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Strategies for the revitalization of indigenous languages



CIRCLE of the
WORD

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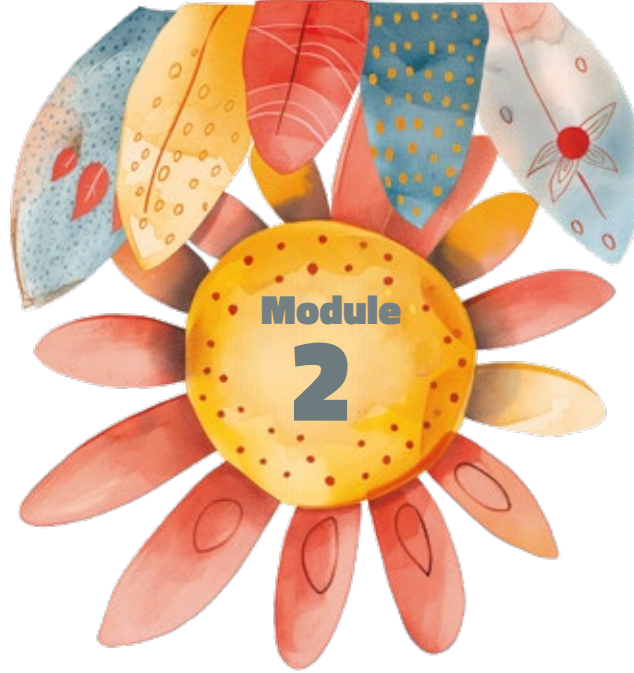


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The methodology for this course and the fieldwork guidelines are a creation of Feeling.

www.feeling.com.co



To learn



Linguistic Immersion in Language Revitalization

Development of Didactic Materials

Training of Speakers and Teachers

Promotion and Awareness



To make



Guide we speak



To Learn





In this document you will
find these symbols that represent:



TIPS

Particular advice on the
subject under discussion.



REMEMBER

Key issues that need
to be remembered.



GET TO KNOW

Extra help to research
and learn more about the topic.

Language Revitalization Strategies

Approaches and Methodologies



At the heart of indigenous language revitalization lies an intricate and multifaceted challenge that requires a comprehensive, adaptive and sensitive approach to the specific needs of each linguistic community. The task of reviving a language that faces the risk of disappearance or decline in its daily use implies not only a deep linguistic understanding, but also a commitment to the revaluation of the cultural identities that these languages represent.

The second unit of our course delves into the rich panorama of strategies and methodologies designed to meet this challenge, outlining a theoretical and practical framework for language revitalization efforts. Language revitalization is not an end in itself, but a means towards achieving a more inclusive and diverse society, where every voice has the power to express itself in its ancestral language. This process goes beyond the recovery of vocabulary and grammar; it is about breathing new life into languages so that they can once again flourish as living means of communication, education and cultural expression. To achieve this, it is imperative to adopt a holistic approach that considers language within its cultural, social and technological context, and recognizes the central role of the community in the revitalization process.

This module will explore three fundamental pillars of language revitalization: language immersion, bilingual and multilingual education, and the implementation of community workshops and courses. Each of these approaches offers unique perspectives and practical solutions to the challenges associated with endangered language revitalization. From educational programs that fully immerse students in the language, to educational models that balance the use of the





language with the use of the indigenous language with other dominant languages, to community initiatives that encourage the practice and use of the language in everyday contexts, this module will provide a comprehensive overview of the methodologies that can be employed to ensure that indigenous languages not only survive, but thrive. In the next section of the module, we will delve into how these strategies are applied in the real world, examining success stories and reflecting on lessons learned. Through this integrated approach, course participants will acquire the tools and knowledge necessary to effectively contribute to the revitalization of indigenous languages, understanding that every revitalization effort is both an act of cultural affirmation and a step towards building a more linguistically diverse and richer future.



Immersion linguistics



Language immersion is presented as one of the most effective and powerful methods in the field of indigenous language revitalization. This approach, focused on the exclusive or predominant use of the target language in educational and everyday settings, allows learners to acquire and use the language in a natural and functional way. Immersion not only fosters linguistic fluency, but also deepens speakers' cultural and emotional connection to their language.

Principles of Linguistic Immersion

Language immersion is based on several key principles that ensure its effectiveness:

Comprehensive Exposure: Learners are surrounded by the target language for a significant portion or all of their day, maximizing opportunities for listening and speaking in authentic contexts.

Active and Meaningful Use: Beyond mere exposure, participants are encouraged to actively use the language in real and meaningful situations, promoting deep and lasting learning.

Cultural Contextualization: Immersion goes hand in hand with the teaching and practice of the culture associated with the language, reinforcing cultural identity and a sense of belonging among speakers.

Adaptability: Immersion programs should be flexible and adaptable to the needs and language proficiency levels of participants.



Types of Immersion Programs

Total Immersion: All educational content is taught in the target language from the earliest stages of education. This model is ideal for creating competent and confident speakers.

Partial Immersion: Some subjects or parts of the school day are conducted in the target language. This option may be more feasible in contexts where the number of competent speakers or resources are limited.

Benefits of Language Immersion

Linguistic Competence: Participants develop strong language skills in both comprehension and expression.

Cultural Revitalization: By integrating culture into language learning, immersion contributes to the revitalization of traditional cultural knowledge and practices.

Attitude Change: Immersion can change negative attitudes toward the target language and culture, fostering pride and appreciation among its speakers.

Challenges and Considerations

Resources and Training: The implementation of immersion programs requires significant resources, including teaching materials and teachers trained in immersion methods.

Community Engagement: The long-term success of these programs depends on the support and commitment of the community, including the families of the learners.

Social Integration: It is essential to promote opportunities for speakers to use the language outside the educational environment, integrating it into social and community life.



GET TO KNOW

Learn about language immersion initiatives to revitalize Indigenous languages

United Nations Web





Bilingual and Multilingual Education

Bilingual and multilingual education emerges as a vital approach to the revitalization of indigenous languages, recognizing the importance of nurturing linguistic competence in more than one language. This educational model not only respects and promotes linguistic and cultural diversity, but also prepares students to participate fully in an increasingly globalized world, while maintaining their cultural identity and heritage.

Fundamental Principles

Linguistic Equity: Bilingual and multilingual education treats all languages involved equally, without positioning one as superior to another. This approach promotes an equitable valuation of languages and cultures.

Curricular Integration: Languages are integrated throughout the curriculum, being used to teach both linguistic content and other subjects. This ensures that students not only learn languages as isolated subjects, but also experience them as tools for knowledge and communication.

Integral Development: Focuses on the integral development of students, aiming at their academic, personal and social growth. Bilingual and multilingual education prepares students to act as global citizens with a deep understanding of diverse cultures and perspectives.



Bilingual and Multilingual Education Models

Transition: This model begins with instruction primarily in the student's native language, with a gradual transition to the second language. Its goal is to ensure comprehension and academic success while introducing a new language.

Maintenance or Enrichment: Unlike the transition model, the goal here is to maintain and strengthen the first language while adding proficiency in a second language. This model is particularly valuable for language revitalization, as it promotes prolonged use and appreciation of the indigenous language.

Reciprocal Immersion: In this approach, groups of students with different native languages teach each other their respective languages, thus promoting bilingual competence in both groups. This model fosters a mutual appreciation of languages and cultures, in addition to building cross-cultural bonds.

Benefits of Bilingual and Multilingual Education

Cognitive: Studies show that bilingual and multilingual students have better cognitive skills, including greater attention span, problem solving and mental flexibility.

Academic: Bilingual and multilingual education can lead to better academic performance, as students learn to analyze and understand concepts from multiple linguistic perspectives.

Sociocultural: This model promotes respect and appreciation of diverse cultures and languages, contributing to a more inclusive and cohesive society.



Challenges

Implementing bilingual and multilingual education presents challenges, such as the need for qualified teachers, adequate teaching resources and institutional support. Strategies to overcome these challenges include educating and training teachers in bilingual methodologies, developing adapted curriculum materials, and collaborating with the community to ensure that programs reflect their cultural needs and aspirations.

In short, bilingual and multilingual education offers a promising path toward the revitalization of indigenous languages, balancing the need for global competence with the desire to preserve unique linguistic and cultural identities. By fostering educational environments that value and promote linguistic diversity, we can ensure that indigenous languages not only survive, but thrive for future generations.



REMEMBER

Not only is the survival of languages endangered, but also the cultural richness and biological diversity associated with them.





Community Workshops and Courses

Community workshops and courses represent a vital and dynamic approach to language revitalization efforts, highlighting the importance of active participation and community engagement. Through these programs, practical and participatory learning is encouraged, which not only teaches the language, but also reinforces cultural identity and a sense of belonging among its members. These initiatives are fundamental to create spaces where the language can be practiced, lived and celebrated.

Key Features

Accessibility: Community workshops and courses are designed to be accessible to people of all ages and language proficiency levels, from beginners to advanced speakers, ensuring that everyone in the community has the opportunity to participate.

Flexibility: These programs are often more flexible than formal curricula, allowing them to adapt to the specific needs and interests of the community, as well as to changing circumstances.

Cultural Approach: In addition to teaching the language, these workshops often integrate significant cultural elements, such as songs, dances, stories and traditions, which help contextualize language learning within the rich cultural tapestry of the community.



Types of Workshops and Courses

Immersion Workshops: Intensive sessions that immerse participants in the language, often through everyday and cultural activities, facilitating a natural, hands-on learning environment.

Language and Culture Courses: Programs that combine language instruction with lessons on the history, traditions and arts of the community, offering a comprehensive education that strengthens cultural identity.

Conversation Circles: Informal meetings where participants practice the language in a relaxed and supportive environment, discussing topics of common interest, sharing stories and experiences.

Successful Implementation

For community workshops and courses to be effective in language revitalization, it is essential to consider several factors:

Local Leadership: The involvement of local leaders and educators in the planning and implementation of programs ensures that they are relevant and respectful of the culture and needs of the community. **Active Participation:** Encouraging the active participation and engagement of the entire community, including families and different generations, is crucial to the success of these programs.

Creative Resources: Using creative and culturally meaningful teaching resources can increase interest and motivation among participants, making learning more engaging and effective.

Evaluation and Adaptation: Regularly evaluating programs and being willing to adapt them based on participant feedback helps ensure that they remain relevant and effective.



REMEMBER

Community workshops and courses not only offer linguistic benefits, but also promote social cohesion.



Language Revitalization Strategies

Materials Development Didactics



The development of teaching materials is a cornerstone of language revitalization efforts, addressing the critical need for accessible, attractive and culturally relevant resources for indigenous language learning and teaching. In the context of revitalization, these materials are not only pedagogical tools, but vehicles of cultural transmission that link the past with the present and future of communities.

Through a meticulous and collaborative approach, the creation of didactic materials seeks not only to facilitate the learning process, but also to foster a deep appreciation and understanding of the language and its cultural significance. Within the framework of indigenous language revitalization, the development of didactic materials occupies a primordial place, acting as the nexus between theory and practice in the language learning process.

The creation of these resources is not only a matter of pedagogy, but also of cultural and linguistic reaffirmation, where language is presented not only as a means of communication, but also as a carrier of the identity and values of a community. At this stage of the course, we focus on exploring how didactic materials, carefully and strategically designed, can be powerful tools for fostering interest, facilitating learning and, ultimately, contributing to the revitalization of endangered languages.



Educational Program Design in Linguistic Revitalization



The design of educational programs plays a crucial role in efforts to revitalize languages at risk of disappearing. These programs should not only focus on effective language instruction, but also on instilling a deep appreciation for the culture and traditions it represents. A well-designed educational program can serve as a powerful vehicle for linguistic and cultural transmission, strengthening speakers' ties to their heritage and fostering an active and engaged learning community.

Key Components of Educational Program Design

Needs Analysis: Before developing a program, it is essential to conduct an analysis of the language and cultural needs of the community. This includes understanding current levels of language proficiency, identifying desired learning objectives, and recognizing available resources and constraints.

Clear and Measurable Objectives: Defining clear and measurable objectives is critical to the success of the program. These objectives should be realistic and tailored to the specific needs of the community, ranging from basic language acquisition to advanced proficiency, along with cultural understanding and appreciation.

Appropriate Methodology: The selection of teaching methodologies should be based on best pedagogical practices and adapted to the particularities of the language and culture. This may include immersion approaches, bilingual education, initiative-based learning, and the use of digital technologies.



Culturally and Linguistically Relevant Instructional Materials:

Instructional materials should be carefully designed or selected to align with program objectives and be culturally and linguistically authentic. The creation of new materials may be necessary to fill specific gaps.

Evaluation and Feedback: Incorporating evaluation and feedback mechanisms allows for measuring progress toward learning objectives and adjusting the program as needed. Evaluation should be ongoing and formative, providing opportunities for reflection and adjustment for both instructors and students.

Community Involvement: Active community involvement in the design and implementation of the program is essential to its relevance and success. This can include everything from the planning phase through teaching, evaluation and program review.



GET TO KNOW

Ejemplos de programas exitosos

Kōhanga Reo and
Kura Kaupapa in New Zealand

Navajo Language Immersion
Programs in the U.S.A.





Creation of Community-Adapted Materials

The creation of community-tailored materials is a fundamental aspect of indigenous language revitalization efforts. This process involves not only translation or linguistic adaptation, but also a deep engagement with the values, culture, and specific needs of each community. By developing materials that resonate with the lived experience of the community, more meaningful learning is fostered and the emotional connection to the language is strengthened.

Principles for the Creation of Community Materials

Community Involvement: Involving community members in all stages of the development process ensures that materials are relevant and culturally appropriate. This collaboration can take the form of workshops, surveys, and feedback meetings.

Cultural Contextualization: Materials should reflect and celebrate the culture, history, and social practices of the community. This includes the use of local iconography, traditional stories, and examples that are culturally significant.

Linguistic Accessibility: Adapting the language level of the materials to that of the learners is crucial. This may involve simplifying texts for beginners or including specific regional dialects.



Diverse and Attractive Formats: Diversification of formats, from printed texts to interactive digital resources, can increase the attractiveness and effectiveness of the materials. Incorporating visual and auditory elements enriches the learning experience.

Strategies for Materials Development

Local Resource Mapping: Identifying and utilizing local resources, such as storytellers, artists, and educators, can enrich the materials and ensure their cultural relevance.

Technology Integration: Technology offers opportunities to create innovative materials, such as mobile applications and online platforms, which can be especially attractive to younger generations.

Flexibility and Adaptability: Developing materials that can be easily updated or modified allows them to evolve with the needs and preferences of the community.



5 children's books in indigenous languages of Mexico

Mexico is full of colors not only in its landscapes, but also in its languages, with 68 native languages that branch out into 364 variants! However, according to INEGI in 2015, only 6.5% of the population speaks an indigenous language.

Factors such as discrimination, migration, and poverty have taken their toll on the number of speakers. But all is not lost, because there are plenty of communities and groups that are making efforts to preserve these languages. The publication of materials in these languages is key to bring their richness closer to those who only speak Spanish. We share in this course of revitalization of indigenous languages 5 Mexican infantiles books written in native languages.

El nacimiento del bejuco (2008)

Nostra Ediciones
Luz María Chapela
Español-tzeltal



El viaje a Mictlan / In inehnemiliz ompa mictlan

Editorial Resistencia
Texto de Víctor José Palacios, traducción al náhuatl Víctor Linares Aguirre, traducción al inglés Adam Critchley
Español-náhuatl-inglés



Lágrimas de Oro: ¡Aquí no hables maya! /
K'aank'aa ya'il icho'ob : Wayé, jma a t'aan ich
maya! / (2013)

Editorial Trillas
Jorge Miguel Cocom Pech
Maya-español



Por qué existen el día y la noche / Meltí. Piyín teey
é ñiaay yiot o' (2014)

Editorial Pluralia/CONACULTA
Versión de Elisa Ramírez Castañeda
Traducción de Arnulfo Estrada
Kiliwa-español



El compadre que se volvió rico una noche / Tu'gø
ja'y midibø jot kujk ach tu'uk tsuum (2014)

Editorial Pluralia
Versión en español de Elisa Ramírez Castañeda Traducción de
Laureano Reyes Gómez
Mixe-español



Example of success



The Menominee Pathway to Climate Resilience is located within the Menominee Language.

Initiative supported by Pawanka Fund

The College of the Menominee Nation's Sustainable Development Institute and the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin Language Immersion Program will obtain guidance on how to revitalize the Menominee language in support of a broader tribal effort to establish a concerted immersion school to be run by Omaeqnomenewak ("People of the Wild Rice") through the guidance and mentoring of the successful Hawaiian concerted school system. The project will focus on language revitalization and charter school development in the context of climate change resilience efforts.

The history of the Omaeqnomenewak ("wild rice people") goes back thousands of years, with archaeological evidence indicating 10,000 years and Omaeqnomenewak teachings as our creation story telling a story that provides a much older Omaeqnomenewak connection to this land now known as the U.S. State of Wisconsin. Like most Indigenous Peoples, the Omaeqnomenewak were affected by European colonialism and the expansion of American settlers over many years. This brought about enormous changes and impacts on our cultural identity, as well as our relationships with the land of which we are a part. The U.S. federal treaty era directly cut off access to lands where we practiced traditional ways of life through hunting, fishing and gathering.



Equally devastating was the disconnection from our ways of life and, specifically, our language through the experience of boarding schools and other methods of separating people from their language and culture. The Omaeqnomenewak still face the more recent effects of the U.S. federal removal policy. Overall, the negative impacts of colonization and settlement affected the core of who we are as a people by disconnecting millennia of knowledge contained in the words and language of our people. Despite this history, the Omaeqnomenewak people continued to fight for their future and maintain a strength that is built from this historical resilience. Climate variability and its predicted effects are just one more in a long list of obstacles we Omaeqnomenewak face on our path to reconnecting and revitalizing our language and community.

The Endangered Languages Project, a project of the Alliance for Linguistic Diversity, classifies the Omaeqnomenewak language as "critically endangered."¹ There are currently 9,102 enrolled tribal members and an estimated 10 people remaining who speak Omaeqnomenew Kiketwan (Menominee language) as their first language. Another group of Omaeqnomenewak are considered second language speakers and are estimated at 20-25 community members. These numbers alone make it imperative that all Omaeqnomenewak do what they can to contribute to revitalization efforts, which includes learning to speak. To address threats to our sovereignty and lands, as well as the effects of climate change, we need everyone for language and cultural revitalization efforts, and now climate change. Many Omaeqnomenewak today understand the need to reclaim the language as a way to address the social and economic issues facing the Omaeqnomenewak.





Use of technology in language teaching

The integration of technology into language teaching represents a revolution in language revitalization efforts, opening new avenues for the learning, practice and preservation of endangered languages. Technology not only offers innovative tools to engage learners, but also facilitates access to linguistic and cultural resources, regardless of geographic or physical limitations. We explore how technology is being used to advance language teaching and strengthen revitalization initiatives.

Online Learning Platforms

E-learning platforms offer structured courses in indigenous languages, allowing users to learn at their own pace. These platforms can range from interactive lessons, practice exercises, to assessments and instant feedback, covering levels from beginner to advanced. Notable examples include Duolingo, which has incorporated indigenous languages into its offerings, and MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) specific to indigenous languages.

Mobile Applications

Mobile apps are particularly effective tools because of their accessibility and ease of use. They can focus on vocabulary, grammar, listening and speaking practice, and language games. These apps, such as "50 languages" which includes lessons for less common languages, allow users to practice and learn at times and places that are most convenient for them.

Multimedia Resources and Digital Contents

Multimedia content, such as videos, podcasts and blogs in indigenous languages, not only provides authentic contexts for language learning, but also introduces learners to the cultures and communities that speak these languages. YouTube channels, educational podcasts and bilingual blogs are examples of how multimedia technology is used to teach and promote indigenous languages.



Social Networks and Virtual Communities

Social networks and virtual communities provide spaces for speakers and learners of indigenous languages to connect, share resources and practices, and support each other in their learning journeys. Facebook groups, Twitter and dedicated platforms are vital for building and maintaining an active language community, allowing speakers to feel part of a collective revitalization effort.

Content Creation Software and Tools

Software such as course builders, e-book authoring tools and video editing software enable educators and communities to create their own customized learning materials. This facilitates the production of educational resources that are culturally relevant and tailored to the specific learning needs of the community.

Challenges and Considerations

Despite its many benefits, the integration of technology into language teaching faces challenges, including the digital divide, the need for technology training for educators, and the importance of ensuring that content is linguistically accurate and culturally appropriate. It is crucial that these technological efforts be accompanied by strategies to address these challenges, ensuring that technology serves as a bridge rather than a barrier to language revitalization.

In conclusion, the use of technology in language teaching opens up a world of possibilities for language revitalization, offering innovative and accessible methods for learning, practicing and preserving languages. By leveraging these technological tools, revitalization efforts can reach wider audiences and have a deeper impact on the preservation of linguistic and cultural diversity.



Language Revitalization Strategies

Formation of Speakers and Teachers



Introduction

The success of any language revitalization program depends largely on the availability of competent speakers and well-trained educators. The training of these individuals requires a holistic approach that combines language learning with the development of pedagogical and cultural skills. This approach ensures that teachers are not only able to teach the language effectively, but also serve as role models and culture bearers for their students.

New Speaker Training

The creation of new speakers is fundamental to the survival and growth of any language. This involves not only teaching the language to individuals with no prior knowledge, but also fostering an environment where language use is reinforced and valued. Immersion programs, conversation circles and community activities are examples of how learners can be encouraged to use the language in a variety of contexts, thereby increasing their fluency and confidence.



New Speaker Training



Training new speakers is a unique challenge and opportunity in language revitalization efforts.

This process goes beyond the simple transmission of linguistic knowledge; it is a deep commitment to cultivating a new generation of speakers who can use the language in their daily lives, revitalizing its presence in the community and ensuring its future transmission. Here, we explore effective strategies and innovative approaches to training new speakers.

Strategies for New Speaker Training

Total Immersion Programs: Immerse learners in environments where the target language is the sole or primary means of communication. These programs can be particularly effective for children in schools or summer camps, but can also be adapted for adults in retreats or intensive workshops.

Peer Mentoring and Peer Learning: Pairing learners with native or more advanced speakers for regular practice. This strategy encourages learning in real contexts and facilitates natural language acquisition through social interaction.

Use of Technology and Digital Media: Mobile applications, online games, e-learning platforms and social networks can provide accessible and engaging resources for independent learning and language practice. Technology also enables the creation of virtual communities of speakers and learners.



Community-based activities and initiatives: Integrate language learning into initiatives and activities that are relevant to the community, such as restoring cultural sites, documenting oral histories, or organizing cultural events. This links language learning to a broader community purpose.

Important Considerations

Motivation and Cultural Relevance: Language instruction should connect with learners' cultural identities and address their interests and motivations. This may include integrating cultural, historical and contemporary elements into learning.

Adaptability to Different Ages and Learning Levels: Programs must be flexible enough to adapt to the needs of learners of various ages and language proficiency levels, from absolute beginners to those seeking to perfect their fluency.

Creating Opportunities for Active Use: Encourage spaces and opportunities for new speakers to use the language in a variety of contexts, both formal and informal, to increase their confidence and competence. Challenges and Solutions

Training new speakers faces several challenges, including limited availability of resources and native speakers, cultural or linguistic resistance, and competition with dominant languages.

Overcoming these challenges requires an inclusive community approach, creative use of technology and media, and strategies to increase the visibility and value of the language within and outside the community.



To Make



Guide We speak



1

Choose a native language
It can be from your community or from any native language in the world.

2

Knows the language
Research the language you chose and in one paragraph describe the origin of the language and what struck you most about its history.

3

Choose your favorite word
Choose a word, the one you liked the most from the language you are studying.

4

Draw the meaning of your word
Draw or post a picture that represents what the word means.

5

Share your guide in the Facebook working group.
Once you have finished completing this guide, share it on the Facebook workgroup.



Example

Guide
We speak

 PAWANKA FUND

CIRCLE of the WORD



1 Choose a native language

Name of the native language
Tamazight (Amazigh language of the High Atlas)



2 Knows the language

Write a paragraph telling the origin of the language you have chosen.

The Tamazight language is one of the ancestral languages of the Amazigh people, spoken for centuries across the mountains of the High Atlas in Morocco. It is a language deeply connected to the land, to water, to the stars, and to the pathways our communities have walked since ancient times.



3 Choose your favorite word

Write your favorite word
Tillelli (Freedom)



4 Draw or place an image that represents your favorite word.





Guide We speak



CIRCLE
WORD of the



1 Choose a native language

Name of the native language



2 Knows the language

Write a paragraph telling the origin of the language you have chosen.



3 Choose your favorite word

Write your favorite word

4 Draw or place an image that represents your favorite word.



Thank you for completing Module 2!

Don't forget to upload your completed guide to our Facebook group: "Circle of the Word."
Look out for the third and final module next week.



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