

National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic, and Other Populations

Language Working Group Presentation Mee Moua

October 8, 2015

Questions To Consider

1. Does the full NAC see a utility to having a Language Working Group?
2. Should the full NAC instead be working together on these issues if there is minimal engagement by NAC members in the working group structure?
3. Should we revisit the scope of the working group? Would more members participate actively in the working group if it were expanded to be the Language & Partnership Program Working Group for example?

Agenda

1. Charter
2. Committee Objectives
3. Challenges
4. Questions & Discussion

Charter – Purpose

The Language Working Group will advise on the development, implementation, and analysis of research associated with methods used to identify which languages to support and types of language services to provide in support of the 2020 Census. It will also provide expertise while balancing known challenges of cost containment and maintaining our commitment to high quality data.

Charter – Focus

- *Advising Research* – Identifying ways to reduce barriers to enumeration of LEP groups. Assist with determining language-specific options and needed levels of support.
- *Providing Subject Matter Expertise* – Determining and refining which non-English languages and modes to support, as appropriate.
- *Advising on ways to Reduce Cost* – Identifying ways to support non-English languages while enforcing mandate to reduce cost.

Charter - Rationale

- Non-English speaking households are one of the hardest to reach and hardest to count. Language needs are rapidly increasing and diversifying in the nation.
- To overcome challenges faced by LEP populations, the Census Bureau continues to research and refine options for non-English support, in preparation for the 2020 Census. This program looks to identify, test, and refine ways to optimize non-English questionnaire designs and response options for LEP populations and to ensure culturally appropriateness and relevance in all materials.

Committee Objectives

1. Review Census Research and Information
2. Solicit External Expert Input
3. Draft Recommendations

Review Census Information

1. 2010 Census Language Program Overview
2. Defining Hard to Reach Populations in Self-Response
3. 2010 Partnership Program Overview
4. Language Support for Mid-Decade Testing

2010 Census Language Program Overview

- 2010 Census Language Program Provided:
 - Non-English questionnaires
 - Language assistance guides
 - Materials for other operational areas
- Criteria for language selection relied on 2005 ACS data and Census 2000 results.
 - The level of assistance by language was determined by the number of occupied housing units with no persons aged 15 or older who speak English “very well.”

Defining H-T-R Pops in Self-Response

- Least likely to self-respond – renter, low income, low education, minority, younger, and Spanish speaker.
- People most dependent on smartphones – younger, low income, less education, and non-white.
- Respondents using smart phones had the largest average time to complete the survey (2012 National Content Test results)

2010 Partnership Program Overview

- During the 2010 Census
 - 257,000 partners utilized – two thirds were located in hard to reach areas
 - Staff with language abilities recruited locally
- Challenges in 2010 included issues with message consistency and cultural appropriateness across translated materials.
- Since then, Census Bureau has started working on an adjudication process to finalize translated materials in an accurate and effective manner.

Language Support for Mid-Decade Testing

- Questionnaires (Internet/NRFU/Paper)
 - English, Spanish for 2014 and 2015 Census Test; 2015 National Content Test (NCT)
 - English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean for 2016 Census Test
- Telephone Questionnaire Assistance
 - 7 languages in 2014 Census Test; 6-8 in 2015 Census Test; 11 for 2015 NCT; 2016 TBD
- Fact Sheets
 - 7 languages in 2014 Census Test; 6-9 in 2015 Census Test; 12 for 2015 NCT; 2016 TBD
- 16 languages are covered across these mediums

Next Steps

- Remainder of year:
 - Engage external experts for at least one call
- Jan-April
 - Continue to engage external experts
 - Finalize report and submit to the Census Bureau at the April 28-29, 2016 NAC meeting.

Challenges

1. Lack of consistent participation by a large enough group of NAC members
2. Desire of participating NAC members to expand the discussion beyond the Language Program to include the Partnership Program.

Potential Outcome/Recommendations

1. Languages that the Census Bureau should include in its assistance portfolio
2. Processes that will help ensure accurate and culturally appropriate translations (e.g. translation process, review process, etc.)
3. Best practices on dissemination (may include partnership program recommendations)

Questions & Discussion