

SIMULATION COMMITTEE GUIDE

SOCHUM



SOCIAL CULTURAL AND HUMANITARIAN COMMITTEE

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Presidents' Letter

Dear Delegates,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to CCB MUN XXI. It is a great privilege for us to have each one of you as delegates of this committee, and we hope it will be an invigorating and challenging experience that drives your curiosity and preparation. We are Lucía Restrepo and Ilana Malca, seniors at Colegio Bolivar. Since middle school, we have participated in numerous models and won various prizes. Model United Nations has been an enriching experience, making us gain a wider worldview and significant knowledge in MUN procedures, which we aspire to transmit to you this year.

In this committee, we will debate two topics throughout the three days in which the model will be held. Both topics require a proficient level of analysis and prior investigation to ensure a proper assessment and approach during the committee. MUN is a fantastic opportunity to gain valuable skills, such as acquiring comprehension of issues in our world, using diplomacy as a way to transmit ideas, and finding innovative solutions for current problems. That is why we hope to see commitment and eagerness from all delegates.

We expect you to come prepared and to complete your research in order to be able to represent your nation to your greatest ability. Please come with an open mind, ready to have fluent and dynamic discussions, and to contribute frequently. We hope that you have an enjoyable time in this model and that you are able to learn and grow as a delegate. Don't hesitate to contact us, through the committee email or via WhatsApp with any questions or inconveniences that might occur during the model. We hope to see you aspiring for greatness and doing your best at all times.

Best of luck!

Lucia Restrepo & Ilana Malca (SOCHUM Chair)

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Simulation topic: *The Persecution of Linguistic Minorities*

I. History/Context

Linguistic minorities have experienced severe discrimination throughout history. This discrimination has frequently been related to imperialism and linguistic colonialism. Language was frequently used as a justification for persecution and ethnic cleansing by various dynasties as a means of achieving and maintaining dominance. Linguistic imperialism was a policy that was implemented at a certain point in the mid-twentieth century by every developed nation.

According to Britannica, English has by far been the most widely spoken and expansive language in the last five centuries. For many years, English speakers coexisted with others who spoke other colonial tongues such as French, Spanish and Portuguese. Nevertheless, English eventually surpassed the other languages. When British expansionism first reached Oceania and North America, the most crucial phase of the development of English started. That was when several indigenous populations in Britain's lands had the English language forced on them.

In order to address what they considered the "Indian issue" in North America, British colonists founded boarding schools and strictly enforced an English-only policy, which included renaming children. The most antagonistic native tribes were purposefully singled out, and children were systematically snatched from their homes and deprived of their cultural background. Students who were absorbed into the boarding school system experienced a range of atrocities, such as child molestation, indentured servitude, malnutrition, and physical assaults. Also, parallel educational facilities could be found in other British colonies, at the same time that New Zealand's native Māori people were being subjugated to an education (Deccan Herald, 2019) system in which they were frequently harshly punished for using their own dialect.

Linguistic imperialism was practised in France too. Even more so than the English, the French relentlessly pushed monolingualism both inside French boundaries and in overseas territories. In an attempt to totally assimilate territories further into French dominion, France's expansion strategy made an effort to completely replace indigenous national cultures and languages. The aim was to make French the sole language used in schooling and in all life areas. Consequently, as France had several colonies throughout Africa, many native African languages whose nations were under the French dominion, were suppressed until they gradually vanished.

Linguistic minorities have many benefits in which specific measures can be highlighted in various fields that contribute to humanity, such as education, communication, radio, press and television, and public service. In many countries, the competence of the sector is assigned to different parts of the government, which is distributed among ministers according to how the presidency of each country gives it a name. The government is responsible for implementing laws and decrees for activities corresponding to the areas of the minister and everything implemented is also brought to territories where the linguistic minority is formally or informally recognized and transmitted.

II. Current Situation

Over 40% of the roughly 7,000 languages spoken in the world are in danger of dying out. Languages are dying at a never-before-seen rate, and a distinctive view of the world is lost as a result. We lose a significant amount of cultural legacy, a grasp of how humans interact with the world, scientific, and medical information, and most importantly, we lose the ability to transmit community life with each language that is lost. In other words, we lose the record of centuries of existence. Language extinction is nothing new, as languages are ever-evolving. (Nation Cymru, 2017) However, the rate at which languages are vanishing today is unprecedented.

Communities that were once independent face great pressure to assimilate with strong neighbours, local forces, or invaders, which frequently results in the loss of their own

languages and even ethnic identity. Economic, social, cultural, religious, political, military, or any combination of these pressures can be applied to languages. Since linguistic diversity has grown over the course of human history, the peoples that are most directly impacted are practically by definition minorities. The native peoples of the Americas, whose numbers are decreasing but still speak about 900 of their indigenous languages, the national and tribal minorities of Africa, Asia, and Oceania, the disadvantaged European peoples such as the Provençals, Irish and Basques, and the tribes of Papua New Guinea, who alone speak up to 900 languages, are among them.

Some claim that language loss promotes understanding between cultures and is a natural result of progress. But rather than losing the first language, this objective can be reached by learning a second and third language. Language loss is a much more direct result of intolerance of diversity, especially when it is used by the dominant against the vulnerable, as anthropological linguists have demonstrated in multiple instances. Furthermore, loss is not just a matter of perceived identity, language plays a significant role in how people conduct their cultural, spiritual, and intellectual lives. This includes everything from welcomes, farewells, conversational styles, humour, and methods to speak to children, to rituals, myths, rites, poetry, and eloquence. It also includes uncommon names for behaviours, feelings, and habits. If a language is to be preserved after it is gone, all of this must be reformed into the new language with new word categories, sounds, and grammatical structures.

The issue of language endangerment has been approached by linguists from two basic angles. One has been collaborating with groups all around the world that want to protect their native tongues, providing them with technical support for language instruction, language preservation, and even language revival initiatives. The alternative strategy has been to record modern languages as completely as possible. Effective documentation includes in depth recordings of both official and casual language use on video, audio, and in writing.

As much as the vulnerability of these minorities affects the preservation of their language, migration has also been part of this language loss, forcing communities to leave everything behind and preventing them from enriching their own culture. including their own language.

Rural residents must deal with a variety of factors that undoubtedly affect how they socialise. In particular, younger generations are more exposed to the drastic change that is contributing to the loss of their language legacy.

Language Rights:

Language rights and linguistic rights are examples of human rights that affect the preferred or used languages of state authorities, people, and other entities. The human rights associated with language are a collection of legal requirements based on international human rights conventions, laws governing how to handle linguistic or minoritarian issues, and laws governing the diversity of languages inside a nation. Language rights can be described as a set of requirements placed on authorities to refrain from interfering with linguistic choices and expressions, or sometimes there is a requirement to acknowledge or support the use of minorities' or indigenous peoples' languages. The UN Human Rights Council heard Rita IzsákNdiaye, the Special Rapporteur on minority problems, submit her yearly report, which focused on the struggles and rights of linguistic minorities. She expressed some concerns and consequently presented a guide for implementations on language rights. You can find her article here: [Language rights of linguistic minorities](#) "Language is by no means imposed but is adopted and once adopted a language is difficult to eliminate from the society until the society decides to change or adopt something new due to internal or external factors." (Chaudry, 2014)

III. Key points of the debate

- Ranking of language minorities in the country
- The link between language and cultural identity
- The disappearance of minority languages around the world
- Importance of respecting the integrity of language minorities within territories
- Legislation and policies that address linguistic human rights and state a clear form of standards and conduct
- Effective complaint mechanisms to address linguistic human rights issues

IV. Guiding questions

1. Describe any minority languages that are spoken in your country. Approximately how many people speak them? How do they rank among the Endangered Languages of UNESCO?
2. Has there ever been linguistic persecution in your country? What were the solutions implemented, if any, to stop this? Could these solutions be applicable in other nations?
3. Are minority languages and cultures considered to be an important part of your country's society, or is it more important that all citizens can communicate in the same language?
4. What has your government done to safeguard and/or promote minority languages in the country?
5. In what ways could minorities be better integrated into society, whilst still preserving their language?

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