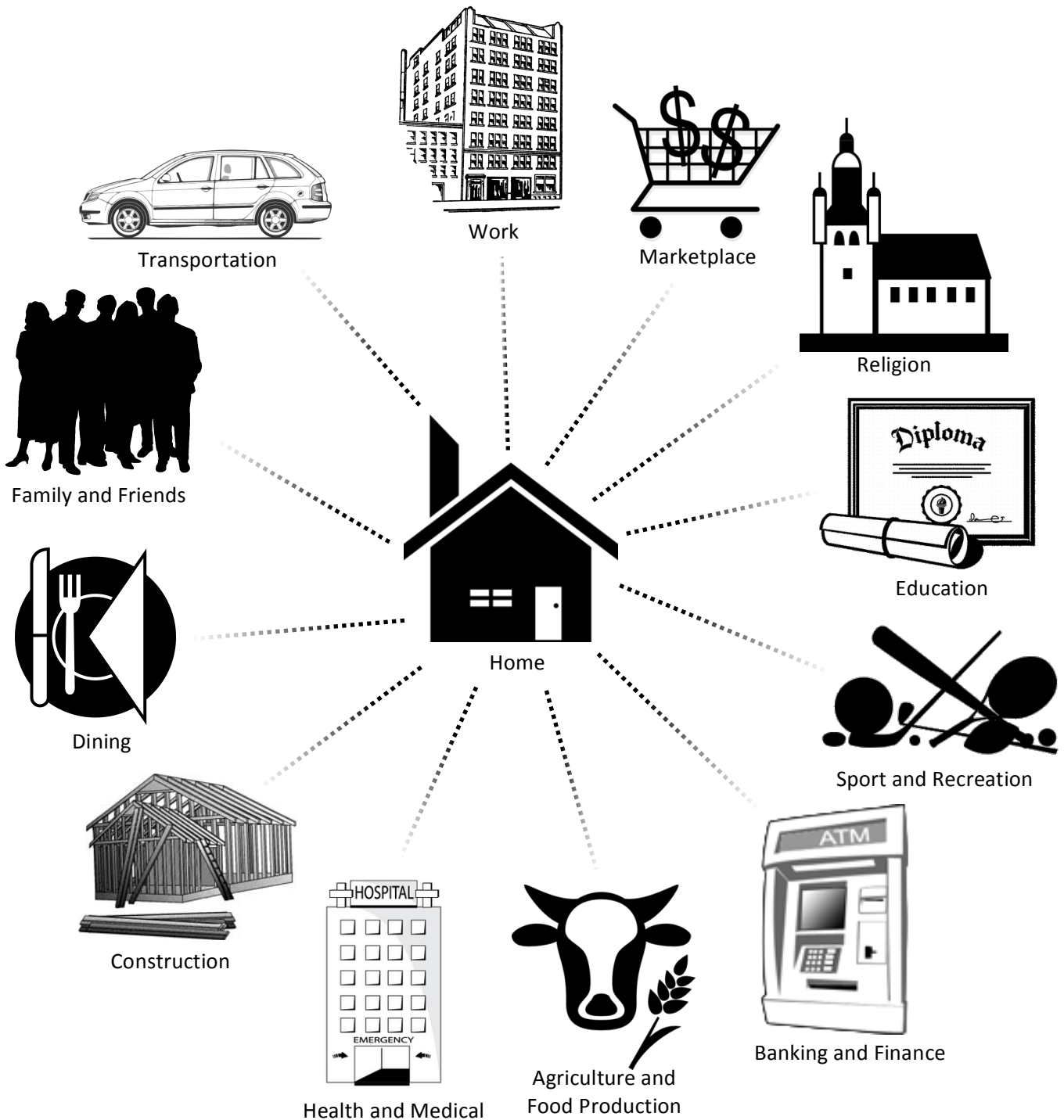


## Community Sketch

Language and culture acquisition is simply a process of learning to talk to people and to engage them in conversation. This obviously means speaking to them using their language, but it also requires that you are familiar with the areas of life that they are talking about, and are able to speak about those areas with some understanding. This kind of ability starts with learning to talk about the common and familiar things; home life and the immediate family first, then other areas that are part of everyday life, such as school, shopping, transport and work. It is a good idea, during the early stages of learning, to develop a 'sketch', or plan, of common and familiar areas like this that you want one day be able to talk about. Having a clear idea of the areas you need to explore will help you to learn in a balanced way about all the things that people in the community are engaged with. Each community sketch will be a little different, but an example for an urban community might look like the one below:



Sometime after you have been in your community for several months, develop your own community sketch, using the example above as a guide (also see the example for a rural area at the end of this document). Think about the major areas of daily life that everyone in your community knows about and talks about. It will probably help if you begin by thinking about a particular family that you know in the community, and their daily lives and interactions. Your community sketch will help you as you work through the different stages of culture and language learning - some ideas of how to use it are outlined below (the Stages mentioned below refer to those from the *Becoming Equipped to Communicate* guide to culture and language learning).

### During Stage 1:

Make a note of some general types of activities that relate to each of the areas in your community sketch. Keep adding to your lists as you notice activities going on around you in the community (as you do the *Participant Observation* learning activity during Stage 1). The example below shows some general types of activities for just some of the areas:



**Home** - Cooking, hygiene, maintenance, cleaning, gardening, visiting/entertaining, relating to neighbours, local community work, recycling rubbish.



**Agriculture and Food Production** - Farming, fishing, livestock, beekeeping, fruit growing, bringing produce to market, harvesting food.



**Dining** - Restaurant dining, restaurant manager or waiter, street food, takeaway, picnics, meals with family/friends.



**Construction** - New home building, renovation, concrete work, carpentry, furniture making, tiling, roofing, ground works.



**Work** - Office work, manual labour, skilled labour, marketing, job seeking and interviews, work time breaks and meals, travel to and from work, specific workplaces.



**Religion** - Weddings, funerals, religious festivals, religious meetings, regular worship, places of worship (maintenance), monks, ministers, etc.



**Marketplace** - Local market, supermarket, retail shops, department stores, speciality items, food sourcing and transport.



**Transportation** - Personal vehicles, modes of transportation, public transport, vehicle repair, tyre repair, selling and buying vehicles.

### At the end of Stage 1:

Using your community sketch, plan some *Listen and Act* activities based on any large gaps you have in general vocabulary for these areas (e.g., sports, transportation, religion, etc.). Don't try to learn specific vocabulary at this stage, but just the basic terminology for objects and actions (an average of 40-60 words for each area), so that you are prepared for Stage 2 activities based around these areas of community life.

### During Stage 2:

As you are doing the *Working with Daily Routines* learning exercises during Stage 2, your community sketch and list of activities will help you to plan your Stage 2 learning. For every area in your list, write down some specific activities that you could take part in with your neighbours, language helpers or friends. Keep thinking of, and noting down, more specific activities for each area of your community sketch, so that you have plenty of ideas for activities to take part in as you move through Stage 2. Planning like

this will help you to learn in a balanced way and not miss out on learning to talk about any major areas of community life.

Below are examples of some possible specific activities for a number of major areas (this list doesn't include every area, but in your list you should cover each area you had in your community sketch).



**General types of activities**

**Home** - Cooking, hygiene, maintenance, cleaning, gardening, visiting/entertaining.

**Specific activities to take part in for Stage 2**

Making new mailbox (or other home maintenance activities), washing dishes, bathing and dressing a baby, making a typical family meal, the family morning routine, getting a haircut, feeding animals or pets, mowing the grass, preparing for visitors.



**Agriculture and Food Production** - Farming, fishing, livestock, beekeeping, fruit growing.

Planting a tree, growing hydroponic lettuce, tree trimming, net fishing, harvesting vegetables at a market garden, milking a cow, collecting eggs at a chicken farm.



**Dining** - Restaurants, street food, takeaway, picnics, meals with family or friends.

Making tea or coffee, buying crepes or kebabs (street food), going to the food court at the mall, making a local dish, sharing a picnic or family mealtime, helping in a restaurant.



**Construction** - New home building, renovation, concrete work, carpentry, furniture making.

Cement moulding, home renovation, making a table, hanging a door, making a path, painting a room, making a timber house frame, buying building materials.



**Work** - Office work, manual labour, skilled labour, marketing, job seeking and interviews.

Helping at a sample stand (marketing), making business cards (computers, printing), making clothing (sewing), garbage pickup, going to a job interview, street cleaning.



**Marketplace** - Local market, supermarket, retail shops, department stores, speciality items.

Setting up a market stand, preparing vegetable juice for sale, buying a large item, butchering fish for sale, choosing clothing in a store, assisting a shop owner.



**Transportation** - Personal vehicles, modes of transportation, public transport, vehicle repair.

Getting a taxi, riding on the train or bus, riding a motorcycle, tire rotation, car wash, filling petrol, getting a mechanical check.

**During Stage 3:**

During Stage 3, you will be hearing stories that your helpers or friends will tell you. You will be building on the things you learned during Stage 2, and will use the same daily routines you already experienced as a basis for your Stage 3 learning. By using your community sketch from the beginning, you will have experienced a broad range of activities during Stage 2, so by the time you begin Stage 3 you will have a wide range of things to base stories on. For example, in Stage 2 you might have learned about leaving and arriving in a taxi, so in Stage 3, your helper could tell you a story about a time he was leaving and arriving at an airport. With the foundation of understanding and vocabulary you already have, you are well situated to learn much more from this story than you would if it was all entirely new to you, because much of the vocabulary will already be familiar. If you use a community sketch from the beginning, you are more likely to build a broad base of vocabulary and understanding around the important areas of life in the community.

Later in Stage 3, you will learn how to use the future tense by having your language helper talk about things in the future. The best way to do this is to create a natural scenario for your helper to speak to you about. It will be much easier for you to suggest a scenario if you have a broad range of activities for which you already know the vocabulary. For example, you may have done a hair cutting daily routine activity in Stage 2, so in Stage 3 you will be able to ask your helper to tell you what would likely take place if you went to the barber shop tomorrow to get your hair cut in a crew cut.

During Stage 3 you will be beginning to think about deeper areas in addition to observable behavior, and starting to understand *why* people behave in the way that they do. What do they appreciate and prioritize in their lives? What are their underlying beliefs about life? You will have a great foundation to move into these deeper areas if you have a broad understanding of the more common and familiar areas of life.

**Community sketch for a different setting:**

Below is an example of how a community sketch for a rural village setting might look. You will have to develop one that is a good picture of the particular community you live in.

