INTERNATIONAL MOTHER LANGUAGE DAY

- UN initiative since 1999
- A human right
- Celebrating linguistic diversity
- Promoting multilingual education
- Understanding, tolerance and dialogue
1. Everyone should have opportunities to express themselves in their mother tongue at school.
2. I feel my mother tongue is respected by my school mates.
3. I have felt offended by how some students react to the way I speak English (or another language).
4. Some languages are more important than others.
5. You cannot truly understand someone until you speak their first language.
6. The world would be a better place if we all spoke English.
Linguistic Diversity

- Less than 10%
- 10% – 25%
- 26% – 50%
- 51% – 75%
- 76% – 90%
- More than 90%
- No data
Over 3,000 languages at risk of disappearing by 2100

About 4% of the world’s languages spoken by 97%

Factors: prestige, attitudes, peer pressure, mass media...

(source: UNESCO)
A GLOBAL CONCERN

Languages Hotspots

These areas have a high number of languages in danger of extinction.

**THREAT LEVEL**
- SEVERE
- HIGH
- MEDIUM
- LOW

Click on a highlighted area to learn more.
WHERE LANGUAGES DISAPPEAR MOST

- India: 196
- USA: 191
- Indonesia: 147
- China: 144
- Russia: 136
- Australia: 108
- New Guinea: 98
- Canada: 80

Source: endangeredlanguages.com
WHY DOES IT MATTER?

- Languages encode worldviews and cultures
- Human potential for creativity
- Part of the “ethnosphere”, “a flash of the human spirit”- Ted talk by Wade Davis, National Geographic explorer (2’09- 4’30)
Do you understand any of these words? Explain their meaning to your classmates.

1. Toska
2. wabi-sabi
3. Gezelligheid
4. Dépaysement
5. Begeisterungsfähigkeit
6. Chigadzamapfiwa
7. Jayus
8. Melatah
9. Badkruka
10. Dolce farniente
11. Sellathiruppavar
12. saudade
13. Duende
14. Naz
15. 소심(하다)
16. 風韻
17. Forelsket
18. Om
BENEFITS

- Cultural
- Social and personal development
- Health
- Professional
- Academic
- Global

→ “The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.” Wittgenstein
SHAN PROGRAMME IN THAILAND
“TREES GROW THROUGH THEIR ROOTS; HUMAN BEINGS GROW THROUGH THEIR MOTHER TONGUE.” (MEDYA ORMÉK, 9 YEAR-OLD TEACHER OF KURDISH)
**QUICK SURVEY**

- Who can converse in another language as well as in English?

- Who can write in another language as well as in English?

- Who is studying a language A other than English?
thinking of Holland
I see wide-flowing rivers
slowly traversing
infinite plains,
inconceivably
rarefied poplars
like lofty plumes
on the skyline in lanes;
and submerged in the vastness
of unbounded spaces
the farmhouses
strewn over the land,
tree clumps, villages,
truncated towers,
churches and elm trees -
all wondrously planned.
The sky hangs low
and slowly the sun by
mists of all colours
is stifled and greyed
and in all the regions
the voice of the water
with its endless disasters
is feared and obeyed.
Mntfwananmi, buka naludvondvolo, My child, look at this stick.
Tiga netigigaba tatiwa ngulo, It knows all the problems of the world.
Lelakubon’akubhalwanga bhukwini, What it has seen has never been recorded,
Kubhalwe kuyincwadzi lengenamakhasi, Only in an invisible book.
Lubuke mntfwanami, Look at it my child,
Lucondzile, lucatsa, luhle fana It is straight and admirable.
Kalucwayi muntfu, kukuye lolucwayako

Kuloludvovolo lolu fana, ngiyadvondvotela I lean on this stick,
Ngisima kulo lapha’emalunga sekadziniwe When I am weary.
Ngibhula ngal’ematolo nangihamba I remove dew in the grass when I walk.
Ngiphindze ngigiye ngalo nangitsakasile I use it when I am jovial and dancing.
Ngive ngalo’emanti nagewel’umfula I use it to feel water before I cross the river.
Ngiveisela ngalo nakumnyama, ngitfol’indlela When it’s dark, my stick helps me find the way.