THE SCIENCE BEHIND LANGUAGE

**Languages in Danger:
At NunaSoft, the Problem is Part of the Solution**

Half of the 6 912 languages spoken on earth will disappear over the next 100 years. In Éric Poncet's opinion as President and founder of NunaSoft, this number underestimates, by far, the reality. "In light of globalization and the effects of technology's dramatic growth namely Internet almost 90% of modern languages will not see the next century..." he predicts.

Éric Poncet

Language survival depends on its usage, on the number of frequent speakers amongst all activity spheres. Each language has its own history and its own lifetime. That being said, it's possible to document and index a language whose survival is jeopardized, just as anthropologists and linguists draw the picture of a reality before it disappears completely. On the other hand, we can also choose to create our own technological tools allowing us to preserve it from the ever growing erosion.

It's that latter option that has NunaSoft specialists motivated. "Technology should help – not harm – languages preservation", adds Poncet, who wishes to help find some balance again. "That is why we would rather adapt technology to humans, their cultures and their knowledge, than the opposite".

Science, technology and perseverance

With the elaboration of a user-friendly computer keyboard for writing – and transcribing – some native languages such as Inuktitut, Cherokee and Cree, Éric Poncet was able to prove it's possible to slow the process.

By associating native languages with computer science, we can finally get an idea of the measures that need to be taken to preserve languages, cultures and hundreds of years of history.

What was the result of that?

As an example, we can now recuperate data we thought were forever lost. Working with a 20,000 words dictionary could be a challenge, but its accomplishment is even more rewarding!

Another example is the use of a custom conversion tool: a document with illegible fields and out-of-date fonts was successfully transcribed and will be transmitted in its native tongue to future generations.

But overall, just imagine being able to – finally – write in your mother tongue using a computer keyboard!

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Assisting the client while respecting his autonomy

NunaSoft has also elaborated a training method able to seamlessly integrate all these softwares, transcoders, converters and databases in order to give users durable and transparent solutions. NunaSoft's success resides in knowing how to listen, to develop performing tools and to offer required technological tools, while remembering that it's the community itself that preserves its language and insures its culture legacy.

Everywhere in the world, languages preservation and revitalization are only possible when requested by those involved. This is why, rather than use the "foot in the door" strategy to introduce itself, NunaSoft chose to promote its accomplishments to its future clients by participating in conferences and events with language technologies and their leaders as a main topic.

At NunaSoft, technology is state-of-the-art, approach and ethics are different and results bring us hope.

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