

National Science Foundation
Workshop for
**Documenting Endangered
Languages**



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Documenting Endangered Languages

The Ethnologue's Contribution

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Goals and Purpose of the Ethnologue

- to provide a comprehensive listing of the known **living languages** of the world
 - Delimited scope
 - Classification
 - Dialects
 - Language Use
 - Language Development
 - Other
 - Summary data

Current contributions:

- **Demographics:** speaker population, ethnic population, monolingual population, bilingual population, population percent in country, age(s) of speakers
- **Vitality:** vitality status, attitudes assessment
- **Use:** domains of use, general comments on use, use in education, literacy rates, status (official, national, trade, etc.), media usage
- **Development:** script and orthography information, existence of locally-authored literature, date of publication of Bible or part thereof
- **Documentation:** Existence of dictionary, grammatical description, text collection

Future contributions under consideration:

- **Demographics:** age of youngest known speaker, change in speaker population,
- **Vitality:** GIDS level
- **Use:** expanded domain data
- **Development:** expanded script and orthography data
- **Documentation:** expanded range of documentation categories to include oral and visual materials

Future Directions

- **Country-by-country data “audits”**
- **Participation in broad based development initiatives and networks**
- **Improved feedback mechanisms**
- **Increased frequency of publication**
- **Update of category definitions**