

ADDRESSING THE FACTORS INVOLVING IN THE ENDANGERMENT OF INDIGENIOUS LANGUAGES

Imama Sabir Rao*¹, Rizvi Syed Sanober², Mehboob Ali Golo³, Sonal Khan Maitlo*⁴

¹M. Phil English (Linguistics) Lahore Leads University, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan; ²Lecturer, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto University of Law Karachi, Sindh, Pakistan; ³Assistant Professor department English Language and Literature, The Shaikh Ayaz University, Shikarpur, Sindh, Pakistan; ⁴M.Phil English (Linguistics) Lahore Leads University, Lahore, Punjab Pakistan.

¹imamaiftikhar6@gmail.com; ²rizvi.snober@szabul.edu.pk; ³mehboob.golo@saus.edu.pk; ⁴sonalkhan3634@gmail.com

Corresponding Author: *1

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ABSTRACT

This research primed not only to divulge the factors involving in language endangerment, but also addressing these factors to solve the problem and preserve indigenous languages in the future. No community want to see their language in danger because with the death of a language the entire history perishes; but there are some factors which are leading to Pakistani indigenous languages to endangerment. The researchers explored and addressed these factors through this valuable research to solve this problem; to fulfill this purpose they face to face meet 360 participants and asked them seventeen close-ended questions and one open-ended question to find the answer of the both research questions. The purpose of this survey was to compose data to solve the problem investigated. The composed data was later analyzed by using “Statistical Package of Social Sciences” (SPSS); and analyzed data was presented in the tables and figures. Findings of this research indicated that mainstream of the research participants agreed that communication barriers, traveling, tourism, trends of language mixing, marriages and migrations are leading indigenous languages to the verge of danger. The processes of endangerment can be reverse able by giving special focus from its speakers. In the end researchers give some recommendations to preserve and restore these languages.

Keywords: Indigenous languages, Endangered languages, Level of endangerment, Endangerment & Extinction

INTRODUCTION

The increasing globalization has immensely influenced languages in the world, consequently there is need to preserve languages, because languages are not only a significant aspect of our identity but it is like a building block of our assortment and inheritance. Therefore, losing languages are not merely loss of languages but also entirely loss of heritages and cultures of the concerned communities. The important literary works as poetry and traditional stories becomes dissolve with language extinction. In the world frequency of endangered languages is increasing

gradually. Pakistan is situated in South Asia which has rich history of languages but unfortunately there are approximately twenty-five languages which are enlisted in endangered languages in the official record. Language is inimitable occupancy of human beings gifted by God. Social evolution deprived of languages is incredible. Languages are ubiquitous and without languages humans are like dumb animals, indeed humans are social and gain evidence is their fundamental requirement (Maitlo, Tumrani & Farhat, 2023).

Language is used as a communicating tool through which people transfer information to carry out their social affairs language is required by all human being. It is a vital human activity through which desire, directions, ideas and emotions are expressed Cheema, et al (2023). With the help of language human being can transmit information; language is storehouse of knowledge. It is an instrument of thinking as well as source of pleasure Maitlo et al, (2023). According to Encyclopedia Britannica, “now a day there is 6700 languages in the world but it was single man who comes to the earth. Language act about as a mark of identity, individuals have their own selection of language which empower them to relate to a particular culture or social gathering. Language cannot be isolated from the culture and society in which it gets itself. Some social groups have wished to maintain their culture and linguistics identity but it is difficult due to the process of language and societal change. Language change is a common process, so it is a social change (Austin & Sallabank, 2011).

With the growth of population, advancement in technology, accelerate urbanization and rapid industrialization the world has very near to globalization. This increasing rate of technology, globalization and international marketing highly affected on human culture, language and other lifestyle. The languages of and civilization of developed nations has great intervention on other culture and language. When parents are not transferring their language to their children and the language have no active user in daily life that language is consider to be endangered. Any language which has small number of speakers is in worry. When a language has very few elder speakers and that language is considered to be endangered language.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

“Human beings are only dumb animal without language. It is the human ability to communicate through words that makes it different from an animal” (Maitlo, Tumrani & Ali, 2022). Therefore, language have important role in every field of human life; so, it is duty of human beings to preserve their languages; but unfortunately, many languages are listed as endangered languages in the world. This tendency is also observed in Pakistan according to

UNESCO report twenty-eight indigenous languages are endangered. The main reason of this cause is that elder are not willing to transfer these indigenous languages to their next generation. The present study is directed to find and address these motives which are causing of endangerment of indigenous languages. Similarly, the specific study tried to find methods to preserve these Pakistani indigenous languages.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The key objective of the current research is;

- To explore which indigenous languages are endangered languages in Pakistan.
- To explore the factors which are causing language endangerment and decline.
- Finding out the approaches which are helpful in preserving indigenous languages.

To find these objectives researchers developed the following research questions.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present work is dealing with these research questions:

- I. Which indigenous languages are endangered languages in Pakistan?
- II. Explore main factors of endangerment and ways preserve indigenous languages?

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Language is an intricate anthropological phenomenon owing to its natural complexity there are not satisfactory marks and particular directions to generalize. Relatively, this is substance of everyday innovations. Many experts of the field of linguistics in worldwide developing innovative research works and discovering new finding. Eventually, offsprings researchers will challenge and will come up with dissimilar conclusions. The range continues in everlasting mode. Therefore, singularity of anthropological languages is wide-ranging and miscellaneous; consequently, it is unbelievable to incorporate altogether. The researchers restricted their specific research study to the endangered languages in the context of Pakistan.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The present study is addressing interesting linguistic issues as endangerment and decline of some Pakistani indigenous languages. The current research is conducted in Pakistani context which makes it momentous as it is conducted in miscellaneous viewpoints. The current study is fourfold, firstly, the present research is essence of prominent issue of the contemporary age endangerment and extinction of indigenous languages in Pakistan; secondly, the present research will find out the reasons of endangerment, decline, disappearance and extinction of the subjugated languages; thirdly, the researchers offer a sheer number of tested commendations for the purpose of preserving languages which are endangered and decaling; lastly likewise, the study will helpful for future researches in filling research gaps.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The key purposes of literature review are providing evidences and indications from the previous studies linked to present study (Ahmad, Maitlo & Rao, 2022). Literature review summarizes and evaluates the previous writings related to present topic and provides framework to contemplate results for current research work; likewise, it reveals the previous works and provide progressive ideas for advanced researches. Furthermore, it aids researcher to replace his research in greater context to show upgraded result (Ahmad, Rao & Rao, 2023). The literature review of the present research contains on language endangerment, its definition, causes, levels, and language extinction; followed by some previous researches and research gap.

LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT

Language endangerment refers to the stage of any language in which it is decaying day by day and not preserved in documents and records; therefore, the possibility of its revitalization vanished; moreover, on a social basis its use is decreasing rapidly. The external and internal forces are causing language endangerment, former refers to attacks of foreigners, aggressiveness, religions, economic conditions and education and social pacifications; the later refers to feel shyness and inferiority while interacting in their native language. Sometimes both the internal and external forces abruptly attack on a language and the

language and culture cannot survive further. The speakers of the language consider that this language is no more advantageous for them and for their coming generation. Furthermore, the people give up the use of their mother tongue to overcome the linguistic discrimination (Granadillo & Orcutt-Gachiri, 2011).

The loss of every language result in the irretrievable loss of idiomatic, history and culture. Every language is a peculiar exhibition of men experience of the world. No single elements show that language is endangered, but UNESCO experts have identified nine factors that should be considered together:

- Language transmission among generation.
- Exact number of speakers.
- Ration of speakers in whole population.
- Move in area and media.
- Accessibility of stuff for language teaching.
- Governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies including official status and use.
- Behavior of speech community for their native language.
- Quantity and quality of record.

ENDANGERED LANGUAGE

The language becomes endangered language as its native users are not interacting in their own language and preferring the use of other languages; neither, their kids are acquiring their native language nor parentages are transforming it to new generations. Endangered language is one that is probably going to dead in future. Many languages are dying and other languages which are used widely in the region are replaced. Except if current patterns are reversed, within the next century, these endangered languages will become dead. New generations and new speakers cannot learn numerous different languages, when the last speaker of the language dies, these languages will become dead. In fact, many languages have just a single native speaker still living, and that individual's death will mean the eradication of the language: It will never again be spoken or known by anyone.

WHY LANGUAGE WOULD BE ENDANGERED?

A language sweeps when its speakers disappear or when they adopt another language of the dominated group. Languages are often threatened by external forces such as military, economic circumstances, religion, education and culture or by internal forces such as the sense of inferiority and shame by the speakers toward their mother tongue. Today rapid migration and accelerate urbanization is another main cause of the loss of traditional lifestyle and intend people to use dominated language which is necessary for their communication, social participation and economic development.

Language endangerment is not always Language Death; we saw that language endangerment is not a simple phenomenon. There are so many things attached, a language will not vanish swiftly. May be in one place the language will die out but in many places it will alive for many causes. Although population plays an important role in this matter but there may be a small group can be dominated on large population such as British domination in India. Furthermore, geographical diversity for a language will not influence on language of similar population such as Urdu in Gulf countries.

LEVELS OF ENDANGERMENT

“UNESCO” distinguished linguistic endangerment into four levels as:

1. The first level of language endangered is known as “vulnerable” mostly spoken by the children, nevertheless this is limited to specific domain for instance at house.
2. The second level of language endangered is “definitely endangered”, in this stage children leave learning their native language at their homes.
3. The third level of language endangered is called “severely endangered” this level refers to the stage where only elders speak and know this but they do not use this while communicating with their children’s.
4. The fourth level of language endangered is termed as “critically endangered” in this level the language is occasionally spoken by the elders. (Moseley, 2010).

LANGUAGE EXTINCTION

According to ethnologies presently seven thousand languages are articulated on the globe and optimists estimated that 50% will die, while another estimation showed that 75% to 90% languages will die in the end of present century. About Pakistani languages ethnologies listed almost seventy will die and some languages have died even now, while others are on desertion edge. Moreover, when language deprived from its speakers it cannot passes to next generations then it dies (Moseley, 2010).

Language loss and language death interchangeably refer to language extinction. Language loss refers to stage where the language entirely loses its speakers, while language death refers to the stage when its users have fewer ability and fluency in language compared to their progenitors. Moreover, linguistic attrition procedure causes language death because in this process speakers loses talent in the native language. One more procedure involve in the death of native language is language shift due to linguicide because new generations are not acquiring mother tongue as first language. Languages have died out all over history and it has been replaced through language contact; the contact among groups of speakers of diverse languages, or closing the gap due to lack of communication over distance (Ladefoged, 1992). Till now this was seen as ordinary series of exchange. But an increasing number of different types of language can no longer be learned by children, as well as the trend of language change, where speakers move to languages of wide communication, means that unless the various inventive ways in which humans express themselves are now documented, future generations will have no knowledge of them.

The loss of a language is like the loss of a dilapidated museum or library. In its own way of speaking, in its lexical and semantic features things are an important step in the culture of its speakers. The spread of few leading languages and the losing of native languages is universal phenomenon.

Language shows the uniqueness of society or ethnic group, when a language is extinct the uniqueness of society will be vanished. The language loss is just like the loss of culture or the loss of gift of our ancestors, so every language has a uniqueness and beauty. Languages have died off throughout history, but never have we faced the massive

extinction that is threatening the world right now; to say that a language is dead is like saying that a person is dead. Language has no existence without people. When no one speaks a language, it dies (Granadill & Orcutt-Gachiri, 2011).

Language dies when it is not passed to the younger generation. The language is not a self-sustaining entity. Language can only occur in the communities where there are speakers and transmit it. When there is a good environment for people to live, a community of people can only exist there. Languages are in danger when communities cannot flourish. Language dies when they lose their speakers (Nettle & Romaine, 2002).

Language shift occurs when speakers relinquish their language, eagerly or under pressure, for other language, which at that point takes over as their means of communication or socialization. Language death alludes to the condition of extinction, that is, the language is no longer utilized as a means of communication or socialization. Language death may happen through the abandonment of language by its speakers, the non-utilization of language in any space, the vanishing of its speakers. The procedures of language shift and language death are interrelated as typically a language gets extinct at the point when its speakers shift to other language. In any case, if all speakers of the language are abolished, the language can become extinct.

Language loss occurs when speakers of any language quit speaking it. Instead, language shift is the essential reason for language loss, when the speakers stop to speak their own indigenous language for the language of what is commonly an economically or politically leading neighboring culture. Language loss and language change are natural to all language circumstances. While the degree of change of languages differs, every single language continually changes after some time and language can change to such an extent that they develop into totally various language. A different sort of language loss happens when speakers stop communicating in their legacy language for another language (Grenoble, 2011).

SOME PREVIOUS RELATED RESEARCHES

In the international context several researches conducted on the topic of endangered languages as Headland, (2003) analyzed thirty endangered

languages in the Philippines; Blench, (2007) investigated endangered languages in West African context; Premrirat, (2007) studied endangered languages of Thailand; Salminen, (2007) analyzed endangered languages in European countries. Turin, (2007) studied linguistic diversity and the preservation of endangered languages in a case study from Nepal. van Driem, G. (2007), studied endangered languages in South Asian context by analyzing these endangered languages in Indian subcontinent and other countries of the South Asia in the chapter number fourteen of an edited book of Matthias Brenzinger. He analyzed languages regarding their families and context and find many languages are in danger in South Asia. Florey, (2010) analyzed endangered languages of Austronesia. Akpanglo-Nartey et al, (2012) investigated some endangered languages of Ghana. Elnazarov, (2023) analyzed endangered languages of Central Asian context.

In in national context of Pakistan limited researches has done on this topic as the, researcher Burki, (2001) analyzed dying languages specially focusing on Ormuri language which is spoken in the limited areas of Southern Waziristan. Bari, Ahmed & Tabassum, (2020) investigated diminishing local languages in the era of globalization a case study of Pakistan. Younus, Farhat & Ahmad, (2023) analyze the factors involving in decline of Kalasha language, the main purpose of this research was to find the reasons which are causing the decline of this language of minorities. The sample size was 106 participants, the findings of the study showed that communication barriers, migration, tourism, and the trend of language mixing are the major factors of languages endangerment. The researchers find this gap and tried to fill this gap through this valuable research work by using following methods and approaches.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this part of the study the researcher gives account of the procedures which he/she has employed in the completion of research work (Ahmad, Maitlo & Jeevan, 2023). For the present research researchers employed survey technique and gathered data from randomly selected 360 participants from all Pakistan, this idea was taken from the research study of Ahmad, Cheema, & Farhat, (2023), to get better

information. The researchers selected participants from both locations and both genders because “gender is always considered an important factor for the teaching and learning process in every research work” (Rao, Jeevan & Ahmad, 2023, P,319). For instrumentation the researchers used questionnaire containing on three parts first part covers on demographic information, second part contained on seventeen close-ended questions while third part contain on one open ended question. The researchers face to face meet all research participants and collected data; the collected data was later analyzed in numerical figures by using SPSS software latest version. The analyzed data was presented in figures and tables.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The purpose of the present research was to explore the factors causing language endangerment in in Pakistan. There are some endangered languages in Pakistan which are decaying day by day the present study is not only an effort to highlight these endangered languages and involved factors, but it also presents the ways to preserve these languages by being endangered. First part is contained on demographic information of the participants, second part contains on close ended questions, while the third part comprises one open-ended question. The close ended question finds the answer of first research question, while the open-ended question finds the answer of second research question.

Table: 01
Demographical Statistics of the Research Contributors.

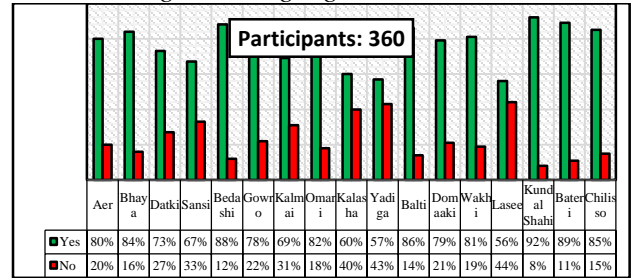
Location/Gender	Area/	Partakers	Frequency	Percentage	Total
Gender	Urban	90	50%		total 360/ (100%) contributed
	Rural	90	50%		
Location	Male	90			in research.
	Female	90	50%		

Table above is showing the results of the demographic information of the participants as there were total 360 contributor participated in this research. The ninety belongs to the urban and ninety belongs to the rural areas of Pakistan. Similarly, the ninety belong to male and ninety belong to female genders.

CLOSE ENDED QUESTIONS

To find the answer of the first research question the researchers in the part B of the questionnaire asked seventeen close ended questions from the total three hundred sixty research participants about the endangered languages in Pakistan. The responses are presented in the figure one blew.

Figure:01
 Some Endangered Languages in Pakistan.



About Aer language 80% said yes, 20% no, Bhaya language 84% said 16% no, Datki language 73% said yes, 27% no, Sansi language 67% said yes, 33% no, Badeshi language 88% said yes, 12% no, Gowro language 78% yes, 22% no, Kalmi language said yes 69%, 31% no, Omari language 82% yes, 18% no, Kalasha language 60% yes, 40% no, Yidgha language 57% yes, 43% no, Balti language 86% yes, 14% no, Domaaki language 79% yes, 21% no, Wakhi language 81% yes, 19% no, Lasee language 56% yes, 44% no, Kandal Shahi language 92% yes, 08% no, Bateri language 89% yes, 11% no, Chilisso language 85% said yes, 15% no. Therefore, this is clear that the majority of the participants agreed that these languages are endangered languages and gradually declining.

OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

To find the answer of the second research question the researchers in the part C of the questionnaire asked one open ended question from the total three hundred sixty research participants about the main factors of endangerment and ways preserve indigenous languages The responses are presented in the table number one and table number two blew.

Table: 02
What are the factors in language endangerment and how endangered language can be prevented?

Factors involving in language endangerment	Ways to preserve endangered language
<i>Extracts from Responses</i>	<i>Extracts from Responses</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Due to communication barriers inclination of the speakers of these languages is towards languages. 2. Mixing other languages with indigenous languages is causing language endangerment. 3. Bilingualism, multilingualism, habits of codeswitching and codemixing etc. 4. Travelling and tourism is also a major factor in language endangerment. 5. Higher study in abroad, migrations, marriage etc. are also some factors involve in the endangerment of these indigenous languages. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government should take action by inviting linguists to preserve endangered languages. 2. Government must publish books in these languages by providing funds. 3. These languages should be included in syllabus at primary level in the areas where its spoken. 4. The concerned families must use these languages in their homes with their children. 5. The speakers of these languages must use these languages on social media plate form.

The factor of communication barrier, speakers' inclination to other languages, codeswitching, codemixing, bilingualism, multilingualism, travelling and tourism, higher education from abroad, marriage and migration are some major factors involving in language endangerment. To preserve these languages participants suggested some solutions as government take steps to preserve language by inviting linguists for consultation. Moreover, government must publish books in these languages by providing funds. Families must use languages in homes and social media to save these endangered languages.

DISCUSSION

Some endangered languages in the province Sindh are as, **Aer language** is spoken by few hundred persons in the rural areas of Sindh, especially in (Hyderabad, Kunri, Kot Ghulam Mohammad and Nawab Shah) so, listed as an endangered language.

Bhaya language is spoken in Sindh, particularly in (Mirpur Khas, Hyderabad, Khipro, and Kot Ghulam Mohammad, it is also considered endangered language with few hundred speakers. **Datki language** is spoken mostly by Hindus in Mirpur Khas, Bedin, Thar Parkar, Umer Kott, Indian province Rajasthan. Sindhi language dominating on it, so, Datki language is considered endangered language. **Sansi language** is spoken by twenty thousand people in Sindh province, especially suburb areas of Karachi. Mostly Muhajirs speak it, and it's not aboriginal language of Pakistan.

Some endangered languages in the province KPK are as, **Badeshi language** is purposeless and spoken proficiently by few persons so it's called dormant language. It's spoken in Swat, Tret, Bishigram, Alai and Mansehra. **Gowro language** is spoken by few hundred people in district Kohistan of KPK and considered endangered language. **Kalami language** is spoken by few hundred Swati persons particularly in Kalam area. **Omari language** is spoken in the limited areas of Southern Waziristan. **Kalasha language** is also endangered language spoken by kalash people in kalash valley district Chitral. **Yidgha language** is endangered language in real sense with only six thousand speakers and becoming extinct in Chitral. The main reason of its endangerment is impact of Khowar language in district Chitral.

These endangered languages are from Gilgit Baltistan areas as, **Balti language** is spoken in areas of Skardu and Gilgit Baltistan, this is also considered as an endangered language. **Domaaki language** is categorized as a moribund language, which mean its near death and will become extinct soon. Its spoken Hunza, and Gilgit Baltistan by few hundred people so-called Dom's declining daily. **Wakhi language** mostly spoken in Gojaal, Hunza valley and Gilgit Baltistan. This language is also gradually declining because its speakers are migrating in different areas and adopting other languages.

Some endangered languages from other areas of Pakistan are as, **Lasee language** speakers in Lisbella district of Baluchistan are remain only eleven thousand and decreasing day by day. **Kandal Shahi language** is spoken in Neelam valley Kashmir only by seven hundred speakers and enlisted as a moribund language. **Bateri language** is spoken by the people living on the eastern bank of Indus River

in Batera area. **Chilisso language** is spoken by Shina speakers in the eastern areas.

The participants were asked about the factors which are leading to the indigenous languages to the endangerment, most of the participants of said communication barriers as speakers of these languages are communicating in other languages which is leading them to other languages. Language switching, mixing, bilingualism and multilingualism are also leading to danger. Moreover, travelling tourism, and migration, marriage and go to abroad for higher study are also leading languages to endangerment.

About the ways to preserve these languages the participants presented different kinds of the solutions some said government should take action to preserve these languages by inviting linguists and publishing books in these languages by providing fundings. Moreover, these languages should be included in the curriculum of primary level schools in these areas, and the families must transfer these languages to their children to preserve it, the speakers of these indigenous languages must promote their language by using social media platform.

The findings of the present research partially match with the findings of some previous researches of Burki, (2001) on dying languages; special focusing on Ormuri language; Headland, (2003) on thirty endangered languages in the Philippines; Blench, (2007) endangered languages in West Africa; Premsrirat, (2007) endangered languages of Thailand; Salminen, (2007) endangered languages in Europe; Turin, (2007). Linguistic diversity and the preservation of endangered languages a case study from Nepal; van Driem, (2007) studied endangered languages in South Asian context; Florey, (2010). *Endangered languages of Austronesia*; Akpanglo-Nartey et al, (2012) endangered languages of Ghana; Bari, Ahmed, & Tabassum, (2020) diminishing local languages in the era of globalization a case study of Pakistan. Elnazarov, (2023) endangered languages of Central Asia. Which makes this research a valuable and helpful in preserving endangered languages.

CONCLUSION

Language loss is an alarming linguistic mystery worldwide; different languages and various dialects are becoming a direct victim of language loss. The

aim of this particular research work is deal with the endangerment and extinction of indigenous languages of Pakistan. Linguists argue that language extinction is a gradual process, and with the passage of time, the victimized language steadily goes extinct. Dominance of other languages, low social status and fewer beneficiaries are some of the reasons of a language going extinct (Austin, & Sallabank, 2011). Thus, language loss is a threat to a country's linguistic diversity. In Pakistan, for instance, some seventy languages are actively spoken with numberless dialects. Some minor languages and dialects, however, are directly hit by language loss. The researchers, thus, develops a sound rationale about 'why' some particular languages and dialects are declining, particularly in Pakistan; 'which' factors cause language loss; and 'how' practical measures could avoid this phenomenon of language declining.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Now comes the main question, how can one preserve these languages to keep their rich literature and applications protected. The researchers give some recommendations to save ingenious languages from being endangered.

- In order to preserve indigenous languages, we must take up the mission of promoting language diversity and recording our mother tongues in order to preserve them in their original forms.
- It is our moral duty to work towards spreading awareness of these languages and teach people to take pride in speaking them. It should be kept in mind that preserving languages is not just the duty of people who speak it but also government bodies so that proper regulation can be ensured.
- People should be taught that for their identities to continue existing, it is important for their cultural stance to be present all across the globe, and for that to happen, the existence of their language is necessary.
- The state needs to take timely and appropriate steps to revive these and so many other endangered languages and secure the culture and identity of the peoples that they represent.

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