



PART 3

Read the text below and answer questions 27–40.

LANGUAGE VITALITY: ECOLOGY, IDEOLOGY, AND REVITALISATION

A

Language loss is often described with a biological metaphor: just as species go extinct, languages can disappear. The comparison is useful because it highlights scale and irreversibility; once a language stops being spoken, vast stores of ecological knowledge, oral history, and identity-linked practice can vanish with it. Yet the metaphor also risks oversimplification. Species extinction is driven by ecological collapse, whereas language loss is typically driven by human power relations—schooling, labour markets, stigma, and state policy. For this reason, many scholars prefer the frame of biocultural diversity, which treats linguistic variety as intertwined with cultural practices and local environments. In this view, the decline of a language is rarely an isolated event: it often accompanies changes in land use, settlement patterns, and the erosion of community institutions that once sustained daily communication.

B

To understand mechanisms of shift, sociolinguists frequently draw on the concept of diglossia: a stable arrangement in which two varieties or languages are assigned different social functions. A “High” code may dominate education, law, and official media, while a “Low” code is restricted to home life and informal interaction. Diglossia can persist for long periods, but it becomes unstable when the High language is tied to economic mobility and social prestige. Under these conditions, language shift can appear “voluntary” while still being shaped by coercive incentives. Parents may choose the dominant language for children not because they reject their heritage, but because they are navigating labour markets, migration, and the everyday costs of stigma. As domain loss progresses, the endangered language retreats from public institutions into smaller, private spaces, narrowing the contexts in which complex registers are practiced and transmitted.

C

Documentation is often presented as a remedy, but its relationship to vitality is ambiguous. Archival linguistics—recording narratives, compiling dictionaries, and describing grammar—can protect knowledge from total disappearance and can support future learning. However, documentation cannot substitute for a living speech community. A dictionary can become a museum artifact if it is not linked to fluent speakers, routine use, and intergenerational transmission. Moreover, “saving” a language in archives can unintentionally support a comforting illusion: that preservation has been achieved without



confronting social inequality, educational exclusion, or the daily pressures that cause families to abandon the language. Documentation is therefore best understood as necessary but insufficient: it is infrastructure, not revitalisation itself.

D

Efforts to reverse shift increasingly rely on models that treat revitalisation as staged and ecological rather than purely symbolic. Joshua Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) is influential because it places intergenerational transmission at the centre and warns against skipping steps. A language cannot be rebuilt solely by producing textbooks or broadcasting a few programmes if it is not spoken in the home. Fishman's framework aligns with the idea of domain reclamation: communities attempt to take back specific arenas of use—family life, childcare, neighbourhood commerce, workplaces, local governance—so that speaking the language becomes functional rather than ceremonial. This also brings planning into view. Corpus planning develops orthographies and teaching materials, while prestige planning seeks to reshape attitudes so that the language is publicly valued and not treated as a marker of backwardness.

E

Education is often invoked as the decisive solution, yet it contains a paradox. Schools can expand exposure, but they can also accelerate shift when they operate exclusively through the dominant language and present minority languages as irrelevant or defective. Even supportive programmes vary sharply in impact depending on whether they teach the language as a subject or teach through the language as a medium of instruction. Immersion approaches aim to create competent speakers by making the endangered language the normal vehicle for learning mathematics, history, and daily classroom management. However, schools alone cannot maintain vitality if children leave the classroom and return to homes and peer groups where the dominant language controls interaction. The strongest programmes therefore connect schooling to community spaces—childcare, sports clubs, religious practice, local media—so that learning is reinforced by real-world necessity and social belonging.

F

Technology adds a new layer of opportunity and risk. Digital tools can support learning, connect dispersed speakers, and extend domains into messaging, video platforms, and online publishing. Yet digital spaces are not neutral. The dominance of English and a small set of “global” languages in interfaces, coding ecosystems, and search algorithms can intensify inequality through a digital divide: it is easier to live online in a dominant language, and harder to make minority-language content discoverable and economically sustainable. In some contexts, the internet becomes a site of domain loss rather than



reclamation, because young users associate digital modernity with the dominant language. Technology can therefore function as a double-edged resource: it amplifies revitalisation when it strengthens offline networks, but it can also accelerate shift when it replaces local interaction with global platforms that reward linguistic conformity.

G

Ultimately, debates about revitalisation are ideological as well as practical. One framing treats language as a tool: valuable insofar as it delivers economic advantage, literacy, or access to institutions. Another framing treats language as a human right and a public good: a basis for identity, dignity, and participation without shame. These positions lead to different definitions of “success.” A purely economic view may accept language replacement as rational adaptation, while a rights-based view emphasises repair of historical injustice and the legitimacy of minority-language public life. The most durable revitalisation efforts tend to combine material support with ideological change: they protect spaces for use, rebuild intergenerational transmission, and contest linguistic hegemony so that speaking the language is not a private hobby but a normal, respected way of living.

Questions 27–32

Choose the correct heading for Paragraphs A–F.

List of Headings

- i Conflicting pressures in the digital realm and the problem of unequal access
- ii Why archives preserve records but cannot substitute for living transmission
- iii How status-based division of languages can become unstable under economic pressure
- iv A metaphor that illuminates loss but can mislead about its causes
- v The limits of institutional solutions and the immersion distinction
- vi Why parents may choose the dominant language for their children
- vii A staged model for recovery and the idea of reclaiming domains of use
- viii Why home transmission takes priority over textbooks and broadcasting
- ix The role of dictionaries in preserving knowledge for future learning
- x How search algorithms affect the visibility of minority-language content

27 Paragraph A

28 Paragraph B

29 Paragraph C

30 Paragraph D



31 Paragraph E

32 Paragraph F

Questions 33–36

Look at the following summary and the list of words below. Choose the correct letter.

Strategies for Survival

Fishman's model places priority on restoring **33** within families, since a language cannot be rebuilt if children do not learn it naturally. Revitalisation therefore focuses on **34**, meaning the recovery of everyday spaces such as home and local services where the language becomes functional again. Alongside this, prestige planning seeks to improve the language's public **35** so it is not treated as inferior. Finally, archival work remains useful as **36**, but it cannot replace daily use.

A infrastructure

B domain reclamation

C intergenerational transmission

D status

E exclusive instruction

F economic mobility

G standardised testing

H bilingual stigma

Questions 37–40

Choose **YES** if the statement agrees with the claims of the writer, choose **NO** if the statement contradicts the claims of the writer, or choose **NOT GIVEN** if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this.

37 The writer regards the biological comparison as an exact explanation of why languages disappear.

38 The writer states that immersion programmes cost more to operate than programmes that teach the language only as a subject.

39 The writer indicates that digital tools can support revitalisation but may also accelerate shift because dominant-language interfaces shape online behaviour.

40 The writer implies that revitalisation is framed in ethical terms, such as rights and dignity, rather than being only an economic strategy.



Answer Key

27. iv

28. iii

29. ii

30. vii

31. v

32. i

33. C

34. B

35. D

36. A

37. NO

38. NOT GIVEN

39. YES

40. YES