

Date: Sat, 14 Dec 2002 18:03:50 +0100  
From: **David Gil** <gil@eva.mpg.de>  
Subject: Re: "our speech"

Björn,

Minangkabau, an Austronesian language spoken in western Sumatra, in Indonesia, provides a good example of what you're looking for. Minangkabaus refer to their own language as "bahaso Minang", "bahaso Padang" [Padang is the main city in Minangkabau territory], or -- and this is what you're looking for -- "bahaso awak", where "awak" is a general pronoun which may have either first or second person reference, and often both (in which case it corresponds to a first person plural inclusive pronoun "we").

- > And, if so, does this labelling of one's own
- > variety (vernacular) correlate with some special sociolinguistic value?
- > E.g., it may (and will probably) be so that such a variety has low prestige
- > as a means of any superregional standard (koiné), but is held in some
- > esteem by those who use it every day (and whose native tongue it may be
- > considered) for the purpose of communication with people who are considered
- > as belonging to one's own locally very restricted community.

Like all regional languages in Indonesia, Minangkabau is disadvantaged relative to the national language, Indonesian. In particular, if Minangkabau people migrate elsewhere (which they frequently do), they might be ashamed to speak their language in front of others. On the other hand, Minangkabaus often take great pride in their language and culture, and they are known to have made substantial contributions to modern Indonesian literature. So the "prestige" issue seems to be quite complicated.

David

---

Date: Sat, 14 Dec 2002 11:38:37 -0600 (CST)  
From: **Michael Noonan** <noonan@csd.uwm.edu>

A language that I've been calling Nar-Phu in various publications was known to its speakers as 'our language', as well as the 'language of Nar' or the 'language of Phu', the names taken from the two villages in which its spoken. The label Nar-Phu as the name for the language was decided on by a group of natives speakers and me.

You can find information on the language in a paper you can download from my website -- under downloadable papers. The paper will appear in print shortly in a volume edited by Randy LaPolla and Graham Thurgood. The paper was written a few years ago. I have a more current introduction, the first chapter of a grammar, which I could send you if you're interested.

Mickey Noonan

---

Date: Sat, 14 Dec 2002 19:49:58 +0100  
From: **Laszlo Honti** <honti.laszlo@dgfc.uniud.it>

Sehr geehrter Herr Kollege!

Ich kenne eine solche Sprachform. Sie ist die im Torniotal (Nordschweden) gesprochene finnische Mundart, die die Sprecher als "Meijäkieli" (in finnischer Literatursprache: meidän kieli 'unsere Sprache') bezeichnen.

Über diese "Sprache" können Sie viel mehr von meinem Kollegen Prof. Dr. Eberhard Winkler erfahren, der vor kurzem zum Professor der Finnougristik an der Universität Göttingen ernannt wurde. (...)

---

Date: Sat, 14 Dec 2002 13:05:32 -0600

From: **victor friedman** <vfriedm@midway.uchicago.edu>

Speakers of the former Serbo-Croatian use "nash jezik" 'our language' commonly. Even before the break-up, this was common usage, but now in addition to being a homey reference it has become a way of avoiding the politics of BCS (Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian). Macedonians also use various forms of 'our' to refer to their language (e.g. zboruva po-nashinski 'one speaks our-ian [lit. in our fashion]')-- in the Macedonian dialect of Boboshtica and Drenovjane near Korcha in Albania kaj nas 'like us'. These usages date from the period before modern national consciousness, when one's primary source of identity was religion, not language. Although some Macedonians did refer to their language as bugarski (or blgarski, etc., depending on the dialect) 'Bulgarian' or srpski 'Serbian' by the mid-nineteenth-century some were using makedonski 'Macedonian', but most referred to it with some form of "our" In those days, Macedonian-speaking Muslims called themselves "Turks" (turchin, pl. turtsi) and Macedonian-speaking Christians referred to themselves as Kaurin (pl. Kauri) from dialectal Turkish for 'infidel' (Eng. gjaour). In isolated villages, this usage still occurs. The identities (and literary languages that go with them) of the Balkans today emerged during the course of the 19th century.

Although Macedonian had low prestige vis-a-vis Serbian and Bulgarian in the 19th century -- and even today Bulgarian linguists continue to claim that Macedonian is a dialect of Bulgarian (they also claim all of southern Serbia), and the use of "nash" could be correlated with low prestige for Slavic vis-a-vis Turkish and Greek (but NOT Albanian and Aromanian), it is arguably also correlated with the use of religion rather than language as the basis of identity. In Albanian, Gjuha jonë 'our language' is the name of an language pedagogy journal, but Albanians of Albania (and adjacent regions) always refer to their language as shqip, which probably comes from '[speak] clearly' (the comparison with shqiponj 'eagle' is a folk etymology). Cf. also

Herson-Finn, Viktoria S. 1996. What is Nas^ [=Nash]: Toward a Theory of Ethnolect in the South Slavic Dialect Continuum. Ph.D. dissertation. The Ohio State University.

On Macedonian language and identity see

Friedman, Victor. A. The Modern Macedonian Standard Language and Its Relation to Modern Macedonian Identity. in The Macedonian Question: Culture, Historiography, Politics, ed. by Victor Roudometoff. Boulder, CO: East European Monographs. 2000. 173-206.

---

Date: Sat, 14 Dec 2002 22:12:40 +0100

From: "**M. Crevels**" <M.Crevels@let.kun.nl>

Dear Bjoern,

In Itonama, an unclassified language of Amazonian Bolivia, the few speakers that are left refer to their language with:

*sihni-padara*

1:EXCL-language

'our language'

I don't know whether this has always been the way in which Itonama speakers have referred to their language. They were settled into so-called reductions by the Jesuits when these came to the area in the beginning of the 18th century. So basically they have been in contact with the Spanish language for almost 300 hundred years now. Although it is probably an isolate with a highly complicated verbal morphology, people keep referring to the language as "el dialecto", a label that has been put on all Bolivian lowland languages. This way of referring to one's own indigenous language is apparently quite common in South-America. The question remains, however, whether this also was the case in precolumbian times ..

Best,

Mily Crevels

---

Date: Sun, 15 Dec 2002 12:13:11 +0900

From: **Kazuto Matsumura** <kmatum@tooyoo.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp>

A variety of Finnish spoken in the Torne River valley in Northern Sweden is one. If I remember correctly, it is called <mea"n kieli > (a" = a umlaut), which means "our language".

For details, contact the Research Institute for the Languages of Finland. Their contact information is at:

<http://www.kotus.fi/inenglish/>

Kazuto Matsumura

University of Tokyo

---

Date: Sat, 14 Dec 2002 21:23:14 -0800

From: **Johanna Nichols** <johanna@uclink.berkeley.edu>

Dear Dr. Wiemer,

The Chechen and Ingush (Nakh-Daghestanian or East Caucasian or Northeast Caucasian family) call their own languages 'our language' or 'our people's language'. These are languages with an inclusive/exclusive opposition, and the inclusive is of course used in this designation. Chechen and Ingush are different languages but form a single speech community because there is much passive bilingualism. The label 'our language' refers to either or both. This term has no special sociolinguistic value; it's just the name of their language.

Traditionally there was no lingua franca in the Caucasus, just widespread multilingualism. There's no traditional way to talk about the language in the language other than when talking with one's fellow Ingush and/or Chechens, but in the twentieth century when Ingush and Chechens began writing dictionaries and grammars they created the new terms "Ingush language" and "Chechen language" for situations (such as a dictionary title) where the audience is large and impersonal and includes non-Chechen/Ingush. In this situation neither the inclusive nor the exclusive would be possible.

The collective self-designation is 'our people'; it refers to Ingush, Chechen, and the Kisti

of the Pankisi Gorge in Georgia (who speak Chechen but do not belong to the ethnic group that calls itself Chechen). In Chechen and Ingush this is vain naax (Chechen) / vai nax (Ingush), and this is the source of the term Vainakh used by linguists of the Chechen- Ingush branch.

More information is on my Ingush website and soon to be on my Chechen website (url's below).

Johanna Nichols

---

Date: Sun, 15 Dec 2002 11:24:30 +0100

From: **Jeanette Sakel** <jeansakel@hotmail.com>

Hallo Björn Wiemer,

Die Sprache Mosestén (Mosestenan - Bolivien, Tiefland) hat diese Selbstbezeichnung:

tsin-si' mik  
1PL-POSS.F tongue.F  
'our tongue'

oder sogar

khäei'-si' mik  
REF-POSS.F tongue.F  
'(someone referential)'s own tongue'  
(Khäei' ist ein referentielles Pronomen)

oder manchmal

tsin-si-si' oder verkürzt tsin-si-s  
1PL-POSS.F-POSS.F  
'our's'

Es ist der Name, der hauptsächlich von den Sprechern benutzt wird. Ich hatte (während der Feldforschung) immer das Problem, dass ich diesen Begriff nicht selber benutzen konnte, da ich nicht zur Sprachgruppe selbst gehöre... und damit mit tsinsi' mik genausogut Deutsch meinen könnte. Meine Informanten fanden es jedenfalls immer eher witzig...

Ansonsten hat Mosestén eher einen niedrigen Status unter den Sprechern. Spanisch ist ganz klar die wichtigste Sprache für sie. Der Begriff Mosesteneno oder Mosestén wird (auf Mosestén) nur sehr selten gebraucht, was wohl auch mit der Selbsteinschätzung der Sprache als 'Dialekt' oder 'nur eine Art und Weise wie wir sprechen' zu tun hat. Dieses ist jedenfalls häufig die Reaktion der Sprecher.

Viele Grüsse, Jeanette Sakel  
MPI Nijmegen

---

Date: Sun, 15 Dec 2002 12:30:24 +0100

From: **maria-jose ezeizabarrena** <fepezsem@vc.ehu.es>

Hallo,

ich weiss nicht, ob das dir hilft.

Auf Baskisch unterscheidet man zwischen : euskaldun 'Baske/Baskin' und erdaldun 'der/die andere Sprache spricht'

euskaldun : euskara + dun (Baskisch + der/die habende) = der/die Baskisch spricht.

Das ist eine rein sprachliche Bezeichnung, keine geographische, politische, ethnische Bezeichnung. Muttersprachler oder nicht, werden alle Baskischsprechende "euskaldun" ernannt: euskaldun berriak 'neue Baskischspreche' / euskaldun zaharrak 'alte Baskischsprechende oder Muttersprachler'.

erdaldun: erdara + dun (andere Sprache + der / die habende)

Heutzutage bedeutet erdara 'irgendwelche Sprache, die nicht Baskisch ist'. Aber in der Zeit, wo man der Kontakt mit "fremden Sprachen" auf eine begrenzte, war sie die "erdara". Viele Baskischsprechende in Südfrankreich haben lange Zeit 'erdara' mit Französisch identifiziert, und genauso ist passiert mit Baskischsprechenden in Nordspanien, für denen 'erdara' Spanisch bedeutete.

Ich hoffe, du versthest, trotz meiner Fehlern. Grüsse.

Maria-José Ezeizabarrena

---

Date: Sun, 15 Dec 2002 12:29 +0000 (GMT)

From: **Manfred Ostrowski** "ostrowski.s.m."@t-online.de (Susanne Ostrowski)

I am studying are referred to as "our language" by native speakers: most speakers say „our language" instead of mentioning the standard language name explicitly.

In Basque, for example, you will hear more often "gure hizkuntza" ("our language") than the neutral "euskara" ("Basque") if there is a connotation of nearness (hurbiltasuna).

Best regards, Manfred Ostrowski, Koeln

---

Date: Sun, 15 Dec 2002 17:52:06 +0100

From: elke.n@t-online.de (**Elke Nowak**)

Lieber Herr Wiemer, wahrscheinlich meinen Sie einen solchen Fall nicht, denn er dürfte sehr weit verbreitet sein:

Inuktitut, der Name der Sprache der Inuit, wie sie in Nunavut und drum rum gesprochen wird, bedeutet wörtlich : "so wie ein Inuk es macht" inuk -titut, Das gleiche gilt für alle andern Varianten wie Inuttut, Kalaallisut (Grönländisch) und andere. Damit verbunden ist ein extrem hoher Identitätswert.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Elke Nowak

---

Date: Sun, 15 Dec 2002 22:24:32 +0100

From: **Thomas Menzel** <menzel@uni-greifswald.de>

Hallo Bjoern,

schau doch mal in folgendes Büchlein - liegt in Greifswald nicht vor, trotz ukrainistischem Schwerpunkt, habe ich aber in Oldenburg mal gelesen:

Michna, Ewa

Lemkowie - Grupa etniczna czy naród? / Ewa Michna. - Kraków : Zakl.

Wydawn. "Nomos", 1995. - 147 S.

(Religiologica Juventa)

Literaturverz. S. 141 - 147

ISBN 83-85527-27-3

Die Dame sagt zumindest, daß die ethnische Identifikation bei den Lemken noch vor etwas über hundert Jahren so schwach war, daß sie sich nur über ein Wir-Gefühl abgegrenzt haben. Die Stammesnamen Huzulen, Bojken und Lemken sind sehr jung und jeweils von den Nachbarn auferlegt; wenn überhaupt, haben sich die Angehörigen dieser Bergstämme als Rusnaci bezeichnet. Für die Sprache selbst ist "ruski" ja nun ein griffiges Etikett, welches auch durch die Zugehörigkeit zur Ostkirche gefestigt wurde. Ob "nasza mova" im Schwange war, daran kann ich mich konkret nicht erinnern. Sicherlich kannst Du bei Frau Michna aber Hinweise auf andere polnische soziologische Literatur zum ethnischen Zusammengehörigkeitsgefühl bei diesen Bergbauern finden. Viel Spaß beim Weitersuchen und schöne Weihnachten, falls wir uns vorher nicht mehr schreiben!

Thomas.

---

Date: Sun, 15 Dec 2002 18:21:14 -0800

From: **Pilar Maritza Valenzuela** <pvalenzu@darkwing.uoregon.edu>

Hello!

The Shipibo refer to their own language as "non joi," as opposed to Spanish which is called "nawan joi:"

no-n joi

1pl-GEN language/word/speech

"our language, word, speech"

nawa-n joi

outsider/Spanish speaker-GEN language/word/speech

"the outsider's language".

Shipibo-Konibo, as is commonly called in the linguistic literature, is a minority language spoken by some 30,000 people in the Peruvian Amazon.

Saludos,

Pilar Valenzuela

---

Date: Mon, 16 Dec 2002 10:16:36 +0000

From: **Daniel Everett** <dan.everett@MAN.AC.UK>

What are the literal meanings for the words translated 'language' in the Guarani and Siriono cases?

Interestingly, the Piraha are more mentalist in their conception of their language. The people are 'the straight ones' and the language is 'the straight head' (not, the straight, tongue, for example). To learn another language is to 'acquire another head' or 'to want another head'. NonPiraha languages are 'crooked heads'. To have trouble learning Piraha is to 'lose a straight head' or to 'look intensely for a straight head'.

Dan

On Monday, December 16, 2002, at 10:19 am, **Östen Dahl** wrote:

One of the minority languages that were recently officially recognized in Sweden is "meänkieli". This was previously regarded as a variety of Finnish and referred to in Swedish as "tornedalsfinska". "Meänkieli" is transparently 'our language' in meänkieli. Apparently, this is a relatively new coinage. There may of course be problems if more Finnic varieties choose the same option!

Claude Hagège mentioned Guaraní as a case of a language referred to as 'our language' by its own speakers. Another language in the same family that I have some first-hand knowledge of is Sirionó. Although it has been labelled "mbia chëë" 'the people's language' in some published texts, my feeling is that the most common way of referring to it in speech is "nande chëë" 'our language (our speech)'.

There is of course a descriptive problem here: to what extent are such expressions conventionalized? Obviously, anyone could call their mother tongue "our language", and it is quite natural to do so, in the same way as you would probably refer to your family as "our family", in particular when speaking to its members, rather than using a last name or anything similar.

- Östen Dahl

---

Date: Mon, 16 Dec 2002 11:38:20 +0100  
From: **Östen Dahl** <oesten@LING.SU.SE>

**Dan Everett** asks:

"What are the literal meanings for the words translated 'language' in the Guaraní and Sirionó cases?"

As I hinted at by adding 'our speech' to the gloss of the Sirionó phrase "nande chëë", the meaning of "chëë" (the trema marks a nasal in the recently introduced spelling) is somewhat unspecific. I quote the Franciscan missionary Anselmo Schermayr's dictionary from 1958: "habla; lengua; palabra; oración; conversación; yosin" - maybe the best English translation is really "talk". "Nande" is the inclusive first person plural pronoun, here used possessively.

- Östen Dahl

---

Date: Mon, 16 Dec 2002 11:39:55 +0100

From: **Johanna Laakso** <johanna.laakso@UNIVIE.AC.AT>

Dear all,

as we know, numerous ethnonyms around the world denote simply "people" or "real people". Isn't it simply logical that the corresponding languages - unless there are other grounds for naming them - can only be distinguished from other languages by calling them either "(real) people's language" or "our language"?

Among the Finnic peoples, the best example are the Vepsians, whose ethnonym, itself of an obscure origin, was (until the 20th century) only used by a part of the people. Some speakers of Vepsian called themselves "Ludians" (now better known as the name for a transition dialect between Vepsian and Karelian; the name, of course, goes back to Russian ljudi 'people'), but -- according to E. N. Setälä who visited the Vepsians in 1889 and 1916 -- the Vepsians east of the River Ojat' did not have a special name for their ethnicity and language: they "just say 'speaks this language' or 'speaks like us'." (For more information, Riho Grünthal's book on Finnic ethnonyms,

with an extensive summary online as well:

<http://www.helsinki.fi/jarj/sus/julkaisut/ct/ct51grunthal.html> ,

is warmly recommended.)

Best, Johanna.

---

Date: Mon, 16 Dec 2002 12:21:42 +0100

From: **Jan Terje Faarlund** <j.t.faarlund@INL.UIO.NO>

The group of people in Southern Mexico known as Zoque in English and Spanish (originally a Nahuatl word), do not have a name for their own ethnic group or their language. For their language, they simply use the word 'ode' (=language), and they refer to themselves as 'ode püt' (=language people), or 'chabyajpabü ode' (= those who speak the language). This latter term may also be used to refer to indigenous people in general.

Jan Terje Faarlund

---

Date: Tue, 17 Dec 2002 13:03:03 +0200

From: **Gideon Goldenberg** <msgidgol@mscc.huji.ac.il>

Dear Colleagues,

"Our tongue" is the term commonly used by speakers of the various Neo-Aramaic Jewish dialects referring to their own special speech variety, viz. 'lishana deni', 'lishan didan', 'lishana didan', 'lishana noshan', or simply 'lishanan' (as it is in one's own dialect). This term marks the language of the speaker's own community as distinct from neighbouring dialects of the Christian Assyrians or from the dialects of other Jewish communities. Other languages or speech varieties have names. Hebrew is 'lishan-qodesh' or the like ("Sacred Language"), as in European Jewish communities.

The city of Harar in Ethiopia is called 'ge' ("The City") by the people of the originally Harari community that inhabit the Old City, the members of the community are referred to as 'ge usu' ("City-men"), and the Harari minority-tongue which is surrounded by other languages is referred to by its speakers as 'ge sinan' ("Language of The City"); "of The City" refers exclusively Harar.



All these appellations refer to communities and community speech-forms of minorities, but the distinction from the surrounding dominant world should not necessarily mark the local as less prestigious; it may rather express intimacy and nostalgia.

Some other appellations of minority languages, like 'mame-loshn' ("mother tongue") or 'jargon' for Yiddish, do not refer to a special speech-form, but (in this case) to Yiddish in general. So is also 'al-lugha' ("the language") which Arabic speakers would use for general reference to Arabic outside the Arabic-speaking countries.

Speakers of the Sodd-Gurage dialect in Ethiopia call themselves Kīstane ("Christians") and their language Kīstaniñña (as distinct from neighbouring communities of Pagans and Moslems), but the independent personal pronoun 'iñña' ("we" [not related to the language-marking suffix -iñña]) will exclusively refer to members of that community, excluding foreigners (for including others they would use "I and you, we and you" or the like). Cf. the possessive suffix '-enij' ("our") in some forms of Neo-Aramaic, which excludes foreigners, as against the non-marked '-an' (all-inclusive "we").

Best regards,  
Gideon Goldenberg

---

Date: Tue, 17 Dec 2002 12:28:39 +0100

From: "**Mühlschlegel, Ulrike** Dr." <Muehlschlegel@iai.spk-berlin.de>

Lieber Kollege,

als Tip: fragen Sie mal bei Ethnolinguisten oder bei Ethnologen/Anthropologen nach. Ich glaube mich zu erinnern, dass bei indigenen Gemeinschaften in Süd- (und Mittel-???)amerika diese Bezeichnungen vorkommen.

Aus eigener Erfahrung fallen mir galicische Liedtexte (1.Hälfte 20. Jh.) ein, die von "a nossa fala" sprechen, in Abgrenzung zum obligatorischen und dominanten Kastlilisch. Kenne ich aber (leider) nur aus oraler Tradition, ich kann über Weihnachten mal in den Tonaufnahmen nach Belegen suchen ...

Beste Grüße,  
Ulrike Mühlschlegel.

---

Date: Tue, 17 Dec 2002 12:45:59 +0100

From: **Alberto Nocentini** <flanar@unifi.it>

In response to Bjoern Widmer:

Such denominations as "(our) language" occur in restricted sociolinguistic environments, where the competence of the language in question (usually a low prestige variety) is not commonly shared. So, for instance, one of the names of the Mediterranean "lingua franca" was simply "lingo" (i.e. "language") and one of its latest offshoots, used in England by theatrical people and homosexuals, is "polari" (an adaptation of Italian "parlare", i.e. "to speak"). In a similar way Sranan, the lingua franca of Surinam, is also referred to as "taki-taki" (i.e. "talk talk").

Best wishes  
Alberto Nocentini

Date: Tue, 17 Dec 2002 12:51:47 +0100

From: **Jan Terje Faarlund** <j.t.faarlund@INL.UIO.NO>

On Monday, December 16, 2002, at 11:21 am, Jan Terje Faarlund wrote:

For their language, they simply use the word 'ode' (=language), and they refer to themselves as 'ode püt' (=language people), or 'chabyajpabü ode' (= those who speak the language). This latter term may also be used to refer to indigenous people in general.

Jan Terje Faarlund

The last line is interesting. I would bet that the extension of this term is one of the consequences of redefining identity, the matter of 'becoming Indian', forced upon many indigenous peoples since the 'conquest'. I often find, in such cases, that in texts and some other very specific environments that terms like this have two references: a very specific one to the people in question and a wider one including other indigenous people when contrasted (implicitly or explicitly) with 'whites' or 'civilizados', etc. Is this correct with the Zoque?

Dan

I think this is precisely the point. Consider the two following examples (in different dialects), from interviews with Zoque activists, printed in the journal "Nuestra sabiduría" (no. 16, 1999), which publishes material in the indigenous languages of Chiapas with Spanish parallel texts. The interviews were done in Spanish, and translated into Zoque. I give first the Spanish phrase, then the Zoque translation, with a morpheme-by-morpheme translation:

(1) mis compañeros indígenas zoques

de ode tsab-yaj-pa-bü pün-da'm

the language speak-PL-IMPERF-REL person-PL

(2) los pueblos indígenas poseen conocimientos

te' ore-tsap-yaj-pa-bü kubgu'y-is-tam ñüijt-yaj-u mujso-kyu-tyam

the language-speak-PL-IMPERF-REL village-ERG-PL have-PL-ASP know-ledge-PL

In both examples a word/phrase meaning 'those who speak the language' is used, in (1) as an epithet to 'person' to translate 'compañeros indígenas zoques', in (2) as an epithet to 'village' to translate 'indígenas'.

Jan Terje Faarlund

---

Date: Tue, 17 Dec 2002 17:16:13 +0100  
From: **Paolo Ramat** <paoram@UNIPV.IT>

"Die Dorfgemeinschaften in Mazedonien nennen ihre eigene Sprache \*nashenski\* [<sh> for palatal /s/: P.R], d.i. 'auf unsere Weise', alle anderen, die sprachlich [...] abweichen, sprechen \*vashenski\*, d.i. 'auf eure Weise'", N.Reiter, EuroLinguistik, in 'Forschungen zur osteurop. Geschichte', Osteuropa Inst. an der Freie Univ. Berlin, 48/1993: 170f. I don't know whether this is really fitting for the original question asked by B.Werner, but it is in any case an interesting proof of the importance of language for the self-identification of a human community ('ethnocentrism':  
Cp. Alban. \*shqiptàr\* !)  
Best regards,  
Paolo Ramat

---

Date: Thu, 19 Dec 2002 22:30:33 +0100  
From: **Winfried Boeder** <winfried.boeder@uni-oldenburg.de>

Sehr geehrter Herr Wiemer,  
nur der Vollständigkeit halber:  
Die in der Türkei lebenden Georgier (Nordostanatolien) nennen sich selbst chvenebur-i, Pl. chvenebur-eb-i (ch = c + Hacek, -i Nom., -eb Pl.) 'die Unsrigen' zu chven 'wir', eigentlich: die so sind wie wir; das Suffix -ebur- drückt eine Ähnlichkeit aus; cf. dzvelebur- 'so wie früher' (zu dzvel- 'alt'), lomisebur- 'löwenähnlich, löwenartig' (lom- 'Löwe'). 'auf Georgisch' ist dann chveneburad (Adverbialis auf -ad).  
chveneburi war der Titel einer türkischsprachigen Zeitschrift, die für einige Jahre von diesen Georgiern herausgegeben wurde.  
Mit freundlichen Grüßen,  
Winfried Boeder

---

Date: Mon, 23 Dec 2002 17:34:05 -0600  
From: "**Victor A. Friedman**" <vfriedm@MIDWAY.UCHICAGO.EDU>

In response to Björn Wiemer's query,  
According to Mefküre Mollova, who reviewed Pokrovskaja's grammar of Gagauz arguing that it was not a language separate from Turkish (the Gagauz are Christians living in the Black Sea region of what is now Bulgaria-Romania-Moldova-Ukraine whose Turkic language is generally considered to belong to the Oghuz branch but has some Kipchak features), the Gagauz refer to their language as türkchemiz 'our Turkish'.

Also, speakers of the former Serbo-Croatian often referred to their language as "nash jezik" in the old days and nowadays do so to avoid having to choose one of the many possible names plus/minus all the attendant implications. Macedonians also use various forms of 'our' to refer to their language (e.g. zboruva po-nashinski 'one speaks our-ian [lit. in our fashion]')-- in the Macedonian dialect of Boboshtica and Drenovjane near Korcha in Albania kaj nas 'like us'. These usages date from the period before modern national consciousness, when one's primary source of identity was religion, not language. Although some Macedonians did refer to their language as bugarski (or blgarski, etc., depending on the dialect) 'Bulgarian' or srpski 'Serbian'

by the mid-nineteenth-century some were using makedonski 'Macedonian', but most referred to it with some form of "our" In those days, Macedonian-speaking Muslims called themselves "Turks" (turchin, pl. turtsi) and Macedonian-speaking Christians referred to themselves as Kaurin (pl. Kauri) from dialectal Turkish for 'infidel' (Eng. giaour). In isolated villages, this usage still occurs. The

identities (and literary languages that go with them) of the Balkans today emerged during the course of the 19th century. Although Macedonian had low prestige vis-a-vis Serbian and Bulgarian in the 19th century -- and even today Bulgarian linguists continue to claim that Macedonian is a dialect of Bulgarian (they also claim all of southern Serbia), and the use of "nash" could be correlated with low prestige for Slavic vis-a-vis Turkish and Greek (but not Albanian

and Aromanian), it is arguably also correlated with the use of religion rather than language as the basis of identity.

\*\*\*\*\*

Note that only some Macedonian-speakers in northern Greece (mostly in the east) are Bulgarian-identified. Especially in the western part of the region (e.g. around Lerin = Gk. Florina & Kostur = Gk. Kastoria) they are Macedonian-identified and refer to their language as makedonski. Note also that Macedonian-speakers near Voden = Gk. Edhessa used makedonski for their language as early as 1908 (Upward, Allen. 1908. The East End of Europe. London: John Murray. pp. 202-206.). Speakers use *ta dhikà mas* when speaking Greek, not when speaking Macedonian (when they would use nashinski, nashki, or some similar derived form of nash 'our'). Note also that there is a political dimension: The speaking of Macedonian in Greece was illegal under the Metaxas dictatorship, and although at one time speakers of Macedonian in Greece did use makedhonika to refer to their language, this usage was explicitly proscribed. (I have a photo of a Greek poster to not speak (na milane) "Makedhonika" as well as "Vlahika", etc. (k. lp.) It refers to these as "glossika" (a derivative of glossos 'language').

\*\*\*\*\*

In Albanian, Gjuha jonë 'our language' is the name of an language pedagogy journal, but Albanians of Albania (and adjacent regions) always refer to their language as shqip, which probably comes from '[speak] clearly' (the comparison with shqiponj 'eagle' is a folk etymology). Cf. also

Herson-Finn, Viktoria S. 1996. What is Nas^ [=Nash]: Toward a Theory of Ethnolect in the South Slavic Dialect Continuum. Ph.D. dissertation. The Ohio State University.

On Macedonian language and identity see

Friedman, Victor. A. The Modern Macedonian Standard Language and Its Relation to Modern Macedonian Identity. in The Macedonian Question: Culture, Historiography, Politics, ed. by Victor Roudometoff. Boulder, CO: East European Monographs. 2000. 173-206.

Best

Victor Friedman

---

Date: Wed, 25 Dec 2002 18:38:52 +0100

From: **claud hagege** <claud.hagege@FREE.FR>

In connection i) with Björn Wiemer's query on languages which are named by their own speakers as "our speech/language", ii) with the interesting information given by Östen Dahl's on *meänkieli* as a minority *kieli* which, spoken in the Torne valley in Northern

Sweden, has recently been officially recognized, and iii) with my own remark that there are many languages which correspond to what Björn is looking for, it may be useful to recall two further cases, besides Guarani, which I mentioned in my message (15 Dec.), and Siriono, mentioned by Östen. One is what Greek linguists refer to as "Slavonic Macedonian" (for the obvious reason that when the Greeks are speaking of Macedonia, they mean a part of Greece, and won't refer to the Republik of Macedonia (formerly one of the six federal republics of Socialist Yugoslavia) without adding "Slavonic". This language, still spoken in northern Greek villages between Thessaloniki and the Macedonian and Bulgarian borders, is one of the endangered languages in Europe today. It is referred to by its older users (most of them bilinguals (with Greek as the language used outside family relationships) ) as "Bulgarian" sometimes, but mostly as *ta dhikà mas* which, in Greek, exactly means, literally, "the one of us, that which belongs to us"; the term for "language" is not used here because the neutral plural in *-a*, in this case, necessarily refers in modern Greek to the language, as in *milate anglika*; "do you speak English?" The other case is represented by a community of which many members precisely happened to live in Thessaloniki before their extermination by the Nazis in 1944: descendents of the Spanish Jews expelled from Spain by the Catholic Kings in 1492, and who refer to the archaic Judeo-Castilian they speak (generally called "djudesmo") as *lo muestro*. In this language, *m-* in *muestro* corresponds to Castilian *n-* in *nuestro* "our, ours". Therefore, *lo muestro* means, exactly, "ours, the one (sc. language) of us".

Interestingly, a people may also refer to itself (not exactly to its language) as "alien" rather than as "self". It may also use both designations. Indo-Europeans referred to themselves either as "self" or as "other". "Self" was found in the name of the Samnites, in which *Samn* is in all likelihood from *\*swe+\*bh -no-*, and in the old name of Sweden, o.Sw. *swe:-ri:ke* "realm of self" > mod. *Sverige* (Östen will correct me if I am mistaken). "other" is found in the vey name of the Aryans, from skr. *à:rya* "other". By referring to themselves in this way, they meant that they had come from a territory different from the one they had conquered (cf. Pokorny, Thurneysen, Thieme, and the Gaulish tribe Allobroges (= "(from) another territory" in which the root, *\*alyo-*, corresponds to Eastern *à:rya* ). According to another hypothesis, which is not backed up by convincing arguments, and which is explicitly rejected by Benveniste, the Aryans were so called because they were the best: cf. Greek *ari-* in *àristos*. I won't insist on the implications of such a hypothesis and what it is reminiscent of with respect to the 1933-1945 period. Anyway, this leads us fairly far from "our language", although the topics are not unrelated!

Best, Claude.

---

Date: Sat, 28 Dec 2002 17:44:15 +0100 (MET)

From: **elke hentschel** <jasam@germ.unibe.ch>

**Martin Mato** wrote:

ich weiss dass ich einfach gehoert habe dass die Slavischboelkreung die in angrenzung mit Albanern war, auch eine

form von "nashke" alsi quasi wir sprechen das Unsrige ( Sprache). Ich muss abar anschauen wer und wie ganz genau gesprochen wurde.

Da kann ich weiter helfen:

\_Naski\_ (mit hacek auf dem s) oder \_nas jezik\_ (ebenso) 'unsere Sprache' ist eine geläufige Bezeichnung fuer Serbisch, Kroatisch und Bosnisch, wenn man sich nicht auf eine dieser Sprachen resp. Sprachbezeichnungen festlegen will. Es bezeichnet also keine einzelne Varietaet in Abgrenzung von einer anderen sondern alle mutuell verstaendlichen Dialekte (also das, was man frueher als "Serbokroatisch" bezeichnet hat). Manche benutzen auch \_jugoslovenski\_ 'suedslawisch', obwohl - oder gerade weil - es eine Sprache dieses Namens nie gegeben hat. Mir selbst gefaellt uebrigens am besten die dritte, vor allem auf Mailing-Listen im Internet gelaeufige Bezeichnung \_hrpski\_ (aus \_hrvatski\_ 'kroatisch' und \_srpski\_ 'serbisch')...

Viele Gruesse,  
elke hentschel

---

Date: Mon, 30 Dec 2002 09:31:27 +0500

From: **Valeri Khabirov** <khabir@Eテル.RU>

When I first came to the Central African Republic in 1968 one of the linguemes of the interethnic language sango (creolized variant) among others like sango ti gara, sango ti turugbu (turugu), sango ti salavisi, sango vehiculaire was MBI TENE (mid tone in the first lexeme and 2 low tones in the second lexeme) which means "I say". Some of my students used to have a negative attitude to it saying it wasn't worth learning since it was no one's language. Since then the situation has changed and sango has acquired prestige and become L1 for an increasing number of young people in urban areas. Sango's political prestige has greatly increased when it was declared an official language in 1991 in addition to French with the aim that it must fulfil the functions hitherto restricted to French.

Another lingueme of this kind is that of the congolese national language known as munukutuba (monokutuba) in Brazzaville and kitiba in Kinshasa (Rep. Dem. du Congo). The latter seems to be the creation of linguists because they consider the name munukutuba too long (the opinion of Josue Ndamba). Actually ki- is the bantu prefix and -tuba = to say. As far as the lingueme munukutuba is concerned the first bantu morpheme munu- means "I" and the second and the third -ku-tuba mean literally "you say". So munukutuba means "I say to you". Munukutuba is one of the national languages in the Republic of Congo (together with lingala).

---