

LANGUAGE DOCUMENTATION

Documentation Assessment



Part 1: Preparing the Way

Consider the questions below before you begin



What is the overall goal of your project?

- School-based: curricula development; what age group?
- Community-based: classes, cultural activities, radio, etc.?
- External project: signage, web/tech materials, scholarship?
- Also consider who are your allies in this work: community programs, other TCUs, external partners?



What is the starting point for documentation?

- Are you working with speakers?
- Are you working teachers or language learners?
- Who (personnel) or what (materials) are needed for a successful project?
- Are you utilizing materials/data already in the community?
- Are you collecting new material/data?



Considerations for data/materials:

- If you are using older/available materials:
 - do you have permission to access and use this data?
 - what format are these materials in (VHS, cassette tape, print)?
 - do they need to be converted to a newer technology?
 - have the materials been reviewed for appropriate cultural or language content: when, how, or who can access this?



Part 2: Beginning the Study

Considerations for **EXISTING MATERIALS**



Develop inventory lists for materials you already have.

Inventory lists should include the following:

- Title of document material
- Date it was created, recorded, etc.
- Creator and/or Speaker of/in document
- Size of document
- Location (where is it housed)
- Format (print, cassette tape, VHS, digital, etc.)
- Rights (is it public domain, access to only some)
- Any other important information needed



Also indicate/include the following:

- Has it been translated, transcribed and by whom
- Has the material been updated to new media format; list new format.
- Date of transcription/translation and media conversion
- Does it contain culturally sensitive material
- Is it stored in a safe, secure place?
- Include special notes (are there illustrations, etc.)
- Set a priority level for additional processing or backing up (copies)



Developing Existing Resources; identify the following:

- Do you need training or personnel to translate, transcribe, convert materials to newer media?
- Who will complete the inventory?
- Who will analyze & manage rights to materials?
- How will you create or manage a safe storage system?
- List any physical resources you have
- Include any notes, barriers, or other issues





Part 2: Beginning the Study

Considerations for **NEW MATERIALS**



Make a wish list of what to collect and include the following:

- Title
- Format (will it be video, audio, etc.)
- Short description
- Intended use (i.e. to help students with conversational norms)
- Target audience (i.e. students & age, community)
- Copyright plan including sharing possibilities
- Will it need translation or transcription
- Will it need digitization
- Back up and Storage plan
- List any restrictions



Also include the following:

- What is needed to collect the material and who will do it; are translators needed?
- Identify speakers or others to record if needed
- How will you ensure quality control
- How long will it take to collect the material & where will it be housed
- Make a list of what to collect: conversations, songs, cultural activities, social media, classroom content, etc.



Developing New Resources; identify the following:

- Who will manage, prioritize, and support production of new materials?
- Who will translate/transcribe if needed?
- What resources are needed to complete tasks?
- What is communication plan for the team?
- How will decisions be made about priorities, best practices and guidelines?
- Consider safe & secure storage & physical resources
- Include any notes, barriers, or other issues



Resources for Documentation & Data Management

Data Sovereignty planning via the CARE principles:
<https://github.com/DataCurationNetwork/data-primers>

National Science Foundation's Data Management

Guidance: Information can be found here on what to include in the required Data Management Plan supplementary document for NSF grant proposals.
<https://www.nsf.gov/sbe/data-management>

Local Contexts: A global initiative supporting Indigenous communities with tools to reassert cultural authority in heritage collections and data; includes metadata development for language.
<https://localcontexts.org/>

Creative Commons: A tool to assist with Copyright, Licensing, Reuse and Derivatives Management
<https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/>

Archives Aligning with Grantor's Requirements

DELAMAN: The Digital Endangered Languages and Musics Archives Network
<https://www.delaman.org/>

Core Trust Seal: Core level certification for interested data repositories. A universal catalogue of requirements reflecting core characteristics of trustworthy data requirements
<https://www.coretrustseal.org/>

