

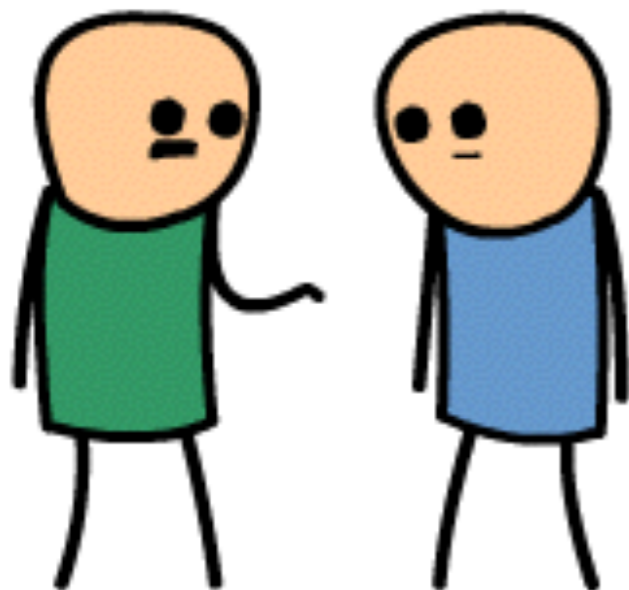
# HOW TO GET AWAY WITH SAYING SOMETHING CRAZY

1. Begin with "I'm no expert, but"

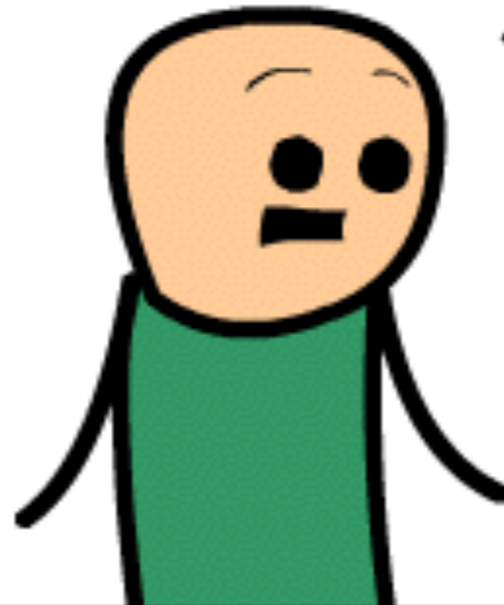
2. Say something crazy.

3. End with "I'm just asking questions."

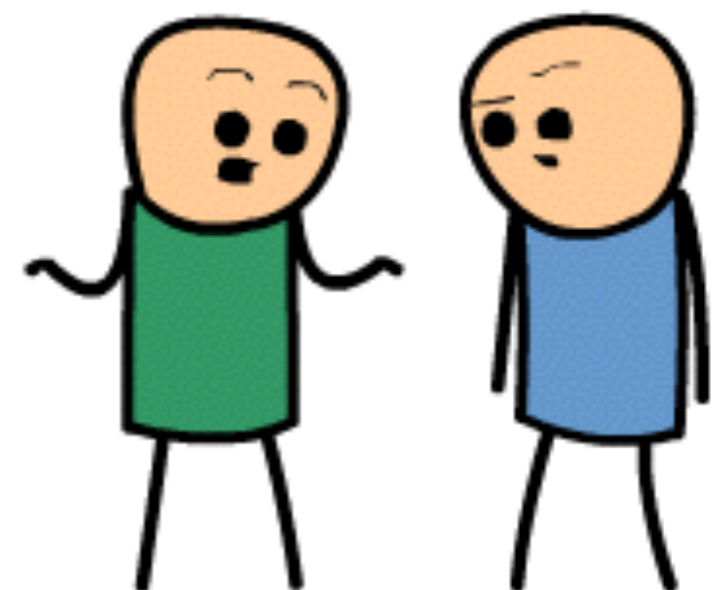
I'M NO EXPERT, BUT...



MAYBE DIGITAL LANGUAGE ARCHIVING NO LONGER NEEDS TO BE A DISTINCT FIELD AND SHOULD JUST BE CALLED "ARCHIVING" INSTEAD.

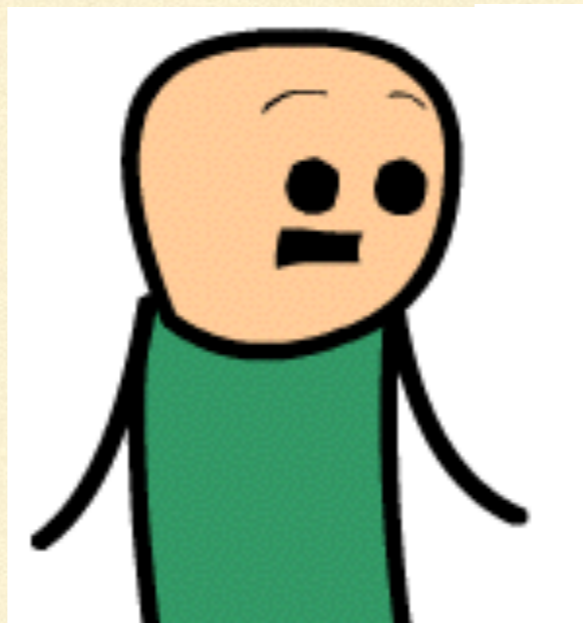


I'M JUST ASKING QUESTIONS!



# Whither digital language archiving?

- Has digital language archiving become obsolete, to be replaced by mere “archiving,” where digital preservation is the norm and language resources are treated just like any other resource?
- Are language resources “special”?



# Origins of *digital language* archiving

- Emerged as a response to changes in the field of linguistics
- Language archives and language documenters were forced to grapple with digital preservation early, due to:
  - looming obsolescence of media formats
  - return to empirically-based research (hence large amounts of data)
  - increasing attention to documentation of endangered languages
  - vast amounts of born digital data being produced by language documentation programs (and resulting risk of “digital carnage” in which data become effectively inaccessible) (Bird & Simons 2003)



# ~~Digital language~~ archiving

- Dec 2000, Workshop on Web-based Language Documentation and Description
- 2001, Open Language Archives Community (OLAC)
- 2002, Electronic Meta-Structures for Endangered Languages Data (E-MELD)
- 2003, Digital Endangered Languages and Musics Archiving Network (DELAMAN)
- 2007, ISO 639-3 language codes
- 2010, National Digital Stewardship Alliance (NDSA)



# Linguists are accidental pioneers in digital archiving

- Archiving is by nature a conservative profession
- 2000 US Library of Congress recommends preservation of cassette audio recordings via transfer to open reel tapes
- Yet, linguists were already thinking digital, creating digital objects and using those objects in their research
- 2004 preservation consultant advises ANLA:
  - “Copies should be burnt to CD or DVD for retention.”
  - “Whenever feasible, data should be printed out in hard copy form on acid free paper.”
- Meanwhile, linguists went on to create standards and infrastructure for digital archiving
- Now the archivists have caught up

# From digitization to digital preservation

- Solve tomorrow's problems, not today's
- How many people have digitized...
  - ... cassette tape?
  - ... open reel tape?
  - ... wax cylinder?
- In the not-too-distant future we will not be doing very much digitizing, but we will be curating vast amounts of digital data.
- Most video tape will be unreadable by the end of the decade, so digitization will cease to be an issue.
- Audio tape will last longer, but not indefinitely...

# Outlook for digital language archiving

- Digital preservation will be more important than digitization
- Demise of digitization will favor an entity-based rather than activity-based approach to archive costing
- The costs of digital language archiving will increasingly be indexed to archiving costs at parent institutions
- Storage cooperatives offer a cost-effective approach to digital preservation which takes advantage of the existing digital language archiving community

