

## The ecologies of language endangerment and the threat to linguistic diversity in Asia

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The distribution of endangered languages in Asia and the degree to which shift to socially dominant languages has already occurred are grounded in the types of ecologies of endangerment found. Viewed from the macro-level, one can attribute these differing ecologies to a host of inter-connected historical and socio-political developments that have local or supra-local manifestations and ramifications. Asia differs from areas such as Australia, North or South America where language endangerment is widespread and heavily advanced with regards to their different ecologies of language endangerment: in Asia language shift is typically the result of implementing relatively recent neo-colonialist policies under the guise of national development or identity building strategies, rather than the effects of long-term settlement colonization. However, while the manifestation of these different socio-political ecologies that each favor language loss are indeed different and tied to the political histories of the polities involved, they are also not infrequently historically inter-dependent due to the peculiarities of late 19<sup>th</sup> through early 21<sup>st</sup> century historical events throughout Asia.

Understanding the varied but related ecological circumstances that have led to the present-day situation in Asia can help shape priorities of both specific languages in need of documentation from the scientific perspective, what restorative processes or policies might be implementable for such linguistic communities and why they may or may not work. The presentation begins with the Russian language empire (Anderson 2015), comparing two vastly different parts, Siberia (Anderson 2017a, 2017b) and the Caucasus. The language endangerment situations are rather different across these two due to very distinct local ecologies, the former more akin to the New World/Australian settlement colonies, but the latter quite distinct from that. Soviet ethnic policy and language ideologies had significant impact on countries in interior Southeast Asia, so I turn next to a brief discussion of the ecology of language endangerment there. I then address neocolonialist national development schema that pervade and typify the modern nation-states of insular Southeast Asia/southwest Pacific, here exemplified by Indonesia, and the Subcontinent and Himalayas region represented by India (Anderson and Jora in press) and finally finish this tour reviewing Asia with a brief discussion on the ecology of language endangerment in Taiwan and the Ryukyu Islands. Southwestern Asia is part of the ecology of endangerment that encompasses northern Africa and will not be addressed here. The differing ecologies of endangerment found in these areas have had distinct but profound impacts on both the extent and degree of language shift to the dominant languages but also on the types of restructuring observed in the subjugated languages today. Data used come from fieldwork and published resources.

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