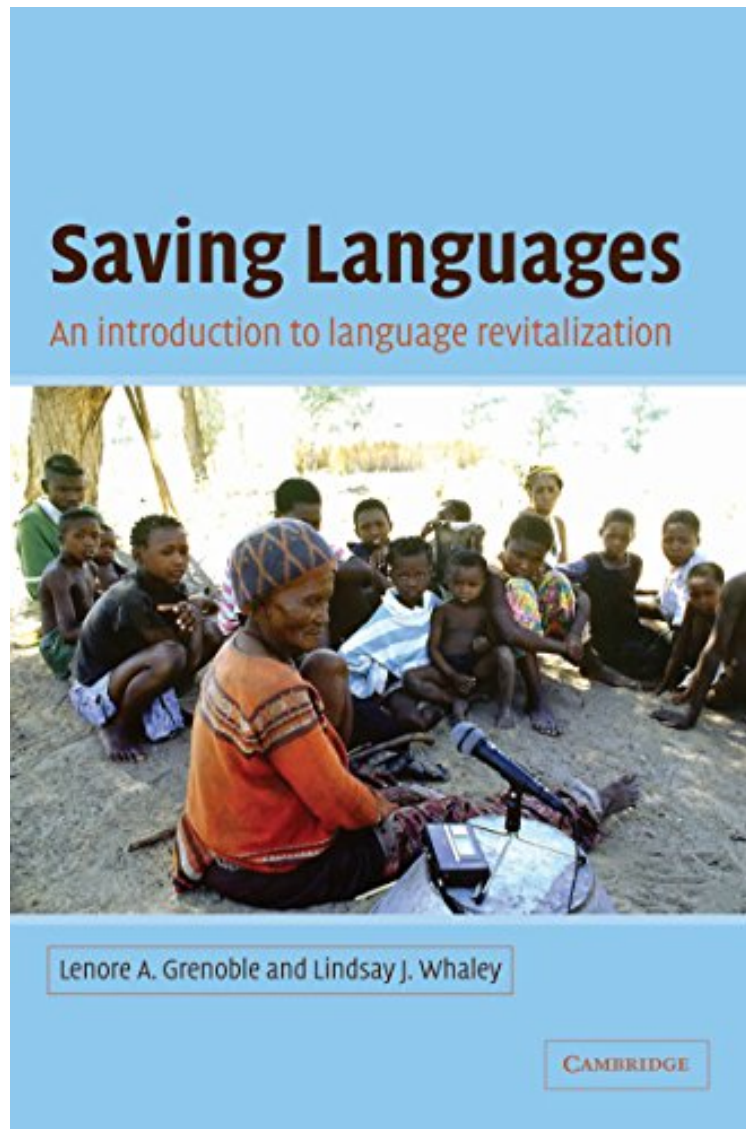


(Read ebook) Saving Languages: An Introduction to Language Revitalization

Saving Languages: An Introduction to Language Revitalization

Von Lenore A. Grenoble, Lindsay J. Whaley
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Von Lenore A. Grenoble, Lindsay J. Whaley : Saving Languages: An Introduction to Language Revitalization before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Saving Languages: An Introduction to Language Revitalization:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Evelyn's view ...Von Anton HambammerLanguage is integral to all human beings, to all societies. We need language as a means of communication, as a linking device to others. At the same time, however, language as a cultural (identity)

marker is a perfect instrument to differentiate one group (speakers' community) from another. It is exactly this function, this utilisation of language as a means of differentiation, which bears another issue, namely that of dominance. Two different speech communities come into contact with each other for whatever reason and as both speak different languages they have to decide whether to use language A or language B as a common means of communication. This is a very 'theoretical' approach. Basically, either language A or B is the language of a more powerful group (political, religious, economic etc) and will therefore soon dominate, thus by and by repel the language of the less powerful group. Their language will soon be buried in oblivion and with the language-loss many cultural rites and customs are prone to a steady decrease too. Therefore, we can say that alongside with the suppression of a community's language, people lose their bond to the culture / the region they live in. There are about 6,500 living languages and more than half of them is about to disappear within the next hundred years. But counteracting tendencies have been in progress for some decades now: societies have become more aware of the importance of languages and this is why more and more trials have been worked on in order to maintain and stabilise or to revive languages which have already been extinct. Grenoble and Whaley have brilliantly managed to introduce the whole topic of language revitalisation to their readership. Starting with a general introduction of the subject they discuss basic terms and issues and give the readership a good image of what they can expect from the rest of the book. Divided into seven carefully selected chapters which, although composed coherently, can be read individually, the authors inform about the necessary steps to be taken if a language revival program is envisaged. In doing so, they do not insist upon the solutions they offer be the only one, yet they recurrently draw attention to the fact that a careful consideration of the individual language-to-be-revitalised situation (political, economic, religious etc) is to be carried out. Language communities differ from each other and so do the political, the religious and the economic systems they are exposed to. Some speech-communities of a languages do not have more than some hundred potential speakers, others some hundred thousands. Some are regionally concentrated, others are spread (for instance the speakers of Romany). Some want 'their' language back to fill the cultural gap, others 'need' to re-construct, to revitalise their extinct language in order to create a common (national) identity - as in the case of Hebrew in Israel (when Ben Gurion proclaimed the new nation), or in the case of Turkish, when Atatürk sought to strengthen Turkey (internal by the help of a 'new' and what is more relevant: a pure language). Grenoble and Whaley candidly show many factors involved in the process of language revitalisation and in doing so they are relatively neutral. Relatively neutral because especially when they talk about some case studies, when they give detailed examples of language revival projects the reader might get the feeling that the authors are not totally neutral, i.e. that they prefer some ideas to others, that they deal with some projects more enthusiastically than with others. Yet on the whole, these preferences (because they are unincisive) do not derogate their credibility and expertise. The way the book is organised is very convincing as the first three chapters primarily focus on general issues, explain terminology, involved factors, propose manifold ideas and possible solutions; the fourth chapter is dedicated to four case studies which are definitely good examples of how revitalisation programs are (can be) carried out and what makes them successful (or not); and the next two chapters concentrate on very specific issues such as literacy and orthography (as parts of revitalisation programs). Finally, the last chapter can be seen as a 'guideline' how to embark on such a revitalisation program. I liked reading this book very much - it is very informative, inspiring, clearly structured, and believable, it offers excellent insights into the processes of language revitalisation. I recommend this book to everybody who is interested in the subject of language revival. As mentioned on the cover: "[...] it's a must-read book for beginning fieldworkers", for students, teachers, for people who live in a region where language death is a prominent topic, for those who work in the field of 'minority groups' ... The book is a must for everybody - I think. (E.A.)

Kurzbeschreibung Language endangerment has been the focus of much attention and as a result, a wide range of people are working to revitalize and maintain local languages. This book serves as a general reference guide to language revitalization, written not only for linguists and anthropologists, but also for language activists and community members who believe they should ensure the future use of their languages, despite their predicted loss. Drawing extensively on case studies, it sets out the necessary background and highlights central issues such as literacy, policy decisions, and allocation of resources. Its primary goal is to provide the essential tools for a successful language revitalization program, such as setting and achieving realistic goals, and anticipating and resolving common obstacles. Clearly written and informative, *Saving Languages* will be an invaluable resource for all those interested in the fate of small language communities around the globe. *Pressestimmen* "Written in English, the world's most dangerous language, the book is most accessible to linguists and, in part, to the educated elite of developed-world communities, especially those where English is the endangering language. In some cases, these communities have already made their own overt or covert choices about language maintenance and are able to carry out their own advocacy and networking and to participate in decisions about revitalization program goals, content, and methods' for them, this book can provide some ideas and facilitate such programs. In other cases, this volume may provide some impetus to community leaders.

It is also a very valuable summary for linguistic, anthropological, and other community-based fieldworkers." - David Bradley, La Trobe University
Language endangerment has been the focus of much attention, and a wide range of people are working to revitalize and maintain local languages. This book serves as a general reference guide to language revitalization, aimed at all those interested in the fate of small language communities.