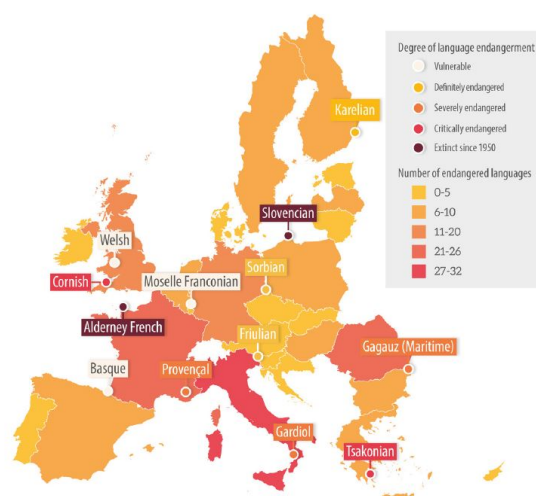


Endangered Languages: Why do they exist ? How to save them ?

In our current world, globalization causes a lot of problems, as well as economic problems or environmental problems. Nevertheless these huge difficulties are not the only ones, this globalization is also at the root of language's disappearance. In fact, there is a desire to gather everything possible in an objective of making life easier.

From this desire is born Globish, a simplified English which is easier to speak for tourists than the English spoken by English people. This globalization of the language leads to the disappearance or the increasing scarcity of many of them, as is the case for the Cornish language which is only spoken by 3,500 people in the United Kingdom. To judge the endangered level of extinction of these languages, five different levels have been created by UNESCO : vulnerable, definitely endangered, severely endangered, critically endangered and extinct. If a language has been classified as severely endangered, it means that the language is still spoken by the older generation and understood by children but not spoken normally.



Data source: [Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger](#), Unesco, 2010.

In each country, regional languages are replaced by the national language. All over the

world, it is India which has the most endangered languages. This is due to its admiration for English. Indeed, in India, school lessons are done in English meanwhile the students don't have the level required to understand well English. This leads to the disappearance of their mother tongues in favour of English. Unfortunately, for India's inhabitants there are not many solutions to save their language because their governments promote this globalization, this emphasis of English. According to them English gives more opportunities. As a consequence, no measures are established to contribute to save these endangered languages. However, it is not the same for endangered languages of other countries.

In countries like France for example several small languages are endangered. Norman dialect is one of them, it is spoken in Normandy by 100,000 people. But it has not always been the case, in 1999 it was spoken by only 50,000 people, its number of speakers has doubled in only 10 years approximately. French governments and the Normandy region itself have implemented measures to try to save this language. First-of-all this language has been promoted a lot, has been put in the spotlight, furthermore it has been introduced in schools, that way children can learn it and revitalization of a language is done mainly by children. They are the ones who are going to pass down this language to their own children the longest possible, and it is easier to learn something and to be interested in something

when you are a child. Other solutions exist to save an endangered language, another example is the MyCornwall magazine, a magazine which has been created to promote another language named Cornish spoken by 2,100 speakers in the area of Cornwall in the United Kingdom. In it there are several columns which allow us to discover things about Cornish.



There are many other solutions to help save these endangered languages such as museums, music, movies etc. You can also act directly in the safeguarding of these endangered languages by doing linguistic tourism. Your holidays are going to be very interesting, you are going to discover an endangered language and, at the same time, participate in its conservation !

To put it in a nutshell, many languages disappear because of the globalization of languages, but a lot of other solutions exist to save them. Transmitting the language to children is one of the most widespread solutions, it is through children that the language can live longer, that the language can cross more generations. It is never too late to save an endangered language, think about it for your next holidays !

Lorette Cantaloube