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Pre-Intermediate Student’s Book

Life

Disappearing voices

**Part 1**

**00.00–00.32** David Harrison and Greg Anderson work for the Living Tongues Institute. Chris Rainier is a photographer for the *National Geographic* Society. The three men were travelling in northern Australia where they interviewed a man. He may be the last speaker of a language that most people thought was extinct.

**00.32–00.39 Speakers** that’s like my father…

**00.39–00.47** There are seven thousand known languages in the world, but more than half of them are expected to disappear in the next 50 years.

**00.47–00.51** And when a language disappears, we lose the information about the world that its speakers had.

**00.51–00.57** That’s why the three men helped create *National Geographic*’s Enduring Voices project.

**00.57–01.16 Chris Rainier** Every two weeks around the planet, a language disappears, completely disappears forever and ever. So what we’re doing with the Enduring Voices project is really, kind of, trying to bring awareness to this whole issue of language loss around the planet.

**01.16–01.26** After Australia, the team travels on. This time they travel to the extreme northeast of India, a remote area near Bhutan, Myanmar and China.

**01.26–01.40** It’s a region where there are many different languages. Many of them are in danger of becoming extinct.

**01.40–01.46** For the team, there are other problems. For example, the equipment isn’t working.

**01.46–02.01 David** Say something.

**Greg** Something. Something that I’m really getting annoyed at is this equipment making my life a hassle.

**David** Go really loud.

**Greg** HEY!

**David** OK, that’ll work. Good enough.

**02.01–02.17** Most of these local languages are not written anywhere so the researchers want to record as much of the languages as possible.

**Part 2**

**02.17–02.35** The team arrives in a large village called Hong. Many of the older people speak the local language called Apatani. But the language cannot survive if the younger people don’t speak it.

**02.35–02.50 David** It’s very easy in these communities to find young people who are speaking English and Hindi and not speaking the traditional languages. They are neglecting them. They’re perhaps even abandoning them.

**02.50–03.00** The team spends time trying to find some younger people who speak the language.

**03.00–03.14 Greg** We definitely want to find younger speakers because they’re the ones that will be showing the shift. The older speakers of course will have the language. So it will be interesting to see if people who’ve been schooled in the modern times, if they’ve still kept it.

**03.14–03.25** The team meets a young man named Vijay, who speaks English and Apatani. Vijay invites them into his home.

**03.25–03.32** A local Indian called Ganesh Murmu helps the researchers while they record basic words of the local language.

**03.32–03.41** *(members of the family speaking)*

**03.41–03.45** Each member of the family says some more words.

**03.45–03.48** *(members of the family speaking)*

**03.48–04.11** As well as doing their own research, the team trains local people to use special language technology kits. These technology kits have a laptop computer, video cameras, and basic recording equipment so the local community can record the last speakers of old languages using modern technology.

**04.11–04.15** *(members of the family speaking)*

**04.15–04.28** Not only are these languages very small, with just a few thousand speakers in some cases, but their numbers may be decreasing as people shift over to global languages.

**04.28–end** The Enduring Voices team must leave, but with the technology kits, they hope that the local community can record this important part of their local culture. They hope that the people will listen to the words of their elders and want to keep the language alive and speak it themselves.

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