Language preservation: From writing on Wikipedia to writing a novel

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Wikipedias & languages

- There are 319 active Wikipedias, but less than \( \frac{1}{3} \) have over 50K articles.
- 25 Wikipedias have less than 1K articles
- There are 58 million articles in all Wikipedias, half of that in 10 languages
Endangered languages

- There are around 7K active languages; 65 are “safe”
- Some of those endangered are spoken by millions, like Lombard, Yiddish, Aymara, and Belarusian
Judeo-Spanish

- Spoken by around 150K people (L1+L2)
- Most speakers are above age of 60
- Suffers leveling with Spanish
- There are Judeo-Spanish studies in Universities in the USA, Israel and Spain
- Language not standardized
- Radio programs in Israel and Spain
- One weekly* newspaper and one magazine
Literature in Judeo-Spanish

- The first books were published in the late 1500s, most of religious nature
- First newspaper began operations in 1871
- First novels / serialized translations in the 1870s
- First original novel published in 1924
- Most recent works are from 1999 and 2012*

*these dates are approximate.
Remember the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Stuck at home
- Social distancing
- Working from home
Why writing a book?

- Wikipedians are experts at writing
- We speak the language
- Information doesn’t generate emotions; art does
- Nothing beats reading in your own language
- You’re helping future generations
Side benefits?

- Creating [more Wikipedia articles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia) about the topic of your book in your language, or expanding the current ones
- Increasing interest of others in your language and culture
- Inspiring others to do the same
- Improving your command of the language

[Wikimania Singapore](https://wikimania.org/)
- Lots of research (including trips)
- Fighting with procrastination
- Became the center of my thoughts
- So far 60% of the writing done
- Will definitely do it again
Mersi muncho.