



SIL International® Presents

Reference Manual

To be used with

A Guide for Planning the Future of Our Language

First Edition

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This is a companion document to *A Guide for Planning the Future of Our Language (First Edition)*. Many people and local communities have contributed to its development, and we are very thankful. Please continue to give us feedback (gpfol_intl@sil.org) so that we may improve this tool for the sake of the language communities around the world.

Disclaimer: The material in the Guide has been tested in a limited number of language communities in South America, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. Though the Guide is based on commonly accepted sociolinguistic principles, SIL and the authors do not guarantee any specific results for communities that use this Guide. We have seen many encouraging results from our preliminary pilot tests, and believe these show the general usefulness of this tool. However, each community will have its own specific outcomes depending on its own unique situation. To those communities that engage with this material in an effort to better understand and perhaps even shape the way they use language, we wish you the very best.

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Table of Contents

Aiming for ‘Spoken by all children’	11
Function/Use - Discussion #1	11
Activities	
Set up a group or committee focused on understanding and promoting your local language and culture	11
Provide ways to build relationships between elders and the younger generation so that the elders can share the culture and language with others	11
Skills	
Use some of your language at local community events	11
Use greetings and simple phrases from your language with each other more often. Encourage others to do this.....	11
Tools	
Work as a group to record what elders still know of your language so it can be made into teaching materials.....	12
Get outside help to record your language, music or arts from elders so it can be shared with others throughout your community.....	12
Examples	
Committee to guide the rebirth of the Kurna language.....	12
Luncheons for Comanche elders.....	12
Involving children in recording elders’ knowledge of Garrawa and Yanyuwa culture and language	12
Recording examples of Arctic languages	13
Writing down Alambak signal drumming patterns.....	13
When/where each language is used - Discussion #2	13
Skills	
Use greetings from your language with each other, and encourage others to do the same.....	13
Use greetings from your language with each other, and encourage others to do the same.....	13
Use customs related to your language for certain occasions, and encourage others to do the same	13
Tools	
Record and use place names related to your language and culture	14
Use mass media as a way to replace the “village square”	14

Examples	
Batak Toba speakers using common phrases and greetings outside their home area	14
Recording place names in Alaska languages.....	14
Slovene media provides a way for Slovene speakers to interact without being identified as Slovene	14
Motivation - Discussion #3	15
Activities	
Overcome a difficult history by creating positive experiences now	15
Skills	
Encourage each other to keep using simple greetings and common phrases from your language	15
Encourage each other to use more of your language and traditional customs, songs and art at local cultural events	15
Set up a language learning retreat	15
Tools	
Promote the learning of your language's traditional script by using it on simple signs or posters (even if it only transliterating words from another language).....	16
Examples	
Overcoming negative feelings from the past by learning traditional songs and dance together.....	16
Learning traditional Scottish instruments in Pennsylvania	16
Kwak'wala fishing camp retreats	16
Street signs in Javanese script.....	17
Learning - Discussion #4	17
Skills	
Teach children or teenagers/young adults how to use some simple greetings or other common phrases from your language	17
If you have a traditional script, show children or teenagers/young adults how to read the sounds	17
Teach local songs or arts from your language in schools or in community groups.....	17
Set up immersion classrooms for early childhood preschools or day cares	17
Tools	
Use computer technology to interest young community members in learning your traditional language	17

Examples

- Informal language learning classes in California languages18
- Developing a Lushootseed language course with university help18
- Learning Lushootseed through English in school.....18
- Teaching the traditional Sunda script in schools18
- Traditional harp apprenticeship in Mono18
- Student input in designing a new computer program to learn Coeur d'Alene18

Environment - Discussion #5 19

Activities

- Take part in any regional or national events that promote local cultures and languages19
- Talk to members of government about ways to promote and keep your language and customs.....19
- Set up a center to promote your community's identity and traditional culture outside your home area.....19

Examples

- Giving out Native American names to promote local languages20
- Tamazight language rights promoted through websites.....20
- Berber Academy unifies Tamazight speakers living outside their homeland20
- Native American language competitions to promote learning traditional languages.....20

Function/Use - Discussion #6 20

Activities

- Set up a group that will promote speaking your language in the home and community20

Skills

- Encourage religious leaders to read from texts in your language or to preach in your language, if appropriate21

Tools

- Make ads for radio, newspapers or magazines encouraging people to speak your language in the home and community.....21

Resources

- Rights to broadcast minority languages in Europe and Central Asia21

Examples

- Birth of the Tuscarora Language Committee.....21

Preaching in the Nivhaar language21

When/where each language is used - Discussion #7 22

Skills

Start using only your language for discussion in certain places or with other people who speak your language, about as many topics as possible22

Provide employee language training22

Promote using only your language with the leaders/organizers of certain places, if appropriate (like religious meeting places, groups/associations)22

Run workshops or educational ads to teach people words/phrases for discussion certain topics using your language22

Use schools to teach the use of a language for a certain place or situation22

Run playgroup or day care activities that use your local language with children23

Tools

Develop new phrases/words in your language to describe things that your language doesn't have words for yet.....23

Examples

Language contracts between Navajo speakers and learners23

Language coordinators teaching in tribal offices23

Deliberately teaching English in Amish schools, and not at home23

Young mothers learning Arapaho24

New words for new items among the Seri24

Motivation - Discussion #8 24

Activities

If children from some homes in your community do not learn your language, use ads or meetings to encourage teenagers or young adults to learn to speak your language.....24

Skills

Create programs that will provide incentives for young adults to learn to speak your language24

Tools

Use meetings or ads on radio or other media to increase interest in speaking your language24

Examples

Local language competitions in Hainan25

Mayangna radio programs in Nicaragua25

Gaelic dormitory residence program25

Learning - Discussion #9 25

Skills

Parents can teach their children how to speak your language in the home; community members can speak to children using your language25

Speak using your language to teach preschools or playgroups25

Speak using your language to teach children how to speak a second language/language of education26

Set up groups/places where teenagers and young adults can learn to speak your language from older community members26

Examples

Learning how to speak Arapaho to children26

Biatah Bidayuh playschool program26

Maori language nests26

Environment - Discussion #10 27

Activities

Talk with members of government about ways to promote using your language for speaking.....27

Find ways or places where you feel you can speak your language safely.....27

Skills

Set up groups of people who speak your language who can support/encourage each other ...27

Examples

Summit to highlight the needs of local languages27

Summer language program for students from immigrant homes27

Aiming for ‘Used for education’ 29

Function/Use - Discussion #11 29

Activities

Use your language to teach classes in primary and secondary schools.....29

Set up a group to translate important documents into your language (government information, health information, etc.)29

Skill

Train teachers how to teach reading and writing in your language	29
Hold workshops to show people how to write books or other materials in your language	29
Tools	
Develop a way to write your language, like an alphabet	30
Make fonts for typing your language	30
Start a magazine/newspaper in your language	30
Use your language for signs/posters (in places where most people speak your language)	30
Use your language to write to each other over the Internet	31
Examples	
Lubuagan multilingual education program.....	31
Translating new laws into the languages of South Sudan.....	31
Translating human rights documents in Central Asia	31
Yukpa teacher training workshops	31
Wapishana writers' workshops	31
Nepal alphabet design workshop	32
Fonts for writing systems from around the world.....	32
Local newspapers in India	32
Producing health posters in Kibera.....	32
Translating wetlands conservation brochures into local languages	32
Assyrian language websites	32
Sunda language online encyclopedia.....	33
When/where each language is used - Discussion #12	33
Activities	
Develop a way to distribute local language books to promote reading	33
At community events, promote using your language to write for specific purposes.....	33
Skills	
Run short workshops for using your language for specific purposes, like writing	33
Tools	
Providing writing helps for using your language in information technology.....	33
Examples	
Pocket libraries in Cambodia	34

Workshops to encourage local authors in Kadazandusun34
 Frisian language helps software34
 Motivation - Discussion #13 34

Activities

Show people how reading and writing your language will help their children succeed in their education34
 Hold events to encourage people to use your language for reading and writing35
 Run contests for readers and writers in your language35
 Plan or join cultural exhibitions to promote your language and culture35

Skills

Motivate parents by involving them directly in local language education for their children35

Tools

Develop materials that present local history and local culture through your language35

Examples

Teacher-parent meetings in the Philippines36
 Elephant Mobile Library to promote reading.....36
 Annual writing competition in Kadazandusun36
 Mayan languages festival36
 Communities involved in Karaja language education planning36

Learning - Discussion #14 37

Activities

Planning language learning through local conferences.....37

Skills

Train your community members how to teach your language.....37
 Use your language to teach children how to speak a second language/national language37
 Provide adult literacy classes in your language.....37

Tools

Make new reference materials for your language on a regular basis (school books, dictionaries, etc.).....38

Examples

Hungarians in Australia learning Hungarian38
 Teach some primary and secondary education classes using the local language38

Una bilingual preparatory classes	38
Bunong adult education program	38
University program to learn to teach Australian languages	38
Dictionary Development Process	39
Environment - Discussion #15	39
Activities	
Ask members of government to change laws or form agreements with your communities that allow/support education in your language and other uses of your language	39
Skills	
Talk with members of government to gain support for education in your language (such as funding, training or use of facilities)	39
Tools	
Talk with members of government (especially education) to find support for making teaching materials in your language and training teachers	39
Examples	
Frisian language policy covenant	40
Philippines government support for local languages in primary education	40
Papua New Guinea government provides support for 430 languages in early primary education	40
Aiming for ‘Remembering’	41
Discussion #16	41
Tools	
Make recordings (audio or video) of elders speaking your language and make written or recorded translations of what they have said in the recordings	41
Store recordings, old documents and any historical items from your language in a safe place where they will not be destroyed by rain, fire or floods	41
Make electronic records (scans, digital recordings) of any recordings or materials you have for your language. Make sure copies of these electronic files are stored in more than one place	41
Resources	43

Aiming for ‘Spoken by all children’

Function/Use - Discussion #1

Activities

Set up a group or committee focused on understanding and promoting your local language and culture

You could start out by holding informal meetings of people interested in seeing the knowledge and practice of your language and culture passed on to the next generations. As people become interested, you could form a team or committee that is responsible for planning activities that will help people understand more of your community’s local language and culture. For example, they might plan projects that ask elders to share what they know about the language or traditional ceremonies. They could also plan ways to teach this knowledge to the younger generation (Amery 2007:21-28; Grenoble and Whaley 2006:63-67).

Provide ways to build relationships between elders and the younger generation so that the elders can share the culture and language with others

You could organize an event that is appropriate to your local culture to bring together elders who know your language and younger people who do not know much of your language. For example, you could plan a luncheon and invite several elders. You could explain to them your interest in learning more about your local language and culture and the ways they might be able to help (Cooley and Ballenger 1982:95-97).

Skills

Use some of your language at local community events

You could ask those responsible to run local community events like weddings, festivals and other ceremonies to use as much of your traditional language as they can during these events. This will help people remember at least some parts of your traditional language.

Use greetings and simple phrases from your language with each other more often. Encourage others to do this

Encourage people in the community to use greetings from your local language with each other. Ask elders to show you which greetings to use in specific situations.

Tools

Work as a group to record what elders still know of your language so it can be made into teaching materials

Plan trips to areas where there are still elders who know some of your language. Involve both adults who can operate recording equipment and children. Use what you gather during these trips to produce materials to teach about your language to children (Lo Bianco and Rhydwen 2001:402-406).

Get outside help to record your language, music or arts from elders so it can be shared with others throughout your community

You could work together with outside groups like universities or research institutions to record how your elders use your language and what other things they remember about your local culture. This information can be recorded in a format that can be available for other members of your community to use for learning (de Graaf 2004:158-159).

You could work with others to record examples of any traditional musical styles or other forms of art unique to your culture and language. By recording and also writing descriptions of the music and art, you will help younger members of your community understand your traditional forms of art and music better (Coulter 2007: 72-100; Coulter 2005).

Examples

Committee to guide the rebirth of the Kurna language

The Kurna language of the Adelaide Plains of Australia stopped being used in the 1800s. Using written sources and by creating their own vocabulary similar to neighboring languages, the people were able to reconstruct the Kurna language. In 2000 they held a workshop to talk about funeral rites and language for use in the family. After several more workshops, a group of people formed a committee to promote Kurna and to help develop more materials about it. This committee, Kurna Warra Pintyandi, guides a number of activities, such as giving guidance about funerals, printing postcards and greeting cards to promote Kurna and preparing Kurna language radio programs (Amery 2007:21-28; Grenoble and Whaley 2006:63-67).

Luncheons for Comanche elders

As one of its first activities, the Comanche Cultural Program in the United States held a series of luncheons where they invited elders from the Comanche community. Through these meetings, the program leaders were able to find out which elders were interested in helping renew the use of the Comanche language. These luncheons helped the elders and others in the community connect and build relationships (Cooley and Ballenger 1982:95-97).

Involving children in recording elders' knowledge of Garrawa and Yanyuwa culture and language

The Garrawa and Yanyuwa people live in the Northwest Territory of Australia. Over the years they have shifted to using English for various reasons, to give more opportunities to their children in this English-speaking country. In 1987, the Papulu Apparrkari Language Centre started the Borroloola Project to save a record of the language before the last speakers died. The project gave children the

chance to understand how the language was spoken. Children were involved in interviewing elders about what they knew. They talked about bush medicine, traditional uses for various plants, oral histories, basket weaving, traditional songs, and word lists. This project allowed children to interact with those in the older generation who still practiced the local culture and who spoke some of their local language. The recordings and knowledge collected is now available to turn into teaching materials for children or others in the community (Lo Bianco and Rhydwen 2001:402-406).

Recording examples of Arctic languages

The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) worked for three years with several language communities in the Arctic regions of the Russian Federation to make recordings of stories and other examples of their languages. These recordings were also made in a way that they could be compared with recordings that been made fifty years earlier of the same languages. The group also gave training to local community members in how to further record their languages (de Graaf 2004:158-159).

Writing down Alambalak signal drumming patterns

In 2006 an ethnomusicologist from SIL International worked together with the only man in the Alambalak community in Papua New Guinea who knew how to play the signal drumming patterns used on their nrwit instrument. They recorded various signalling patterns and the ethnomusicologist wrote them down in musical notations. These recordings and notations could be used by Alambalak people to again learn how to play the signal drumming (Coulter 2007: 72-100; Coulter 2005).

When/where each language is used - Discussion #2

Skills

Use greetings from your language with each other, and encourage others to do the same

You can encourage people and groups within your community to use greetings in your traditional language with each other. This could be done in public or in private, depending on whether people are comfortable being known as belonging to your traditional community out in public. You could use positive ads to promote using your traditional language in this way.

Use greetings from your language with each other, and encourage others to do the same

You can encourage people and groups within your community to use greetings in your traditional language with each other. This could be done in public or in private, depending on whether people are comfortable being known as belonging to your traditional community out in public. You could use positive ads to promote using your traditional language in this way.

Use customs related to your language for certain occasions, and encourage others to do the same

You can continue to use customs from your traditional culture at various family and community events. For example, you could continue or start again to use traditional foods, songs, art and costume at events within your community. The decision about what customs to maintain or revive

can be made through input from a number of community members.

Tools

Record and use place names related to your language and culture

You can work with elders to find out all the place names they know in your traditional language. Find out all you can about each place name and record this. You can also find place names in traditional stories. Teach these place names to young people, along with meaning of each name. Using place names in your traditional language is an important way to help your community stay connected to your traditions and language and to each other (Thornton 2003:29-35).

Use mass media as a way to replace the “village square”

If you live in a place where your community members no longer gather together in a traditional way to share local news and to interact, you could reinvent this idea of a “village square” by using mass media. You could publish a newsletter and newspapers or use radio with elements of the local language to help older community members keep up their ability to use your traditional language, and to help younger people learn how to use it. Mass media in your local language can be helpful also if members of your community are unwilling to use your traditional language in public due to mistreatment from outsiders. By using mass media, they can still use the traditional language privately (Busch 2001:35-39).

Examples

Batak Toba speakers using common phrases and greetings outside their home area

Many Batak Toba young people in Indonesia who grew up outside their traditional home area do not speak much Batak language. However, they know some words and phrases and will use them to show a close or friendly connection with other Batak people. They use these phrases with each other both face-to-face in places like the capital city, as well as in text messages and on social media sites like Facebook.

Recording place names in Alaska languages

An Alaska government group found around 3,000 place names in Tlingit and other local languages of the area. They worked with community elders to find out where the places were and what the significance of the names was. The names revealed information about fishing knowledge, the people's history and their culture (Thornton 2003:29-35).

Slovene media provides a way for Slovene speakers to interact without being identified as Slovene

Members of the Slovene community of Austria are separated from the main Slovene community of Slovenia. Due to negative attitudes toward non-German-speaking peoples by the majority group in Austria, many Slovenes in Austria have become less and less willing to use Slovenian in public. They still use it in private in their homes to some degree. Also, a number of mass media have developed, such as newspapers, in which news from within the Slovenian community is shared

between community members. Those who are older are able to keep up their Slovenian use, and those who are younger have a chance to learn at least some level of Slovenian through the mass media (Busch 2001:35-39).

Motivation - Discussion #3

Activities

Overcome a difficult history by creating positive experiences now

If your community has had a history where it was dangerous for people to speak your traditional language or to be seen using other parts of your traditional culture, you could try to create new, positive experiences for people in the present. You could set up groups that meet regularly but informally to learn your traditional songs and dances, or other arts. This may be of more interest to people than a language learning class, if you find that people think that a language class would be too difficult (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998:67-68).

Skills

Encourage each other to keep using simple greetings and common phrases from your language

Elders can encourage the younger generation to continue using common greetings and phrases between each other within the community.

Encourage each other to use more of your language and traditional customs, songs and art at local cultural events

You can encourage those who lead cultural events, like weddings, festivals and other ceremonies, to request participation from elders or others who still know some of your traditional language, songs or arts. By using the language, songs or arts within traditional cultural ceremonies, you will help increase people's awareness of these traditions. This can lead to further interest in maintaining these traditions. This interest will increase the need for some younger people to learn these traditional skills and keep them alive.

Set up a language learning retreat

If there are still a few people who speak your traditional language well, you could ask them if they would be willing to host a 'retreat' where other members of your community could learn the language from them. Those who want to learn could stay with the fluent speakers (or stay in their sub-community) for a few days. While they are there, provide ways for them to learn the language from those who know it. You could use methods like language learning sessions or doing traditional activities together. The cost of the retreat could be split between those coming to learn, or some things like food or housing could be donated by the people hosting the retreat. It is important that those participating have a safe environment where they can learn. This type of activity would be done best not as a stand-alone activity, but as part of a series of activities to help increase younger people's interest in learning about their traditional language and culture (Anonby 1999:33-52).

Tools

Promote the learning of your language's traditional script by using it on simple signs or posters (even if it only transliterating words from another language)

If your language has a traditional script that most people cannot read, you could promote the use and learning of the traditional script by using it in places like street signs, town name markers or other public places. The script could be used to simply write out the names or instructions as they are spoken in the dominant/everyday language--in other words, transliterate them from the everyday language using the traditional script. Or, if enough people still know how some of the traditional language is spoken, these signs could use the script to translate the meaning into your language. Your community members who are learning how to read this traditional script will feel a sense of connection with each other based on this script as one part of what joins them together.

Examples

Overcoming negative feelings from the past by learning traditional songs and dance together

Members of the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian communities of Alaska and Canada experienced abuse by the government and the church regarding the use of their language and culture in the past. These negative experiences are part of the reason why many people from these three communities are not actively interested in teaching their language to their children. Over the past years, members of these three groups have been encouraging small group meetings where people can learn their group's traditional dance and songs. Although there are still negative feelings connected to the local languages, people are very proud of their heritage and culture. Learning the dances and songs has helped people gain some knowledge of their traditional languages as well (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998:67-68).

Learning traditional Scottish instruments in Pennsylvania

Many people in central Pennsylvania are of Scottish descent. They do not speak the Scots or Scottish Gaelic languages, but there has been increasing interest in recent years to include some form of traditional arts and music in common cultural ceremonies, like weddings and funerals. This interest has resulted in the need for younger members of the community to learn skills like playing the Scottish bagpipes and Scottish smallpipes. Some community members have even learned how to make their own bagpipes and other instruments with the help of experienced craftsman and information on the Internet.

Kwak'wala fishing camp retreats

The Kwak'wala community of western Canada has been shifting to using mostly English. With the help of an outside linguist, several community members participated in a 6-day retreat at a traditional Kwak'wala fishing camp. During the retreat, they learned how to read and write Kwak'wala, listened to traditional legends, observed traditional fishing skills, learned how to play traditional games and also learned about traditional uses for plants (Anonby 1999:33-52).

Street signs in Javanese script

Street signs throughout the special administrative region of Yogyakarta in Indonesia use the traditional Javanese script, alongside the Indonesian alphabet (based on the Roman script). The Javanese script used here is simply rewriting the names from the Indonesian, without translating them into Old Javanese.

Learning - Discussion #4**Skills****Teach children or teenagers/young adults how to use some simple greetings or other common phrases from your language**

You can hold informal weekly language classes taught by elders so that young adults and children can learn basic elements of your traditional language. You could also work together with linguists to help develop resources like pocket-size dictionaries through these informal classes (Hinton 2007:456).

If it is hard to find enough elders who are fluent in your traditional language, one other possibility might be for one elder to work together with a linguist to teach a course about your language at a local university. This would be limited to young people in your community at first (unless the university provides it as an adult studies course). Once the course has been established and running well, it might be possible for some of the people who have been learning through the course to help set up more informal courses throughout the community (Hilbert and Hess 1982:71-89).

If you have a traditional script, show children or teenagers/young adults how to read the sounds

You could help establish supplemental classes in local primary schools that teach children how to read the traditional script of your language.

Teach local songs or arts from your language in schools or in community groups**Set up immersion classrooms for early childhood preschools or day cares**

This method will only work if there are still older speakers living who can speak your traditional language fluently. You can set up a preschool or day care where children learn through the traditional language. Parents can attend and learn the language along with the children. The parents then use the learning at home with their children (King 2001:119-128).

Tools**Use computer technology to interest young community members in learning your traditional language**

If the young people who want to or who should learn your traditional language are familiar with using computers, you could work together with others to produce some basic computer software that would help interest them in learning. These could include picture books and dictionaries, as well as

interactive learning activities (Sobbing and Vincent 2000:32-33).

Examples

Informal language learning classes in California languages

Three Native American communities in California, the Hupa, Karuk and Tolowa, have been running informal weekly language learning classes since the 1970s. Elders teach basic words and phrases to younger members of the community. They have also invited linguists to join some sessions, which has resulted in dictionaries and grammars being written. Pocket dictionaries and phrasebooks of some languages have also been developed (Hinton 2007: 456).

Developing a Lushootseed language course with university help

Members of the Lushootseed community and the University of Washington in the United States have been working together since the 1970s to teach a university course where young members of the Lushootseed community can learn to speak their traditional language. Before this course began, younger members of the community found it difficult to learn their traditional language because the elders did not have experience teaching a language. After the course became more popular, the community was able to establish similar courses on some of the Lushootseed reservation areas. The first year of the two-year program focuses on speaking Lushootseed, and the second year introduces Lushootseed literature (Hilbert and Hess 1982:71-89).

Learning Lushootseed through English in school

One elementary school in Washington state, USA, has classes that include teaching children how to read the Lushootseed language. The children are given the text of a story in both English and Lushootseed. They read them together and the teacher leads the class in a discussion about the text. The teacher also teaches traditional Lushootseed storytelling skills as a part of these learning exercises (Denham et al. 2000:97-98).

Teaching the traditional Sunda script in schools

The Sunda language of West Java, Indonesia, is still spoken as a first language by many people. However, the use of the traditional Sunda script has mostly been lost until recent years. Sundanese linguists and educators worked together to develop a number of different school curriculum to teach the traditional script to students. Students in many areas of West Java now learn how to read the Sunda script as a part of a cultural class each week.

Traditional harp apprenticeship in Mono

The Mono people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo have established an apprenticeship method where younger community members meet with older individuals who are experts at playing a traditional kind of harp used by the Mono people. They started doing this because they saw that the younger generations were not gaining the ability to play these traditional harps (Schrag & Neeley 2007:17-19).

Student input in designing a new computer program to learn Coeur d'Alene

A poorly-made computer program was frustrating students learning their community's Coeur d'Alene

Examples

Giving out Native American names to promote local languages

The non-profit organization Native Languages of the Americas raises funds online for their language preservation activities by suggesting names from Native American languages that people can use for their children, pets, car, or other personal items. Besides raising funds to help their language efforts, this activity helps promote awareness about Native American languages among the general American public (Native Languages of the Americas 2012).

Tamazight language rights promoted through websites

The Tamazight languages are spoken by the Berber people who inhabit Morocco, Algeria, Libya, and Tunisia. Due to political oppression, many adults are no longer passing their community language on to their children. Outsiders in different places have created a number of websites to promote the Tamazight languages and cultures, and to preserve information about them. Two of these groups are the Amazigh Cultural Association of America and the Amazigh World Congress. These websites help highlight the basic human rights abuses these people are suffering, to help draw international attention to their situation (Ouakrime 2001:61-67).

Berber Academy unifies Tamazight speakers living outside their homeland

Many Tamazight language speakers (Berbers) fled Algeria and Morocco in the mid-twentieth century due to government oppression of these minority groups. A community of these Berbers in Paris started an institute called the Berber Academy to bring attention to the human rights abuses experienced by their group in Algeria. They started a newsletter about Tamazight language, culture and history that they were able to send into Algeria, and they approached many other groups in Europe sympathetic to their situation. The Academy also discovered and helped reestablish the ancient Tifinagh writing system of the Tamazight languages, which gave the Berber people the ability to show that their language and culture were more highly developed than what their oppressors were claiming (Mezhoud 2005:109-116).

Native American language competitions to promote learning traditional languages

The Oklahoma Native American Youth Language Fair is an annual event that brings together teachers and students of Native American languages. Participants can enroll in various oral and written language competitions and are awarded prizes per category from a panel of judges made up of elders from Native American communities (Native American Languages 2012).

Function/Use - Discussion #6

Activities

Set up a group that will promote speaking your language in the home and community

Those who are interested in promoting greater spoken use of your language could form a group or committee. Using whatever resources you have available, you could plan a variety of activities each

year to promote using your language for speaking. These activities could be done at the same time as already established regular events, like annual meetings or festivals.

Skills

Encourage religious leaders to read from texts in your language or to preach in your language, if appropriate

Religious leaders could use scriptural texts, liturgy, songs or other materials in your language during religious meetings/services. Religious leaders could deliver sermons/messages in your language if the hearers are all speakers of your language.

Tools

Make ads for radio, newspapers or magazines encouraging people to speak your language in the home and community

You can make advertisements for radio and TV that promote using your language for everyday communication. These ads could portray people speaking to each other in your local language in places where you as a group feel you should encourage people to speak to each other using your language.

Resources

Rights to broadcast minority languages in Europe and Central Asia

A number of countries in Europe and Central Asia guarantee the right to broadcast using minority languages. The specific criteria vary from country to country. A summary of the broadcasting rights for minority languages in each country can be found in Programme in Comparative Media Law and Policy (PCMLP) and IViR 2003 (McGonagle et al. 2003).

Examples

Birth of the Tuscarora Language Committee

The Tuscarora language is a Native American language spoken now by a small number of people in western New York state in the USA. In 1995, the Tuscarora Language Committee (TLC) was formed by members of the community who wanted to find a way to pass on their language from the remaining handful of Elders who could still speak Tuscarora fluently. Using very little money, the TLC has organized a number of activities over the years, including producing calendars to promote Tuscarora, signs set up throughout their land, conversational vocabulary cassettes made by Elders and surveys of Tuscarora people to get more ideas for developing their language (Patterson 2002).

Preaching in the Nivhaar language

Pastors in the Nivhaar language of Vanuatu have begun preaching about more topics in the local language as portions of the New Testament are translated into their language. This allows the

pastors to convey more religious teaching to their church members through the local language, and it allows community members to use their language to discuss new concepts (Wycliffe Bible Translators 2012).

When/where each language is used - Discussion #7

Skills

Start using only your language for discussion in certain places or with other people who speak your language, about as many topics as possible

In order to help those in your community who want to learn to speak your language better, you could make agreements (or 'contracts') between pairs or groups of people within your community about how you will use your language. They would agree to use your language to talk to each other at certain times or about certain topics. This allows the people who speak your language well to pass their knowledge on to those who want to learn to speak it better (Lee and McLaughlin 2001:38).

Provide employee language training

You can help those in your community who want to speak your language better by providing short training sessions associated with their workplace. For example, a language teacher could train the employees how to talk about their work and other topics using your language. As they interact with each other at work, they will have a natural way to practice what they are learning (Pecos and Blum-Martinez 2001:80).

Promote using only your language with the leaders/organizers of certain places, if appropriate (like religious meeting places, groups/associations)

Encourage people in various leadership roles to use more of your language in the places where they usually speak in front of people. For example, you could encourage religious leaders to conduct certain parts of their service or a sermon in your language, if that is acceptable to the community. You could ask government officials to give announcements or public training in your language.

Run workshops or educational ads to teach people words/phrases for discussion certain topics using your language

Work together with local public or non-profit radio to broadcast short radio segments that introduce words or phrases in your language. For example, if you are trying to help people become comfortable talking about finances in your language, the radio slot could introduce a number of terms and short discussion about finance, all in your language. The idea is to help people become familiar with hearing and using these new terms or ways of talking about topics that they might not have used your language to discuss before.

Use schools to teach the use of a language for a certain place or situation

If your group is fairly separate from the main or dominant culture of your region/country (or if your community prefers to remain separate culturally from the main/dominant culture), you could use schools as a place to teach children what they need to know about the official/dominant language.

This kind of program could teach them what they need to know to interact well with people outside the community who speak that official/dominant language. (Note: In this situation, the focus is on learning the dominant language--not the home language or local language. This assumes that you are already teaching the home/local language to children in the home.) (Johnson-Weiner 1999:31-37)

Run playgroup or day care activities that use your local language with children

You could set up a nursery, playgroup or day care where older women who speak your language well are present to help young mothers learn how to speak to their children using your language (Greymorning 1999:6-16).

Tools

Develop new phrases/words in your language to describe things that your language doesn't have words for yet

Work as a group, including leaders in your community, to develop new words or phrases for items that have been brought in from the outside culture. The words or phrases might be completely different from the word in the outside culture, or they might sound similar to the word from the outside culture, but adjusted to fit your language better.

Examples

Language contracts between Navajo speakers and learners

People within the Navajo Nation in the United States have begun signing contracts with each other about how they will use their Navajo language. For example, a language teacher might make a contract with a language student, or members of a family might make contracts with each other. The purpose of making these agreements is to try to make speaking Navajo the norm for certain topics and situations where English has been becoming more prevalent (Lee and McLaughlin 2001:38).

Language coordinators teaching in tribal offices

Speakers of Cochiti-Keres noticed that their language was no longer being passed on to the younger generation. One of the activities they used to overcome this was to send language coordinators to the tribal offices, who taught language classes for 30 minutes on three days each week. They encouraged the employees to use Cochiti-Keres for their daily business interactions, rather than using English for everything (Pecos and Blum-Martinez 2001:80).

Deliberately teaching English in Amish schools, and not at home

The Amish community in the United States is a group who wish to remain culturally separated from the mainstream American culture. They speak a language called Pennsylvania German. Using schools that are completely under their local control, the Amish community teaches English to their children through the schools so that they will be able to interact well with non-Amish people around them. In the home and in the Amish community, however, they use Pennsylvania German for almost all interaction (Johnson-Weiner 1999:31-37).

Young mothers learning Arapaho

The Arapaho Language Lodge in Wyoming, USA, provides a place where young mothers can come in contact with women elders from the Arapaho community. The elders teach the young women how to speak to their children in Arapaho (Greymorning 1999:6-16).

New words for new items among the Seri

The Seri people of Mexico speak the Cmiique litom language. The Seri people have invented phrases and words using their own language for modern items brought in from outside their culture. For example, their word for car muffler is *ihiisaxim an hant yaait*, or 'into which the breathing descends' (Rymer 2012:79).

Motivation - Discussion #8**Activities*****If children from some homes in your community do not learn your language, use ads or meetings to encourage teenagers or young adults to learn to speak your language***

Plan events that highlight good speaking skills in your language, in a way that will make children, youth and young adults want to speak the language well. For example, you could plan a bilingual speech competition. In this sort of event, schools select students who can speak well in both your community language as well as the official/national language. These chosen students are given topics to prepare for the competition. At the competition, the judges give basic questions related to the topics to the participating students. The participants then give responses in both languages and are awarded based on their ability to use both languages well (Tsou et al. 2007).

Skills***Create programs that will provide incentives for young adults to learn to speak your language***

Set up educational programs that will help university students learn to speak more of your language while they are living at school away from your home area. This could also be done in places where teenagers must go away to boarding schools in order to attend high school (University College Dublin 2010:11).

Tools***Use meetings or ads on radio or other media to increase interest in speaking your language***

In areas with radio access, you could ask a community-based or non-profit radio station if they would air short informational segments in your language. The topics you choose to talk about should be needs that the community feels are important, so that people will be interested in listening (Benedicto et al. 2001:55-58).

Examples

Local language competitions in Hainan

A group in Sanya city on China's Hainan island helped raise interest among local people in using their local languages for speaking environments by holding a competition in which students were awarded based on their ability to speak both their own local language and Mandarin (Tsou et al. 2007).

Mayangna radio programs in Nicaragua

The Mayangna people live along the coast of Nicaragua. They recently established two different radio shows that were started with help from the University of the Atlantic Region of the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua. They first tried a daily 15-minute program that focused on story-telling, a college program for bilingual and intercultural education, and local news. After seeing how popular this initial program was, they were able to expand it to become a 1-hour long program. They also are now broadcasting on two different stations, from two different main towns in the Mayangna area. The program presents information about bilingual education programs, Mayangna history and culture, nature conservation information, education activities, music, and local announcements. The radio program has drawn together speakers of Mayangna from across large distances (Benedicto et al. 2001:55-58).

Gaelic dormitory residence program

University College Dublin provides a program where students can apply to live in a special dorm setting where they are able to deepen their ability to use their heritage language, Gaelic. The university provides scholarships for participants, as well as other resources about raising bilingual children and how to maintain the use of Gaelic beyond the college years (University College Dublin 2010:11).

Learning - Discussion #9

Skills

Parents can teach their children how to speak your language in the home; community members can speak to children using your language

Encourage mothers and fathers to speak the local language in the home to their children. If young parents themselves do not know how to speak the local language, provide training to them in how to speak simple phrases related to nurturing their children, which they can use directly with their young children. If a local language preschool exists, encourage parents to reinforce what children are learning in the preschool by repeating at home the words and phrases they are learning.

Speak using your language to teach preschools or playgroups

Teach playschools or preschools using your local language. There are templates and guides you can use to create materials for teaching playschools. For example, the book *Heritage Language*

Playschools for Indigenous Minorities describes how to administer such a local language playschool, as well as how to develop the teaching materials. The book also contains samples of a variety of teaching materials which can be adapted for local use (Smith 2012).

Speak using your language to teach children how to speak a second language/language of education

Use children's mother tongue (language of the home) as a basis upon which to teach other languages they should get to know, such as an official/national language (Ouane and Glanz 2010:26).

Set up groups/places where teenagers and young adults can learn to speak your language from older community members

Using a method that fits within your local culture, you could help start groups where elders or those who can speak your language well can meet with younger community members. Some people call this 'language apprenticeship,' where a younger person meets with an older person to learn all he/she can from the older person (Schrag & Neeley 2007:17-19).

Examples

Learning how to speak Arapaho to children

The Arapaho Language Immersion Program in Wyoming, USA, teaches young mothers phrases they can use to talk to their infants and young children. This preparation results in children learning how to speak Arapaho even before they enter an Arapaho-language preschool program (Greymorning 1999).

Biatah Bidayuh playschool program

Children in the playschool program in Būnūk village in Malaysia learn through playing. This playschool uses the Biatah Bidayuh language for all of its instruction. Children's learning activities include playing that involves pretending they are doing local adult activities such as pounding rice or carrying rice home in a woven sack that hangs from their foreheads, down over their backs (Smith 2012).

Maori language nests

The Maori people of New Zealand began a practice in the 1980s called the 'language nest.' Maori elders lead day school programs for young children using the Maori language. The program also includes language learning classes for Maori adults--especially the young parents--so they can use Maori in the home with their children (King 2001:119-128).

Environment - Discussion #10

Activities

Talk with members of government about ways to promote using your language for speaking

Within the context of your government system, approach members of government with ideas about how the national or local government could help your community speak your language better, and to pass it on from one generation to the next. Depending on your situation, you might be able to request funding from your government to help with local programs that help community members learn how to speak your language from elders who still know it.

Find ways or places where you feel you can speak your language safely

Skills

Set up groups of people who speak your language who can support/encourage each other

Within your community, those who are interested in learning to speak your language better can meet together in groups for the purpose of talking to each other using your language. A group like this could meet every so often, like once per week. Members of your community who are living outside the community could get together in such a way to speak the language to each other in the new place they are living now.

Examples

Summit to highlight the needs of local languages

In June 2011, members of many Native American, Native Alaskan and Native Hawaiian communities gathered in Washington, D.C., for the National Native Language Revitalization Summit. The summit highlighted for Congress the benefits of language revitalization programs up to this point. The participants also requested members of government to continue and increase support for local language revitalization in the U.S. (Cultural Survival 2011).

Summer language program for students from immigrant homes

The University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) runs a summer program where high school students from immigrant homes can come to learn to speak their heritage language better. The courses are taught by UCLA students who speak the language of study (Center for European and Eurasian Studies 2008).

Aiming for ‘Used for education’

Function/Use - Discussion #11

Activities

Use your language to teach classes in primary and secondary schools

A guide for planning and beginning a program that uses the local language as the language of instruction alongside the national language or other major language can be found in “Planning community-based education programs in minority language communities” (Malone 2006).

Set up a group to translate important documents into your language (government information, health information, etc.)

Discuss with community members what kinds of information people have difficulty understanding because they do not understand the language it is printed in. Consider information on new laws or regulations, basic rights, health concerns, agricultural tips, or other useful topics.

SIL has produced many shell books around the world. Shell books are small books about a variety of useful topics, based on a template that can be easily adapted to local languages. Shell books can contain either just the local language, or the local language plus one or two other languages. Contact SIL to get a CD full of shell book templates.

Skills

Train teachers how to teach reading and writing in your language

Through periodic workshops, train teachers who are speakers of your language how to teach reading and writing in your language in their school classrooms. You could find linguists or others in your region who work on mother-tongue literacy, and request their help with holding workshops.

Hold workshops to show people how to write books or other materials in your language

List what kinds of written materials you already have in your local language. Use a guide to what stages of literature you can produce and explain this to those attending the workshop. Decide on who will be using the materials you produce at a particular workshop. Make the materials relevant for that group. Talk about what a good story in your language sounds like. Practice writing stories that fit within the stage of literature you are currently working on. Edit your story and someone else’s story. Practice creating a booklet using good formatting. Add illustrations. Translate the text into another language if necessary. You can also produce other materials like stories for higher stages, flip chart materials for teaching a community development topic, or games to teach people how to read.

Whatever you produce, then decide how you will test the materials in the community and how you will produce more materials in the future (Malone 2001).

Tools

Develop a way to write your language, like an alphabet

Ask a linguist to help you list the sounds you make in your language, and to help you see how your language could be written similarly to other languages in the area, or similar to your national language. If many people can already write another language, ask them to write short stories or other items in your language. Then, compare how they have chosen to write your language-- especially any sounds unique to your language, and how they have divided one word from the next word. Use this as a basis to discuss together how you would like to write your language. Then, make a guide for writing your language based on your decisions as a group.

One method a group could use to develop a writing system together goes as follows (from Hasselbring 2012):

- The group looks at examples of writing in another language they have seen in writing before (like their national language, or an international language).
- They list what they like and don't like about that way of writing.
- Based on their list, the group puts these different features into categories like: "Features we must have in our writing system" and "Features that would be good to have if possible."
- The group then chooses the top 5 features in each category, placing them in order of how important they feel they are.
- The result will be a set of features that people feel should be a part of their written language.

A guide for developing an alphabet using a workshop setting is available in the document "Manual for alphabet design through community interaction." (See Easton and Wroge 2002.)

Make fonts for typing your language

If your language uses a script that is not used on computer keyboards, you could contact computer experts to help you find a way to set up the script of your language for typing (McClure 2001: 68-75).

Start a magazine/newspaper in your language

Work together with interested community members to see if a local language newspaper or magazine would be of interest to enough readers to cover costs, or look for other ways to cover printing costs. Invite people to write columns or articles of local interest; translate news or information from other languages.

Use your language for signs/posters (in places where most people speak your language)

Make posters or signs in the local language for important events or to share important, positive messages with your community members. These could include posters about health topics, upcoming events, or encouragement to use the local language.

Use your language to write to each other over the Internet

If many people who speak your language live outside your home community, or if those who speak your language live in many different places, you could try to write to each other over the Internet. Some examples could include:

- Sending e-mail to each other
- Writing on instant message services
- Running classes about your language over the Internet
- Setting up a web page or Facebook page with news about your language community
- Using radio in your language over the Internet to teach your language or to teach through your language

Examples***Lubuagan multilingual education program***

Children in the Lubuagan language community of the Philippines learn using Lubuagan as the language of instruction for their first three years of primary school, along with learning English and Filipino orally. This prepares the students to then learn how to read and write in English and Filipino in following school years (Walter and Dekker 2008).

Translating new laws into the languages of South Sudan

During the introduction of new laws regulating the establishment and operation of local governments, chiefs in two states of South Sudan requested that the laws be translated into the local languages of the area in order to help local people understand and use the new laws (Gurtong 2009).

Translating human rights documents in Central Asia

UNESCO reports that a number of human rights documents, including the Convention of the Rights of the Child, have been translated into the Kyrgyz, Tajik and Kazakh languages. These translated materials were developed for use in training those who will train youth in principles of human rights in these Central Asian countries (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office 2003).

Yukpa teacher training workshops

The Yukpa people live in communities on both sides of the border between Colombia and Venezuela. In 2012, teachers from the Yukpa communities came to a series of two workshops where they learned how to apply a method for teaching reading and writing in Yukpa mother-tongue schools (SIL International 2012a).

Wapishana writers' workshops

The Wapishana community lives in several villages in the savannahs of Guyana, South America. Community members have formed a literacy association, and with the help of outside literacy specialists from SIL, they have carried out a number of literacy activities. In one instance, the literacy association brought together Wapishana people for a writer's workshop where they made a variety of shell books—books based on templates that are easy to adapt to other languages. Their shell books included a number of traditional Wapishana stories, such as “How the Snake Lost Its Feet,” “When

Humans Became Monkeys” and “When I Was Bitten by a Rattlesnake” (SIL International 2012b).

Nepal alphabet design workshop

Four languages in Nepal sent representatives to a joint alphabet design workshop sponsored by SIL and Tribhuvan University in 2011. They first transcribed stories in their own language and compared how different people wrote the same thing and discussed the areas of difference. They then decided among themselves, with input from linguists, how to resolve those differences. Then they talked about how to separate one word from the next word and other topics related to writing their languages. For most topics, they first listened to an explanation by a linguist together as a large group. They then broke into groups based on their local language to immediately talk about how the topic they just heard about looks in their language. They used a template to help them produce a writing guide for their own language by the end of the workshop. They printed these writing guides before the end of the 10-day workshop and took them home to their villages to see if people felt the writing system they had developed would work, or if there were some changes they should make.

Fonts for writing systems from around the world

Resources on scripts and fonts from around the world may be found on the web page “Sites on Scripts and Writing Systems” (Non-Roman Script Initiative 2012).

Local newspapers in India

There are over 55,000 local language newspapers in India, especially popular in rural regions. One example, *Eenadu*, which is printed in the Telugu language, includes features popular with local patrons, such as a column giving animal husbandry advice and local opinions on political races (India Knowledge@Wharton 2010).

Producing health posters in Kibera

A group of fifteen young girls working as peer educators to women caught in the sex industry in Kibera, Kenya, asked for training in how to translate posters and other health materials from NGOs into the local languages of the women they mentor. They saw that these women could not make use of the information and materials written in English given by most NGOs. The organization Translators without Borders is training this group of girls and other local translators/interpreters across Africa how to translate such basic knowledge into local languages (Rettig 2012).

Translating wetlands conservation brochures into local languages

Groups concerned about the loss of certain kinds of environmental areas important for many local communities as well as wildlife have adapted materials from international sources into local languages. For example, groups in several countries around the world adapted a poster template and stickers provided by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands into national and local languages. These materials were mass produced and used to raise local awareness of keeping wetlands intact (Ramsar 2005).

Assyrian language websites

Although their home community is in Iraq, most Assyrians live in other countries around the world. Many of them live in places where they can use the Internet. They use websites for learning the

Assyrian language, listening to Assyrian radio, looking up words in Assyrian dictionaries, reading Assyrian grammar books, and talking with each other about their Assyrian culture and language (McClure 2001: 68-75).

Sunda language online encyclopedia

Members of the Sunda language community in Indonesia have created a Sunda language version of Wikipedia, the online collaborative encyclopedia site, developing over 17,000 articles by mid-2012 (Wikipédia Sunda 2012).

When/where each language is used - Discussion #12

Activities

Develop a way to distribute local language books to promote reading

If you live in a remote area with limited access to local language books (or other books), set up a way to organize and transport a library of books from one school/village to the next. There are a number of ways this could be done: a sturdy plastic trunk organized into sections, a pocket library, a vehicle set up as a lending library, and more.

At community events, promote using your language to write for specific purposes

Use venues like community meetings, celebrations or fairs to promote using your language more for writing and for education. You could do this through plays, skits, drama or other arts, or through brochures, lectures or discussion groups.

Skills

Run short workshops for using your language for specific purposes, like writing

You could run workshops for local authors that help them improve their skills in writing using your language. This kind of workshop could help authors learn skills both for writing and publishing in your language (Lasimbang and Kinajil 2008:175-176).

Tools

Providing writing helps for using your language in information technology

If your language is already being used in technology like computers, you can help people become better at writing using your language by creating some helps that go along with these technologies. For example, you can create computer programs that can link to existing word processing programs (like Microsoft Word or OpenOffice). These programs could have spelling checks, grammar checks, thesaurus and dictionary features to help people when they write your language (Sijens 2008:136-137).

Examples

Pocket libraries in Cambodia

Children in remote Cambodian villages are able to have access to children's books in a way they never had before. Through the help of the NGO Room to Read, the communities have developed a system for distributing books called a 'pocket library.' With sturdy materials sewn together in rows of pockets large enough to hold children's storybooks, a single pocket library can hold around 100 books. The pocket library is set up at a local school, where children help manage checking out books to borrowers. Each weekend, the whole pocket library is rolled up and transported to the next school on the library route, eventually rotating around to a number of schools (Carey 2012).

Workshops to encourage local authors in Kadazandusun

The Kadazandusun Language Foundation (KLF) ran a workshop for local authors to help them with ideas and skills for writing and publishing in the Kadazandusun language. The workshop resulted in some new educational materials in Kadazandusun produced by these local authors. The KLF also has helped set up a Writers' and Illustrators' Network so that writers and illustrators from the local area could connect with each other. They hope this will result in production of more Kadazandusun literature in the future. Yearly writing competitions are another activity the KLF sponsors to help increase the amount of written materials available in the local language (Lasimbang and Kinajil 2008:175-176).

Frisian language helps software

After realizing that people could not write Frisian as well as they could speak, read or understand Frisian, the Fryske Akademy and a software development company in the Netherlands developed two programs to help people improve their ability to write using Frisian. The program Taalhelp gives adults access to a dictionary, spell check and thesaurus that can be used with Microsoft Word. The other program, Bernetaalhelp, helps children learn how to spell and use the Frisian language for writing. The program highlights differences similar between Frisian and Dutch words. As a result of this program, Frisian speakers are becoming more comfortable using Frisian to write more things than in the past (Sijens 2008:136-137).

Motivation - Discussion #13

Activities

Show people how reading and writing your language will help their children succeed in their education

Organize an event like a conference or a series of meetings that bring together parents, teachers and others from throughout your community. If necessary, request help from an organization or person with expertise in the area of bilingual education. Using both dialogue and presentation, share information about the benefits of bilingual education with parents. Help them see that good education that begins with the language the child already knows and then teaches them any other language of

education will prepare their children well for learning throughout life.

The set of five booklets called *Advocacy kit for promoting literacy in multilingual settings* gives guidelines and examples from Asia of how to promote different types of education programs that use the local language as the basis for education. These programs all prepare students to do well in the national language or language of education (UNESCO Bangkok 2007).

Hold events to encourage people to use your language for reading and writing

Use unique and interesting parts of your local culture to promote reading in your local language. You could use traditional dress, songs, arts or foods to create an event to promote reading and writing in your language.

Run contests for readers and writers in your language

You can increase interest in reading and writing your local language by running competitions in which people are invited to write certain types of things in the local language. This could be done together with a magazine or newspaper, a regular cultural event each year, or on a seasonal basis. You could also run contests in which people read existing materials in the local language. This would help increase people's awareness about the written form of your language and would help interest individuals in becoming better at their ability to read the language.

Plan or join cultural exhibitions to promote your language and culture

Plan an event where speakers of your language can teach other people, including people who do not speak your language, things about your language and culture. This could be a one-day event, or a multi-day event. It could be held in cooperation with a museum, university or other institution. The purpose of this kind of event is to help outsiders gain a better understanding of the value of your language and culture, including your language's literature and place in society. It also helps motivate members of your community to take greater pride in your language (Grimm and Martin 2002:123-129).

Skills

Motivate parents by involving them directly in local language education for their children

If you develop any educational programs in your language for use in schools or with younger children, you could first take community adults through the materials. This will allow the adults/parents to better help their children when they begin learning the new materials in your language. Such close interaction with the local language materials and program should also help motivate the adults to support the program and local language learning in the home (Nettle and Romaine 2000:183-184).

Tools

Develop materials that present local history and local culture through your language

You can show community members how reading materials in your language will help all generations maintain a connection with the past. You could do this, for example, by using your language to

develop school materials about local history and local culture. You could highlight the value of these kinds of materials so that community elders can see how using your language in this way will help maintain a connection with your community's heritage.

Examples

Teacher-parent meetings in the Philippines

Parents in one area of the Philippines were concerned that a new multilingual education program would keep their children from learning English and Tagalog, the national language. Educators were able to visit the area and hold meetings with the parents to explain to them how this program would start off in the local language--the language spoken in the home--but would also teach the children English and Tagalog. The direct explanations given to the parents helped address their concerns and helped them see how this program would help their children succeed (MTB-MLE Network 2012).

Elephant Mobile Library to promote reading

Communities in remote parts of northern Laos are partnering with three NGOs to provide 1,000 children with access to books through an Elephant Mobile Library. Lending libraries including 640 children's books in the Lao language are carried by elephants into the remote communities participating in this program. Children are able to borrow the books to read. The elephants—an important national symbol in Laos—are an attractive and exciting feature, helping draw many children to the mobile libraries (Carey 2011).

Annual writing competition in Kadazandusun

The Kadazandusun Language Foundation (KLF) in Malaysia runs an annual writing competition. Participants submit short stories or folktales in the Kadazandusun language, which are then judged, published in a compilation and sold within the Kadazandusun community. This helps increase the number of people actively writing in Kadazandusun and increases the amount of Kadazandusun literature available (Lasimbang and Kinajil 2008:175-176).

Mayan languages festival

In 1986 the Cleveland State University started the *K'inol Winik* festival to promote the Mayan languages. Speakers of Mayan, including teachers of Mayan and artisans, gather together once every two years for this event. Each festival may last up to two weeks and focuses on one aspect of modern-day Mayan language or culture. This festival increases awareness about the Mayan cultures among the larger society and helps Mayan teachers, writers and artisans connect with each other (Grimm and Martin 2002:123-129).

Communities involved in Karaja language education planning

In the 1970s, Brazil's National Indian Foundation established schools to help communities from four language groups, including the Karaja, start local language education. First steps included teaching adult community members how to read, and training teachers. Community members have been involved in planning the content of the local language education, which is based on oral traditions of the Karaja people. The program has helped community members realize the depth of their oral tradition. Many of them have taken active roles in managing this program (Nettle and Romaine

2000:183-184).

Learning - Discussion #14

Activities

Planning language learning through local conferences

You could hold a local language planning conference, or an 'identity conference,' centered around activities that will help your community carry out plans to help community members use your language for more writing, as well as for other purposes. For example, such a conference would allow you to develop small 'focus groups' that each handle a specific set of activities related to helping community members learn how to read and write your language--like a focus group that oversees distributing textbooks to schools that offer classes in or about your language (Hatoss 2008:64-66).

Skills

Train your community members how to teach your language

Train speakers of your language how to teach your language to children and others. Do not assume that just because someone can speak a language, they can automatically teach it. Help speakers of your language get training that will enable them to become qualified teachers (according to the normal qualifications for school teachers in your area, if possible). For example, local groups interested in your language and culture can work together with universities to create training programs that will allow speakers of your language to become qualified teachers. Not only can the university offer education to young people from your community, they could also offer a training track that prepares speakers of your language--both younger and older--to become qualified teachers (Hobson 2004:53-57).

Use your language to teach children how to speak a second language/national language

Children can learn a second language by using their first language as a basis for learning.

Provide adult literacy classes in your language

Use the local language to teach adults how to read and write. Using a language that they are already familiar with will make learning to read easier. A guide to setting up an adult literacy program based on a local language can be found in *Manual for developing literacy and adult education programmes in minority language communities* (Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All 2004).

Tools

Make new reference materials for your language on a regular basis (school books, dictionaries, etc.)

Some types of reference materials can be made by a group following a template already set up by someone else. For example, there are software programs and workshop methods to help communities develop dictionaries in their local language, or using the local language plus one or more other languages important to the readers.

Examples

Hungarians in Australia learning Hungarian

In 2001, the Hungarian Council of New South Wales and the Hungarian Centre in Melbourne started an annual conference that brings together teachers, community leaders and others from the Hungarian community living in Australia. Their goals include making sure there are ways for Hungarians to continue learning and using Hungarian in Australia and planning Hungarian cultural and language activities that can be of benefit to the entire Hungarian community in Australia (Hatoss 2008:64-66).

Teach some primary and secondary education classes using the local language

Una bilingual preparatory classes

The 5,400 speakers of the Una language of Papua, Indonesia, live in a remote, mountainous area. Many villages still have no government schools. In order to help their children succeed in being able to enter Indonesian schools, the community has developed an early primary education program to help students learn how to speak, read and write Indonesian. The program follows a 3-year course in which children first learn how to read and write in the Una language. At the same time, they also learn how to speak Indonesian by using Una as the basis for learning the Indonesian. At the end of the third year, children are able to test into the middle and upper levels of Indonesian-language primary schools outside their home villages (Kroneman 2005).

Bunong adult education program

Adults who speak the Bunong language of Mondulkiri province in Cambodia participate in an adult education program in their local language set up around two methods of learning. One method focuses on stories and helps the learners understand what they are reading. The other track is based on primers and focuses on reading with accuracy (UNESCO Bangkok 2006:57).

University program to learn to teach Australian languages

The Koori Centre at the University of Sydney helps students who are speakers of small, local languages do well in their university studies. Students talk with each other about how they are doing in their studies, and they get advice from staff members. The Centre runs courses that prepare members of the local language communities to become teachers (Hobson 2004:53-57).

Dictionary Development Process

The Dictionary Development Process has been used by a number of language communities to develop dictionaries. This method helps participants gather large numbers of vocabulary items in a fairly short time--up to 10,000 in two weeks. Free software programs are used in this method to store and print the data (Shore and van den Berg 2006).

Environment - Discussion #15

Activities

Ask members of government to change laws or form agreements with your communities that allow/support education in your language and other uses of your language

A language policy covenant is one type of agreement that could be made between a government and your language community. A covenant is a negotiated agreement that states in what ways the government will help support the development of your language, which could include education based on your language and training for teachers who speak your language. The covenant could state how much funding the government will commit over a certain period of time. Covenants would normally be renegotiated every few years or more often (Gorter 2001:218).

Skills

Talk with members of government to gain support for education in your language (such as funding, training or use of facilities)

Besides getting policies that allow for education through your local language, you could also approach the government for help with specific parts of the education process. Governments might be able to help with funds for activities, or funds for experts who could give training to teachers who speak your language. They may also allow you to use government-owned buildings for the learning activities you plan. For example, maybe a government-owned school will allow you to use the school building during non-school hours for an activity group.

Tools

Talk with members of government (especially education) to find support for making teaching materials in your language and training teachers

Your community could ask for help with developing local language curriculum from your government, especially the department of education. Governments might be able to provide help with templates or guidelines that need to be met for education requirements. Curriculum experts might be available to help with designing the materials. The government might also be able to provide help with printing and distributing the materials.

Examples

Frisian language policy covenant

The Netherlands government signed a language policy covenant with the province of Friesland in 1989. The covenants promise that the government will help ensure funding for Frisian organizations. The government also agreed to establish policies and laws giving status to the Frisian language for administrative and legal uses (Gorter 2001:218).

Philippines government support for local languages in primary education

Starting in June 2012, the Philippines Department of Education replaced English and Tagalog in many schools with one of twelve other languages spoken in the Philippines. This will affect kindergarten through third grade. This new approach is a part of national education and is supported through training, funds and facilities managed by the Philippines government (Morella 2012).

Papua New Guinea government provides support for 430 languages in early primary education

The government of Papua New Guinea was working with communities and NGOs to develop curriculum and train teachers for preschool and primary grades 1 and 2 in over 430 local languages by 2003. Community members made significant contributions to the development of the local education materials, thus helping keep costs lower than the previous English-only education. The students learn English through the local language in these early grades, and then in grade 3 move into majority English instruction (Bühmann and Trudell 2008).

Aiming for ‘Remembering’

Discussion #16

Tools

Make recordings (audio or video) of elders speaking your language and make written or recorded translations of what they have said in the recordings

You could record texts of elders or others speaking your language and make this available for wider use through whatever technologies are available in your area, such as iTunes or podcasts. You could record video of cultural traditions and your traditional language and put them on media like YouTube.

You could work with linguists to produce recordings of your language that also show the grammar and translations of each word. These recordings and notations can be stored together on digital media to be preserved for others to view and study.

Store recordings, old documents and any historical items from your language in a safe place where they will not be destroyed by rain, fire or floods

If there is a safe location in your area, like a museum or other place that has experience in taking care of older documents and artifacts, you could work out an arrangement to store these materials there. You could also appoint a group or person within your community as the caretaker of these items. Make sure they are stored in a way that they will be safe if there is a fire, flood, theft or other event. Perhaps keeping them in a safe might work in some situations.

Make electronic records (scans, digital recordings) of any recordings or materials you have for your language. Make sure copies of these electronic files are stored in more than one place

You can make electronic scans of digital photos or older documents and artifacts. These digital scans or photos can then be stored electronically with other information about your language. Making digital copies of your language materials allows you to store the information in more than one place, making it safer from being lost. You could also choose to make images of these digital records available on a public website so that others within your community or outside your community can view the older materials without having to come to where they are physically stored.

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