Current employment: Mainly private sector

Private Sector

IBM
SapientNitro™
NISSAN
Microsoft
Intel
IDEO
R&D
Design anthropology could benefit sectors with fewer financial resources.

- Public Sector
- Nonprofit Sector
- Private Sector
More than HALF of the world’s 7,000 languages are at risk of disappearing this century
Workshop on user-centered design of language archives
What is an archive?

(Hunter 2003)
Emergence of digital language archives

- 1992 LSA Committee on Endangered Languages and Their Preservation

- The Internet

- Metadata standards, ISO language codes, best practices for digital repositories

“We must do some serious rethinking of our priorities, lest linguistics go down in history as the only science that presided obliviously over the disappearance of 90% of the very field to which it is dedicated”

(Krauss 1992:10)
What is user-centered design?

• Interdisciplinary approach to developing new product concepts
• UCD tries to optimize product around how users can, want, or need to use the product, rather than forcing users to change their behavior to accommodate product
Stakeholder groups represented at workshop

1. Language communities
2. Linguists
3. Archivists and curators
4. Experts in user-centered design
5. Representatives of funding agencies
Language communities: Historical context

- Language materials often taken from communities without consent
- Placed in museums and archives to which communities did not have access or control
- Materials might be private or sacred
- Sovereignty and self-determination highly valued now
Language communities:
Value of language archives

- Preserve linguistic and cultural materials
- Materials together in one place
- Accessible to community
- Develop educational materials
- Control how materials are shared with people outside community
Language communities: Challenges

- Each situation is different
- Financial resources
- In some cases, Internet access
Linguists: Value of language archives

- Access to other linguists’ recordings and transcripts
- Cross-language comparison
- Citable corpus of own data
Linguists: Challenges

- Lack of information about materials (transcripts, descriptions)
- Hard to locate specific information without reading each page or listening to audio
- Transcription salad
The big AHA for workshop participants

- Most language archives are not working for ANY user group!
- May be achieving mission of preservation, but not access
Trajectory of research and application

- (Re)design representative sample of archives
- Develop guidelines for UCD of language archives
- Disseminate guidelines and encourage culture change
Exploratory user research for CoRSAL

- Design Anthropology class project

- User groups
  - Lamkang indigenous community
  - Computational linguists
  - Other linguists
  - Depositors and archive managers

- Reconceptualization of language archives
Questions?

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