

# Locally based and institutionally supported communities of practices (CoP) and their role in minority language revitalization

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# Community of Practice

- A community of practice is a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do, and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.



# Community of Practice

(Etienne Wenger)

- The concept of ‘community of practice’ can be useful to describe the process of acquiring language and skills connected with living in a certain community, sharing joint practices and constructing identities in relation to these communities.
- Developing a practice requires the formation of a community whose members can engage with one another and thus acknowledge each other as participants.
- Spending time together, creating a close relations, constructing a common identity, developing some passions...

# CoP

- Their members interact on different levels and create the *mutual engagement*;
- All the members are related by common goals and activities called *joint enterprise*;
- The members have a *shared repertoire* of resources related with language, style and routines by which they express their common identity.

# CoP and minority languages

- Creating a space to use a minority language;
- Meeting other people (in the same age, sharing the same interests etc.) with whom using a minority language is possible;
- Through shared practices a common identity of a group of practitioners is being created. When practices concern minority language/culture it becomes the base of this identity.

# CoP and ML

**D20F(W):** Some people just used the Welsh language without even thinking about it and others had to really think about using it. It depended on what you did in school. If you did a lot of extracurricular activities, like preparing different things for Eisteddfod, a lot of people did something connected with sport and some were involved in drama... they could speak a lot more Welsh, they got used to it. And those people who didn't get involved had a lot of difficulties to speak.

# Schools



# School-based groups

(Zapalaki Lower-Sorbian)





# Camps – creating a space to use the language



# Artistic groups in minority languages



# Activist groups



# Questions:

- Is it possible to purposely create a locally based CoP?
- Can CoP be officially established?
- What conditions should be fulfilled for CoP to work?
- How CoP can give motivation to use a ML?
- Why CoP organized around artistic activities (like theatre) gives the strongest results?
- What kind of relations are build through CoP and why are they important for ML use?
- Is the common identity created by CoP must be based on already existing common identity?
- How can the concept of CoP can be useful for language revitalizers?