Introducing
“A Guide for Planning the Future of Our Language”

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Introduction

• SIL International
  80+ yrs, 2000+ language communities
• Great opportunity for learning about issues faced by speakers of “smaller languages”
How to capture insights gained?

- Sustainable Use Model (SUM)
- Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS)
How to get practical?

• theoretical models and analytical scales → practical tools for language communities who want to work for a better future for their languages?
A Tool

• “A Guide for Planning the Future of Our Language”
  • informed by theory
  • grounded in experience
  • holistic in perspective
  • participatory in approach
Outline

• SUM and EGIDS
• Practical applications
  • Profiles
  • Insights for language planning
• A Guide for Planning the Future of Our Language
  • purpose, structure
  • some early reports of use and impact
  • a glimpse by video
Companion Presentation

• “Community responses in Indonesia and Malaysia to a new language maintenance planning tool”
  by Charlie Hanawalt

• 13-ICAL Presentation
Sustainable Use Model (SUM)

Sustaining Language Use: Perspectives on Community-Based Language Development
M. Paul Lewis and Gary F. Simons

https://leanpub.com/sustaininglanguageuse
An Ecological Perspective

• language varieties exist in relationship with other language varieties as part of a community’s repertoire
• languages fulfill different functions in a given speech community
• languages can thrive--and die--depending largely on the environment in which they are used
Ecology of languages

• “in linguistic ecology, one begins not with a particular language but with a particular area, not with selective attention to a few languages but with comprehensive attention to all the languages in the area” (Voegelin & Voegelin 1964: 2, cited by Haugen 1972, in turn cited by Hornberger 2002:32)
Biocultural diversity = Wealth

• “A diverse world is a culturally and naturally richer world. With less diversity, humanity is poorer. It is a question of the kind of world we want to live in.”

Linguistic diversity decline

“(N)ormally a result of the process of language shift away from small indigenous languages toward larger, national or regional languages.”

- migration
- urbanization
- national unification
- colonization
- globalization of trade and communications

Language Shift

“Language shift occurs when a population of speakers adopts a new language at the expense of their mother tongue, generally over the course of a few generations, and is the biggest driver of language extinction.”

Language Shift=?Invasive Species!

• “It is the cultural analogue to alien invasive species – language shift – that is the greatest threat to linguistic and cultural diversity.”

Language Shift
is the opposite of
Language Development

But I thought…!?
Language Development

1) the process starting early in life by which a person acquires language.
Language Development

2) the process by which a language takes on new functions within a society
Language Development

3) activities undertaken in a community to add or restore functions for a language
Rather than addressing language shift head on

The Sustainable Use Model begins at a slightly different place...
Knowledge Management

Local communities must concern themselves with the preservation and transmission of “life-crucial knowledge.”
Knowledge that is crucial to a community’s way of life

- history, arts, traditions, folklore, ...

and/or well-being

- physical, spiritual, social, economic, ...
The Basic Decision

• whether/how a community wants to sustain its unique identity
• how to transmit essential bodies of knowledge associated with that identity to succeeding generations
EGIDS

A Scale of Language Development
Philosophical Foundations

GIDS--the starting point

• Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale
Fishman (1991) *Reversing Language Shift*

• A measuring rod for language shift:
  – Level 1 “safest”: an official national language
  – Level 8 “most endangered”: a dying language spoken only by the elderly
  – The 6 levels in between represent successively more functions for language in society as one ascends the scale
  – The scale measures disruption so higher numbers represent greater levels of disruption
The basic premise of GIDS

• Language shift (ending in extinction) happens as a language loses functions in society
• To reverse language shift, the community must work to bring those functions back
An Expanded GIDS

Incorporates finer distinctions at different parts of the scale from

• UNESCO 2003
  “Language vitality and endangerment”
  --9 factors, 6 levels
• Ethnologue (previous editions)
The 13 levels of EGIDS

0 International
1 National
2 Regional
3 Trade
4 Educational
5 Written
6a Vigorous
6b Threatened
7 Shifting
8a Moribund
8b Nearly Extinct
9 Dormant
10 Extinct

The color coding

- Violet ("Institutional") — The language has been developed to the point that it is used and sustained by institutions beyond the home and community. EGIDS 1-4

- Blue ("Developing") — The language is vigorous and is being used in written form in parts of the community, though literacy is not yet sustained through a formal institution. EGIDS 5

- Green ("Vigorous") — The language is unwritten and in vigorous oral use among all generations. EGIDS 6a
The color coding (2)

- **Yellow ("In trouble")** — Intergenerational transmission is in the process of being broken, but the child-bearing generation still speaks the language so revitalization efforts might be able to restore transmission of the language in the home. EGIDS 6b-7

- **Red ("Dying")** — It is too late to restore natural intergenerational transmission in the home. EGIDS 8-9

- **Black ("Extinct")** — The language has fallen completely silent. EGIDS 10
Practical Application of EGIDS

Reporting on and tracking “profiles” of language development or vitality for languages of the world

www.ethnologue.com
A global profile of language status

World Population 7,106,885,254; Living Languages 7,102
Institutional 578, Developing 1,598, Vigorous 2,479, In Trouble 1,531, Dying 916
http://www.ethnologue.com/world
Language status by world areas
Status of all Austronesian languages

- Institutional: 121 (10%)
- Developing: 216 (17%)
- Vigorous: 454 (36%)
- In trouble: 342 (27%)
- Dying: 88 (7%)
- Extinct: 36 (3%)
World vs Austronesian overall language status profiles

WORLD

AUSTRONESIAN
Application to Language Development/Revitalization

Two basic predictions from SUM

1. It is not realistic to skip levels in rising up the EGIDS scale.

2. It is not realistic to maintain an unstable level.
SUM and realistic goals

IF the current level is stable, THEN realistic goals =

• Advance to the next higher level, or

• Maintain the current level
Three Levels of Sustainable Use

Sustainable Literacy

Sustainable Orality

Sustainable Identity

Sustainable History
Five Conditions

Five conditions of language use determine the EGIDS level of a language:

- Functions
- Acquisition
- Motivation
- Environment
- Differentiation
The FAMED Conditions

• **Functions** – The language in question must be useful. Uses (functions) for the language at each sustainable level must exist and be recognized by the community.
The FAMED Conditions

• Acquisition – A means of acquiring the needed proficiency to use the language for those functions must be operational.
The FAMED Conditions

• **Motivation** – Community members must be motivated to use the language for those functions.
The FAMED Conditions

• **Environment** – The external environment (e.g., policy, attitudes) must not be hostile to the use of the language for those functions.
The FAMED Conditions

• **Differentiation** – Societal norms must keep the functions assigned to the language distinct from the functions for L2.
How can real communities make use of insights of SUM & EGIDS (without going to graduate school)?
A Guide for Planning the Future of Our Language
designed to be used by
• members of defined local communities concerned about their language (in groups of 12-15)
• mother-tongue facilitators of the process
• trainers in the use of this approach
A Guide for Planning the Future of Our Language

Not designed to be consumed in one sitting!

The conversations could take place over a number of days or months.
A Guide for Planning the Future of Our Language

71 pages of
Notes for Facilitators
Notes for Trainers
Explanatory material, visual aids, and creative ideas for engaging small groups in guided discussion on specific topics
A Guide for Planning the Future of Our Language

Four Major Sections
A: How do we use our languages?
B: Where is our language now, and where do we want it to go?
C: Language documentation
D: Planning in response to what we’ve learned
A Guide for Planning the Future of Our Language

Companion documents:
Facilitator Reference Materials (17pp)
Alternative ideas, activities, metaphors, resources for guiding process
Resource Guide (47pp)
Activities, tools and examples of what other communities have done to reach specific goals for their languages
Some places where (at least parts of) the Guide has been taught or tested:

Asia: India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines
Africa: Sao Tome and Principe
Americas: Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Mexico, Brazil
Pacific: Papua New Guinea
Summary

In general, the tool has generated considerable enthusiasm wherever it’s been used.

Observed to be effective for getting people thinking and talking and sometimes even planning and taking action.
Anecdote

Part A of Guide given as guided fieldwork assignment to 5 teams of M.A. students

RESULTS:

New community insights
Greater heritage pride among younger participants
One community sponsored their 2 MT facilitators to do study program in Manila
“Word of advice from elders” to stop marrying outsiders
A Guide for Planning the Future of Our Language

How to get the (2nd) Beta version?
--See Charlie Hanawalt or me here at 13-ICAL, or email request to gpfol_intl@sil.org

Eventually intended to be available on www.sil.org
Glimpses from a Workshop
Using the Guide in Peru

3.5 min Youtube video of workshop in Peru [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4tHP2VVwrQ&feature=youtu.be)

2.5 min excerpt to be shown during this presentation