



LANGUAGE LEGACIES:

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*New Haven, CT*

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## NOAM CHOMSKY BENEFIT LECTURE

On November 15, 2006, ELF board member Noam Chomsky will give a lecture to benefit the Endangered Language Fund. The title will be "Why Are There So Many Languages? Diversification From An Underlying Unity."

New Haven Lawn Club  
193 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, CT 06511

6:45-7:30 Pre-reception  
7:30-8:30 Lecture  
8:30-9:00 Q&A  
9:00-9:30 Reception

\$50 General Admission to the lecture  
\$250 Lecture and Meet-and-Greet Reception  
with Noam Chomsky at 9:00

Email Nick Emlen at [emlen@haskins.yale.edu](mailto:emlen@haskins.yale.edu)  
to make a reservation.

## NICK EMLEN TO RUN MARATHON TO BENEFIT ELF

On October 1, 2006, ELF's own Nick Emlen will run in the Portland, Oregon marathon to benefit the Endangered Language Fund. This will be, as far as we know, the first fundraiser of its kind.

To learn more about the marathon fundraiser, or to sponsor Nick in the race, email Nick at [emlen@haskins.yale.edu](mailto:emlen@haskins.yale.edu).



the  
endangered  
language  
fund

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# language legacies

## ELF AWARDS 11 GRANTS IN 2006

**Erin Debenport**  
*University of Chicago*  
**Community Language Documentation At Sandia Pueblo**

The Southern Tiwa language revitalization program at Sandia Pueblo, New Mexico, serves the community by teaching the language to the tribal members. This project will expand the existing program by creating new opportunities for participation by community members. This goal will be accomplished in two ways: by training community members to enter dictionary information into the online database, and by creating an editorial group of native speakers to edit and expand the document. The language has little history of documentation, so this work will represent a valuable contribution to the understanding of the Kiowa-Tanoan language family. Sandia Southern Tiwa is spoken 10 miles north of Albuquerque, New Mexico, by 43 fluent speakers out of a tribal enrollment of approximately 500.

**Pastor Dawari Braide**  
**Printing of Kalabari-English Dictionary for Kalabari children**

The Endangered Language Fund gave Pastor Dawari Braide, a 2005 ELF grant recipient, an additional grant this year to publish the bilingual dictionary that has been the product of his work on the Kalabari language. Pastor Braide's work last year produced language materials for teaching the Kalabari language to the community members. The dictionaries will be used by Kalabari children in the city of Port Harcourt, Nigeria, near the delta of the Niger River. The Kalabari language is a Niger-Congo language spoken by 258,000 people, endangered largely because of the massive relocation that has taken place in the area due to the development

of Nigeria's oil industry in the Port Harcourt region. Thanks to the work of Pastor Braide, the children of the Kalabari communities have access to printed and online language resources.

**Amrendra Kumar Singh**  
*Jawaharlal Nehru University*  
**Description of Pasi**

Pasi is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken by fewer than 1,000 people in Arunachal Pradesh, India. The language is endangered due to the overwhelming use of Hindi and English in the region, and to intermarriage among the various groups who speak different minority languages. In the Siang district, which borders China and the Indian region of Assam in the far northeast corner of the country, the complex of languages to which Pasi belongs has been described simply as the "Adi language group." According to more recent research, the linguistic situation in the area seems considerably more complex. Singh will travel to the East Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh to write the first descriptive grammar of Pasi and to clarify the relationships between the various languages and dialects of the Adi language group.

*"A large section of the Kundal Shahi population speaks a distinct language, which might descend from an ancient form of the Shina language"*

*-Kundal Shahi maintenance project*

**Khawaja Rehman**  
**Frontier Language Institute Language Maintenance And Shift In Kundal Shahi**

In the area surrounding the Kundal Shahi village in Pakistan-administered Kashmir, most people speak the Hindko language. Within the village, however, a large section of the population speaks a distinct language, which might descend from an ancient form of the Shina language. Over the past 40 years, the speakers of this language have

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begun to speak Hindko, whereas in the past they maintained a stable balance between the two languages. The current speaker population is estimated at 500 out of an ethnic group of around 2,000. Some of the speakers left the village following the devastating earthquake of October 2005, accelerating the rate of language shift. Rehman plans to archive the community's oral traditions, write a grammar and glossary, form a Kundal Shahi language preservation society, and document the changing language attitudes that have led to the language's recent decline.

**Robert Williams**  
*American University in Cairo*  
**Ghulfan Language Documentation**  
**Through Forced Migration Stories**

Due to the various political and geographical factors that have made it difficult for linguists to work in rural Sudan, many of the indigenous Sudanese languages have not been adequately described. The same political factors have now forced tens of thousands of Sudanese people to migrate, many of them to Cairo, which gives Williams a rare opportunity to document the forced migration narratives of Ghulfan language speakers. Ghulfan, known as Ajang among the group that migrated to Cairo, is a Nilo-Saharan language spoken by around 16,000 people in the Nuba mountains of the Sudanese state of South Kordofan. Williams will make digital video and audio recordings of the language to be used both for linguistic analysis and for the benefit of the relocated Ghulfan communities. These recordings will also be of use to people interested in the recent Sudanese migration to other parts of Northern Africa.

**Jerry Hall**  
*Lane Community College*  
**Tutudin Language Camp**

Tutudin is an Athabaskan language currently spoken by two elderly people in southwestern Oregon. The current project will offer the

chance for community members to participate in a week-long summer Tutudin language camp and receive guidance from one of the last living speakers. In the recent years of the Tutudin language camp, the community has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of people involved in learning the language. This summer's participants will gather in Agness, Oregon, and practice the language through classes, songs, games, and cultural tours to important sites in the area, including battle sites, villages, ceremonial grounds, and museums. They will also take part in traditional experiences such as basket making, sweat lodge ceremonies, and crafting hunting and fishing tools.

**Simeon Floyd**  
*University of Texas at Austin*  
**Multi-Dialect Documentation of Highland**  
**Ecuadorian Quichua**

This project will produce a transcribed text collection of Ecuadorian Quichua corresponding to approximately ten hours of digital video documentation of discourse in four distinct dialects of the language. The result will be the creation of a large corpus of naturally-occurring Quichua discourse representing a range of dialects and speaking styles, from stories to interviews to conversations of many kinds. Collaborative transcription and data processing by a native Quichua speaker and a U.S. graduate student will create an archival source with which to do descriptive linguistic analysis as well as to create texts and digital media for community use. The Quichua language is still spoken in most of the Ecuadorian highlands, but language shift has been an ongoing process for centuries and is currently

proceeding at an unprecedented rate. Linguistic manifestations of racism against the indigenous people are prominent, and children have been pressured to use Spanish instead of Quichua. This project will create resources to help speakers strengthen linguistic and cultural transmission through textual and audiovisual media.

*"The Karinya language project will provide training and technological resources to the village leaders, who will produce their own texts."*

*-Areytry Karinya project*

Wilson de Lima Silva  
University of Utah  
Documentation Of Arapaso

The goal of this project is to document Arapaso and Karapana, two previously undocumented Tukanoan languages spoken in the Upper Rio Negro region of Brazil. Arapaso is highly endangered; the researcher has determined that there are 20 people who know a few words in the language. There is only one known speaker of Karapana. Silva will produce a list of the last words remembered by the Arapaso people. He will produce the first typological overview of Karapana based on the analysis of texts and lexical materials collected from the speaker. The data and recordings will be available online to the Arapaso and Karapana people at the Amazonian Museum in Manaus and at Federação das Organizações Indígenas do Rio Negro (FOIRN). The work will also be accessible to the scientific community through the CAIL archives at the University of Utah and through AILLA at the University of Texas at Austin.

Joana Jansen and Virginia Beavert  
University of Oregon  
Documenting Yakima Sahaptin Conversation

The Yakima Sahaptin language is spoken fluently by fewer than 10 people in and around the Yakama Indian Reservation in central Washington State. It is one of several Sahaptin dialects, which are mutually intelligible and syntactically similar, with differences in orthography, phonology, and lexicon. This project will complement previously completed work on Yakima, which has been based on legends and personal narratives, with very little interaction between native speakers. The current project will record, transcribe, analyze and distribute a corpus of conversational data in digital video and audio form from several fluent first-language speakers of Yakima Sahaptin. These data will give insight into the language as used between people, instead of in the context of narration. The data will be available to linguists, community members, and language teachers in a variety of formats. Such interactions are of critical importance for language revitalization programs.

Racquel Yamada  
University of Oregon  
Karinya Language Documentation

The purpose of this project is to collect text data from native speakers of the Aretyry dialect of Carib who live in the village of Donderskamp, Suriname. Carib, also known as Karinya, is spoken by about 10,000 people in Venezuela, French Guiana, Brazil, Guyana, and Suriname, and among this group, 20 speakers live in Donderskamp. The project will provide training and technological resources to the village leaders, who will record their own texts. This locally-based data gathering process will help empower the people of Donderskamp to take the future of the language into their own hands. Products of the project will support current and planned

language revitalization efforts and will contribute to the linguistic understanding of Cariban languages.

Erich Fox Tree and Julia Gómez Ixmatá  
Mesoamerican Sign Language Survival And Documentation Project: Modern Signs, Ancient Histories

Meemul Tz'ij is the K'ichee'-Mayan name for a complex of indigenous natural sign languages used widely throughout the Maya area of Mesoamerica. In recent years, Fox Tree has worked to determine whether these languages actually constitute an ancient sign language family. Most of the languages of the Meemul Tz'ij complex have been overlooked by linguists and anthropologists. The existing scholarship has suggested that the languages came into existence in the early 20th century, but Fox Tree's research indicates that they come from an ancient and indigenous source; the sign languages are referenced in colonial Spanish documents and depicted in Maya iconography dating as far back as the Pre-Classic Period. It is possible that these are the oldest documentable sign languages in the world, over four times older than the earliest records of the national sign languages of Europe and the USA. Fox Tree's research also indicates that the languages are also used by non-Mayan indigenous people in Central and Eastern Mexico. This project will clarify the history of these unusual languages and document their structures.

*"It is possible that these are the oldest documentable sign languages in the world, over four times older than the earliest records of the national sign languages of Europe and USA."*

*-Meemul Ch'ab'al  
sign language project*