VEHICULAR CROSS-BORDER LANGUAGE COMMISSIONS

TERMS OF REFERENCE, TASKS AND CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP

Nov. 23, 2009

Status and Role of Vehicular Cross-Border Lang Commissions

- Vehicular Cross-Border Language Commissions (hereinafter "LC's") together with National (=Country) Language Structures constitute the two main working structures of ACALAN

- LC's represented on the ACALAN Governing Board and the Technical and Scientific Committee

- LC's elect Academicians

Terms of Reference (TOR's) of LC's
(I)

- Encourage, sponsor and undertake research on the language

- Harmonize differences in orthographic practices

- Work towards the evolution of a standard form of the language

- Engage in language promotion activities

- Undertake terminology creation

Terms of Reference (TOR's) of LC's
(II)

- Sponsor and encourage research in the use of the language as a medium of instruction

- Encourage production of literary, pedagogic and technical material

- Encourage the training of younger researchers

- Advocate the use of the language as a working language in some public domains

Terms of Reference (TOR's) of LC's (III)

- Co-opt and enlist the interest of groups and individuals interested in the promotion of the language

- Exchange experiences with other language commissions, particularly in the adaptation of new technologies to African languages

- Seek and raise funds for the activities of the Commission

Tasks of LC's (I)

Three main tasks: Initial Fact-Finding, Research and Advocacy

(a) INITIAL FACT-FINDING: What has been done? What further needs to be done?

- Initial Fact-finding can take several forms: survey, compilation and audit of existing materials, evaluation of current state of development and use of the language, etc.

Tasks of LC's (II)

Specifically, fact-finding tasks include:

1. L1 and L2 proficiency of the relevant populations

2. Use of the language as a medium at what levels of education and for which subjects

3. Audits of availability of print and electronic media in the language

4. Availability of textbooks and other works

Tasks of LC's (III)

5. Information on popular art forms in the language, including movies and home videos

6. Facilities and opportunities (formal and informal) for learning the language by speakers of other languages

7. Human resources, i.e. trained and competent applied linguists and language practitioners (especially translators and interpreters) in the language

Tasks of LC's (IV)

(b) RESEARCH: Research envisaged is practical research designed to facilitate greater use and spread of the language

- Each LC to work out modality for research and identify areas of research, scholars or institutions currently engaged in, or capable of carrying out, such research, possible sources of funding, and opportunities for joint or collaborative research

Tasks of LC's (V)

Specifically, main areas of research which the

LC will focus on include:

1. Reform and harmonization of orthography

2. Popularization of agreed orthography through publication of orthography manuals and other texts

3. Terminology creation, particularly in the areas of science and technology

Tasks of LC's (VI)

4. Compilation of grammars and dictionaries

5. Development of manuals for teaching the language to non-speakers

6. Development of strategies for use of the language in official domains

7. Scope of economic and socio-political uses of the language in facilitating trade and distribution of goods and services

Tasks of LC's (VII)

8. Harmonization of Sign languages in the relevant language

9. Development and application of human language technologies and ICTs with regard to the language

10. A study of attitudes towards the language by speakers and non-speakers

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Tasks of LC's (VIII)

(c) ADVOCACY: The case for advocacy is based on the realization that no matter how much research has been done on a language, no matter how much material is available in it, its widespread use may not be achieved unless the advantages for such use are brought to the consciousness of policy makers and users alike.

Tasks of LC's (IX)

Measures for advocacy and promotion include:

1. Sensitizing governments and policy-makers to the need for language empowerment and promotion

2. Awareness campaigns directed at language users in order to promote favourable attitudes to the language

3. Award of grants for training and research

Tasks of LC's (X)

4. Sponsorship of the publication of popular books and making of home videos

5. Advocating a policy of using the language as a medium of learning and teaching in schools and colleges

6. Competitions and prestigious awards in different domains of use, including prizes for literary and technical output in the language

Tasks of LC's (XI)

7. Campaigns for use of the language as a working language in some public domains

8. Observance of special days in the year when language and language use can be showcased. Such special days include the International Mother Language Day (21 February), World Literacy Day (8 September) and Africa Day (25 May)

Constituting Language Commissions (I)

- Challenge of numbers and the Addis Ababa consensus on about 40 VCBL's and initial 12 LC's i.e. *Modern Standard Arabic* and *Berber* for North Africa, *Hausa, Mandenkan* and *Fulfulde* for West Africa, *Kiswahili, Somali* and *Malagasy* for Eastern Africa; *Chichewa/Chinyanja* and *Setswana* for Southern Africa and *Lingala* and *Beti-fang* for Central Africa.

Constituting Language Commissions (II)

- Challenge of composition of LC's and absolute need to insist on merit. Only the best scholars based on merit and experience should be chosen

- There is also need for geographical spread which, however, should not be sacrificed to merit

- Work on language is not limited to LC's. Most of it will be done by non-members of LC's

Constituting Language Commissions (III)

Criteria for Membership of LC's

1. Commitment in the cause of Africa and Pan-Africanism

2. Merit as demonstrated in research and scientific publications

3. Interest in, and commitment to, the geographical expansion of the language

Constituting Language Commissions (IV)

Criteria for Membership of LC's (Contd.)

4. High involvement in the development and promotion of the language through activities such as research, description, literary and creative works, activism and publications

5. Expertise or knowledge in contributing to the development, promotion or a wider use of the relevant language

Constituting Language Commissions (V)

Criteria for Membership of LC's (Contd.)

6. Ability to facilitate the development and promotion of the relevant language by virtue of the candidate's position, network and afiliation to an organisation

7. Literacy in, and active use of, at least one African language

Constituting Language Commissions (VI)

Criteria for Membership of LC's (Contd.)

8. Interest in and/or promotion of one or more African languages other than the candidate's own language

9. Good moral character and proven social and intellectual integrity

10. Availability for the cause of the Academy

Constituting Language Commissions (VII)

- Challenge of VCBL's not selected in Phase I. Nothing stops establishment of informal LC's just like non-CBL's which will work in National (= Country) Language Structures. ACALAN will endeavour to identify VCBL's that will feature in Phase II.

- With these guidelines, this Workshop should now proceed to consider nominations of possible candidates for the LC's.

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Terms of reference. tasks and criteria for membership. Vehicular Cross-Border Language Commissions. nov. 23, 2009

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