

The Sad Situation of Original Language Loss "Half and half, then half again!"

Prior to Europeans first coming to North America between the 12th and 15th Centuries, approximately 300 different languages were being spoken by between 5-10 million Native Americans already living in what is now the United States and Canada.

When explorers and settlers encountered animals and plants that they did not recognize, they often borrowed the Native American word for the object, altering it to make it easier to pronounce for an English speaker. Such words as skunk, hickory, chipmunk, moose, pecan, and squash all became part of everyday American English through this borrowing process.

Because much of the early English contact with Native Americans took place along the north eastern Atlantic seaboard, many of these borrowed words are from the Algonquin family of languages which were widely spoken in the area. Algonquin languages include Cree, Chippewa, Ojibwa, Kickapoo, Menominee, Potawatomi, Shawnee, Abnaki, Micmac, Mohegan, Nanticoke, Arapaho, Blackfoot, Cheyenne and Piscataway.

Today there are only about 150 Native languages still being spoken in the United States, but 76 are considered nearly extinct and only a few of them have enough speakers to be able to survive the 21st Century.

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European Languages in the Americas

Canada: French & English

United States: English & at least 150 worldwide languages

Mexico: Spanish

South America: Spanish, Portuguese

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Religious Explanations of Multilingualism

Bible – Adam & Eve name each and every item

Bible – Tower of Babel (language was a curse based on man's pride).

Qur'an 49:13 (al-Hujrat, verse 13)– "O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other). Verify the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most

righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted with all things.

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Respect For or Tolerance of Language Diversity

Anecdote of Nellie and David and son walking in Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia discuss in Aklanon what Christmas gift to buy our son in Aklanon. Man walking behind us shouted: "Your in Australia, speak bloody English."

If and when you hear another or "strange" language spoken, be grateful for it. It is that part of the speakers that is most human and what makes them most comfortable. Do not feel bad about not being able to understand it. They are not keeping you out of their conversation to hurt or offend you. They are just being themselves.

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Language Activity

- (1) Write down the names languages you have heard of?
- (2) Write down the languages you have actually heard being spoken?
- (3) Write down the languages you speak at home?
- (4) Write down the languages you speak in school?
- (5) If you could study a language, which one would you like? And why would you like to learn it?

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When a language is lost, so is the culture that goes with it.

Recently I heard two maxim's from Punjabi speakers:

- (1) "The bundle is in a greater hurry than the thief." What do you think they mean by this?
- (2) Punjabi: "A straw in a thief's beard." = English: "A guilty conscience needs no accuser."

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Have you ever heard the words "pidgin" and "creole/kriol?" Would anyone want to know what they mean?