

Supporting native languages thru Wikipedia/media

Firth McEachern, University of British Columbia
Bikol Wikiconference, Aug 4-6 2023
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Threads of support

Language documentation

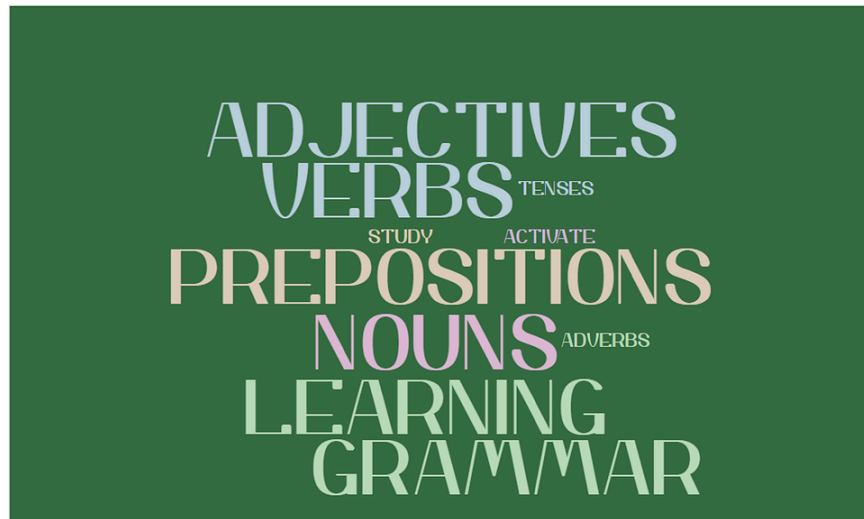
Wikipedia offers a platform where speakers of native/indigenous/minority/endangered languages, or academics, can create articles, documents, and resources in and about these languages.



Language learning

Wikipedia offers educational materials, grammar guides, vocabulary lists, and pronunciation guides.

It can serve as a valuable resource for people interested in studying native languages, whether to improve proficiency in their heritage language or learn another language anew.



Language visibility

Having content in a minority language on Wikipedia raises awareness about its existence and the challenges that the language community faces.

It encourages recognition of lesser known languages and linguistic diversity in general.



Accessibility

Wikipedia's open nature makes information in/about indigenous languages accessible to a global audience, making it easier for people to appreciate and learn these languages regardless of where they live.



Collaboration

Wikipedia fosters a collaborative community of contributors worldwide.

This allows speakers of native languages to connect with writers, linguists, scholars, and enthusiasts who can help with language preservation and documentation efforts.



Technical assistance, funding opportunities, rewards, fame....

Wikipedia's own outreach activities, and Wikipedia's presence and impact, can be leveraged to attract attention from organizations, leading to potential funding and partnerships for language preservation projects.



Wiki Loves
Folklore

International Photography
contest on Wikimedia Commons



**What can you do to promote
your language?
(using Wikipedia and other Wikimedia
tools)**



Start a Wikipedia in your language, or add to existing one

Wikipedia articles have been created in 334 editions, with 321 currently active and 13 closed

The [Meta-Wiki language committee](#) manages policies on creating new [Wikimedia projects](#). To be eligible, a language must have a valid [ISO 639](#) code, be "sufficiently unique", and have a "sufficient number of fluent users".



Translation rally

Host an event for people to translate articles from English and other languages into your native language.

Wikimedia/pedia sometimes initiates translation rallies, but you can host your own.



Edit-a-thons (target language: yours)

Host an event for people to create and improve content *in their mother tongues*, especially Wikipedia articles.

These can be private or Wikipedia-led events.



Edit-a-thons (target language: English, Tagalog, other)

Host an event for people to create and improve content **about their mother tongues**, especially Wikipedia articles.

What types of articles might contain information about your native language?

There are myriad!!!!



Upload-a-thons

Host an event for people to upload various kinds of media—pictures, audio files, video recordings—to Wikimedia Commons, related to your native language, culture, and place.

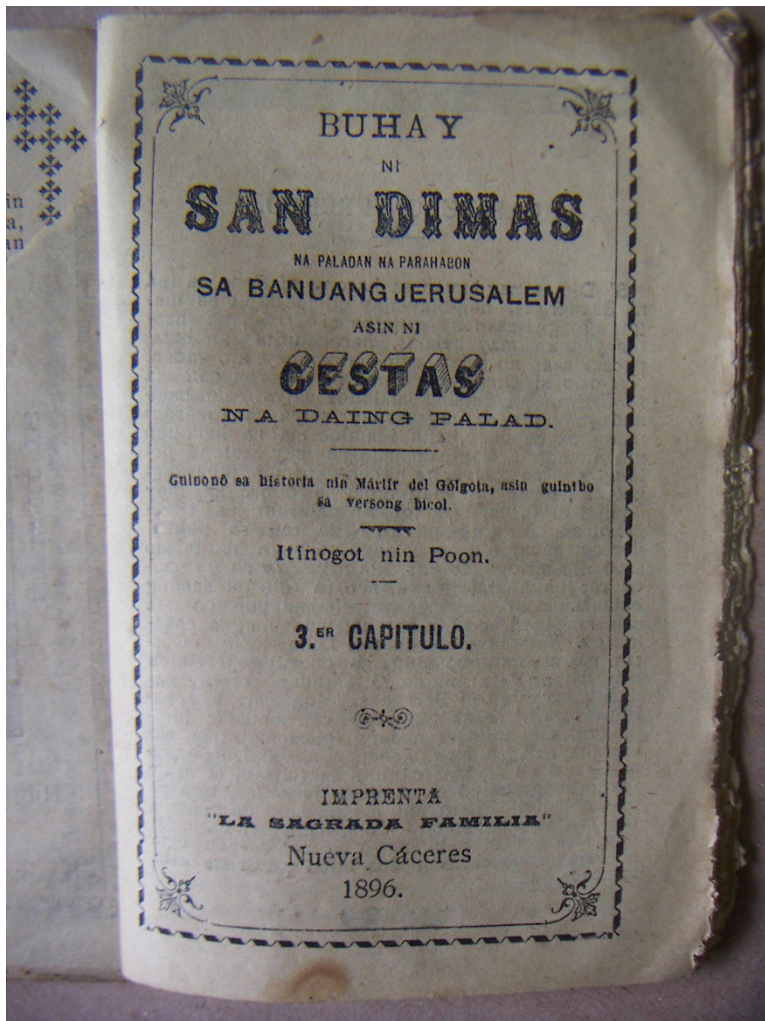
Wikimedia Commons hosts multimedia files in various indigenous languages.



Community consultation and collaboration

Initiate discussions and workshops with stakeholders/advocates about language issues that may affect Wikipedia projects —such as language representation, orthography, nomenclature, classifications, etc.

Understand their needs and preferences, technological limitations, cultural sensitivities, agency, indigenous knowledge, etc.



Use other Wikimedia tools for language documentation

Wiktionary and **Wikisource** provide spaces for documenting and preserving vocabulary, traditional stories, and historical texts in indigenous languages

Integrate Wikipedia/media in education

Make use of Wikimedia content in and about your mother tongue, and important topics such as multilingualism, linguistic diversity, and language rights, in your classrooms and school activities.



Language revitalization

By providing content in vulnerable languages, opportunities to add more content, and a community to collaborate in language projects, you can leverage Wikimedia tools to promote language awareness, appreciation, learning, use and transmission to younger generations.



Bikol language is the flame
of our people's spirit,
as colorful as our Peñafrancia,
feisty as our chilis,
enduring as Mayon.

- Anonymous

Add me:

Firth Languages (FB)

Firthm2 (YT)

Firth_m (IG)

Thank you! Q & A?