be considered a variant of the immersion method. The language concerned probably needs to be only moribund, and preferably weakening. It will not be applicable to extinct languages.

#### 11.5.7. Telephone method

Taff (1997) reports that this method is employed for the Deg Xinag language of Alaska, USA: “Since the number of Deg Xinag speakers, all elders, is less than twenty and the learners, young adults, are spread among sites too distant to make it feasible to get together face-to-face, we organized a one-credit distance delivery class under the authority of the University of Alaska” (Taff 1997: 40).

The speakers and learners meet by audioconference, once or twice a week. Due to the nature of the equipment used, i.e. telephone, the emphasis is on speaking and listening, rather than on writing.

This method, too, has limitations. For examples, the learners cannot see the faces, gestures, and other body language of the speakers. This makes it difficult to pronounce some of the sounds – particularly when the telephones do not work well.



Nonetheless, the class is invaluable. Taff (1997: 44) states: “compared to no language learning situation, the telephone class experience is wonderful. It allows us the only opportunity most of us have to listen to and talk with a group of fluent speakers”.

What is unique about this method is the use of telephone for language teaching/learning. It is also worth stressing that this course is accepted as a university subject. This method will be used for moribund languages, although it will be more easily carried out for weakening languages.

#### 11.5.8. Radio method

The radio method can be used for all of extinct, moribund, and weakening languages. One example of this method is reported by Maher (1995: 86): In 1987, a commercial radio station in Hokkaido, Japan, began broadcasting an Ainu-for-Radio language course. The program is not broadcast nationwide but in Hokkaido only and it is aired early (6.05–6.20) on Sunday morning. It aims to create public interest in both the language and the traditional Ainu outlook on nature and life. The audience rating is relatively high for that day and time: 0.1–0.2 percent. This suggests that the program has achieved its aim, though to a limited extent.

#### 11.5.9. Multimedia method: internet and CDs

Recently, with the development of IT, increasing use is now being made of computer technology, utilizing multimedia materials for language revitalization; see Kushner (1999), and Miyashita and Moll (1999). See also, for instance, David Nathan’s website *Aboriginal Languages of Australia* (<http://www.dnathan.com/VL/austLang.htm>) on multimedia resources on Australian Aboriginal languages. Community members are beginning to show interest in multimedia resources and to recognize value in them for language maintenance revitalization. For example, such materials make the lessons more fun and make the younger generation interested in the language, and they counter the lack of fluent teachers in the classroom (Siobhan Casson, p.c.). There are also language lessons available on the internet, e.g. a Welsh language lesson at the following site: <http://www.cs.brown.edu/fun/welsh/>.

There is, however, one serious problem. Insufficient funding makes it extremely difficult to purchase computers, not to speak of the production of multimedia materials or use of the internet for language revitalization.

The multimedia method may be applicable to any language at all – provided that funding and materials are available.

#### 11.5.10. Two-way education method

This method will be in principle applicable to languages at any stage in Figure 11-1, although it will be more feasible if the language is healthier. According to McConvell (1982, 1994), the concept of a “two-way” school was suggested to him by Aboriginal Australians such as Pincher Nyurrmiyarri, a leading Gurindji man of the Northern Territory, Australia, in the mid-1970s. It derived from the Aboriginal people’s dissatisfaction with the current education system (which could be termed the “one-way” school system), which only teaches the “white-man’s” culture and English. They argue that one-way education should be replaced by a “two-way” system. In Pincher Nyurrmiyarri’s view, two-way education should involve the following two components.

(a) Discussions and negotiations between teachers, relevant Departments and the community over policies and programs, rather than having them imposed only from the white side.

(b) Two-way exchange of knowledge. (i) The Aboriginal people involved in the school would make an effort to learn and understand the aims and methods of the European programs, while the European teachers in turn would make an effort to learn about the language, culture and aspirations of the Aboriginal people. (ii) Similar two-way exchange of knowledge between old and young Aboriginal people.

This view is echoed by voices from North America. Thus, see 11.3.2.1-[4]-Stage 4 (“Develop two-way bilingual programs where non-speaking elementary students learn the indigenous language and speakers learn a national language ...”), and 11.4.2-[8]-(e) (“All educators (including the school principal) should try to learn the student’s home language ...”).

Pincher Nyurrmiyarri’s view is truly remarkable in the context of more than 100 years’ history of white domination. Unfortunately, his vision has not been as yet realized. No doubt, the same applies to the education of minority peoples in many other countries.

#### 11.5.11. Formulaic method

This method was proposed by Amery (2000: 209–212) for the revival of the Kurna language of the Adelaide area of South Australia. It entails a staged introduction of well-formed Kurna sentences into speech that otherwise con-

sists of English words and sentences. The initial stage involves one-word utterances that can stand alone as, e.g., questions, responses, commands, greetings, and leave-takings. This is followed by the introduction of sentences that consist of just two or three words. And so on. A similar method is proposed by Fettes (1997: 309). This method aims at the levels of word speakers, phrase speakers, and possibly simple sentence speakers, discussed in 9.4.1.1-[1]. This method will be useful for extinct languages.

#### 11.5.12. Artificial pidgin method

Amery (2000: 215–217) reports that what he seems to term “artificial pidgin method” (a term apparently cited from Powel 1973: 6–7) is employed in the revival of the Ngarrindjeri language, south of Adelaide, South Australia. Some people in the community have learned Ngarrindjeri and claim to speak it, but the Ngarridjeri they have learned is a kind of relexified English. That is, word order is strictly AVO (according to the convention adopted in Chapter 8, but SVO in the tradition of word order typology) as in English, and the sentences are word-for-word translations of English sentences, even to the extent of using Ngarridjeri case suffixes as separate words in translating English prepositions.

As Amery (2000: 216) notes, the advantage of this method is the ease with which the language can be constructed and used. However, the language that has been revived is far removed from its previous structure and it invites the question on the issue of “intactness”, discussed in 11.2-[1]-(b). Amery suggests that this is an unfortunate consequence of the community’s rejection of the involvement of linguists.

#### 11.5.13. Place name method

This method is applicable to all the stages shown in Figure 11-1, including extinct languages. As seen in 11.2, according to the view that a language is alive if place names in that language remain, its revival only requires replacement of at least a few place names (in the dominant language) with their traditional equivalents.

In Hawaii, many (or perhaps most) place names are Hawaiian or Hawaiian-based, and a similar situation obtains with Maaori place names in New Zealand, in sharp contrast to Australia, where almost all place names are in English. In Ireland, Placenames Commission was appointed by the government as early as 1946 to “ascertain the correct Irish forms of the placenames of Ireland, and to

compile them” (Bord na Gaeilge 1998: 8). Note that this aim indicates the importance of accurate writing systems (see 11.4.3.3).

Replacement of place names is not what is generally meant by language revitalization (see 11.2). Nonetheless, Fettes (1997: 309) suggests that “even changing the name of the tribe or community may be a small step towards language renewal”. Furthermore, it has an important function in that it is useful for what Amery (1994: 145) calls language awareness programs. Thus, Nicholas Thieberger (e-mail of 1 February 2001) reports: Brian McCoy, on pp.17–18 of *Eureka Street*, Vol.1, No.1, makes a plea for naming places with their traditional names on the ground that it is the best way to honour places and our relationship with them, and that to speak old names is to begin to learn an original way of seeing the world around us.

#### 11.5.14. Language reclamation method

In Amery’s (2000: 17) terminology (cited in 11.1), reclamation refers to revival of an extinct language, utilizing materials recorded earlier when the language was spoken. We shall look at the situation of Kaurna of the Adelaide area, South Australia, and of Warrungu of North Queensland, Australia.

[1] Kaurna of the Adelaide area, South Australia

A detailed account is in Amery (2000). See also McKay (1996: 135–136) and Nathan (1996: 184–202).

The last fluent speaker of Kaurna appears to have died in 1929, but the language was documented by the nineteenth century missionaries, Christian Teichelmann and Clamor Schürmann. Attempts have been made to restore the Kaurna language, including the sounds, on the basis of the written documents and of the sounds of other Australian languages, and even a CD of the language, including the sounds, has been produced. (For a method of reconstructing sounds on the basis of written documents, see the papers in Thieberger (ed.) 1995.) A Kaurna program commenced in the primary section of the Kaurna Plains School (an autonomous Aboriginal school) in 1992, and in two other schools in 1994.

Although the children are unable to develop communicative fluency, the program is judged successful by those involved in it on the following grounds. First, it involves students and the wider Aboriginal community in the education process. (Note that in this case Aboriginal people are involved in the education process, as was desired by the Aboriginal people who put forward the idea of two-way education, cited in 11.5.10.) Second, it has created and fostered a sense of identity and pride amongst Aboriginal people. That is, this pro-

gram has brought about benefits, despite the fact that the language seems unlikely to be restored to its fully viable state. The important thing seems to be re-acquisition of their ancestors' language – even if the re-acquisition is only partial.

It is fortunate that the people who documented Kaurna were German: Christian Teichelmann and Clamor Schürmann. They used a consistent writing system, which is different from the – inconsistent and confusing – English writing system. Had they used the English system, reconstruction of Kaurna might not have been possible. Again, this shows the importance of accurate writing systems (see 11.4.3.3).

[2] Warrungu of North Queensland, Australia

The revival movement of Warrungu already was mentioned in 11.2-[2] and 11.4.3.2. It is briefly outlined as follows. In the early 1970s, Peter Sutton and the writer worked on a fair number of languages in and around Townsville, North Queensland, recording them from the last speakers, who have since passed away. Sutton's main focus was on Gugu-Badhun, and the writer's on Warrungu. More than a quarter century later, Sutton and the writer were requested to assist with proposed plans for the revival of the languages and cultures of the region. Many of the people involved turned out to be grandchildren of the last speakers whom Sutton and the writer had recorded in the early 1970s. (This is an example of "grandchildren effort"; see 11.4.2-[11]-(k).) Their movement employs the reclamation method, since there is no speaker left, and the revival relies on the earlier records of the languages.

There is one particularly interesting aspect of this movement, and this has to do with pride, self-esteem, and interest in language that has been enhanced by a unique feature of the language. One day in March 2001, the writer was having a discussion with Rachel Cummins and her husband, John Cummins (who is a Gugu-Yalanji person, not a Warrungu person). Rachel and John have five daughters, and they were listening to our discussion. The writer explained one aspect of the Warrungu language roughly as follows:

Warrungu had a phenomenon that linguists call syntactic ergativity. This phenomenon is unique among the world's languages. It mainly occurs in Australia, in Queensland, and in fact, in North Queensland. It occurs in Warrungu, and also Warrgamay, Girramay, Jirrbal, Mamu, Ngadjan, and Yidiny. Because this phenomenon is unique among the world's languages, it is a very important part of the cultural heritage – not only for the people of this area, but also for the entire humankind.

Upon hearing this, Knomi, one of the five daughters, said, "I'm curious". Later, in June 2001, Rachel said in one of her e-mail messages, "You inspired

Tahlia [Knomi's younger sister]", and also "Tahlia is eager to go to Japan to study with you". (Tahlia was 17 at that time.) That is, the knowledge of the existence of a rare phenomenon in their ancestral language has raised Warrungu people's sense of pride, self-esteem and interest in it.

It proved infeasible for Tahlia to come over to Japan for study. Instead, the writer started giving Warrungu lessons in Townsville, in March 2002. The progress is slow, but the writer considers the prospect encouraging. The Warrungu revival movement is described in Tsunoda (2004), and also in an essay located at: <http://www.sgu.ac.jp/com/ksasaki/kaken/essay/essay-tsn.htm>.

#### 11.5.15. Adoption method

Eve Fesl, who is the first Aboriginal Australian person to be awarded a Ph.D. degree in linguistics, describes in Fesl (1982) an unusual case of language revival: the revival of a language by means of adoption. Unlike Kaurna people, the people involved gave up the idea of restoring their ancestral language, but instead they adopted another language.

Aboriginal languages of Victoria were among the first to be wiped out after colonization. In the mid-1970s, Fesl was requested to search for a language of Victoria to revitalize, only to find none. Fesl then looked for a language which was spoken in a similar – naturally and socially – environment to theirs, that is, a coastal and urbanized area. Finally, Fesl found the Bandjalang – also spelt Bundjalung (11.4.3.3) – language of the Lismore area, New South Wales. It still had some speakers, and it was spoken in a similar environment, both naturally and socially. Fesl and the group applied to Bandjalang tribal elders for permission to teach their language in Victoria. Despite a prolonged debate that arose from jealousy in the Bandjalang community, the Victorians finally succeeded in obtaining permission to teach Bandjalang, on the condition that it is taught to Aboriginal children only. The Bandjalang people's reason is this: "the whites have ripped everything off – we want something for our children first" (Fesl 1982: 50). (For the teaching of Bandjalang in Victoria, see also McKay 1996: 52–53, 150–151).

As mentioned in 10.2.2.2, many Aboriginal Australians consider they own their ancestral language – even if they do not speak it. It is in view of this language ownership that Aboriginal Australians of Victoria needed permission from Bandjalang people to teach the language. Regarding this language, Bandjalang people are "language owners", while those Victorians who learned and use it are "language users".

Florey and van Engelenhoven (2001: 213) report another instance of the implementation of the adoption method.

The adoption method is in theory applicable to all languages, but in practice it will be employed for extinct languages only.

#### 11.5.16. Methods of language revitalization: discussion

We have looked at various methods employed for language revitalization. As seen in 11.2, whether a given language revitalization program is considered a success or not depends on the definition of language revitalization and the aim of that particular program. Also, a given program may be considered a success if it brings concomitant benefits to the community, e.g. enhancement of the sense of self-esteem and identity, and the community members' involvement in the education process (11.2, 11.5.14-[1]). This makes it impossible to make a clear-cut judgement as to whether a given method will bring success or not.

Success of a given program may be measured in terms of the proficiency acquired and the number of resultant fluent speakers. Even if we confine ourselves to these criteria, it is still not easy to measure the effectiveness of the methods listed above. This is largely because the sources consulted do not provide clear information on these respects. In general, those methods which are applicable to weakening languages only, and not to moribund or extinct languages, e.g. the immersion method employed in New Zealand and Hawaii (11.5.2), will be expected to produce a higher degree of proficiency and a larger number of fluent speakers than otherwise, and indeed, this seems to be the case, judging by the accounts provided and also by the writer's observation in New Zealand. In contrast, those methods which are applicable to moribund languages as well, or even to extinct languages as well, may be expected to yield, at best, a low degree of proficiency and a small number of speakers. Fortunately, however, this is not always the case – as far as proficiency is concerned. Some of the latter methods, too, may create a high degree of proficiency – provided that the people are determined and that there is a social environment that enables the language revitalization activity in question. Thus, consider the master-apprentice method, which is applicable to moribund languages as well (though not to extinct ones). As mentioned in 11.5.5, the writer's fieldwork with Alf Palmer on Warrungu is a variant of this method. Three spells of "apprenticeship" from 1971 to 1974, totalling about 8 months, produced a fairly fluent speaker of Warrungu. Under a more favourable circumstance, this method will be able to yield a larger number of speakers.

## 11.6. Summary of Chapter 11

Chapter 11 pointed out that the answer to the question as to whether languages can be revitalized depends on the definition of language revitalization and the aim of a given program. It then looked at a number of proposals for strategies of language revitalization, mainly aimed at the societal level rather than the individual level. Language revitalization activities are beset with a multiplicity of very difficult problems, and these problems, together with suggested remedies, were considered. Chapter 11 then examined various methods of language revitalization. The number of available methods correlates with the degree of endangerment. The degree of proficiency acquired and the number of resulting fluent speakers will be expected to correlate with the degree of viability of the language in question. However, this does not hold in every case. Thus, the master-apprentice method, which can be applied to moribund languages, can produce (fairly) fluent speakers, as can be seen by some fieldworkers' fluency in the respective languages.

Chapter 11 has shown that language revitalization does not concern language exclusively. It "forms part of a much broader movement towards reestablishing societies on a human scale and in balance with nature" (Fettes 1997: 315) (see also Fishman 1991: 18; Thieberger 1990: 352). It requires "social justice" (Thieberger 1990: 348, 352), i.e. sociopolitical and economic justice (Hale 1993: 26, 1998: 215), such as the existence of a comfortable social environment (Sawai 1998: 188), and economic prosperity (Janhunen 1997: 138).