

The above are some of the ethical issues that you will need to think about in relating to people and communities. As already discussed, there are no single answers: different communities, different researchers, different contexts within a community, different times, and changing external forces all have a great effect on fieldwork (see Holton 2009 for a comparison of how different he found the notion of ethical fieldwork in two different communities; see also Dobrin 2008). Early fieldwork is a type of adaptation to a new situation. As in any change, it is a challenge for an outsider to build a place for him- or herself within a new community, and the challenges are probably enhanced when the outsider seeks to control or is not really able to 'hear' a community.

## 18.5 Ethics with Respect to Scholarship

The principles identified in the ethics codes target not only people, both individuals and communities, but also scholarship, and I now turn to this. In linguistic work, it is worth thinking about ethics with respect to scholarship in two different ways: ethics with respect to languages and ethics with respect to knowledge systems.

### 18.5.1 Ethics and languages

As discussed in the introduction, the realization of the previously unforeseen rate of language endangerment led to a call to linguists to work with speakers of languages that were disappearing. Much of the early discussion about the necessity for research on endangered languages is framed in terms of moral responsibility, with statements of the following types: a linguist has a responsibility to record a language because each language is a storehouse of knowledge, an encoding of a peoples' culture and history; language diversity is to be valued (see e.g. Hale et al. 1992; Crystal 2000; Nettle and Romaine 2000; Harrison 2007).

p. 421 Such reasons for research on languages are clear in statements found for various programs that support research on endangered languages that were developed in the later part of the previous century and the earliest years of this one. For instance, the following quotation about the Documenting Endangered Languages program, sponsored by the National Science Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities in the United States of America, talks to the need to rescue languages:

'This is a rescue mission to save endangered languages,' said NEH Chairman Bruce Cole. 'Language is the DNA of a culture, and it is the vehicle for the traditions, customs, stories, history, and beliefs of a people. A lost language is a lost culture. Fortunately, with the aid of modern technology and these federal funds, linguistic scholars can document and record these languages before they become extinct.'<sup>4</sup>

The website for the Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Documentation Program includes the following statement, 'Because every lost word means another lost world',<sup>5</sup> speaking to the tragedy of language loss. The concern in these quotations is with languages and the moral responsibility to study languages: this is ethics with respect to scholarship and knowledge systems, as outlined in the ethics codes discussed in §18.5.2.

The recognition of the extent of language endangerment at the end of the twentieth century, coupled with enormous advances in technology in terms of ability to record both audio and video and to store vast amounts of data, has led to the establishment of a field that has come to be known as documentary linguistics (e.g. Himmelmann 1998; 2008; Woodbury 2003; 2011; articles in Gippert, Himmelmann, and Mosel 2006). Language documentation involves data collection, transcription, and translation. The products of language documentation include edited fieldnotes and, more fundamentally, text collections, with the aim of recording the linguistic practices and traditions of a speech community. Texts of all genres,