

## LANGUAGE REVIVAL: SIGNIFICANCE, STRATEGIES, METHODS AND ISSUES

**Abdalmohsin Ahmad Alshehri**

Department of Languages and Translations, Faculty of Science and Arts, Taibah University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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**ABSTRACT:** *The main purpose of this paper is to outline the maintenance of cultural heritage through language revival. It discusses the need for language revitalisation in terms of its significance, strategies, methods and issues. It found that ethical reasons, aesthetic motivations, economic justifications, cognitive benefits are adequate to embark on any language revival program. It also found that both language and culture need to be revived. It was also found that there are three effective approaches to language revival (i.e. total-immersion method, bilingual method and language reclamation method). It was also found that language revitalisation programs experience a number of problems, represented in complexity of the language, existence of other languages to revive, government support and language programs. This paper concluded that language revival is a matter of ethics, pride, knowledge, beauty, economics and cognition. Thus, the general public and all authorities should be aware of individuals involved in the language loss situations, and the steps needed to transform their life.*

**KEYWORDS:** Language revival, Cultural heritage, Language revitalisation, Language reclamation, Language loss.

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### INTRODUCTION

Language is considered the most important observable aspect of culture. In other words, it plays a pivotal role not only to communicate values, customs and beliefs, but also to form identity. Therefore, it can be said that the loss of a language is perceived as the loss of cultural heritage. To be more specific, a number of valuable cultural practices such as poetry, traditional songs and oral histories can be lost as a result of language loss and dire consequences for native speakers. In fact, the loss of a language undoubtedly has been seen as a widespread phenomenon in human history. For this reason, language revitalisation or language revival has appeared as a global issue with the aim of reviving an extinct language or halting the weakening of a language. As language endangerment has received a great deal of attention over the past few decades, it is a necessary step to shed light on how a language can be reclaimed. More importantly, understanding how language revival has become a progressively significant language project in different parts of the world.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Language, without any doubt, is a vital tool. It is not only a means of expressing thoughts, perceptions, ideas and values; it also represents social identity (Kilgour 1999). According to Kramsch (1998, p. 3), language plays a key role in conducting

social lives as it is a significant principal vehicle for shaping sentiments, emotions and cultural ties. Kramsch (1998, p. 3) reports that language can be seen as a cultural value because it is a system of signs. It is an integral feature of cultural identity. Indeed, It is knowledge, which Kilgour (1999) suggests prosperity and growth are created by knowledge and brains. To quote John Stuart Mill 'Language is the light of the mind.' It is generally agreed that language is an intrinsic aspect to culture. In other words, it is a symbol of cultural autonomy. For this reason, it can be said that linguicide (language killing) is often perceived as a rejection of culture.

There seems to be a general consensus that language death is not a recent phenomenon in human history. Tsunoda (2006, p. 1) argues that language death is a common occurrence that has taken place in both historic and prehistoric times. It has been estimated that living languages in the world are nearly between 5000 and 6000 languages (Černý 2010, p. 51). However, a remarkable number of languages have become extinct (Hoffmann 2009, p. 12). The question could be asked, what is language death? In fact, there are several definitions have been given to language death. To begin with, language is considered dead when it stops developing or changing (Dension 1977, p.14 cited in Tsunoda 2006, p. 37). Secondly, Tsunoda (2006, p. 37) reports that language is regarded as dead when there is no transmission to the children of the community as a whole. Another definition is that language may be regarded dead when it is not used as a vehicle for communication in the community as a whole (Brenzinger & Dimmendaal 1992, p.3, Sasse 1992, p.18 and Thomason 2001, p.224 cited in Tsunoda 2006, p. 37). Moreover, Tsunoda (2006, p. 38) suggests that language is regarded as dead when there is no transmission to all families of the community as a whole. Language may be considered dead when there are no native speakers or fluent speakers still alive (Elmendorf 1981, p.36 cited in Tsunoda 2006, p. 38). Finally, language is regarded as dead when there are no records of the language such as books, tapes and CDs (Dension 1977, p.13 cited in Tsunoda 2006, p. 41).

The loss of a language has been seen as a global issue that has swept the world and therefore a great deal of attention has been paid to it in the last few decades. Language loss has repeatedly occurred in all epochs (Dixon 1991, p.232 cited in Tsunoda 2006, p. 3). The loss of a language can be defined through two significant terms, namely language shift and language attrition. To be more explicit, language shift refers to the gradual replacement of one language by another as the main vehicle for communication in the whole community. Language attrition refers to the loss of competence and fluency in the native language of individual speakers (Myers-Scotton 2002). It is generally agreed that there have been a considerable number of instances of language loss.

According to Tsunoda (2006, p. 3), the history of language loss can be divided into two main periods, namely the pre-European colonial period and post-European colonial period. Tsunoda (2006, p. 4) points out that there were three dominant languages in the pre-European colonial period, namely Latin, Nahuatl and Quechua. The Latin language expanded due to the expansion of the Roman Empire and therefore a sizable number of colonised individuals deserted their languages with the

aim of adopting Latin. This means a large number of languages have been replaced by Latin (cf. Ridgway 1994; Swadesh 1948, p.226 cited in Tsunoda 2006, p. 4). Expansion of the Aztec empire in Central America resulted in the expansion of Nahuatl. Quechua also achieved great dominance owing to the expansion of Inca empire in South America (Dorian 1998, p. 4; Garaza and Lastra 1991, p.97 cited in Tsunoda 2006, p. 4).

As previously outlined, numerous cases of language loss have been taken place in human history. However, European nations have been seen to have a devastating effect on aboriginal languages loss. To illustrate, English in Australia, New Zealand and Africa; French and English in Canada; Portuguese in Brazil; and Spanish in South America (Tsunoda 2006, p. 4).

It is generally agreed that there are several languages experiencing rapid endangerment. This means the number of the world's spoken languages is supposed to disappear rapidly in the coming decades. An endangered language can be defined as a language that is at risk of falling out of use and become dead (Hoffmann 2009, p. 12). Tsunoda (2006, p. 9) reports that language endangerment is a matter of degree. A number of languages classifications have been proposed based on four criteria, namely number of speakers, age of speakers, transmission of the language to children and functions of the language in the society. As an illustration, Krauss (1992, p. 4) proposes a classification that is mainly focused on transmission to children: 'safe language' refers to a language that is still spoken by children and safe from extinction, 'endangered language' refers to a language that will be ceased to be learned by children within the century and 'moribund language' refers to a language that is no longer used as a native language by children. Another proposed classification by Schmidt (1990, p. 54) which is based on number of speakers, age of speakers and transmission to children and functions of the language in the community: 'healthy language' refers to a language that is actively used by all generations, 'weakening language' refers to a language that is mainly spoken by older people, 'dying language' refers to a language that only has a few speakers and 'extinct language' refers to a language that does not have any speakers.

As a huge number of minority languages have been threatened with extinction, language planning has received a great deal of attention in the last few decades. Amery (2001, p. 141) reports that dedicated efforts have been made in order to maintain endangered languages and revive extinct ones. It is fundamental to consider the meaning of language planning. Baldauf (1997, p. 3) defined language planning as a deliberate effort with the aim of changing a language or its functions in community. According to Dundon (n.d, p.2), there are three types of language planning, namely 'corpus planning' which refers to making changes in the language structure such as standardisation of pronunciation and spelling, 'status planning' refers to making changes in the language function, for example choosing a certain language as an official language, and 'acquisition planning' refers to teaching and learning of languages that need to be maintained (Dundon n.d, p. 3).

One of the most noteworthy goals of language planning is language revival. Over the past fifty years, a number of innovative programs have been undertaken in many parts of the world with the aim of working to wake up sleeping beauty languages (Grenoble 2006, p. 1). This means language revitalisation is a growing phenomenon and has been seen to be an issue of global proportion. For this reason, it is essential to shed light on definition of language revival. It can be defined as attempts to preserve threatened languages or revive extinct ones and restore them to be reasonably fluently used in the community as a whole (Amery 1994, p. 147 cited in Tsunoda 2006, p. 171). Another definition by Hinton (2001, p. 5) language revival refers to the programs that aim to re-establish a language which no longer is spoken and attempt to reuse it as a vehicle for communication.

There are several instances of revived languages around the world. However, the revival of Hebrew has been seen as the most successful project in language revitalisation (Zuckermann, Ghil'ad & Walsh 2011, p. 111). Hebrew was successfully revived because it had not completely gone out of use; in fact, it was used as a religious language (Kaufman 2005, p. 2). Freeburg (2013, p. 2) reports that Hebrew was described as a dead language since it had no native speakers until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, it has currently eight million speakers. This means the shift of Hebrew from being an extinct language to the official language of Israel is extremely unique in regard to its success. To conclude, as a significant number of language revival activities are being conducted around the world, it is crucial to highlight this phenomenon as a way of bringing endangered and extinct languages back to life.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Why Do We Revive Languages?**

#### **Ethical reasons**

Language is a vehicle for expressing values, ideas and experience. Indeed, there is a close tie between language and identity. In other words, your mother tongue defines who you are, and where you are from in contrast with, and in relation to, others. For instance, if someone speaks English as a first language, this indicates that he/she is from an English speaking country. Another example is that individuals can be also identified through their dialects. Zaidan and Callison-Burch (2013, p. 4) report that there are many dialectal varieties of Arabic such as Saudi, Egyptian, Algerian, Moroccan and Iraqi, and accordingly Arabs can be easily recognised through the differences between their dialects. In fact, the loss of a language causes a number of harmful effects on the whole community. To give some examples, language loss leads to the weakening of direct connection to ancestors. It also can be said that the loss of a language results in the loss of other significant cultural practices and artistic skills such as oral histories, poetry, dance, traditional songs, symbols, stories and written tales. To be more explicit, language death can be considered the most painful event for individuals involved. Zuckermann, Ghil'ad (2013) argues that the death of a language plays a major role in losing a number of valuable aspects such as cultural autonomy, soul spiritual sovereignty, intellectual property and self-identity. Losing those cherished aspects means losing the whole life. He also argues that the loss of a language is much more severe than the loss of land as the land is still there, but the

language is not. This means nothing can compensate for the loss of a language. However, language revitalisation attempts to resurrect optimism and hope for people involved in the language loss situations as it provides them with emotional support and reclaims their identity through learning the language of their ancestors (Zuckermann, Ghil'ad 2013). It is a source of solidarity since it strengthens the social relationship between individuals. An example of that is reported by Tsunoda (2006, p. 141), regarding So (Thavung) of Thailand: 'One woman said that she will teach her children to speak So (Thavung) so that when they grow up and have some problems in their lives, they will be able to come back and with the parents and other elderly people'. Thus, it is a moral imperative to maintain languages that are in danger and provide their speakers with the opportunity to express themselves in their beloved languages. Finally, to quote Nelson Mandela, 'If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.'

### **Aesthetic motivations**

To quote Ken Hale, a well-known linguist, who worked with several threatened languages and noticed the impact of loss of language: 'When you lose a language, you lose a culture, intellectual wealth, work of art. It is like dropping a bomb on a museum, the Louvre.' This can indicate that language is a storehouse of cultural practices, concepts and beliefs. Each language has its own unique way of expressing thoughts, ideas and experiences. More importantly, a culture can be identified through certain concepts of language. Therefore, language revitalisation is significant as a result of the inherent value of diversity, including both linguistic and cultural diversities (Mühlhäusler 2000, p. 332). Historically developed knowledge can be found through linguistic and cultural diversities, and Crystal (2002, p. 34) contends that the loss of language contributes to the loss of inherited knowledge. According to Hinton (2001, p. 5), as a result of the loss of a language, a number of knowledge systems such as philosophical systems and environmental knowledge systems are subject to be lost. Diversity in general can be seen as a sign of stability. According to Skutnabb-Kangas (2002, p. 14), diversity has played a pivotal role in aiding evolution of natural systems. Human success has been due to the ability to modify diverse cultures that are suitable for different kinds of environments (Baker 2001, p. 281 cited in Skutnabb-Kangas 2002, p. 14). Linguistic diversity seems to be the most considerable reason for language endangerment. Crystal (2002, p. 36) provides a number of reasons to justify the significance of linguistic diversity. He emphasises the retention of ecological diversity, identity, history, human knowledge and attractiveness of languages. This means languages do not only involve past experiences, cultures and identities, but also aspirations and dreams of the future. Linguistic diversity builds various societies through strengthening cooperation between them, accessing to diverse knowledges, information and ideas, ensuring cultural diversity and preserving cultural heritage. It is a sign of beauty and wonder of the world (Krauss 2001, p. 31 cited in Tsunoda 2006, p. 156).

To demonstrate linguistic variety, Zuckermann, Ghil'ad (2013) illustrated a number of fascinating words such as 'Mamihlapinatapai' a word from Yaghan language of Tierra del Fuego in Chile and Argentina. It refers to 'a look shared by two people, each



wishing that the other will offer something that they both desire but have been unwilling to suggest or offer themselves'. Another word is Ancient Persian 'nakhur'. It refers to 'a camel that will not give milk until her nostrils have been tickled'. Also, 'Iktsuarpok' a word from Inuit language of the Arctic regions in Greenland, Canada, and the United States. It refers to 'the feeling of anticipation that leads you to go outside and check if anyone is coming'. Finally, 'Pana Po'o' a word from the Hawaiian language. It refers to 'the act of scratching your head in order to help you remember something you have forgotten' (Sanders 2013).

Zuckermann, Ghil'ad (2013) also asserts that valuable cultural aspects and concepts can be kept alive through language maintenance and reclamation. Consequently, it is essential to preserve linguistic and cultural diversity as it increases human achievement and flexibility.

### **Economic justifications**

In regard to economic justifications, language revival has a number of utilitarian benefits. To begin with, it aims to provide the speakers involved with the opportunities to improve their wellbeing and mental health (Zuckermann, Ghil'ad & Monaghan 2012). Evidence shows that bilingualism slows dementia, enhances quality of life and reduces money spent on medical care (Keysar et al. 2012 cited in Zuckermann, Ghil'ad 2013). Secondly, language revitalisation plays a major role in reducing delinquency. For instance, it has been found in British Columbia and other parts of Canada that there is a strong link between youth suicide and absence of conversational knowledge in the mother tongue (Hallett et al 2007 cited in Zuckermann, Ghil'ad 2013). It also increases cultural tourism. To illustrate, cultural tourism is already a major contributor to Australia's economy, hence language revival has the potential to positively influence Australian economy as a significant number of tourists wish to learn about indigenous cultures. This, without any doubt, greatly contributes to the tourist dollar. More importantly, language revitalisation can be a key source of employment in both tourism and education, and therefore indigenous people can be provided with jobs and opportunities such as language teachers (Jai Kookana 2014, p. 1). Moreover, Zuckermann, Ghil'ad (2013) argues that the mental and physical wellbeing of individuals can be positively impacted by language revival projects as they have the chance to be connected with their cultural heritage. Language revival provides individuals involved in the language loss situations with a strong sense of pride and self-esteem. One of the elders of Navajo expressed the significance of language revitalisation for his society in the following way: 'If you don't breathe, there is no air. If you don't walk, there is no earth. If you don't speak, there is no world' (Brenzinger & de Graaf).

Generally speaking, diversity of languages in a community, culture and business positively impacts economy through customer growth, communication and hiring. To be more specific, businesses that have mastered a diversity of languages implicitly attract a substantial number of customers and clients from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds around the world as they provide them with their needs and wants, and allow them to easily communicate with their employees who are able to speak diverse languages.

**Cognitive benefits**

Language revival has a number of cognitive benefits related to multilingualism. Studies have shown that non-linguistic cognitive abilities of bilingual children are much better than monolingual children (Kovacs and Mehler 2009 cited in Zuckermann, Ghil'ad 2013). Adesope et al. (2010, p. 207) report that several studies have found that cognitive outcomes are linked to bilingualism. It is generally agreed that bilingual individuals have demonstrated to have better cognitive processes, such as mental flexibility, problem solving, task switching and inhibitory control, compared to monolingual individuals. To give an example, a study conducted by Bialystok et al. (2004) found that bilingual speakers have the ability to control their attention in regard to linguistic and nonverbal tasks (Adesope et al. 2010, p. 208). Metalinguistic awareness is another cognitive advantage of bilingualism. To be more specific, the ability to acquire two different languages with different structures enables bilingual individuals to explicitly comprehend how each language works. For instance, bilingual speakers are able to clearly notice the differences between their two languages in terms of syntactic rules (Adesope et al. 2010, p. 209). Finally, bilingual individuals have shown a high capacity for metacognitive awareness. To elaborate, bilingualism allows learners to be aware of their own learning strategies and the required mental activities that help learning process. The ability to learn and use knowledge of two different languages, including vocabulary, phonology, syntax and morphology provides bilinguals with great perception in their own cognitive processes (Adesope et al. 2010, p. 210). Thus, it can be said that language revitalisation has not only cultural empowerment, but also cognitive.

**STRATEGIES FOR LANGUAGE REVIVAL**

Concerning strategies for language revival, two important issues need to be highlighted, namely, what to revive: language, or language-and-culture, and levels of language revival: the societal or macro level, and the individual or micro level (Tsunoda 2006, p. 173).

**What to revive: language alone, or language-and-culture?**

One of the paramount roles of language is to develop, elaborate and transmit culture. In other words, language and culture go “hand-in-hand” and therefore they are inseparable (Amery 1994, p. 141). A significant number of researchers argue that a successful revitalisation program relies on maintaining both language and culture (Tsunoda 2006, p. 173). Wurm (1998, p. 199) reports that traditional culture and activities such as singing, fishing, hunting and handcraft need to be revived with the aim of refreshing the knowledge of the language.

There seems to be a general consensus that culture plays a key role in assisting language revival. This can be done through creating a real life situation or a natural context by choosing one of the traditional cultural aspects to aid in revitalising a language. As an illustration, dancing was used in reviving the Classical Nahuatl language of Mexico by a number of dance groups in Los Angeles (Tezozomoc, Danza Azteca Huehuetotl, and Danza Azteca Tenochtitlan 1997, p. 56 cited in Tsunoda 2006, p. 173).

To sum up, traditional cultural activities help learners involved in language revival programs with familiarity of the language and make an enjoyable learning environment.

### **Levels of language revival: the societal or macro level, and the individual or micro level**

These two levels are linked to each other. The societal or macro level refers to the extent of language use in the society, and the individual or micro level refers to the degree of language proficiency of an individual.

#### **The societal or macro level**

Tsunoda (2006, p. 175) reports that the strategies of language revival activities depend on the degree of viability of the language. McKay (1996, p. 226) provides a number of factors that play an important role in language revitalisation programs: the capability of using the language as a system of full communication, the number of speakers, the economic situation and the political position of the speakers and their language, and the speakers' attitudes to both their language and the dominant language. It can be said that the language maintenance strategy is linked to the language status. For example, language revival programs are used in a situation where the language is spoken by a few fluent speakers, and language awareness programs are employed in a situation where there are no fluent speakers, the language is no longer known and documentation is minimal (Amery 1994, p. 143).

#### **The individual or micro level**

This is related to the degree of proficiency of an individual in the language. In terms of language learning or language teaching, a number of approaches need to be distinguished. First of all, 'learning through the language' is the most difficult approach due to the use of language as the main medium of instruction, and therefore it requires a fair number of fluent speakers in order to be implemented (Stephen Harris 1994, p. 137 cited in Tsunoda 2006, p. 178). Secondly, 'learning of the language' can be divided into two sub-approaches: acquiring language for daily use and accumulating words and phrases (Amery 1994, p. 141). Finally, 'learning about the language' is the easiest approach to be implemented and it can be employed in a language awareness program (Tsunoda 2006, p. 179).

According to Rubin (1999, p. 20), there are five degrees of fluency in language instruction: Creative, Fluent, Functional, Symbolic and Passive. This classification ranges from the most fluent category (Creative) to the least fluent category (Passive). However, it is inconsistent because fluency is not required to perform all functions of language. For instance, fluent and non-fluent individuals are able to use language for a symbolic function, which refers to the capability of using common sentences in formal situations, as signs of cultural possession and language involvement (Tsunoda 2006, p. 179).



## METHODS FOR LANGUAGE REVIVAL

As mentioned above, several languages are disappearing. At the same time, a substantial number of initiatives are being made with the aim of maintaining threatened languages or reviving extinct ones. A reasonable number of approaches to language revival have been proposed (Amery 1994, p. 143). Implementation of language revitalisation methods is correlated with the degree of endangerment. To illustrate, the bilingual method might be appropriate to weakening languages, but inappropriate to extinct languages (Tsunoda 2006, p. 201). This paper will look at total-immersion method, bilingual method and language reclamation method.

### **Total-immersion method**

It is generally agreed that total-immersion method is the best option for producing a generation full of fluent speakers for a threatened language. There is a common-sense premise that creating an environment in which learners only use a language is the best way to learn that language. In terms of language revitalisation, total-immersion method can be defined as exposing learners to only hear and speak the endangered language (Tsunoda 2006, p. 202). In other words, the threatened language is used as a main vehicle for content instruction. Hinton (2001, p. 9) believes that the total-immersion method provides learners with the opportunity to use language in real communication that assist in producing fluency.

The revival of 'Maori', language of New Zealand, which started in the early 1980s, is the best known language immersion program. The intensive use of the total-immersion method is considered the most noticeable feature of Maori language programs. This approach is operated from the pre-school stage to the high school stage, in which all instruction is carried out in Maori (Grenoble 2006, p. 53). Clearly, Maori revitalisation has been seen as a highly successful project.

### **Partial-immersion or bilingual method**

Bilingual method is another significant approach to language revival that has been used increasingly in many parts of the world. It can be defined as the use of both the local language (endangered language) and the language of wider communication (dominant language) as media of instruction (Hong 2010, p. 1). According to Hinton (2001, p. 8), bilingual education is a vital tool for language maintenance rather than language revitalisation if the minority language is reinforced from the community. In other words, although bilingual method creates an environment for using the local language in real communication purposes, learners need to be motivated to use that language on the playground and their every daily life.

Tsunoda (2006, p. 205) reports that bilingual approach can be classified into two models: transitional and parallel. Transitional model: the minority language is initially used to teach learners, and then gradually move them to be taught in the dominant language. Parallel model: the minority and the dominant languages are used simultaneously in education.

‘Tapirapé’, language of central Brazil, is one of the best cases of language partial-immersion program. There are several reasons for the successful revival of Tapirapé. Firstly, Curriculum of the Tapirapé School takes the indigenous culture into consideration. Secondly, all teachers are native speakers of Tapirapé. Thirdly, Tapirapé is the main medium of instruction. Finally, there is an intensive program for teaching Portuguese as second language in order to allow students to effectively communicate in the dominant language (UT 2008, p. 59).

### **Language reclamation method**

Language reclamation is mainly concerned with extinct languages. It refers to the revival of a language that is no longer spoken by utilising its recorded materials (Amery 2000, p. 17 cited in Tsunoda 2006, p. 211). A variety of names has been given to this process such as resurrection, revival and awakening. According to Grenoble (2006, p. 64), language revival is different from language reclamation because language revival relies on native speakers as consultants while language reclamation is based on documentation of the language. It can be said that both language revival and language reclamation aim to bring dead languages back to life regardless of availability of native speakers or remaining language documentation. More importantly, is to utilise all available resources to awaken a language.

Kaurna language of Adelaide, South Australia and Warrungu language of North Queensland, Australia are the best cases of actual language reclamation (Tsunoda 2006, p. 212).

## **PROBLEMS OF LANGUAGE REVIVAL**

Language revitalisation programs face a variety of problems. A number of these problems are present prior to the beginning of language revival activities such as complexity of the language and existence of other languages to revive; and some of them are not pre-existent, for example government support and language programs (Tsunoda 2006, p. 180).

### **Complexity of the language**

Complex grammatical system has been seen as the most serious problem that might render any language difficult to be learned. It may result in reducing the possibility of language transmission. Australian aboriginal languages and Irish are cases of this problem (Dorian 1994, p. 492). According to Tsunoda (2006, p. 180), the possible remedy for this problem is ‘compromise approach’ which refers to the acceptance of deviation from the traditional norms.

### **Existence of other languages to revive**

The presence of more than one language to maintain hinders the task of renewal. The revival programs of Maori have been highly successful due to the absence of other language that needs to be revitalised (Tsunoda 2006, p. 180). This means determined efforts have been only made to preserve Maori. Australia has experienced this problem as it has had about 250 indigenous languages (Dixon 1991, p. 249). The way to overcome this problem is to geographically separate speakers of various languages.

However, this plan might be difficult to be implemented as a consequence of encountering moral, financial and political issues (Tsunoda 2006, p. 180).

### **Government support**

Government support plays a leading role in enhancing the likelihood of success of language revival activities. It can be provided in different ways such as recognition of people's language and culture, and this can be done through encouraging the use of minority languages in government offices, schools and mass media (Spolsky 1995, p. 188). More significantly, the financial support, that assists in constructing buildings, producing resources and supplying facilities, is highly required (Tsunoda 2006, p. 184).

### **Language programs**

Language programs are the essence of language revitalisation projects, and accordingly they should be taken into account. The success of language activities is influenced by a number of factors such as community support, parental participation, shortage of human resources (native speakers or trained teachers) and lack of exposure to the language being used (McKay 1996, p. 137). Thus, language programs need to be carefully conducted to enhance the achievement of a revival movement.

## **CONCLUSION**

To quote a Welsh proverb, 'A nation without a language is a nation without heart' (Crystal 2002, p. 36). In other words, language is a significant part of culture that plays a paramount role in human life. It does not only mean semantics; in fact, it transmits culture and reflects individual's personality, and therefore language and culture are inseparable. This means the loss of language entails the loss of culture. Indeed, a remarkable number of languages have disappeared in many parts of the world, and this event has resulted in losing a lot of vital cultural practices. It has been said that the access to traditional cultural values can be regained through learning of the ancestral language. As a result, much attention has been paid to language revitalisation in the last few decades. The purpose of this paper was to shed light on the great significance of maintaining cultural heritage and sense of identity through language revival. This paper has discussed ethical reasons, aesthetic motivations, economic justifications, and cognitive benefits of revitalising languages. It has also outlined a number of strategies, methods and problems of language revival.

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