

Words

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A colleague of mine wrote a book about Indians, and a very good book too. But we were astonished to find by the jacket that he had once been an Indian trader. In which connection one of his neighbors tells the following:

It seems that a noted Danish authority, who spoke 11 Indian languages, came to Nevada to study the Washoe and the Paiute Indians. This neighbor took him out to interview a prominent Paiute and invited my colleague to go along. Just before they got there my colleague since he understood Indians said that he'd better go ahead and prepare the way. Whereupon, preceding them, he raised his right hand, when he got there, in the Indian sign of peace and friendship, to the seated Indian and began:

"Man from far away comes to talk to Indian in his tipi. Him heap smart. Speaks with many tongues---"

"Oh, is that so?" said the Paiute chief cordially, rising.  
"Bring him in. Where did he learn linguistics?"

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