The sound library

Sound documents and collections as means of recovering and protecting endangered languages
[Some ideas based on Argentinean work with aboriginal communities]

Lic. Edgardo Civallero
National University of Córdoba - Argentina
Selk’nam
(Tierra del Fuego)
Mainly exterminated during XIX century. Last speaker (Lola Kiepja, photo) dead 1966. Language conserved in texts and recordings
Yámana
(Tierra del Fuego)
Mainly exterminated during XIX century. Last 2 speakers still alive in Chile. Language conserved in texts and recordings.
Diaguita / Calchaquí
(NW Argentina)

Completely slaughtered during II Calchaqui War, ended 1666. The only text supposed to codify their widely-spoken language (kakan) was lost during XVII century.
Sanavirón
(Córdoba, central Argentina)
Disappeared after Spanish Conquest in XVII century. Just 3 words of their language conserved in texts. Their paintings in caves represent their whole culture and the final moments of their history (spanish warriors in horses)
Comechingón
(Central Argentina)
Disappeared after the Spanish Conquest in XVII Century. Just 7 words of their language conserved in texts.
Argentine maps showing the distribution of originary peoples (grouped in cultural areas) during XVII century and the remaining single groups in 2005.
Aonikenk
(Southern Tehuelche)
(Patagonia -
Argentina)
Almost disappeared.
Highly endangered
language, spoken by a
few elders, even if it
has been recorded,
studied and conserved
in texts.
Qom, Pit´laxá, Moqoit
(Tobas, Pilagás, Mocovíes)
(NE Argentina)
Around 60.000 people, speaking Guaykurúan highly endangered languages, written and spoken but currently suffering strong cultural pressure and oblivion.
Quechua and Kolla / Aymara
(NW Argentina)

Argentinean Quechua dialect spoken by 7000 mestizo-people in Santiago del Estero province. Aymara southern dialect spoken by around 30,000 persons. Both written and spoken, but suffering oblivion, discrimination and cultural pressure.
Wichi, Yofwaja, Nivaklé
(Matacos, Chorotes, Chulupíes)
(NE Argentina)
Around 100,000 people. Speakers of Matacoan family endangered languages, written and spoken but suffering cultural pressure.
Avá / Mbyá
(Chiriwanos – Chanés, Guaraníes)
(N Argentina)
Around 7000 Mbyá, 3500 Avá and 1500 Chané, from northeastern Misiones province to northwestern Salta province. Speakers of Avá-Ñe´é (Guaraní), official language in Paraguay, but endangered in Argentina.
Mapuche
(Patagonia - Argentina)
Around 90000 Mapuche and 1500 Ranküllche, speaking Mapudungu (Mapuche language). Healthy idiom, written and spoken, but suffering strong cultural pressure and discrimination in Argentina.
The Quilmes, last Diaguita-Calchaqui group, was defeated in 1666 by Spanish armies. Those who survived the terrible slaughter were deported to Buenos Aires, where they died of sadness. Today, the city is inhabited just by “cardones”.
Disappeared

Selk’nam – Yamana - Gününa-küna – Pewenche – Huarpe – Querandí
Charrúa – Chaná – Timbú – Sanavirón – Comechingón – Lule – Vilela
Tonocoté – Abipón – Caingang – Diaguita – Omaguaca - Ocloya

Still spoken

Aonikenk – Mapudungu – Kolla – Quechua - Qom´lek – Moquot - Pit´laxá
Yofwaja – Nivaklé - Avá-Ñe´é – Wichi - Mbyá
Agradesiyki – Aguyje – Juspaxara – Chaltu may
Muchas gracias - Thank you very much

Lic. Edgardo Civallero
edgardo_civallero@yahoo.com.ar