

# FROM THEORY TO PRAXIS: LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE ELABORATION OF BAURE TEACHING MATERIALS

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# Structure

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## 2. Developing Baure teaching materials

- course book
- bilingual memory game
- teacher training

## 3. Evaluation

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- shortcomings
- undesirable effects

## 4. Discussion

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- developing teaching materials: a field linguist's expertise?

## 5. Conclusions

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# 1.1 Introduction: Baure languages

## Genetic affiliation

- Arawakan languages, southern branch (Aikhenvald 1999: 65-71)
- closely related to the Mojo languages, and to Terêna and Paunaka
- Baure language group: Baure, Carmelito and Joaquiniano (Danielsen and Terhart *in press*)



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# 1.1 Introduction: Baure languages

## Baure speakers

- critically/severely endangered language (Kraus 2007, ELCat)
- total number of speakers: 59
- all speakers are elderly, transmission has been interrupted since 1950s

## Language status

- recognized in the constitution as an official language (36 indigenous languages), and schools are encouraged to teach local languages
- growing awareness of the potential loss, several community based initiatives for revitalization (schools, indigenous organizations)

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## 1.2 Introduction: Baure documentation project

### The Documentation of Baure: A Language of the Bolivian Amazonia

- funded by the DoBeS program (Volkswagen Foundation)
- core research team
  - Dr. Swintha Danielsen (Linguistics - typology)
  - Dr. Franziska Riedel (Ethnology)
  - Femmy Admiraal, MA (Linguistics - typology)

UNIVERSITÄT LEIPZIG



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## 1.3 Introduction: Baure teaching materials

### ***Shi vikarow to vekori - Libro de enseñanza del idioma baure***

- funded by the Foundation for Endangered Languages and the Alice Cozzi Heritage Language Foundation
- team of volunteers
  - Julián Imanareico (Local teacher - Baures)
  - Gilmar Vidal (Local teacher - El Carmen)
  - Katja Leichsnering (Educational Sciences)
  - Frank Landsbergen (Illustrations)
  - Hans-Albrecht Günther (Layout)

### **Bilingual memory game Baure - Spanish**

- funded by the Endangered Language Fund

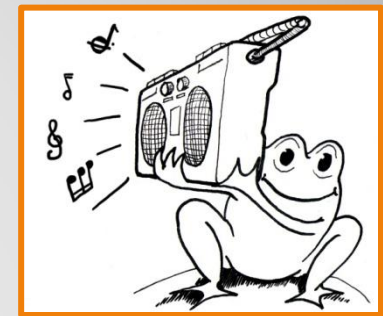
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## 2.1 Baure teaching materials: course book

### Original idea

- combine existing teaching materials into a coherent Baure course



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## 2.1 Baure teaching materials: course book

### End product

- exercise book
  - 11 chapters and 2 *repasos*
  - central theme: story of frog and lizard
  - grammar: pronouns, nouns, verbs, numerals
  - basic vocabulary thematically listed  
(kinship terms, body parts, food, animals, natural surroundings, domestic utensils)
  
- teacher's manual
  - part I: answers to exercises, suggestions for classroom activities, homework sheets
  - part II: elaborate description of grammar
  - audio CD with exercises and story



(Admiraal 2012)

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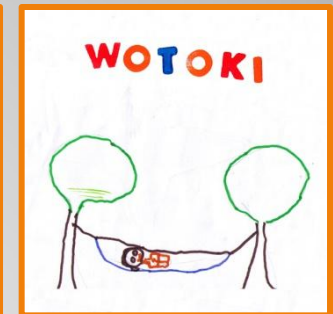
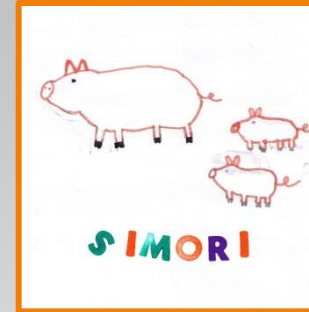




## 2.2 Bilingual memory game

### Bilingual memory game

- 35 pairs of matching cards
- pictures based on children's drawings
- each pair has a Baure and Spanish word
- used for vocabulary training



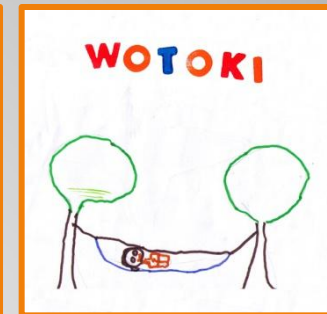
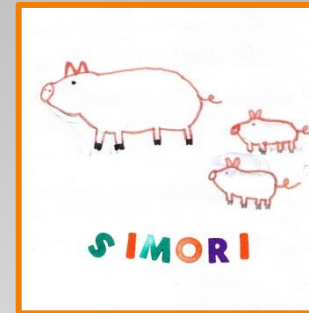
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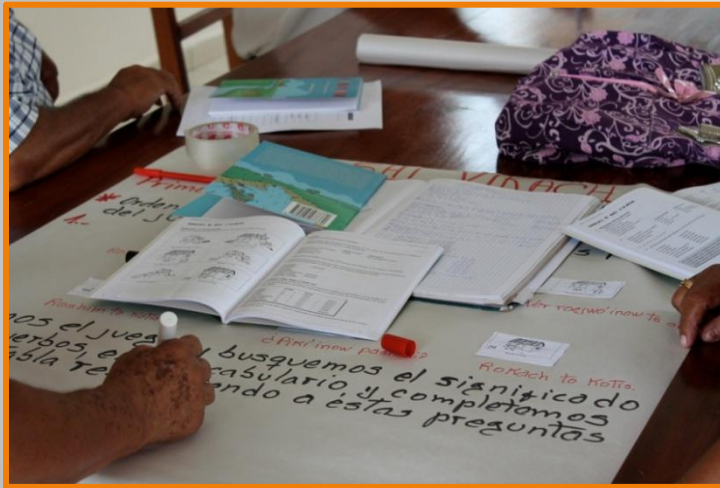
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## 2.3 Teacher training

### Workshop

- 80 teachers from primary and secondary schools in Baures
- two sessions of half a day each
- first session: teachers are learners
- in between: homework assignment
- second session: teachers teaching



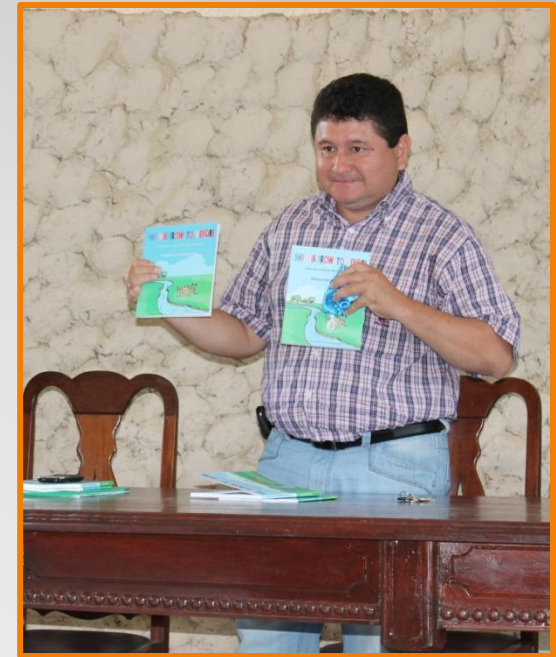
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## 3.1 Evaluation: successes

### Successes

- memory game encouraged children to learn vocabulary
- speakers are proud of the book
- contributes to already growing awareness of potential language loss (e.g. commercials on local radio, local authorities financially support development of more teaching materials)



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## 3.2 Evaluation: shortcomings

### Shortcomings

- too little involvement of teachers in the elaboration of content
- materials are very demanding for the teachers (2-day workshop not nearly enough)
- audio CD: more audio materials needed and of better quality



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## 3.3 Evaluation: undesirable side effects

### Undesirable side effects

- inevitable loss of complexity of the language in teaching and learning process
- Baure materials will be used in El Carmen and San Joaquín as well (maybe even in towns where Itonama and Mojo languages was/are spoken?)
- language materials are the only proper teaching materials available to teachers



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## 4.1 Discussion: A field linguist's task?

### A field linguist's task?

- applications and ethic guidelines

“The parties will support efforts for revitalizing the languages within the **limits of their possibilities**”

(DoBeS Code of Conduct,

[http://www.mpi.nl/DOBES/ethical\\_legal\\_aspects/DOBES-coc-v2.pdf](http://www.mpi.nl/DOBES/ethical_legal_aspects/DOBES-coc-v2.pdf))

- limited time and financial resources
- language materials for community is not main goal



## 4.2 Discussion: A field linguist's task?

### A field linguist's expertise?

- data collection/selection: data collected for documentation is very different from data used in teaching materials or revitalization programs
- elaboration of content: no training in educational sciences, limited training in second language learning
- implementation: inadequate teacher training is one of the main causes for the failure of teaching programs for endangered languages (Hinton 2001)





## 4.3 Discussion: collaboration

### Seek collaboration with ...

- community
  - what kind of materials does the community wish for and how do they define the need for it?
  - are there any local initiatives for language revitalization and what is their motivation?
  - does the language have an official status and what does this imply?
  
- anthropologists
- specialists from educational sciences
- sociolinguists
- specialists in language acquisition



## 5. Conclusions

- Giving community members access to archived materials does not necessarily serve them in revitalizing an endangered language.
- Think bottom up: what does the community wish, expect, need, and how can the descriptive data form a basis to help them reach their goal, or how does it need to be processes in order to contribute.
- Learn from best practices of other revitalization projects and share your own experiences (good and bad).

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**I wish to express my sincerest gratitude to the Baure speakers, and thank them for their efforts and patience, and their willingness to share their knowledge with us.**

**Asoropaiy, thank you.**



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## 2.1 Developing materials: data collection

### Examples from the Baure book

- complex verbal morphology

(1) *Nborimbekinopashapir=nish.*

*ni=pori-mbe-ko-ino-pa-sha=pi=ro=nish*

**1SG**=sew-CLF: flat-ABS-BEN-**INTL**-IRR=**2SG**=**3SGm**=EXCL

“Well, when I am going to mend it for you.”

- competing constructions

(2a) *Paripoewani-ye.*

*pari-poewani-ye*

house-next.to-LOC

“Next to the house.”

(2b) *Ropoewani-ye to pari.*

*ro=poewani-ye*

*to pari*

3SGm=next.to-LOC

ART

house

“Next to the house.”

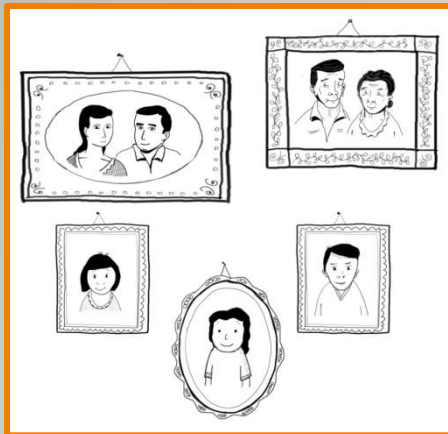


## 2.2 Developing materials: elaboration of content

### Examples from the Baure book

- language capacity of teachers: teachers are learners themselves

Course book:



Teacher's manual:

En el idioma baure se clasifica a los parientes de manera distinta al castellano. Es decir, para algunos familiares hay dos palabras en el castellano pero solamente una palabra en el idioma baure, y para algunos familiares hay una sola palabra en el castellano y dos palabras en el idioma baure. Por ejemplo, *nij* se usa para referirse a un nieto o una nieta, y *nicha'* se usa para referirse a un tocayo o una tocaya. La palabra para un hermano o una hermana depende del sexo de la persona que está hablando. La persona que está hablando se refiere a un hermano/hermana del mismo sexo con la palabra *nipiri*. Es decir, una mujer dice a su hermana *nipiri*, 'mi hermana, y un hombre dice a sus hermano *nipiri*, 'mi hermano'. Una mujer dice a su hermano *ni'aiy*, 'mi hermano' y un hombre dice a su hermana *net*, 'mi hermana'. Además, hay una palabra más general, *nichon*, 'mi hermano/hermana' que se usa para hermanos de ambos sexos. En la lista del vocabulario en el libro de estudiantes se especifica si la palabra tiene dos traducciones o si se refiere a una persona de cierto sexo.

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## 2.2 Developing materials: elaboration of content

### Examples from the Baure book

➤ teaching Baure numerals

(3a) *Ponosh jir.*

*po-no-sh*                      *jir*  
 one-CLF:general-one man  
 "One man."

(3b) *Apin jir.*

*api-no*                      *jir*  
 two-CLF:general man  
 "Two men."

(3c) *Mbon jir.*

*mbo-no*                      *jir*  
 three-CLF:general man  
 "Three men."

(4a) *Popish kiwor.*

*po-pi-sh*                      *kiwor*  
 one-CLF:long&thin-one snake  
 "One snake."

(4b) *Apipi kiwor.*

*api-pi*                      *kiwor*  
 two-CLF:long&thin snake  
 "Two snakes."

(4c) *Mbopi kiwor.*

*mbo-pi*                      *kiwor*  
 three-CLF:long&thin snake  
 "Three snakes."

