

SFLSMUNC 2013 Background Guide

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



Chair: Zhou Fangzhou

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2. Welcome Letter

2 August 2013

Greetings delegates,

I'm Zhou Fangzhou, and it is with great honor and privilege that I introduce myself to you as your chair for UNESCO in SFLSMUNC. I majored in English and graduated from Shanghai International Studies University, currently studying in the Graduate Institute of Interpretation and Translation SISU.

The preservation of linguistic diversity is the main problem that we need to address in our conference. The situation is as dangerous and volatile as any in the world. Each country that you're representing should fulfill the work that lies in your responsibility, while making yields in terms of policy enactment and international cooperation. Currently, little progress has been made to stop the trends by UNESCO and the global society, since it requires great efforts from the states' government, especially when some of them are still facing the threat of famine and natural disasters in their nations. Thus it is crucial, that through your hard work and contributions, this committee would improve the current situation by substantial actions to be taken!

Once again, I'm so thrilled that you'll be joining me for SFLSMUNC UNESCO this fall! I'm confident that the committee will be great, and I'm confident that the committee will be great because of its great delegates. UNESCO is my favorite type of committee as a delegate, and I hope that you'll enjoy the committee as much as I'll enjoy preparing it. I'm glad that we can together investigate the causes and possible solutions of this often-neglected but critical issue.

As SFLSMUNC approaches, I encourage you to take a thorough look at this background guide and research your country's position upon this issue. Having a firm background research in the topic will make debates in our committee more rewarding and entertaining.

Good luck with your preparation, and don't hesitate to contact me with any questions that you might have during your research, and also, about our committee. I can't wait to know you in Shanghai this November, and see you in the committee room!

Sincerely,
Zhou Fangzhou

3. History of the committee

In the 1990s, by the establishment of the first committees, societies, and foundations such as the Linguistic Society of America's Committee on Endangered Languages and their Preservation and the German Society for Linguistics' Society for Endangered Languages (ICHEL) of the University of Tokyo, a bibliography on endangered languages is maintained on the website of ICHL. The LINGUIST List is currently setting up its own Endangered Language Homepage and many linguistic areas in the world have their own list on the Internet.

At the 15th International Congress of Linguistics, held in August 1992 at Laval University, Quebec, the Committee Permanent International of Linguistics (CIPL) put solving language endangerment on top of the agenda. A collective was edited by the then president and secretary general of CIPL in preparation for the plenary session on "endangered languages" and the same title appeared emblematically on the cover of the proceedings of the congress.



With financial support from UNESCO, CIPL is now actively involved in the organization and coordination of the survey and study of some seriously endangered languages. This includes fieldwork, collecting and recording appropriate language material and documentation, linguistic research and other activities. Important publications include UNESCO's Red Book of Endangered Languages and the Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Disappearing.

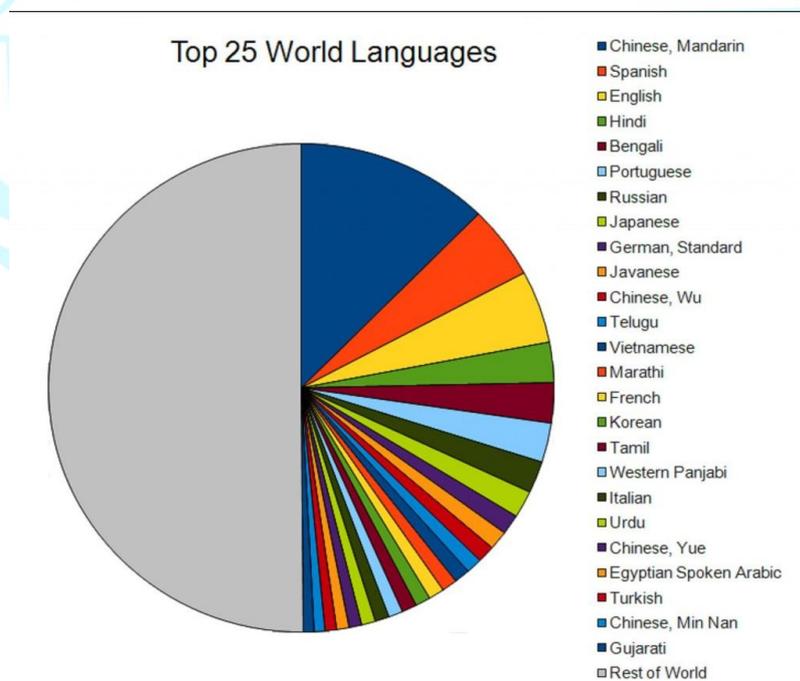
4. Introduction

i. The definition of language diversity

Language, which is the most advanced way for people to communicate with each

other, has now been listed as one of the intangible cultural heritages as defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO). A “living language” is simply one which is widely used as a primary form of communication by a specific group of living people. The exact number of known “living language” varies from 6000 to 7000, depending on how one defines a language, and also on how one draws a line between *language* and *dialect*. National boundaries frequently override linguistic difference when one determines whether two linguistic varieties are languages or dialects. For example, Cantonese and Mandarin are often classified as “dialects” in Chinese, even though the difference between them is more significant than that between Swedish and Norwegian.

Because of topographical and cultural factors, different groups of people have created and developed different languages throughout history. Like “Biodiversity”, linguistic diversity is formed when languages all over the world are taken into consideration as a whole, and is considered as an irreplaceable component in the human society. Therefore, maintaining the diversity of languages is just as important as maintaining the diversity of species. The “logosphere” (defined by Michael Krauss as a term describing the web linking the world’s language, analogous to biosphere) would also break down just as the biosphere would do as it becomes vulnerable and instable when certain species are taken away from it.



Language diversity is crucial to human society, for each language embodies and represents the unique culture and wisdom of a specific group of people and each language is an expression of the human experience of the world.

Currently, the statistics shows that nearly 6% of the now existing languages have more than a million speakers, and these languages are spoken by 94% of the world's population. Conversely, about 94% of the languages are spoken by only 6% of the world's population. This fact, along with other factors such as the process of globalization and neo-colonialism, is now threatening language diversity. This deterioration beckons of immediate recognition and action. This is not only about maintaining original ethnic and cultural identities, but also about respecting and harmonizing between different races and tribes on the earth.

ii. Language families

The world's languages can be grouped into language families consisting of languages that can be shown to have common ancestry. Linguists currently recognize many hundreds of language families, although some of them will probably be grouped into larger units as more evidence becomes available and in-depth studies are carried out. At present there are dozens of language isolates: languages that cannot be shown to be related to any other languages in the world. Among them are Basque, spoken in Europe, Zuni of New Mexico, P'urhépecha, also found in Mexico, Ainu of Japan, Burushaski of Pakistan, and many others.

The language families of the world that have most speakers are the Indo-European languages, spoken by 46% of the world's population. This family includes major world languages like English, Spanish, Russian, and Hindustani (Hindi/Urdu). The Indo-European family achieved prevalence first during the Eurasian Migration Period (c. 400–800 AD), and subsequently through the European colonial expansion, which brought the Indo-European languages to a politically and often numerically dominant position in the Americas and much of Africa. The Sino-Tibetan languages are spoken by 21% of the world's population and include many of the languages of East Asia, including Mandarin Chinese, Cantonese, and hundreds of less distinguished languages.

Africa is home to a large number of language families, the largest of which is the Niger-Congo language family, which includes such languages as Swahili, Shona, and Yoruba. Speakers of the Niger-Congo languages account for 6.4% of the world's population. A similar number of people speak the Afro-asiatic languages, which include the populous Semitic languages such as Arabic, Hebrew language, and the languages of the Sahara region, such as the Berber languages and Hausa.

The Austronesian languages are spoken by 5.9% of the world's population and their coverage stretches from Madagascar to maritime Southeast Asia, and all the way to Oceania. This family includes such languages as Malagasy, Māori, Samoan, and many of the indigenous languages of Indonesia and Taiwan. The Austronesian languages are considered to have originated in Taiwan around 3000

BC and spread through the Oceanic region through island-hopping, based on an advanced nautical technology. Other populous language families are the Dravidian languages of South Asia (among them Tamil and Telugu), the Turkic languages of Central Asia (such as Turkish), the Austroasiatic (Among them Khmer), and Tai–Kadai languages of Southeast Asia (including Thai).

iii. Definition of language endangerment

Language endangerment occurs when a language is at risk of falling out of use as its speakers die out or shift to another language. The language starts to lose speakers, and becomes extinct when no one in this world speaks it any more. Various factors can lead to the language endangerment: when a country falls into control of another, for example, its citizens would likely be forced to learn the language from the latter, a process known as “culture conquering”. Another process is likely to happen in a place which has subordinate cultures, where adults would encourage their children to learn and speak the language of the dominant culture (usually more economically developed) as means of getting better positions in the society. Other related factors include religious, cultural, and even psychological problems such as the speakers’ negative feelings about certain languages. These all attribute to discourage the speakers of certain languages from using it, forcing those languages toward extinction.

Even though there are more about 6000 languages in the world, it is estimated that at least 50% of them are now losing speakers. According to a report from UNESCO, it is predicted that between 50-90% of currently spoken languages will be extinct by the end of the 21st century. The fewer speakers a language has, the more likely it is going to become extinct in a very short time. The top 20 languages, which are spoken by more than 50 million speakers, have speakers that make up about 50% of the world’s population, whereas many of the other languages are spoken by small communities, most of them with less than 10,000 speakers. These languages, therefore, are endangered when they are threatened by dominant languages.

Degree of endangerment	Intergenerational Language Transmission
safe	language is spoken by all generations; intergenerational transmission is uninterrupted >> not included in the Atlas
 vulnerable	most children speak the language, but it may be restricted to certain domains (e.g., home)
 definitely endangered	children no longer learn the language as mother tongue in the home
 severely endangered	language is spoken by grandparents and older generations; while the parent generation may understand it, they do not speak it to children or among themselves
 critically endangered	the youngest speakers are grandparents and older, and they speak the language partially and infrequently
 extinct	there are no speakers left >> included in the Atlas if presumably extinct since the 1950s

Five levels of language endangerment

Some scholars point out that language extinction is actually a natural process caused by the accelerated rate of globalization and other human activities. However, the widely accepted notion is that the extinction of any language might result in irrecoverable loss of unique cultures and historical knowledge, for the knowledge of a language is key to answering fundamental questions in the future. Every time a language dies, we have less evidence for understanding patterns in the structure and function of human societies. The loss of languages would also harm the linguistic and cultural diversity in the world. In today's society, certain awareness should be raised to respect minor languages instead of viewing them as undeveloped or even barbaric. The world would not be better off if all the cultures are assimilated; rather it is always the better choice to preserve all of them.

5. Current situation

i. The situation in different regions

Asia

A land that cultivated the ancient civilizations, Asia has developed hundreds of language families, and thus has a great linguistic diversity. In India, thanks to multilingual government policies, many languages are well-protected and spoken extensively. In Himalayas and Pamir Mountains in Central Asia, and Afghanistan, the situation also remains relatively optimistic, since only a few tongues are disappearing, and most of them are now well-catalogued. However, the *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Disappearing* (known as the *Atlas*) points out that in East Asia, especially in countries like China, the situation is quite uncertain. Though it maintains a large amount of dialects within its territory, the pressure from Chinese (Mandarin) is strong, particularly for those people in the northeast and northwest. In order to get in touch with those people from more developed areas in the eastern part of China, they might study Mandarin and abandon their native tongue, leading to the loss of treasured languages and dialects.



The Pacific region

The Pacific region, which includes Japan, Taiwan(China), the Philippines, Insular, Malaysia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Fiji, Micronesia, Polynesia, and Australia, holds more than 2000 living languages, a third of the world's total. Papua New Guinea alone boasts at

least 820, a world record for linguistic diversity. According to the *Atlas*, the region's languages are generally alive and well-kept, but still there are several crisis areas in this region- Australia, Taiwan, and New Caledonia. In Australia, where aborigines were forbidden to speak their native language under the colonial domination of United Kingdom, it was not until 1970s that their 400 aboriginal languages were allowed to be used, resulting a record number of language extinction. Now, there are only about 25 aboriginal languages still in usage. As for Taiwan, the situation is quite similar to that in northeastern part of china, where local languages are yielding to the pressure from Chinese (Mandarin). In New Caledonia, French has had a devastating influence on local culture and language, causing two thirds of the 60,000 indigenous people there to lose their language.

Africa

As the linguistically least-studied continent, the situation there is still unclear. Limited information shows that among the 1400 local languages there, about 500 to 600 are declining, while 250 are facing the immediate threat of extinction. Nigeria and East Africa, according to the *Atlas*, are considered as two crisis areas which have the most severely endangered tongues.



North America

In North America, the pressure from English and French is quite obvious, for most of the people there are from European ancestries. In the Arctic region, very few Inuit Eskimo languages survived because of this. In Canada, the situation is better: with the efforts from the government, 104 Amerindian languages have survived successfully. While in America, because of the colonial period, less than 150 Indian languages have survived out of the several hundred languages that had been widely spoken on this continent. In the recent years, discrimination against these languages has eased, however, the “black lash of conservatism and the strengthening of the ‘English-Only’ policies in the 1980s has exacerbated the ongoing extinction of Amerindian languages,” the atlas says.

Europe

In Europe, minority languages are always under endangerment, since the linguistic diversity problem has long been neglected there and some of the local languages in Europe are now disappearing at an astonishing rate. Only advocated in recent years, minority languages have been the target of repressive policies for a long time, and only a few countries, such as Norway and Switzerland, have

encouraged multilingualism for any length of time. The *Atlas* points out that about 50 European languages are now in danger. Some of them, such as Sami tongues, spoken in Scandinavia and Russia, are regarded as severely endangered.

South America and Central America

In Central and South America, there is not as much language diversity as elsewhere because of the extermination of entire peoples in eastern Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay. Similar to North America, Many Indian languages are under pressured by Spanish and Portuguese. In Mexico, for instance, 14 local languages are seriously endangered or moribund. A large number of South America's 375 or so surviving languages are also threatened.

ii. The reasons that caused the endangerment of language

Many things related to the human society may result in language endangerment. These things vary from region to region, including internal, as well as some external factors. All of them, which will fall into either of these two categories, are equally devastating. Though not all the factors are included and introduced here, by studying these reasons and factors, you will certainly get a better view of the current situation.

Internal Factors

Internal factors are usually directly related to the speakers' negative attitude toward a certain language in a community. The reasons vary a lot, but basically they have something to do with the people's inferiority complexes. These people, together with their communities and cultures (often considered as undeveloped, or even barbaric), may somehow be placed in a discriminated position by other aggressive and dominant cultures and languages (often considered as advanced, economically and socially well-developed). Thus, associating their disadvantaged social status with their culture, members of language communities would start to believe that their languages and cultures are not worth sustaining, and thus try to abandon them while pursuing the language from those "advanced" cultures, in hopes of overcoming the discrimination. Meanwhile, adults in these communities usually encourage their children to learn the language from a dominant culture in order to secure them with a prominent future by joining the dominant society. This process may gradually result in the younger generation's forgetting their indigenous languages, which put the languages under attack, or even lead to their extinctions.



9 factors that ensure the language vitality

External factors

Language endangerment may also result from external forces, such as military, economic, religious, cultural or educational subjugation. The reason why a language would be extinct, as is described before, is because of the extinction of people who speak such a language. These factors, likewise, can all lead to this situation. The decline of native languages in North America is a very typical example. It was set off by the European conquests in the 16th and 17th centuries. Languages disappeared in large numbers because the speech communities became the victims of warfare, new diseases brought by the European colonists (smallpox, both intentionally and unintentionally transmitted to Native American tribes), and forceful resettlement. The authorities, who later formed the US Government, set up a series of policies directly aiming at the elimination of cultures and languages of Indian communities: native children were separated from their families in special boarding schools where the use of their languages was forbidden. The discrimination and separation from the dominant society also forced the children to deny their own heritage and identity. This cultural and linguistic deprivation through formal education also took place in other colonial settings, such as Africa, and New Zealand, where it was considered as an essential part of colonial strategies to assimilate native and colonized people. Even in today's society, because of the process of globalization associated with economic cooperation, the situation has not improved significantly. For example, Regions like Taiwan and Hong Kong, have to use English in order to maintain their global associations with developed regions, posing a potential threat to the indigenous languages. Countries like Malaysia and Singapore could also probably do without English and use Malay only as their national official languages, if their economies did not depend so largely on American and British

Markets. The situation is even worse in Third World countries, which are eager to develop domestic economy and thrive by maintaining such relationships. Globalization has not only blurred the national boundaries, but also has accelerated the process of people assimilated, almost all across the world.

iii. Actions that have already been taken

As a part of its effort to protect the world's oral and intangible heritage, including traditional popular music, dances, festivals, customs, traditional knowledge, oral traditions and local languages. The Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, adopted by the General Conference, points out the certain steps of protecting the linguistic diversity, in the same way that Bio-diversity is protected. In the declaration, certain aspects, such as education, the respect for mother tongue, the exchange of information and data, and the cooperation between nations are mentioned. And by reemphasizing the importance of natural, as well as cultural heritage, the declaration also encouraged the member states to formulate policies and strategies for the preservation and enhancement of the cultural heritage (including linguistic diversity).

International Mother Language Day (Feb. 21th), celebrated by UNESCO since 2000, aims to promote the linguistic diversity and multilingualism. The date represents the day in 1952 when students demonstrating for recognition of their language, Bangla, as one of the two national languages of the then Pakistan, were shot and killed by police in Dhaka, the capital of what is now Bangladesh. The significance of International Mother Language Day is obvious: it comes at a time when linguistic diversity is increasingly threatened. Such an observance would definitely play a vital role in raising the awareness of language endangerment among the human society.



On January 26th, UNESCO set up a strategic monitoring body (the Task Force on Languages and Multilingualism) and an operational monitoring structure (the network of focal points for languages) to ensure synergy among all language concerned sectors and services. Through this well-designed combination, strengthened and revived in February 2008 by the creation of an intersectional

platform on language and multilingualism (IPLM), the Organization is working internationally to promote the principles enshrined in or derived from standard-setting tools relating to languages and multilingualism, and locally to develop coherent national and regional language policies, in conformity with its mid-term strategy.

Before the 28th International Mother Language Day, the UNESCO proclaimed 2008 to be the International Year of Languages, pursuant to the resolution adopted by the General conference of UNESCO. To celebrate the year, several projects were taken, in terms of building capacity, research and analysis, raising awareness.....These projects can briefly summarized as:

- Educational initiatives promoting bi- and multi-lingual education and speech, especially the usage of the mother-tongue at all levels and in formal and non-formal settings.
- Projects in the field of science aimed at enhancing communication and collaboration between scientific researchers and institutions across linguistic divides, as well as distributing and sharing research materials in order to overcome the language barriers. Researchers in certain fields should realize and recognize the central role of vernacular languages in indigenous ways of knowing.
- Social and human sciences project focusing on languages, human studies and cultural rights, migrations, urbanization and other social issues (e.g. exclusion and poverty).
- Culture-centered projects on cultural diversity, dialogue and exchange, aimed at protecting cultural heritage and safeguarding endangered languages (i.e. through translations and publications for instance).
- Communication and information initiatives that concentrate on building knowledge societies in which everyone can participate and benefit from; allowing universal communities to gain access to specific information; increasing general public awareness by media.



Many language-saving organizations worldwide are initiating projects as well. Endangered Language Alliance (ELA) started its language documentation projects a couple of years ago, working with immigrants and refugee populations in New York and other cities, helping them document and maintain their languages. Their projects are mainly about recording the high-quality speech of stories, narratives, dialogues or elicitation sessions on grammatical topic from those speakers. These recordings may take place at the speakers' home, in community centers, or at the ELA's office. By doing this, ELA strives to transcribe and annotate all of these materials, and share them as much

as possible with the public and certainly with the relevant language communities, who typically play a major role in directing, if not explicitly initiating, the project. While the highest priority for a language's survival is transmission, in the worst case, those materials can be used as "life supporters", which may be extremely useful for today's generation of language learners, and linguistics.

iv. Examples of extinct languages being saved

There are several cases in which endangered languages are saved by the efforts of local governments, speakers, and the language communities. It's helpful and meaningful that we take a close look at these cases, which may provide us with some possible solutions, constructive clues and advices.

Ainu

Ainu used to exist in an area between the northern part of the Japanese main island of Honshu and the southern tip of Kamchatka. After Japanese's immigrant to Hokkaido and the establishment of Japanese region, Ainu people were forced to settle down in an area called Ezochi.

In the Meiji era (1680), with the government policy of assimilation, Ainu were oppressed and exploited by the Japanese intruders. The Hokkaido Settlement Mission was established as an administrative organization to rule the region of Hokkaido. Thus, the area where Ainu occupied was granted as the territory of Japanese. With the introduction of Japanese way of life and compulsory special education for Ainu children, the oral transmission was interrupted. Consequently, the Ainu language, together with its culture and traditional lifestyle, disappeared for a couple of generations.



Ainu villagers

When the Hokkaido Aborigine Protection Act was passed in 1899, Ainu were declared “former aborigines”, and this gave rise to further discrimination toward them. In 1946, the Ainu Association of Hokkaido was established, aiming at providing better and traditional education for Ainu and creating social welfare facilities for them. In 1984, the organization proposed the *Law on the promotion of Ainu Culture and Facilitation of Popular Understanding of Ainu Tradition* to the Japanese government. For the first time, the Japanese government recognized the existence of a separate ethnic group inside Japan, which calls for respect for its culture and tradition. This marks a significant change to the previous policies. It intends to help the society realize the Ainu people are critical in contributing to the diversity of cultures in the country.

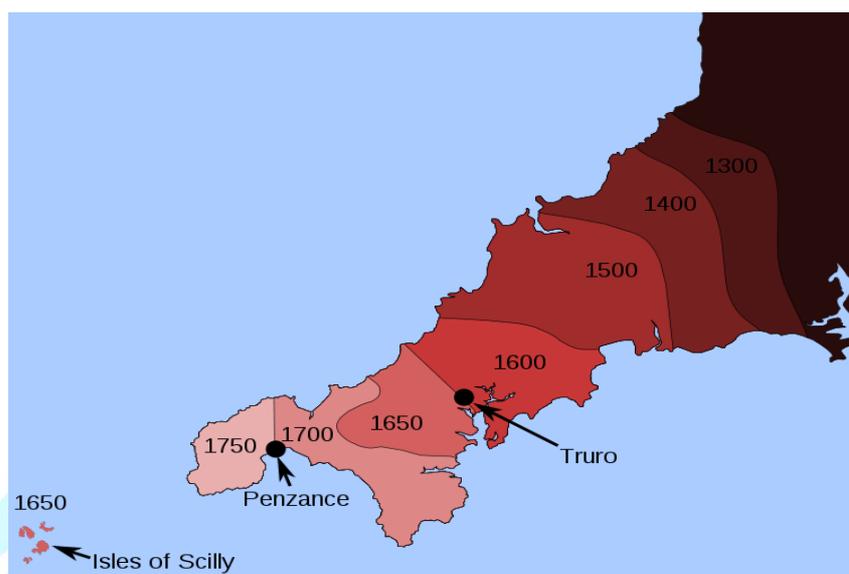
In 1997, the Hokkaido Government, the Hokkaido Development Agency and the Ministry of Education of Japan approved the establishment of Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu Culture (FRPAC). One of its tasks is to further the development of diverse national cultures through the preservation and promotion of the Ainu language and traditional culture, as well as the dissemination of knowledge on Ainu traditions. The foundations provided training opportunities for Ainu language instructors with effective instruction methods, which were based on the grammatical characteristics of the Ainu language, and prepared in cooperation with Ainu language researchers. Also, an Ainu museum was opened where the young generation could rediscover this unique culture.

It is said that there were only 8 people speaking Ainu on the island of Hokkaido in the late 1980s. However, throughout this process of protection, 23,767 people identified themselves as Ainu according to a survey in 1999. Though Ainu is still a language that is regarded as nearly extinct, with the hard work of scholars on this language, we have the confidence to believe that the language could be saved with positive development and determined language policies.

Cornish

Cornish is one of the Brythonic languages, which constitute a branch of the Celtic languages. Along with Welsh and Breton, Cornish is directly descended from the Common Brittonic language spoken throughout much of Britain before the English language came to dominate. The language was the main language of Cornwall for centuries until it was pushed westward by English. Nevertheless, it still served as an important language in Cornwall until the 18th century, and was even spoken by a few families until the 19th century. But by this time, the transmission of the language to new generations ceased. Most of the inhabitants can speak no word of Cornish. Written sources from this period are largely spelled following English spelling conventions. It was defined as an extinct language in 1777, and it was widely believed that it died out because the death

of the older generations who spoke the language.



However in the 20th century, there was intense academic interest in the language, particularly in the Middle Cornish literature, and also in attempting to find the last native speaker of the Cornish language. Despite the announcement of the death of the language, this academic interest provided the groundwork for a Cornish language revival movement. In 1904, a Cornish culture activist Henry Jenner published “*A handbook of the Cornish Language*”, considered as a point at which revival movement started.

The movement focused on reconstructing and standardizing the language, including coining new words for modern concepts and creating educational materials to teach Cornish to others. Several linguistic systems were published during this process, making agreements upon the written, as well as the spoken for the standardized language. However, disputes still existed, particularly in the existence of multiple orthographies. By the time when Cornish was recognized by the UK government under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Language in 2002, the public hadn't yet achieved a wide consensus. Thus a process of unification was initiated, which resulted in the creation of the public-body Cornish Language Partnership in 2005 and agreement on a Standard Written Form in 2008. In 2010 UNESCO altered its classification of Cornish, recognizing that its previous label of being “extinct” was no longer accurate. With a number of speakers that is slowly growing, this has become a milestone for Cornish speakers, and symbolizes the successful revival of the modern-day Cornish language.

6. Suggestions for further research

Materials on the topic of “Linguistic Diversity” are not scarce, but they do take careful sorting and searching to gather. Considering the fact that language

endangerment is an emergent problems that needs to be solved, many scholars and experts have raised their awareness on such a problem, and therefore, has written many reports and analysis about it. It's always a very good choice for delegates who want to conduct a further research to check out those research papers and books written by some of the professors and scholars in colleges and universities, such as *"Linguistic Diversity in Space and Time"* written by *Johanna Nichols*, a professor in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of California, Berkeley, or a book named *"Language Endangerment and Language Maintenance: An Active Approach"*, which introduces the well-organized definition of language endangerment, and may enrich your basic knowledge about the problem.

The problem that is discussed in this background guide is also the one that UNESCO has long been focused on. The UNESCO Committee has published several conventions, as wells as treaties, in the past few years, based on the general conferences held in Paris. Those conventions and treaties are all available on the website of UNESCO, and are free to download. They are perfect resources for you to obtain official information about the actions that have already been taken, and the goals that UNESCO expects to reach. Certain situations are also well described in those materials. For further information about the linguistic problem in your country, you may check out the "Atlas of the World's languages in Danger" published by UNESCO, which specifies the situation and some of the statics in each of the country.

If the delegates want to learn more about the recent update on this issue, there are several options: you may keep up with the content on the website of UNESCO, which may release some latest updates. You may also check out the website of *"National Science Foundation"* and *"Endangered Alliance"* for the information of some of the projects mentioned in their projects. It is also a very good idea to follow the news from the 8th UNESCO Youth Forum to be held in Paris in October. Linguistic Diversity, now raising more awareness among the youth all over the world, may also be a topic to be discussed in this Forum.

7. Assignment

SFLSMUNC requires each delegation to submit one position paper for each committee they attend (including the Cabinet of United Kingdom). Position papers act as good guidelines to further researches. Reading the feedback from the Dais and position papers of other delegates will help delegates figure out the flow of the committee in advance. A good position paper should consist of the following basic sections:

- A brief introduction to the current situation of the topic, strengthening the

importance of the agenda pending discussion;

- Current mechanism for addressing the issue, be it domestic, regional or international conventions, organizations, treaties or resolutions;
- Country's position on the topic and constructive and concrete proposals for the coming conference in further addressing the issue.

Delegates must base their position paper on the three perspectives stated above. Please clearly state out all the materials that are quoted from other sources using MLA format.

The detailed format and submission information of position papers are listed below:

- Position paper should be no more than one page;
- The font of the position paper must be Times New Roman sized 12 pt.;
- Delegate's name, school, representing country and the name of the committee and its topic must be shown on the page;
- The file name of the position paper must be "Committee Name_Country Name"; (e.g. UNESCO_China.doc/docx)
- The file of position paper must be attached to the appendix of the mail; DO NOT put the position paper directly in the message body;
- The position paper must be submitted to our official Email address, which is for assignment submission, document submission, questions, and notifications: sflsmun2013@126.com.
- The deadline for the position paper is 23:59 GMT+8, Oct. 7th, 2013.
- The subject of the email should be the name of your country and your committee.

Should delegates have any academic question concerning the conference, please submit your question to the Email address listed above.

Sample Position Paper

Committee: Disarmament and International Security Committee

Topic: Protection of Civilians in Modern Warfare

Country: Japan

Delegates: Zhang San, Li Si, Shanghai Foreign Language School

Japan argues that the civilian protection, whether in times of peace or during wars, is hindered by several newly emerged factors, including the rapidly developing weaponries, the controversies over motives for war, the possible infringement on national sovereignty and the non-execution of existing conventions.

Japan has made substantial efforts on the protection of civilians in armed conflicts, ratifying *The Hague Convention* and *The Geneva Convention* that both clarified

the definition of civilian, which Japan considers to be the premise of civilian protection. Under a number of well-established normative frameworks, Japan, as a nonpermanent member then of the UN Security Council, significantly contributed to the process of laying out *Resolution 1674*, a reaffirmation of *Resolution 1265* and *Resolution 1296*, which majorly focused on securing human safety and human rights of civilians involved in modern warfare. Regarding the IHL as the fundamental of civilian protection, Japan actively participates in the PKO missions, and lodges strong condemnation and firm opposition against behaviors harming civilians, particularly women and children, concerning sexual violence, arbitrary detention, savage torture, deliberate attack on humanitarian personnel and other violations against the law.

Japan insists that state sovereignty is a responsibility rather than a privilege, and advocates the R2P system as a valid and necessary mechanism for civilian protection. Moreover, Japan proposes the following steps be taken for the effective enforcement of civilian protection. Primarily, persons not belonging to regular armed forces or corps should be classified into two categories, the aggressive and the non-aggressive, where the aggressive refers to citizens carrying out or seeking for attacks, or posing potential threats to others in domestic conflicts, terrorism combats or non-aggressive wars; unpremeditated harms resulting from self-defense are identified acceptable when towards the aggressive, but not towards the non-aggressive; harms in an aggressive war to either the aggressive or the non-aggressive are deemed to be unreasonable. Secondly, intentional attacks to civilians aiming to trigger panic or chaos in the region as well as for other strategic purposes may never be adopted. In addition, the type of war should be determined by the UN Security Council at its outbreak. If intentional attacks to civilians persists or even aggravates, further operations including weapon embargo, asset freezing, eco-sanctions and humanity interventions should be considered. With regards to an increasing number of terroristic threats, unmanned flight missions deployed to knock out a certain target must receive permission from the government of countries involved before brought into action so as to avoid the violation of national sovereignty. Similarly, the distribution of humanitarian aids should also go through such a procedure in order to stand neutral and efficient. Furthermore, no-fly zones should be established in regions neighboring the conflict scene, especially in residential areas and above UN refugee camps, to ensure the absolute security of civilians, personnel and infrastructures. The interference by UN military troops should be taken only as the ultimate measure.

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