

Tribute to the sociolinguist Joshua A. FISHMAN

Participation in the Album of Greetings, May 2006

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Joshua, dear friend, we send you our most genuine congratulations, to you, and also to your family and friends, for having achieved the age of 80 this year and having lived such an enriching life. You have become an essential reference in the sociolinguistics field as a teacher and researcher in both the second half of the 20th Century and the beginning of the 21st Century. We have particularly valued your professional contribution for your broad understanding of sociolinguistics, for your interdisciplinary approach (sociological, political, psychosocial), for the use, interrelation and proper study of both theoretical and empirical perspectives, for your inspiring contribution of new ideas on the evolution of ideologies worldwide and for your research and comparison of different sociolinguistic contexts.

Furthermore, we take this opportunity to thank you warmly for being a role model to follow for experts on sociolinguistics worldwide. Your publications, as well as your participation as general editor of the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language (IJSL)*, are to be highlighted, because your main fields of study have included endangered and minority languages and speech communities to which you have become a reference, as is the case of our Basque community.

Specifically in our case, from the Basque Country, we specially want to thank you for the interest, support and help we have received from you. In fact, your interest towards us comes from a long way back, as you often mention “the case of Basque” in your publications, such as *Reversing Language Shift; Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages* (Multilingual Matters, 1991), and *Can threatened languages be saved?* (Multilingual Matters, 2001), where “the case of Basque” is one the four cases chosen from Europe (Azurmendi, Bachoc & Zabaleta, 2001). You have indeed given us support in different ways: by participating in the development of the Basque Government’s language policy by presenting papers at Congresses (*II. Mundu Biltzarra: Euskara Biltzarra*, Eusko Jaurlaritza, 1987; *Euskal Eskola Publikoaren Lehen Kongresua*, Eusko Jaurlaritza, 1990), or by leading relevant seminars, as well as by maintaining fruitful and rewarding relationships and contacts with some Basque sociolinguists.

Thank you also for your efforts, as general editor of the *IJSL* journal, to have a monographic number included on the “the case of Basque”. In order to spread awareness on the Case of Basque from a sociolinguistic perspective worldwide, this initiative has finally been published in two parts: the first one, in the *IJSL* journal, entitled *The Case of Basque: From the Past toward the Future* (*IJSL*, 174, Maria-Jose Azurmendi and Iñaki Martinez de Luna issue editors, 2005), and the second one, entitled *The Case of Basque: Past, Present and Future* (Maria-Jose Azurmendi and Iñaki Martinez de Luna eds., Soziolinguistika Klusterra, 2006).

We would like to encourage you to keep working as you have been doing until now and to keep enjoying life, not only from a sociolinguistics viewpoint but also with your family and friends!

We send you our warmest wishes!