Language Working Group Report

FALL 2016 NAC MEETING

CHAIR: MEE MOUA, ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE – AAJC
Language Working Group Charge

The Language Working Group was created to 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.
Review of Information Presented to WG

- 2010 Census Language Program - Activities & Assessment
- HTC Populations & Internet
- 2016 Census Test & Language Assistance Overview
- 2020 Census Language Program Plans
New Processes for 2020 Census

• Office of Decennial Translation
  • The Chief of the office is Jason Kopp
  • previously worked for the Office of Language Services at the U.S. Dept of State

• Translation Process
  • Translation, Review, and Adjudication
  • Programming (automated), Forms Design (paper)
  • Cognitive Testing/Usability testing (or other forms of pre-testing)
  • User Acceptance Testing (automated), Table Review (paper)
  • Quality Assurance and Approvals
2016 Census Test – Language Components

• Language assistance for the 2016 Census Test (tools and languages):
  • Internet instrument, field enumeration instrument and paper questionnaire (and mailing materials) available in Spanish, Chinese and Korean.
  • Census Questionnaire Assistance was available in Spanish, Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese), Korean, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Arabic, French.
  • Web Pages with Fact Sheet and FAQs were available in Spanish, Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese), Korean, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Arabic, French, Burmese and Thai.

• Tested different contact strategies for the 2016 Census Test.
  • A mix of letters, postcards, and questionnaire being sent in different order
  • Included different in-language materials
2020 Census Plans To Date

• Plan to finalize by Fall of 2017

• Currently planning to provide in-language support for:
  • Internet Instrument
  • Census Questionnaire Assistance (expanded language options)
  • Field Enumeration Instrument
  • Language Assistance Guides (Paper and Internet)
  • Paper Questionnaires
  • Field Materials
  • Language Identification Flashcard

• Languages to be supported for 2020 Census:
  • Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Russian, Arabic, and Tagalog, planning to support from 2018 End-to-End Test
Recommendations from Language WG

• Language Coverage
• Translation Process
• Census 2016 test experiments
• Enumerator Tools/Respondent Materials
• Community Education & Partnership materials
• Telephone Questionnaire Assistance
Recs: Language Coverage

Recommendation #1: We re-affirm and adopt recommendations from the Hard-to-Count Working Group related to language access.

Offering Additional Language Options: In order to reach HTC groups who have high numbers of immigrants and persons with limited English, we recommend that the internet interfaces include as many languages as possible. Online forms could potentially include many more languages than the printed version.

- Prioritizing Language Minority Communities with a High Incidence of Limited English Proficiency: When choosing languages for translation, we recommend the Census Bureau consider not just the number of speakers, but smaller language communities that can only respond in their own language.
- Targeting HTC Communities Through Mapping: For example, in order to best target HTC groups with limited English, we recommend the Census Bureau provide data mapping by language so that areas with LEP individuals are highlighted and can be specifically targeted.
Recommendation #2: We recommend the Census Bureau produce Tier 1 materials (Questionnaires, Language Assistance Guides, Questionnaire Assistance Centers, Telephone `Questionnaire Assistance interviews, Website, Partnership Program) for the top 10 languages for the largest “linguistically isolated” languages, using the most recent ACS 5-year dataset.
Recs: Language Coverage

Recommendation #3: We recommend the Census Bureau produce Tier 2 materials (Language Assistance Guides, Questionnaire Assistance Center, Website, Partnership Program) in 90 languages, which increases the languages supported by approximately 50% from the 2010 Census.

We further recommend that the languages chosen for Tier 2 materials should not only serve large language population groups but also:

- service smaller language groups with greater needs (i.e. those groups that have large percentages of limited-English proficiency or linguistic isolation)
- address language needs of those geographically-concentrated (i.e., populations that make up a significant portion of a geographic location such as a city, state or region even though the language group may not be equally populous throughout the country); and
- serve language groups from the US refugee program in the last 10 years.
Recs: Language Coverage

Recommendation #4: We recommend the Census Bureau produce Tier 3 materials (Language Assistance Guides, Website, Partnership Program) in languages that service smaller language groups with some needs (i.e. those groups that have a significant percentages of limited-English proficiency or linguistic isolation) as well as address language needs of those geographically-concentrated (i.e., populations that make up a good portion of a geographic location such as a city, state or region even though the language group may not be equally populous throughout the country).

Recommendation #5: We recommend the Census Bureau create a time-specific process to solicit additional feedback from interested stakeholders for more niche/unique languages in more language-diverse neighborhoods and communities. That process should require interested stakeholders to provide the language they believe should be served, the reason why it should be served (anecdotal and/or statistical evidence), and contacts for individuals or companies that can service that language.
Recs: Language Coverage

Recommendation #6: We recommend the development of a specific language strategy for Alaska Natives. We further recommend that the Census Bureau look into collaborative opportunities at the state level for those responsible for providing language assistance for voters – for example perhaps partnering with the state of Alaska for a translation partnership.

Recommendation #7: We recommend that the Census Bureau be mindful of persons with disabilities and ensure accessibility to the 2020 Census and its materials via the use of Braille, American Sign Language, TTY and any other tools that would increase accessibility for these communities.
Recs: Translation Process

Recommendation #8: We recommend that Census Bureau incorporate trusted community-based organizations (including organizations representing persons with disabilities) in reviewing all in-language materials, including, but not limited to, any glossaries, in-language mailing materials, and the Census Questionnaire. The Census Bureau should provide organizations with sufficient time and voice to provide input on cultural appropriateness and translation quality prior to finalizing translations and materials.

Recommendation #9: We recommend that the Census Bureau establish and publish official translation guidelines.

Recommendation #10: We recommend the Census Bureau build a database of individual translation contractors for a multitude of languages, recognizing that translation agencies that serve multiple languages may not be the best for specific languages. We further recommend that the Census Bureau consider sharing the database with other agencies and partner organizations.
Recommendation #11: We recommend that the Census Bureau hire permanent, full-time staff to be responsible for coordination of translations for other languages beside Spanish, such as an Asian language translation coordinator or an AIAN language translation coordinator, to support surveys conducted by the Census Bureau.

Recommendation #12: We recommend the Census Bureau conduct a cost-benefit analysis to provide language support for all census surveys, and in particular the American Community Survey, for at least the top 5 languages to reduce in-person follow-up for these surveys.
Recs: Census 2016 test experiments

Recommendation #13: Based on the preliminary results of the 2016 Census Test, we recommend that the Census Bureau should include in-language messaging on the ENVELOPE of mailings in addition to in-language materials and/or messaging inside.

Recommendation #14: Based on the preliminary results of the 2016 Census Test, we recommend the Census Bureau must include in-language materials in the mailings that provide respondents with useful information about why to participate and how to participate.
ReCs: CensUs 2016 test experIments

Recommendation #15: We recommend that the Census Bureau continue to test and refine the in-language materials that go into the mailings to determine which format and what information will promote the highest level of self-response from language communities.

Recommendation #16: We recommend that the Census Bureau consider different metrics for evaluating the use and quality of the different in-language materials beyond relying only on the number of downloads, such as determining how partners used the materials.

Recommendation #17: We recommend the Census Bureau analyze how accurately the Language tracts identified target populations for the Census 2016 test by the different language groups.
Recommendation #18: We recommend that the Enumerator Tools/respondent materials be developed with a focus on end-user.

Recommendation #19: We recommend that the Flashcard Tool include each of the languages available for the language assistance guides.

Recommendation #20: We recommend that Census Bureau create in-language scripts for enumerators to utilize in the field that addresses the different issues that could arise to ensure consistency of in-field translations. We further recommend that the Census Bureau discourage on-the-fly translations by its enumerators.
Recs: *Language Assistance Guides (LAGs)*

Recommendation #21: We recommend that the Census Bureau produce a paper/printable version of their LAGs. We further recommend that the LAGs must be readable (i.e. font-size and type support user readability) and that it is clear the LAGs are to be used as guides and not filled out as questionnaires.

Recommendation #22: We recommend that instructional videos on how to fill out the census questionnaire should start with a segment on why participating in the census matters/is important. We further recommend that the instructional videos be produced both as one whole video as well as in segments (e.g. why participating in the census is important, filling out the question(s) on race and ethnicity, etc.).

Recommendation #23: We recommend that instructional videos be cast in a way that is representative of the diversity of the communities they are targeting.

Recommendation #24: We recommend that an instructional video be created for filling out the paper questionnaire, which can be utilized by partner organizations, youtube and other distribution mechanism.
Recs: Community Education & Partnership materials

Recommendation #25: We recommend that the Census Bureau develop educational and communications materials with simpler messages and plain-language translations. In 2010, community members found the Census-produced materials to be too dense and text-heavy, and in some cases, too complicated for those who may not be literate in their own native language.

Recommendation #26: We recommend that the Census Bureau produce educational and communications materials that provide concrete examples of how participating in the Census can directly benefit different language communities.

Recommendation #27: We recommend that the Census Bureau review all its educational and communications materials to ensure that they are culturally appropriate (i.e. no offensive or inappropriate imagery, whether of people, places, etc.).
Recs: *Telephone Questionnaire Assistance*

Recommendation #28: We recommend that the Census Bureau continue to expand the ability of all people to fill out their census form over the phone. We further recommend that the Census Bureau look at expanding the number of languages supported by the Telephone Questionnaire Assistance beyond the Tier 1 languages. The Bureau should look to target languages that are linguistically isolated, are Hard-to-Count, and have low response rates.
Reqs: *Website*

Recommendation #29: We recommend that the Census Bureau/2020 Census Website support at least all the languages of the LAGs. We further recommend that the individual pages for non-English and non-Spanish languages be comprehensive, clear and properly translated.

Recommendation #30: We recommend that the Census Bureau continue testing how to most effectively let users know from the main page of the “2020 Census Website” that these in-language resources exist and how to reach them.