

Documenting Local Cultures and Languages with a Sense of Place: Pacific Language Mapping¹

PANEL: Sense of Place -- Geographic Links and Local Voices

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My paper is based on a consortium of academic institutions and independent scholars interacting with the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative (ECAI) to connect areas of the world through a commonality of geographic information systems (GIS).

This presentation features the ECAI Language Atlas of the Pacific and case studies of Formosan languages in Taiwan and Malayo-Polynesian Bashiic Yami language of Orchid Island and Ivatan in the Batanes of the Philippines. Continuing from our earlier research, this study aims to provide digital documentation for local community and scholarly interactive use.

Digital language tools are utilized from the local community level enabling temporal-spatial language dynamics in a variety of ways. Collaboration is important for the project to research contemporary issues of endangered languages and conservation. Procedures are based on UNESCO guidelines for tangible and intangible cultural heritage and UNESCO's The Babel Initiative for Internet-based recording of languages, dissemination, and revitalization processes.

Our project is about valuing diversities of worldviews based on ethnography and GIS digital technology documenting ways of life and applied meanings from language and culture as patterns in human experience.

Keywords: endangered and diversity of cultures and languages, education, worldviews, digital Internet tools, information management systems, ethnography, temporal-spatial data, sense of place, Pacific language mapping

¹ This project for mapping cultures and languages is ongoing research since the development of the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative (ECAI) in 1997. See the *Proceedings of the 37th Annual International Conference on Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology* (CAA) March 22-26, 2009, Williamsburg, Virginia, USA.