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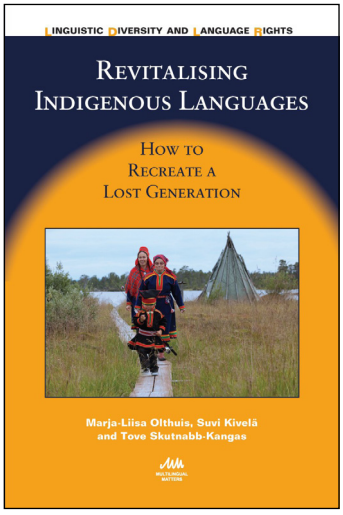
Revitalising Indigenous Languages
How to Recreate a Lost Generation
Marja-Liisa Olthuis, Suvi Kivelä and Tove Skutnabb-Kangas

Just £15

Mahalo nui loa to the authors of this important book! Ancestral languages are crucial components of healthy indigenous communities. Yet once a language is lost among childbearing adults, it seems impossible to gain it back again. Developing a resource of fluent second language speaking adults is the answer. This work tells how to reach that crucial step - and with very small languages. E ola nā ʻōlelo ʻōiwi a kākou!
Kauanoe Kamanā and William H. Wilson, founding members of the ʻAha Pūnana Leo, Hawaiʻi, USA

This book is a wonder! – the uplifting story of a program that has made a very major difference in the revitalization of Aanaar Saami, through the empowerment of the Missing Generations of speakers – the adults who could, once they learn the language, teach or raise children in the endangered language. This account demonstrates how the vision and energy of a few can have a powerful effect on language and cultural survival. Three cheers for Marja-Liisa Olthuis and the brave women who worked with her! What a difference they have made. This is a must-read for all communities and their friends who are trying to revitalize their endangered languages.
Leanne Hinton, Professor Emerita, University of California at Berkeley, USA
Founding member of the Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival

Chock-full of on-the-ground experience, Olthuis, Kivelä and Skutnabb-Kangas present a research-based model for language revitalization among a critical age group: professional adults. Meticulously detailed, the book takes readers inside the Aanaar Saami language education program, introducing its strategies, management and the dedicated learners and master teachers at its heart. The authors' message is clear: yes, it is possible to recover a 'small' minoritized language! Recognizing that every community must chart its own way, the authors offer a practical, hopeful account with invaluable language revitalization lessons.
Teresa L. McCarty, G.F. Kneller Chair in Education and Anthropology, University of California-Los Angeles, USA



This book offers a language revitalisation method that can be used with Indigenous and minority languages, especially in cases where the native language has been lost among people of a working age. It gives practical examples and a theoretical frame of reference for how to plan, organise and implement an intensive language programme.

Marja-Liisa Olthuis is University Lecturer at University of Oulu, Finland. Her major interests are the Saami languages, Finnish, language revitalisation, lexicology, second/foreign language teaching and translating.
Suvi Kivelä is a researcher at the Saami Archives in Finland. She has worked as a news broadcaster at YLE, Finland's national public service broadcasting company. She is one of the Complementary Aanaar Saami Language Education graduates.
Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (emerita) has been actively involved with struggles for language rights for five decades. Her research interests include linguistic human rights, linguistic genocide, linguicism (linguistically argued racism), mother-tongue-based multilingual education and the relationship between linguistic and cultural diversity and biodiversity.

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