



## Rebuilding the Celtic Languages: Reversing Language Shift in the Celtic Countries

By Diarmuid O Neill

Y Lolfa, 2005. Book Condition: New. Brand New, Unread Copy in Perfect Condition. A+ Customer Service! Summary: Sociolinguist Joshua Fishman starts his preface, "The Soft Smile and the Iron Fist", by noting that the "white death" of assimilation of minority cultures (delivered by those with the "soft smile") in these more benign times is not much different in its end results than the "black death" of genocide (delivered by governments with an "iron fist") in earlier days when minority languages were simply forbidden and crushed. And even when governments are "supportive" the support is often more verbal than real. Fishman's advice to supporters of threatened languages is to not "place their trust in princes", but to primarily undertake efforts they can implement themselves, "by their own sweat, tears and resources". This is advice he feels is needed for the six Celtic languages in view of the lack of true support from France or Britain. In his research of a number of minority languages throughout the world, Fishman has proposed that reversing a downward slide can be accomplished by building languages in stages which lay foundations for growth. This model was first published in his 1991 work, "Reversing Language Shift" and...



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