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Engaging Wajuru /Wayoro and Makurap communities in collaborative documentation: Recording, learning, and communicating

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Abstract

In this article, we present an approach for engaging Wajuru and Makurap communities in a documentation project that aimed to provide systematic documentation for their traditional languages. The methodology that we employ combines technical training in ethnolinguistic documentation, capacity building, and a community-based approach for carrying out documentation and producing a digital encyclopedia of the two languages. We demonstrate how the application of this methodology was very effective in raising awareness about linguistic and cultural documentation, in building documentary capacity among the community members, in producing a large and comprehensive ethnolinguistic collection and in generating interest in linguistic and cultural revitalization.

Keywords:
Ethnolinguistic documentation, capacity building, community-based approach, Makurap people, Wajuru people, endangered languages

Introduction

In this article, we present an approach for engaging the Wajuru and Makurap[1] communities from Brazil in collaborative documentation efforts and the first results of this approach employed in a three-year project entitled "Documentation of the severely endangered languages Makurap and Wayoro (Brazil): material and non-material traditional culture, and its associated knowledge," funded by the Endangered Language Documentation Program (ELDP).[2] The initial goal of the project is to provide systematic documentation through audio and video recordings of Makurap and Wayoro, two severely endangered languages spoken in the Brazilian state of Rondônia. The main goal of this article is, thus, to investigate the technical and theoretical issues involved in the planning of documentation projects, asking how these issues may make an impact on the outcome of the projects. Specifically, we would like to understand the relevance of this kind of documentation project for the Makurap and Wajuru communities. Another important question dealt with in this article is how linguistic documentation projects can be shaped to be useful for language revitalization and other issues related to language vitality. Hence, we exemplify this topic with some outcomes of the Makurap and Wajuru ethnolinguistic documentation project.

The planned results of the project include a collection of audio and video recordings of communicative events with a focus on traditional culture and its associated knowledge, a translated and transcribed annotated corpus, a lexical database, and a multimedia dictionary for each language. Examples of the topics that have been documented include traditional foods with information on their ingredients, preparation techniques and any consumption restrictions, traditional ways of fishing and hunting, musical genres and instruments, and attire used in musical performances.

Wayoro and Makurap are two severely endangered languages (Moseley 2010) spoken in the Brazilian state of Rondônia, near the Brazil-Bolivia border. The map below shows the Rio Guaporé Indigenous Land (*Terra Indigena Rio Guaporé*) circled in red, and the Indigenous villages that are located inside that territory (Fig 1.). The Wajuru and Makurap people live in several of these villages, especially in the Ricardo Franco village, which is the most populous of them.

[1] We have chosen to include the two spellings Wajuru/Wayoro in the title because both spellings are correct, but they are used to refer to different concepts. Wajuru is the ethnonym used to refer to the people, whereas Wayoro is the term used to denote the language, which is referred to as either the Wayoro language or the language of the Wajuru people. In addition, there is variation found in the spelling of the ethnonym Wajuru, which is sometimes spelled Ajuru, especially in proper names. We use the term Wajuru to refer to the people or community and the term Wayoro when referring to the language, but we will keep the spelling of proper names as they are registered in official documents. Makurap is the ethnonym used for both the people and their language. However, in official documents (birth certificates, etc.) the spelling Macurap is common.

[2] The project is coordinated by the linguists Ana Vilacy Galucio and Antonia Fernanda de Souza Nogueira in collaboration with Carla Costa. The other two coauthors, Jaqueline Wajuru and Jociclei Macurap, are two of the main researchers of the project. All five authors have equally contributed to the conception of the manuscript. However, we have chosen to transcribe the speeches of Jaqueline Wajuru and Jociclei Makurap to highlight their point of view as representatives of Wajuru and Makurap peoples, respectively.

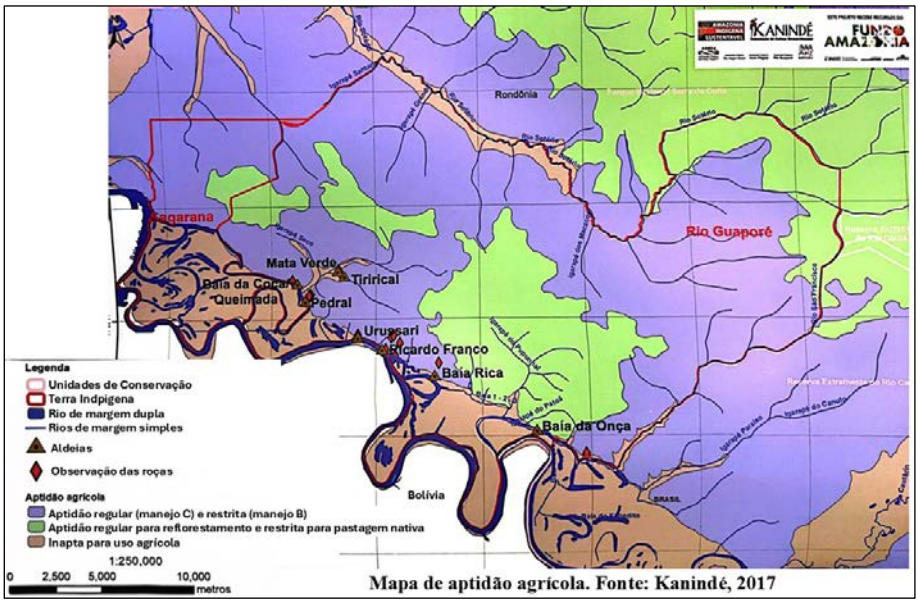

Fig. 1. The Rio Guaporé Indigenous land and its villages (Cardozo et al. 2019).

The Rio Guaporé Indigenous Land in the Brazilian state of Rondônia is inhabited by 10 different Indigenous nations, speakers of languages from distinct linguistic families, namely Arikapu and Djeoromitxi (Jabutian family, Macro-Jê), Kujubim and Wari' (Chapacuran family), Kanoê (language isolate), Aikanã (language isolate), Aruá (Mondé), and Tupari, Makurap and Wayoro (Tuparian family, Tupi). The total population there exceeds a thousand people and includes about 200 Makurap people and 100 Wajuru people. There is also a group of Makurap people living in another Indigenous Land (TI Rio Branco), and a group of Wajuru living in a non-demarcated area in the municipality of Alta Floresta d'Oeste. Before contact, the Makurap people inhabited a region above the headwaters of the Branco River (Rio Branco) and along both shores of the upper Colorado River. The Wajuru people were located at the headwaters of the Colorado and Terebinto rivers.

After contact with rubber companies at the beginning of the 20th century, the Makurap and Wajuru people were incorporated by force into the national workforce. They were thus exposed to a measles epidemic, which heavily reduced their population (Maldi 1991; Soares-Pinto 2009). Then, around the decades of 1940-1970, for economic reasons, the Brazilian government transferred part of the Makurap and Wajuru people (along with groups of other Indigenous nations) from their respective ancestral territories to the Rio Guaporé Indigenous Land at the Brazil-Bolivia border. The surviving Makurap and Wajuru population was forbidden by government representatives to speak their language under threats of punishment and humiliation. The Wajuru children and young people who were born in their ancestral territory but grew up in the Rio Guaporé Indigenous Land understand both the Indigenous language and Portuguese, but for the most part only speak Portuguese fluently. The children of this generation do not understand or speak the Indigenous languages. This current situation is in several ways a result of the violent process imposed upon those people. Wayoro has only one fluent speaker, Mrs Paulina

Macurap,[3] and some semi-speakers, such as her daughter, Mrs Maria Ajuru. Both are adults over fifty years old. In 2023, another elderly fluent Wayoro speaker passed away. Makurap has between 24 to 30 fluent speakers. However, 83% of the speakers are adults over fifty years old.[4] This critical situation is explained by Jaqueline Wajuru and Jociclei Macurap below, which helps us understand the socio-historical development that contributed to the low present-day vitality of these languages:

"Pare!" which means "good morning!" in the Wayoro language. My name is Jaqueline Wajuru. I'm 24 years old and I'm from Ricardo Franco village. The Wajuru people stopped speaking the language once their land was invaded by the non-Indigenous people. Many of them were divided into separate villages, the women, the men, the children (...). Because of that, some fled to other places, and some were imprisoned by the non-Indigenous men who caught them. Many were taken to work, for instance in the rubber tree industry, collecting rubber sap in the forest. During that time there they couldn't communicate with their children, their wives, or their grandchildren. Because they were threatened if they spoke their native language among themselves. Even if they knew how to speak the language, they couldn't speak it because they were threatened. They were told that if they continued to speak the language (...) If they spoke the language, they would be killed by their persecutor. Thus, they stopped talking, and many of them left, they split off to other villages, to build their own villages. Nowadays nobody speaks the Wayoro language anymore, we seek to learn how to speak the Wayoro language. (Jaqueline Wajuru, Ricardo Franco village, July 2024)

In my family I am the only one who speaks the Makurap language. Only me, well me and my mom. She speaks it a little bit. She doesn't really speak it, but she understands it. But you can say that she speaks the language a little bit. And, my grandpa João, he is one of few elders that are still around. It is important to record the language. To record the culture. Because the documentation helps us. It has the capacity to show how the language is (...) and to register the language, including the language and the culture. (Documentation) can show the culture (to other people) and it can keep it recorded for those who do not know it, so that they can watch, see, and hear how our language is spoken. (Jociclei Macurap, Tirirical village, July 2024.)

Wajuru's and Macurap's statements make it clear what the situation is for these two languages and provide a brief overview of the issues that have contributed to this scenario over the years. The sociolinguistic situation described for Makurap and Wayoro is currently shared by most native languages from the Brazilian state of Rondônia, as described by Galucio (2021). The state of Rondônia is one of the most linguistically diverse places in Brazil, housing twenty-six native Indigenous languages, distributed across five language families and three isolates. On the other hand, it is also a region where most of the native languages are currently severely endangered. Due to the intense predatory

[3] Paulina Macurap, together with her mother, started living among the Wajuru from the first year of her life (approximately), after her father died in a conflict between the Wajuru and the Makurap. She learned both the Wayoro and the Makurap languages in her childhood. As an adult, Paulina Macurap married Mr. Casimiro Wajuru and the couple's children are considered to belong to the Wajuru people. According to Nogueira et al. (2019, 48) and Soares-Pinto (2009), for the Tuparian family groups, it is possible to postulate a patrilineal type of social segmentation (see also Singerman, 2025). Later, Paulina Macurap separated from her husband and married a man from the Djeoromitxi people, Mr. José Brito Djeoromitxi, with whom she had five more children.

[4] This information is based on Moore and colleagues' 2012 sociolinguistic survey combined with our own fieldwork observation during our documentation project.

colonization process that has been established in the region, the Indigenous native languages have been losing ground to Portuguese and have ceased to be used as the vehicle of communication in their respective communities (Galucio 2021, 23). In the Rio Guaporé Indigenous Land, most of the population is currently monolingual in Portuguese, and the Indigenous languages are endangered due to both a shortage of speakers and lack of transmission.

Both Wajuru and Makurap community members show interest in learning their respective Indigenous languages. However, traditional methods of language acquisition, such as spending time with fluent speakers and using the language in daily life, are no longer common in either community. Unfortunately, language revitalization is not yet a well-established field in Brazil. Techniques, approaches, and methods are not widely implemented or discussed in Indigenous communities or even in teacher training programs for Indigenous educators. As a possible effect of this gap, there is a general misconception that the language can be taught solely in the formal school system. Thus, community members advocate for the presence of Indigenous teachers in the formal school system to teach their traditional languages and cultures. This strategy can be a good starting point for improving the social prestige of Indigenous languages, but it is not sufficient for language revitalization, especially given the structure of the formal school system. The way the schools in the Indigenous lands are currently organized allows for only a limited number of classes (approximately two hours per week) dedicated to the teaching of Indigenous language and culture.

In the final section of this article, after describing the methodology for engaging the Makurap and Wajuru people in this community-based collaborative documentation project and the effects of this initiative on political and linguistic awareness, we will briefly discuss how we have tried to address the need for and interest in language revitalization, within the scope of our documentation project, by providing guidance to individuals who have shown interest in initiating language revitalization efforts. In the next section, we describe the documentation methodology employed in our project.

Micro-projects approach for ethnolinguistic documentation

One of the pillars of documentary linguistics is the production of lasting, accessible, and multifunctional linguistic documentation (Himmelmann 2006) that can serve the diverse needs of linguistic communities, including language revitalization. According to Austin (2006, 89), language documentation consists of a series of stages, some of which occur in parallel. These stages are:

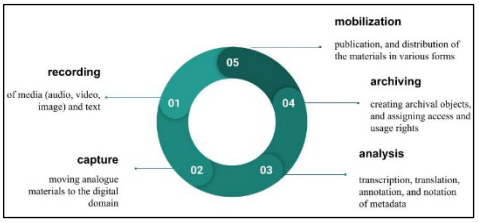

Fig. 2: The stages of language documentation (based on Austin 2006).

In this article, we discuss the first stage of documentation, recording of media (audio and video) and describe our approach to engaging the Wajuru and Makurap communities in collaborative documentation efforts. Our approach has been developed in close collaboration with community leaders, elders who are speakers and experts in the languages, and young people interested in learning both the technical aspects and the language and cultural aspects associated with it.

The capture stage was not necessary in our project, since we had already started working at the outset of the project using

digital recording technology. As for the analysis phase, we transcribe the recordings in Makurap and Wayoro and translate them into Portuguese. The transcriptions and translations are being carried out in ELAN (EUDICO Linguistic Annotator 2020). In addition, we have created a lexical database for each Indigenous language, as well as a database of interlinear texts, using the FieldWorks Language Explorer (FLEx) tool (FieldWorks Language Explorer 2019). In terms of archiving, the recordings and analyses are being stored in the ELAR-Endangered Languages Archive and ALIM-Arquivo de Línguas Indígenas do Museu Goeldi.[5] Copies of the recordings are given to the community members on request and a copy of the complete set of recordings will be left in the community after the conclusion of the project. In our experience, requests, especially for songs, are made personally via WhatsApp. As for mobilization, the project plans to deliver a multimedia dictionary in the Makurap and Wayoro languages and other products designed for language valuing and revitalization, such as thematically organized and digital encyclopedias.

One of the researcher's first and most important obligations before starting a project is obtaining the community's understanding and informed consent. Before applying for the Endangered Language Documentation Program, the project had been discussed with some members of both communities who expressed interest in having their languages documented. At the project's launch, a general meeting was held in the presence of the leaders of the two Indigenous groups and other community members at the Ricardo Franco village, which is the largest village in the TI Rio Guaporé, to discuss the project and plan its development, and its ethical and legal aspects (e.g. questions of authorship, access, informed consent, etc.). The leaders and other participants expressed their concerns about the status of their languages and manifested their interest in maintaining and documenting them.

Fig. 3. Informed consent meeting at Ricardo Franco Village. Image: Carla Costa 2023.

Our community-based approach includes technical training and capacity building in ethnolinguistic documentation associated with active documentation by the communities who have decision-making power over all stages of the process. In choosing the methodology, content, and organization of the documentation, we were inspired by the model that was successfully employed by the linguist Denny Moore in a recent documentation project entitled "Language documentation with a focus on traditional culture among the Gavião and Suruí of Rondônia," funded by the Endangered Languages Documentation Program (ELDP) and carried on from 2016 to 2019 among the Gavião and Paiter (Suruí) peoples from Rondônia, Brazil (Moore forthcoming). In this methodology, technical training for members of the community is essential. Moore (ibid.) reports that after receiving practical and theoretical training about documentation

[5] The Museu Paraense Emílio Goeldi (https://www.gov.br/museugoeldi/pt-br) is one of the Brazilian National Research Institutes linked to the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation. Its linguistic department focuses on documentation, descriptive and theoretical research of the native languages of the Amazon, and it houses one of the few Indigenous language archives in the country, the ALIM-Arquivo de Línguas Indígenas do Museu Goeldi, which contains information on more than 80 Brazilian native languages (https://www.gov.br/museugoeldi/pt-br/a-instituicao/pesquisa/linguistica).

(equipment handling, basics of audio and video recordings, data management, basics of audio and video editing and video subtitling) and information about the documentation methodology, the young Gavião and Paiter (Suruí) documenters produced documentation of specific topics of their own choosing. The methodology applied in Moore's project to increase the scale of documentation was to create a digital encyclopedia of Gavião and Paiter (Suruí) traditional languages and culture by registering the knowledge and use of the language through digital audio and video recordings in the Indigenous language. Each topic recorded was developed as a micro-project. Thus, after receiving the technical training, the young Gavião and Suruí documenters chose the topic they wanted to record, then prepared the content of the documentation session or micro-project, invited an expert on that topic to explain it in the Indigenous language, prepared the setting, the set of equipment and the recording script, and carried out the recording. As a result, they were able to build an impressive collection of documentary material covering several aspects of traditional culture and language. Moore (forthcoming) reports that the topics they chose were those most interesting for the community, often topics that would be unexpected for someone outside the community, such as the traditional notions of Justice.[6] The ethnolinguistic collection produced by Moore's project using that approach comprises a rich list of topics encompassing several semantic fields. It can be seen on the ELAR website (Moore 2018).

Following that same approach, we began the Makurap and Wayoro documentation project with a week-long documentation workshop for members of the various Indigenous nations of the Rio Guaporé Indigenous Land. The workshop included theoretical and practical lessons on the entire documentation process, providing

Stage	**Description**
1. Initial planning and consent	Presentation of the project to the community (leaders and other members); informed consent and ethical discussions.
2. Training workshops	Practical and theoretical training in documentation techniques (recording, metadata, equipment handling, etc.).
3. Topic selection	Community members choose culturally significant topics to document.
4. Micro-project planning	Elaboration of a micro-project planning protocol specifying objectives, participants, locations, required equipment, and discourse genres to be documented.
5. Recording sessions	Audio/video recordings of communicative events and cultural practices, with explanation in the Indigenous language, and Portuguese translation. Sometimes the recordings were done in Portuguese and complemented with explanation in the Indigenous language afterwards.

Table 1: Main stages of the practical methodology applied in the project.

[6] Available at http://hdl.handle.net/2196/00-0000-0000-0012-8AAB-A. Accessed on March 7th, 2025.

participants with the necessary knowledge to record the cultural aspects and communicative events that they considered important to document. During the workshop, the community members learned about the principles of linguistic documentation, techniques for audio and video recording, how to handle the equipment, how to prepare recording sessions, and how to process and collect metadata.

Table 1 shows the main stages of the common methodology applied in Makurap and Wajuru communities, based on the approach developed by Moore (to appear):

The second stage consists of carrying out small documentation projects, called "micro-projects." To create these micro-projects, the community or each participant decides on the subject they want to document. After selecting the topic, they prepare the recording session from beginning to end, normally working in small teams of two to four people. Following the model applied by Moore in the Gavião and Paiter (Suruí) documentation project, the documenter team fills out a micro-project planning form (Moore forthcoming). The information requested on this form includes: identification (name of documenter, village, contacts and subject); objectives (what do we want to know and pass on to the next generation?); research on the subject (with whom? how? when?); micro-project plan (when will it be recorded? duration? with whom? where?); filming script (the stages of the process that will be recorded); equipment needed (camera, microphone, tripod, etc.); what language genre will be documented (interview, narration, conversation, etc.); who will translate it into Portuguese? The form also allowed participants to record any other information they found relevant.

Fig. 4. A student-led documentation session during the Documentation Workshop. Image: Ana Vilacy Galucio 2023.

While planning the micro-project, participants must consider why the topic is important to document and how preserving this knowledge can benefit future generations. They also need to identify the key knowledge holders who can properly teach the subject, determine where the session will be recorded, who will conduct the recording, how long it will last, what type of equipment will be needed, and other relevant details.

After planning the recording session, they carry out the recording in the native language, be it Makurap or Wayoro, and explain the subject being recorded in the lingua franca, Portuguese. Following the technical documentation workshop, Makurap and Wajuru community members were encouraged to organize and implement micro-projects based on the specific needs and interests of their respective communities.

In the next two sections, we will describe how this methodology was applied in the Wajuru and Makurap communities.

Wajuru/Wayoro documentation micro-projects

In the case of the Wajuru people, there is only one fluent speaker, Mrs Paulina Macurap, who is accompanied by a second speaker, her daughter Mrs Maria Ajuru, who is less fluent than her mother. Thus, in order to do a recording session or micro-project, the community puts together a documentary team that is responsible for a

so-called "recording expedition," for instance, a hunting expedition, an expedition to collect honey, or an expedition to search for and drill into the trunks of *aricuri* palm trees (*Syagrus coronata*)[7] to collect edible larvae (*gongo*).[8] The assembled team members, who are normally young people, go by themselves to record the selected event. Then, when they return, they meet with the two Wayoro speakers, Mrs. Maria Ajuru and Mrs. Paulina Macurap, and the women explain, in the Wayoro language, all the relevant information about the specific micro-project topic. Finally, they translate it into Portuguese.

An example of this methodology is the session "The origin of the *aricuri* larvae (*gongo*) owner," which can be seen at the Wayoro collection at the ELAR.[9] In order to do that recording, Mário Sérgio Wajuru invited his uncle, the chief Adão Wajuru, and his nephew to collect edible *aricuri* larvae *(gongo)*. We see the men go into the forest to find the *aricuri* palm trees where the larvae can be found. They then peel the trunk of the tree, pierce it, and look for the larvae *(gongo)*, collect them and store them in a banana leaf. Afterwards, the two young Wajuru documenters, Jaqueline Wajuru and Antônio Wajuru, record their grandmother Paulina Macurap explaining in Wayoro how to collect *aricuri* larvae *(gongo)*. Then, Mrs. Maria Ajuru translates it into Portuguese. Next, Paulina Macurap and Maria Ajuru explain about the spirit that owns[10] the insect that produces the larvae of the *aricuri* palm, called *ngurum* in Wayoro. They explain that the owner of the *ngurum* is "our grandfather, who lives up there in heaven." They also explain that when the shamans snort a hallucinogenic known locally as *rapé*, they invite the grandfather to come visit, because the people here in this world need to eat. Our grandfather comes down, full of *ngurum* all over his body. He comes to bring the animals (insects) that produce good things to eat. Our grandfather says to the *ngurum*: "go and pierce *aricuri*, because the bugs' nails are hurting my body."

It's worth noting that when young people record Paulina Macurap and Maria Ajuru's explanations in Wayoro and Portuguese they hear explanations that are typical of the Wajuru Indigenous worldview. In this way, the community-based micro-project provides spaces in which young people can learn aspects of Wajuru material culture, such as how to make a lamp or a baby sling. Often, during the execution of a micro-project, young people can come into contact, often for the first time, with the knowledge and worldview of their own Indigenous people.

In the case of the Wajuru community, they have collectively discussed and selected the topics they want to document, those they consider important to preserve and pass on to future generations. Another point worth highlighting is that some micro-projects involve the entire family, from the great-grandmother to the great-grandchildren. Examples of these entire family micro-projects are the one that documents the preparation of *pamonha*, a type of tamale made from fresh corn (see Fig. 5), the one that documents the manufacturing of lamps

[7] The *aricuri* palm (*Syagrus coronata*) is a culturally important tree for the Wajuru, Makurap and other Indigenous peoples in the Rio Guapore Indigenous Territory. The regional Portuguese name of this palm in the Guaporé region and in other parts of Brazil is *aricuri*, which is a term probably of Tupian origin [arikurí], cf. Ferreira (1986). Other popular names for this palm are *ouricuri, ouricury,oricuri, licuri.*

[8] The regional Portuguese name of the edible larvae that breed in trees such as the *aricuri* palm, is *gongo* or *goró* or *coró*. The aricuri palm's edible grub is called *ngõranẽ* in Wayoro and *ngot* in Makurap.

[9] https://www.elararchive.org/uncategorized/SO_d4f641b0-0323-4838-a42c-31df031fc65c/

[10] On the notion of ownership among the Wajuru see Soares-Pinto (Soares-Pinto 2009).

(see Fig. 6), and the one that explains the form and use of the traditional Wajuru sword (see Fig. 7).

Fig. 5. Antônio Neto Wajuru records Maria Ajuru preparing pamonha. Image: Antônia Fernanda Nogueira 2023.

Fig. 6. Paulina Macurap and Maria Ajuru prepare the cotton thread that will be used in the lamp. Image: Antônia Fernanda Nogueira 2023.

Fig. 7. Antônia Fernanda Nogueira, Antônio Neto Wajuru, Hélio Wajuru Djeoromitxi, Telivan Djeoromitxi record Paulina Macurap and Adão Wajuru explaining the traditional Wajuru sword. Image: Ana Vilacy Galucio 2023.

Makurap documentation micro-projects

In the case of the Makurap community, the choice of topics to document has generally been restricted to each family and not a general community decision. This may be related to their social dynamics or to the fact that there are more speakers of Makurap than of Wayoro, which gives a certain flexibility on who will record a session. In any case, the several micro-projects recorded for Makurap have been carried out in the same general manner described above.

Typically, the documentation sessions are carried out by the micro-project team in the following steps: first, they record a cultural event—for instance, a traditional fishing method. Next, they record an explanation of the event in the Makurap language, followed by its translation into Portuguese. Some of these micro-projects involve an entire village, such as the micro-project on the traditional fishing method using the *timbó* vine, which was carried out by the entire community of Baía da Coca village. The decision to record this specific topic was made collectively after a general meeting where the scope of the main documentation project was discussed with the community.

The *timbó* vine fishing method involves striking the water of a small lagoon with a vine, releasing a natural narcotic that causes the fish to suffocate and float to the surface, making them easy to catch, either with a bow and arrow or by hand. The recording of this communicative event begins with some adult men retrieving the *timbó* vine, after which the entire community gathers and heads to the lagoon. The event lasts an entire day and includes fishing, cleaning the fishes, and roasting them using traditional methods. During the event, Mr Francisco Odete Macurap Aruá described in the Makurap language the different species of fishes that were caught. The performance of this kind of event is highly valued,

especially because it creates an environment where people of different generations can interact and share knowledge.

Fig. 8. Men with bow and arrow in their hands during the *timbó* vine fishing micro-project. Image: Ana Vilacy Galucio 2023.

Another micro-project carried out by Makurap community members, following the methodology described in this study, was the micro-project on *Genipa Americana* body painting, which can be found in the Makurap collection at ELAR.[11] After the first documentation workshop at Ricardo Franco Village, two students, Denilson Macurap and Sofia Macurap, planned a micro-project to practice what they had learned in class. They followed all the steps taught in the workshop: selecting the topic (*Traditional Makurap Body Painting*), defining the objectives, assembling the team, and creating a film script. The script was particularly important in this case because they were both learning and documenting all the necessary steps for traditional Makurap body painting.

Before starting the recordings, they conducted research with Mrs. Isaura Macurap, asking her about the materials needed to prepare the *Genipa Americana* dye. After gathering this information, the micro-project team recorded several video clips, including of people collecting *Genipa Americana* fruits, gathering banana leaves and coconut straw, making a fire to cook the *Genipa Americana moqueca*,[12] preparing the *Genipa Americana moqueca* and applying traditional Makurap body art on community members.

The recording of the preparative stages of the micro-project was done by Sofia Macurap and explained in Portuguese by Denilson Macurap. The painting session was recorded by both Denilson and Sofia, while Mrs. Isaura Macurap demonstrated and explained the process in the Makurap language.

Fig. 9: Sofia Macurap records Mrs. Isaura Macurap teaching Aline Macurap how to do traditional Makurap body painting on Denilson Macurap. Mrs. Marina Macurap accompanies Mrs. Isaura Macurap in the explanation. Image: Ana Vilacy Galucio 2023.

A different approach to carrying out a micro-project is through face-to-face interviews. In the Makurap community, Jociclei Macurap is a young speaker who aims to expand his knowledge of language and culture through research with elders; he has been particularly motivated by this method of documentation.

Following the documentation methodology discussed in this paper, Jociclei conducted a micro-project on the "traditional ways of living at the *Maloca*"[13] with his grandfather, Mr. João Macurap. Jociclei filled out a micro-project planning form, defined his objectives, and selected his interviewee. Since his grandfather lived outside the village, the recording took place at his

[11] https://www.elararchive.org/uncategorized/SO_39c69f63-86ac-4715-96eb-e6c2468b98e7/
[12] *Moqueca* is a method of preparing food by using large leaves to wrap ingredients such as fish or game meat. In this case, the *moqueca* will help to cook the *Genipa Americana*.
[13] *Maloca* is the term used by community members to refer to the ancestral territory.

grandfather's house in the city of Guajará-Mirim, as shown in the image below.

Fig. 10: Jociclei Macurap and his grandfather, Mr. João Macurap, in a micro-project working session. Image: Ivan Rocha 2024.

Jociclei Macurap recorded both himself and his grandfather. He also conducted the interview, asking about traditional practices related to marriage, festivities, and ceremonial burials.[14] During the video session, he took notes and paid close attention to what Mr. João Macurap was saying. Jociclei Macurap's curiosity and well-planned interview helped Mr. João Macurap to recall old memories while teaching his grandson about Makurap's cultural heritage. In addition, Jociclei Macurap realized that this knowledge was not only being shared with him but also recorded to serve future generations, as he later stated when asked to explain the relevance of the ethnolinguistic documentation.

This micro-project is particularly special because the voice, memories, and worldview of Mr. João Macurap can no longer be accessed in real life, as he passed away in August 2024. This situation exemplifies the urgency of documenting endangered languages and cultures. Jociclei Macurap carried out this meaningful micro-project in March 2023, just a year and a half before losing his grandfather. In the recording session, Jociclei had the opportunity to highlight to his grandfather that their language and culture are valuable and worth preserving and to demonstrate to him his own understanding of and interest in those values.

The ethnolinguistic documentation done in the way that we have described above became so popular among the communities that we have accumulated more than one hundred hours of ethnolinguistic videos of several genres and have built a collection of video and audio recordings of communicative events involving the two languages. In the way described by Moore (forthcoming), we have built a digital encyclopedia of Wayoro and Makurap languages and cultures. Among the topics chosen for documentation are musical genres, aspects of cosmology, especially about the origin of beings and things, recent history and contact with non-Indigenous people, traditional foods, and production processes for specific items in both languages and cultures. Thus, as has been also pointed out by Moore (forthcoming) regarding the Gavião and Paiter (Suruí) documentation, this methodology not only allows for language and culture documentation but at the same time also focuses on topics that are considered relevant by the communities.

Another important issue to consider in the discussion of language documentation and revitalization is the need for permanent archiving of the documentary material, as discussed above. However, there are only a few institutional archives of Indigenous languages and cultures in Brazil, namely at the Museu Paraense Emílio Goeldi and at the Museu dos Povos Indígenas (Brandão et al. 2023). In accordance with the planned goals of our project, the analysis and archiving of documentary material are now being carried out, and we are creating digital databases with annotations (transcriptions and metadata about the primary data).

[14] https://www.elararchive.org/uncategorized/SO_a1d630ed-da80-4a34-a1d8-c8aba15ca89d/

Challenges	**Wajuru community strategies**	**Makurap community strategies**
Broken intergenerational transmission: Due to the intergenerational transmission breakdown, the recordings of everyday communicative events made by the young people are spoken in Portuguese, and not in the Indigenous languages	Organize meetings with the Indigenous speakers, Paulina Macurap and Maria Ajuru, after the recording sessions, asking them to talk about the events in the Wayoro language and explain all the relevant information covered in the topic (procedures, raw materials, worldview related to the topic etc.)	Organize meetings including participants of different age generations and suggest that the younger generations (children and grandchildren) take part in the micro-projects and participate in the communicative events of daily life with the elders who are the fluent speakers. This allows them to listen to the explanations in Portuguese and in Makurap.
Limited use of the Indigenous language in speakers' daily lives	Since the two Wayoro speakers (Paulina Macurap and Maria Ajuru) live in households where Portuguese is the language of communication, when they are interviewed without an interlocutor who speaks Wayoro, they generally produce only small or isolated sentences or very short texts. We prioritize having recording sessions when Paulina Macurap (mother) and Maria Ajuru (daughter) are together. In this recording format, the two speakers help each other to remember words and to recall facts from the people's history, proper names, narratives, and character names. It is also an opportunity for Maria Ajuru to learn about aspects of Wajuru culture, as she reports having learned, for instance, in the recording session where she made a traditional baby sling with her mother. On that occasion, she learned from her mother a sewing stitch technique that she had never mastered.	Whenever possible, it is important to record more than one speaker. We have observed that having as interlocutor someone who understands the Indigenous language and engages in minimal interaction helps the main speaker (the one explaining in the Indigenous language) stay more engaged in oral production.

Limited resources for financial remuneration and equipment: Due to the financial difficulties encountered in the communities, the project would benefit from having longer periods of remunerated participation in the project for the community members to guarantee the continuity of the micro-documentation projects.	Considering the limited resources, in order to ensure equitable access and efficient use of available resources, it was necessary to establish a defined amount of working time for the speakers, in accordance with the project's budget constraints. Additionally, equipment must be shared among community members, requiring careful coordination.	Considering the limited resources, in order to ensure equitable access and efficient use of available resources, it was necessary to establish a defined amount of working time for the speakers, in accordance with the project's budget constraints. Additionally, equipment must be shared among community members, requiring careful coordination.
Imbalance between community's needs, working conditions for the research team and expectation of financial sponsors.	The changes that occurred in the communities between project's submission/approval and its development are not adequately considered by the sponsors when evaluating the results. In our project, several aspects made working conditions more difficult. Budget reduction affected the planned methodology and reduced the time available to researchers in the communities. In the case of Wayoro, the passing of one of the speakers left just one fluent speaker (an elderly woman in poor health etc.). Although these variables are explained in the reports, the sponsors tend to stick to the initial agreement and maintain the expectation of products agreed at the beginning, which may have become unfeasible due to changes in context during the development of the project. In this area, we do not have a solution, but we highlight the value of explaining the difficulties and trying to negotiate the planned products with the financial sponsors.	(see the remarks in the Wajuru column)

Table 2: Difficulties and solutions during the project.

The recordings and analyses (data transcription and annotation) produced by our project are being stored at the ELAR-Endangered Languages Archive and at the ALIM-*Arquivo de Línguas Indígenas do Museu Goeldi*. A preview of the documentary collection built by the project can already be seen on the ELAR homepage (Galucio et al. 2023; Nogueira et al. 2023). We have discussed this arrangement collectively with both communities from the outset of the project and on an individual basis with each participant. Archiving the documentation data in well-established archives run by professional academic institutions is as necessary as doing the recordings since it guarantees the long-term integrity and accessibility of the material. Brandão and colleagues (2023, 6) state that the "key reasons to archive language data are to ensure their longevity and accessibility (...) digital repositories offer options for replicability and protection against the hazards of fire, flood, loss, mold, insects, etc. that threaten the conservation of physical materials."

Both archives chosen by our project fulfill the role of data conservation and accessibility. However, we are aware of the difficulties for community members to access such archives due to limited access to stable internet connections and the language barrier in the case of the ELAR archive, which is run in English. The question of the community's access to these archives has been discussed with both the Makurap and Wajuru communities, and we are working on ways to better handle this question and guarantee their full access to their material. For the moment, we are translating our metadata on the ELAR website into Portuguese and making copies of the recordings given to the community members on request. A copy of the complete set of recordings will be left in the community after the conclusion of the project.

Materials that can be used for language revitalization, such as multimedia dictionaries, are also direct results of the documentation project and they are under development.

As a last topic in this section, we would like to briefly list some of the challenges encountered during the Wayoro and Makurap language documentation projects and how we have attempted to address them.

Teaching another generation: the relevance of ethnolinguistic documentation for the communities

The technical and theoretical issues involved in the planning of the ethnolinguistic documentation project with the Makurap and Wajru Indigenous peoples had a positive impact on the outcome of the project. Hence, what has been the relevance of this kind of documentation project for the Makurap and Wajuru communities? From one point of view, the elders want to document their language and their knowledge to create a permanent record for their children and grandchildren. On the other hand, by getting in touch with dormant practices and knowledge in the community, the young people strengthen their Indigenous identity. In the case of the Wayoro language, we would like to highlight the comprehensive community-based approach that involves collective decision-making. For example, in her description of the micro-project about the production of a special type of sling that used to be made for the mothers of newborns to carry their babies, but that is not regularly made anymore, Jaqueline Wajuru states her concern for the Wajuru community: "[the aim is] to teach another generation step by step how to produce a sling." This statement illustrates the importance of this holistic approach to language and culture documentation and shows the balance between the goals of the different community members. After the

completion of this micro-project about the production of the traditional baby sling, the specifics of how to produce such objects had become a topic of conversation circulating among the Wajuru community and many Wajuru women were interested in producing their baby slings by following the traditional method step by step.

This specific example illustrates the relationship between documentation and revitalization of traditional practices showing that this intersection is not only possible but also necessary, especially in the context of language obsolescence. The interest created by the documentation project motivates the practice of the culturally relevant topics and by doing it the community creates the opportunity to generate more contexts for the use of the traditional language. This synergetic relationship between documentation and revitalization is explored, for example, by Fitzgerald (2020), who states that linguistic documentation and revitalization should be understood as a feedback loop, so that one process continuously feeds the other.

When reflecting on the relevance of the documentation project for language vitality and use and for the strengthening of traditional culture, it is important to take note of the close interconnection between language and culture. Hinton (2001) points out that the two are connected in such a way that in the case of language revitalization many people want to learn their ancestral language to gain access to traditional cultural practices. In the context of the Makurap and Wajuru ethnolinguistic documentation, the results of our project show that the approach we employed was very effective in raising awareness among the members of both communities about their languages and cultures and the need for linguistic and cultural documentation. The elderly and some young people from both nations (Makurap and Wajuru) have been particularly motivated to carry out language documentation and at the same time to revive traditional cultural practices. An example of how this awareness can be perceived is the series of cultural workshops organized by members of the Indigenous groups from the Rio Guaporé Indigenous Land, in which they choose one specific cultural activity, prepare the event, invite the experts in the subject, and gather to practice and learn from the experts. One such workshop was held in the second half of 2024 in the Ricardo Franco village, and it was dedicated to teaching/learning how to produce the traditional sling to carry newborn babies that we have described above. Hence, we see those activities as positive effects of the ethnolinguistic documentation project. A glimpse of such activities can be seen online, as some members of both Makurap and Wajuru communities have publicized those culturally driven workshops on their social media channels.[15]

As has been described in several of the case studies discussed in the Routledge handbook of language revitalization (Hinton et al. 2018), in addition to promoting intergenerational interactions, ethnolinguistic documentation can motivate the younger generations to want to know more about their own culture, and that is a motivating key for language and culture revitalization. In the case of the Makurap and Wayoro documentation project, it has been made clear to us that the elders want to document their knowledge for their children and grandchildren, and the young people are learning about their culture as they document it. In this sense, we would like to highlight how Jociclei Macurap states his interest in participating in the project. For him, there are two goals: to record and document his language and culture for the

[15] See, for instance, the following profiles: Dariete Makurap (@dary_makurap); Jefferson Macurap (@jefferson_macurap); Associação Awanda (@awan_da23); Railane Wajuru (@eu_ray_slizx_wyr__10_); Antônio Neto Wajuru (@eu_tonny_wyr).

future, be it for his children to learn and for other people to know about it, and for himself to learn more about his own language and culture, because when he prepares for and records communicative events with his uncles and grandfather, he learns more about his own language.

"It is important to document and record the language and the culture, because the recordings help us a lot. By recording we can show what the language is like, we can register our language and our culture, and we can leave it recorded to show to those who do not know it, so that they can watch and listen to it and perceive how our language is spoken." (Jociclei Macurap, the Tirirical village in July 2024.)

Jaqueline Wajuru considers the recordings to be a fundamental tool for new generations to learn about their history and culture.

"Recordings are fundamental tools for the new generations to learn [about our language and culture]. I want the project recordings to be stored [at the language archives] and kept so that when people want to know about the history of the Wajuru people, they can learn from these recordings. They can learn more about our Indigenous group, the Wajuru people. In this sense, the recordings will mainly serve to ensure that our culture is not forgotten by the new generations. And so, with these recordings, I hope that the new generations can learn even more about their own culture, which is arising even more and becoming more evident with our work [on the project]." (Jaqueline Wajuru, statement recorded in the Ricardo Franco village in July 2024.)

Jociclei Macurap and Jaqueline Wajuru's statements highlight how they see the relevance of ethnolinguistic documentation and emphasize their expectation for the use and safeguarding of the information being documented. Their point of view is very important because they have authority both as community members and as active participants in the documentation project.

Language documentation is one of the priorities listed by the Indigenous peoples in the state of Rondônia (Galucio et al. 2018), but the Indigenous peoples lack technical capacity to carry on autonomous documentation projects. Other Indigenous groups in the Rio Guaporé Indigenous Land are also becoming increasingly interested in language documentation, since all the languages in the territory are under threat in some way. As chief Adão Wajuru reported in 2024, in the Ricardo Franco village, the threat of the Wayoro language disappearing is "the most serious problem facing the Indigenous groups at the moment." However, in Brazil, there are no specific funding calls for language documentation projects. Contributions are made on a one-to-one basis. A constant request from the communities, especially the Wajuru youth, is the acquisition of professional equipment for recording on cell phones. For instance, a kit of equipment for ethnolinguistic documentation (consisting of a camera, tripod, microphones, headphones, and computer) was donated by our project to the Wayoro and Makurap Indigenous groups so that documentation can be done whenever the community deems it important. Young Wajuru and Makurap have been documenting annual community celebrations, for example, motivated by our documentation project which is reported by the communities as effective in building technical capacity for the community to document their own languages and cultures.

One of the perceived outcomes of the Makurap and Wajuru documentation project is that it has been functioning as a motivating key for language and culture revitalization. To illustrate this, we present a couple of initiatives related to language revitalization among Wajuru and Makurap communities that have started after the development of the ethnolinguistic documentation project. The Makurap people have started an autonomous project

to revitalize the Makurap language, with Jociclei Macurap as the language teacher. Within the scope of our documentation project, we have supported this initiative by providing Jociclei Macurap with technical guidance for his teaching of the Makurap language as a second language to community members. He is a native speaker of Makurap and a connoisseur of their traditional culture and cosmology, but he has no formal training as a teacher. Thus, we discussed with him the application of a culturally oriented and communicative approach, focusing on dialogues, and teaching traditional craftsmanship—such as making baskets and fans—using the Makurap language. The Makurap community organized meetings in which they studied the language from June to November 2024. The classes include children, adolescents, young people, and adults. This initiative is very incipient, and it may not result in new fluent speakers of the language in all its contexts, but it shows how community-based documentary projects can raise awareness among the younger generations about their traditional culture and how well-planned documentation projects can have a positive impact and function as a motivating factor for language revitalization.

The Wajuru community held a general assembly meeting in August 2023 in which they discussed the language situation. As a strategy to improve the language vitality, they planned to create a space for teaching and learning the Wajuru language and culture. In order to implement this idea, they decided to request that the Rondônia state education department hire a Wayoro language teacher. The space to be built would be dedicated to the Wayoro language and the people's cultural practices, such as making the *marico*, a traditional bag woven from tucum fibers, and mats. Weekly meetings were suggested, especially with young children.

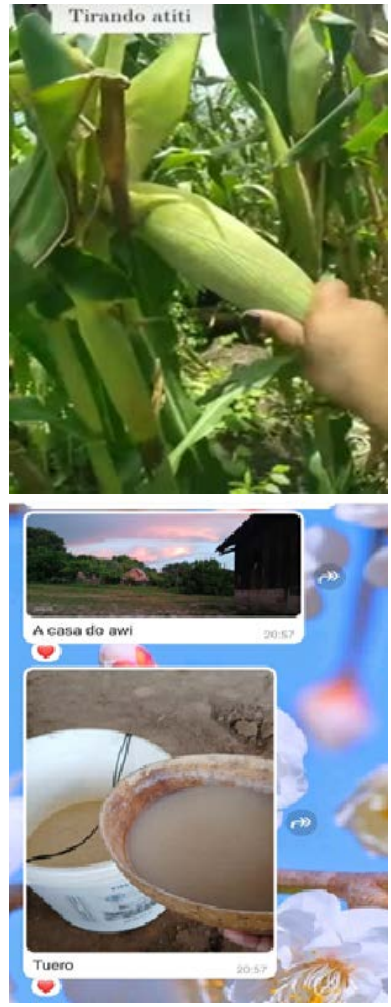

Fig. 11. Screenshots show the use of the Wayoro words *awi* "daddy," *tuero* "chicha" and *atiti* "corn" by young people on the Whatsapp (top) and Instagram (bottom) social networks.

Another initiative was reported by Jaqueline Wajuru who plans to teach Wayoro language at her own home to her younger relatives. Other young people like Railane Wajuru and Antônio Neto Wajuru use social media to feature words they have learned in Wayoro, relating them to daily activities in the community, such as making bowls, harvesting corn, and drinking

chicha.[16] Note in the included screenshots (Fig.11) the use of the words *awi* "daddy" and *tuero* "chicha" in a Whatsapp conversation with Antônio Wajuru and the word *atiti* "corn" in a reel about the corn harvest on Railane Wajuru's Instagram profile.

These Makurap and Wajuru initiatives illustrate a more general movement that has been growing in Brazil and which involves the revitalization of traditional culture practices associated with language revitalization, at different levels.

Wrapping up, we can say that the training workshops and the development of the project following the collaborative approach have had a positive impact on the community in general, not only for the Makurap and Wajuru, but also for the other Indigenous groups that live on the Rio Guaporé Indigenous land. There is a greater understanding of the importance and urgency of the documentation of traditional knowledge for future generations and there is a greater willingness to carry out that documentation. As we have shown in the previous sections, the selection of topics to be recorded reflects the view of the communities about what is or is not relevant for documentation. The documentation, in this sense, is used by the community as a tool to reinforce the use and the learning of cultural practices, and the data produced can be used to support any community-oriented activity. Significant products of the documentation conducted by the members of the language communities, in partnership with the team of non-Indigenous researchers, are the multimedia language dictionaries. These will be delivered to the communities in a digital format that can be used on smartphones, laptops, and computers by all community members who have such devices and can also be used in schools.[17]

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[16] *Chicha* is the Portuguese name for a fermented beverage that is central to Wajuru and other Indigenous peoples from Rondônia and that can be made from manioc, corn, sweet potato, and other tubers.

[17] These dictionaries will be produced using the methodology used to create multimedia dictionaries at the Museu Paraense Emílio Goeldi (Brito et al. 2023) (see sample products at https://dicionarios.museu-goeldi.br/index.php).

Pinheiro, Flávio Henrique Ferreirra Pinheiro, Juliana Ketelen Souza Solano, Letícia Gonçalves Pereira, Frida Natália Lobato de Albuquerque, Matheus Augusto Ribeiro Soares). ♦

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