

SIXTH CAMBRIDGE CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT

CURRICULUM DESIGN AND EVALUATION FOR ENDANGERED LANGUAGES

ABSTRACT BOOKLET

Naveed Ahmad (Bahauddin Zakariya)
Curriculum design for the languages of Pakistan

Pakistan has 27 endangered languages. For a single country of a moderate size, this number is alarming. No endangered languages curriculum is available to address the problem. The present study looks into the possibilities of curriculum design to prevent these languages. Specifically, the study inquirers: 1) Are these languages' speakers accessible in the light of terrorists' threats in the region? To what extent can these speakers provide information about their cultures and literatures? To what extent can they help creating teaching materials for these languages? To what extent can they be involved in team teaching? To what extent medium of instruction can be provided in the medium of endangered languages? And, consequently, can broad based designing features be enlisted as guiding principles for making courses for these endangered languages' speakers to prevent language death. Information will be gathered through the tools of interview and observation. Subjects will be speakers of these endangered languages, administrators, politicians from the related geographical regions, law-enforcing agencies' representatives operating in the areas, and scholars. Additionally, related literature will be reviewed. Data of this exploratory research will be analysed qualitatively. The findings will be useful with reference to endangered languages curriculum design.

Joan Argenter (UNESCO) & **Virginia Unamuno** (CONICET)
An ethnoeducational project among Wichi communities in Argentina: Acquiring language-and-culture knowledge out of traditional practices

The Wichi are an indigenous people inhabiting the Argentina territory. They amount to approximately 35.000 persons. This project aimed at elaborating materials in Wichi addressed to schoolchildren in these communities. It was worked out by two Wichi intercultural bilingual teachers. An experience of non-formal context-bind learning, focused on the recovery of Wichies' textile practices, was carried over. This addressed the areas of natural sciences, arts, language, technology and narrative altogether. Following this experience a monolingual beautifully illustrated storybook for pre-school and primary education children was elaborated: *N'ku Ifweln'uhu*. Children's learning in natural context overcomes formal language teaching in classroom, since the latter does not link patrimonial language and culture knowledge. In the aforementioned activity children were involved in a sequence of skills aimed at the elaboration of chawar. They both participated in traditional handcraft –from identifying the chawar plant up to the weaving process– and learned manual and logical operations, as well as communicational skills: vocabulary, conversation and narrative. Successful pedagogical materials involve a practice-emerging dialogue between common and communitarian curricula. We emphasize the community's control over the storybook illustrator, who reworked her drawings according to natives' instructions, making clear the difference between outsider's and insider's experience and visual representation.

Caroline Bacciu (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen)
Area-bound linguistic identities in Sardinia - An educational grammar proposal

The UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger states the Sardinian varieties *logudorese*, *campidanese* and Italian based *gallurese* as of definitely endangered vitality. Italian as the dominant language with respect to Sardinian increasingly invades informal communication spaces where usually Sardinian is spoken. The standardization attempt (2006), the normative written grammar LSC is applied, at most, in official publications. Until today no overall educational textbook based on LSC grammar for all dialects has been proposed: a supraregional grammar is of vital importance. Based on the structural linguistic divergence between the dialects and the historically constructed area-specific linguistic identities, I will present an educational proposal that takes into account the areas and their respective linguistic and cultural particularities. In order to embrace the (re)learning of Sardinian it is necessary to bring the educational tool into line with the cultural practices of the *Logudoro*, the *Campidano* and the *Gallura* area. In relation to the socially indexed language choice in Sardinia, I

will show that social networks and the respective variety-specific communication spaces are strongly area-bound. Consequently, the relation between local identity and linguistic variety constitutes an essential variable in language choice that crucially needs to be considered in language acquisition planning. Prescriptive unificatory standardizations that ignore these area-bound linguistic identities are inevitably destined to fail.

Dörte Borchers (Graz)

Why mother tongue education in Nepal doesn't work (yet)

Speakers of any language of Nepal have the constitutional right to use their language in education but mother tongue education is offered only in very few schools. The language in most schools is either English or Nepali. The right to mother tongue education has been included in the country's first democratic Constitution (1990) due to political pressure by various of the countries more than 70 linguistic groups and has been an important part of the following Interim Constitution (2007) and the new Constitution of 2015. This paper provides a brief overview over the situation of mother tongue education in Nepal followed by an exploration of reasons for the non-implementation of mother tongue education in most schools. Finally, a look at schools where mother tongue education does work might help to understand, how this concept can be implemented successfully in other places too. The presentation is based on examples from the literature as well as from field work.

Jeffrey Davis (Tennessee)

Curriculum approaches to reawaken indigenous sign language

Hundreds of sign languages (SL) have been documented globally and it is estimated that the actual number may exceed 400 (Ethnologue). Generally, two major types of SL communities are described. First, “urban deaf sign language communities” where members of the Deaf cultural group use SL as their primary communication mode across a range of sociolinguistic domains (education, religion, law, etc.). A second type “village or indigenous sign language communities” involves both deaf and non-deaf community members sharing a common SL. Among both types of SL communities we find many degrees of greater or lesser vitality; i.e., SL surviving under the shadow of a more dominant spoken language or on the verge of extinction due to the loss of all native users who maintained the language for identify and heritage. The revitalization or reawakening of Indigenous SL is linked to how it is transmitted and taught. For 25 years, the author has been engaged in documentary linguistics fieldwork, research, and revitalization of American Indigenous SL varieties considered highly endangered or dormant. This paper features efforts involving Native American community members to encourage more uses of indigenous SL and innovative teaching approaches designed to boost the number of L2 users. Visual language pedagogy entails multimodality approaches to accentuate signed, spoken, written, and digital representations of language, also applicable to teaching both spoken and signed languages.

Meili Fang & David Nathan (Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education)

Tapping the well: evaluating and adapting teaching LWC methodologies for endangered languages

When struggling to support endangered languages (EL) through teaching, it can be easy to assume that we can adopt tried-and true methods used to teach languages of wider communication (LWC). However, there is no single or overarching scenario for teaching ‘big’ languages, and a wide range of teaching approaches are used for LWCs. Major language teaching scenarios range from first language and second language to first foreign language and second foreign language, and more. We can attempt to map appropriate and effective methods from these onto EL scenarios. While it would not only be more efficient for us not to ‘reinvent the wheel’, these scenarios can enliven us to the feasibility of using a range of methods, e.g. in communities with different language ecologies or where there are varieties of learner types and motivations. In this paper we will develop a schema mapping between LWC teaching approaches and various indicators in EL language situations, and describe some concrete examples where specific LWC scenarios are mapped to EL situations. Of course this approach finally raises the question: which features of EL situations require unique methods not presently available for LWCs (and might even be of benefit for LWC pedagogy)?

Tess Fitzpatrick (Cardiff) & Steve Morris (Swansea)

Creating pedagogical wordlists without a corpus: a replication study for the Welsh L2 curriculum

The existence of major corpora for dominant languages has a considerable influence on curriculum planning and development at all levels of teaching. An example of this is the use of corpus-based word frequency lists to determine target vocabulary for teaching and testing. In the context of an endangered language with no comprehensive corpus resource, must vocabulary lists be constructed using translations of frequency-based lists in the dominant language, or is it possible to formulate a more language-appropriate approach? This paper will firstly discuss how a dominant language methodology has been replicated to create pedagogical wordlists for adult learners of Welsh at A1 and A2 levels on the Common European Framework of Reference. The resulting wordlists are already being used to inform Welsh language curriculum development and language testing at these levels. Secondly, we will present a new methodology, based on principled use of word association data, that is being developed to expand coverage of the word lists to B1 level and beyond. The methodologies we present here ensure not only that the wordlists include vocabulary that adult learners are likely to encounter when engaging with the wider speech community, but also that they reflect the specific sociocultural situation of Welsh.

Barbara Graham (SIL)

Reading and writing clubs - A means of introducing endangered languages into curriculum design and evaluation in Kenya?

The school may be identified as an important factor in revitalising endangered language but schooling is also cited as a major cause for language decline. The choice of language(s) to be used in education and high stakes examinations impacts on the language considered of value for social and economic advancement. Curriculum design which seeks to make the endangered language an integral part of curriculum delivery, as well as the evaluation of learning, is likely to have a positive impact on the perception of a language's value. However, in the wider global context, where education is seen as competing not only on a national, but also on an international stage, the challenge is how to ensure that endangered languages share the educational space with other languages and thrive in that space. The concept of a Reading and Writing club arose in a setting where the official time-table permitted half hour's teaching in the Mother Tongue per day. Other lessons were conducted in English and to a lesser extent in Swahili. The club sought to support the reading and writing of all the languages, and to involve teachers, parents and community members. Reports suggest that aspects of the club's strategies are being used in current classrooms.

James Hawkey (Bristol)

Collaborative cross-border curricula: The design and implementation of bilingual and immersion Catalan education programs in France

The traditionally Catalan-speaking area of Northern Catalonia has been part of France since 1659, and as such, has been subject to a great number of assimilatory language policies in favour of French over the last two centuries. However, may the tide be turning? The last decade has seen a massive growth in Catalan language bilingual and immersion education programs in the region. Figures from 2014 reveal that 3,116 students follow some form of Catalan language education (with more than 100 refused access due to lack of resources), which accounts for approximately 4% of school-age children in Northern Catalonia (Gorrand 2014). Although maybe not impressive at first glance, this represents a fourfold increase over the past fifteen years (Becat i Rajaut, 2000: 27; Le Bihan and Rull, 2005: 68), and recent language attitudes data (Hawkey, forthcoming) attests to a heightened level of awareness of Catalan-medium language education in Northern Catalonia. Catalan language programs in the region are designed and implemented with a great deal of collaboration from just over the border in Catalonia. Links between the two traditionally Catalan-speaking territories take many forms – teacher training, provision of materials, promotion of cultural events etc. This presentation will examine the collaborative nature of curriculum design in Northern Catalonia. When a language variety (in this case, Catalan) is endangered in one territory (Northern Catalonia), but not in a neighbouring one (Catalonia), how can the latter help the former? To what extent is having a ‘powerful neighbour’ a useful weapon in the fight for the preservation of an endangered language variety?

Neihana Jacob (Waiariki IT, NZ)

Application of Maori concepts into a Business Management Degree programme

This workshop looks at how the Māori (Indigenous Peoples of New Zealand) language, concepts and World view can be included and implemented into a Business Management degree programme. Between 1996 and 2014, the proportion of the Māori population able to converse in Māori decreased from 25.0 percent to 20.3 percent. Between 2006 and 2014, the proportion of Māori able to converse in Te Reo Māori increased only among those aged 65 and over. In all other age groups, the proportion of Māori able to converse in Te Reo Māori declined (Smith, 2015). To avoid undermining both the degree qualification and Māori world view, this presentation looks at a few examples of how this may be achieved. This area of focus is in response to the continual request by external monitors and internal curriculum advisors of how Māori learners are catered for and how we are insuring that the Māori world view is recognised. Language is intrinsic to expressing and sustaining culture as a means of communicating values, beliefs, and customs. As the indigenous culture of New Zealand, Māori culture is unique to New Zealand and forms a fundamental part of the national identity. Māori language is central to Māori culture and an important aspect of cultural participation and identity (Walker, 1995). The response was to investigate ideas and examples of how the integration of the Māori world view into the prescribed learning outcomes while recognising the limitations of lecturers in Māori concepts.

Ibon Manterola, Leire Diaz de Gereñu, Ines Garcia Askoaga, & Itziar Idiazabal (Basque Country)

Text genres as relevant didactic tools for the implementation and evaluation of the Basque curriculum: the example of a narrative activity in Basque L1, L2 and L3

The aim of this paper is to show the relevance of text genres as didactic tools that permit the implementation and evaluation of the Basque curriculum. School plays a significant role in the revitalization process of Basque, given that more than 50% of students come from Spanish-speaking families (Gobierno Vasco, 2013), and there is an important presence of students with immigrant backgrounds. The Basque curriculum assumes a textual perspective according to which text production and comprehension constitutes the basis for language learning (Dolz & Gagnon, 2010). We will show empirical data that were collected in a narrative activity carried out in different primary schools located in diverse sociolinguistic contexts, where Basque is the L1, L2 and L3 of students. The analysis of students' narratives permits to identify detailed aspects of text production learning such as text planning or the use of text organisers and evaluative expressions. These features appear not only in the case of students with Basque L1 backgrounds, but also in the case of Basque L2 and L3 students. We will conclude that didactic activities based on text genres enhance the emergence of students' linguistic skills which, according to the Basque curriculum, have to be implemented and evaluated.

Noor Azam Haji-Othman & James McLellan (Brunei Darussalam)

Curriculum development, delivery and evaluation issues for teaching endangered Borneo indigenous languages at tertiary level: Tutong and Dusun

The Language Centre at Universiti Brunei Darussalam offers credit-bearing courses in two endangered Borneo indigenous minority languages, Tutong and Dusun. This presentation will focus on issues concerning the curriculum development and delivery of these courses in a context in which most students' first language is Malay. Malay, Tutong and Dusun all belong to the Western Malayo-Polynesian branch of the Austronesian language family, but the percentage of shared cognates of Tutong and Dusun with the Brunei variety of Malay is only around 40%, hence they are distinct languages rather than dialects. Drawing on interviews with those teaching Tutong and Dusun, and on an analysis of the materials they have developed, the presentation will address the particular issues of teaching previously unwritten languages to adult beginner learners. These are

- the development and selection of relevant materials for adult beginners
- the selection and exploitation of appropriate texts for classroom use
- the need to ensure authenticity as well as maintaining academic expectations in the delivery and assessment of the courses
- student feedback on the Tutong and Dusun courses.

Douglas McNaught (SOAS)

From mountains to metropolis: indigenous language education in urban Taiwan

Having faced 390 years of political, economic and social persecution, Taiwan's aborigines are now dealing with unprecedented linguistic and cultural loss. Although the government has a renewed interest in aboriginal rights having established new laws, educational policies and incentives, problems with curriculum development and teacher training have hindered the success of aboriginal language education (Pawan 2005) while rural-to-urban migration has caused a generational disconnect between young aborigines and elder keepers of traditional knowledge. While progress is being made in more rural areas through the introduction of indigenous language-medium schools, alongside continued community-involvement in resource development, indigenous education of the new urbanised population takes place away from the cultural centre in environments where institutionalised racism continues to erode the cultural pride of young aborigines (Cheng & Jacob 2008). Although promising new online resources continue to make remote language learning more accessible, there is still much work to be done to support the educational needs of urban aboriginal students. This paper provides an overview of the history of indigenous language education in Taiwan, discusses current problems with language education and pedagogy alongside macrosocial factors, and proposes possible solutions for increasing cultural and linguistic practices within the new urban environment.

Rebecca Mitchell (Cambridge)

Towards an experimental primary L1 curriculum for the Vili language

Vili is a minority language found chiefly in Congo and the Angolan enclave of Cabinda, with approximately 3,600 speakers in the Nyanga province of Gabon. Gabon has around 60 indigenous languages, none of which enjoys any official endorsement; indeed, the sole official language since independence has been French. In view of declining vertical transmission of the indigenous languages (Mitchell 2012), political apathy regarding language legislation, and the predominance in Nyanga of the Punu and Lumbu languages, Vili can be considered to be in a vulnerable position. This study explores the feasibility of devising a curriculum for teaching Vili at primary level within its speech community, taking into account linguistic challenges such as a lack of texts, dictionaries and metalinguistic terminology, and potentially problematic social factors including speaker attitudes, financial resources, and competition from the official language and dominant regional languages. Against a theoretical background of the central principles of primary L1 language teaching (Bunting 2000) and trends in leading pedagogical resources for languages with official status in Gabon and neighbouring nations (Budgell & Ruttle 2014, Jamet, Pujol & Johanet 2013), this study sketches a context-specific methodology for the teaching of Vili, and assesses the potential for its application to other minority languages in the region.

Siobhán Nic Fhlannchadha & Tina Hickey (Dublin)

The importance of the school as a language exposure environment: An Irish case study

Irish is unusual among endangered languages in that it has received significant state support for almost a century. Perhaps most crucial of these supports was making Irish a required subject for all children from school entry. However, dissatisfaction with the outcome of teaching Irish in mainstream English-medium schools contributed to increasing parent-led demand for the establishment of Irish-immersion schools (*Gaelscoileanna*). Irish-medium education has had some success in producing high proficiency Irish speakers, though few studies have examined the actual language use of these children. In this study, data were collected from 306 participants (aged 6 - 13 years), including detailed information on home language experience. Standardised measures of Irish and English receptive vocabulary were used and the LITMUS MAIN task was used to elicit spoken picture descriptions. The outcomes for participants in Irish-medium schools in officially designated Irish speaking areas, called *Gaeltacht* areas, will be presented, along with case studies of an Irish immersion school and Irish-medium schools in largely English speaking parts of the *Gaeltacht*. School type predicted a significant amount of variance on the measures of Irish and English reading vocabulary, and the results of the picture description task revealed interesting differences between participants according to language experience in education. The outcomes of Irish-medium education for the vitality of the language are significant in the context of weakening intergenerational

transmission of Irish in the home and a substantial increase in the dependence on schools to produce Irish speakers, and the results of this study are therefore relevant to researchers, policy makers, educators and parents.

Colleen O'Brian (Arizona)
Creating relevant curricula for endangered languages in Colombia

Most of Colombia's around seventy indigenous languages are endangered. Although the government supposedly supports bilingual education in schools, few (if any) programs have been successful, due to the sheer number of languages, massive displacement of indigenous populations, and lack of resources. In this paper, I examine several language revitalization programs, including Quechua, Cofan, Muisca, and San Andres Creole, discussing their strengths and weaknesses. Then I discuss what we can learn from the school-based component of these programs and finally offer suggestions for the creation of more successful language programs in Colombia, taking into account the sociopolitical situation. I argue that each curriculum has to be tailored to the individual community based on four criteria: (1) their desires, such as prioritizing rituals, traditional stories, or ecological knowledge (2) location, such as urban environments or isolated villages; (3) resources, namely whether the government is dedicating money to the program; and (4) learner demographics, including speaker number, age, and type of employment. Finally, I suggest that we can borrow some tools from anthropology, such as in-depth ethnography and participant observation to create more effective pedagogical materials that address the needs and wants of communities.

Evaristo Ovide (Salamanca)
Language and cultural assimilation in indigenous education programmes in the public schools of Argentina

The province of Chaco has always been, and still is, a pioneer in Argentina in implementing Intercultural Bilingual Education (EIB in Spanish) in schools. EIB is a light modification of the traditional school system with the objective (in theory) of meeting the needs of the indigenous peoples and preserve and promote their culture and language. Since 1989, Chaco has had trained Aboriginal Teaching Assistants" helping non-indigenous teachers with indigenous population. Since 1999, there are Intercultural Bilingual Teachers (all exclusively indigenous) in the schools. The three indigenous languages of the province were made official in 2007. Since 2014, two more laws were passed in Chaco giving more control and job security to indigenous teachers. However, contrary to what could be expected, research carried out by UNICEF in the capital of the province in 2011 showed a very negative picture regarding the performance of indigenous children at school. I will present an analysis explaining why the school system in Chaco (and not only) still remains as a fundamental tool for cultural and language assimilation by the dominant culture (although much more subtly and effectively than in previous times) and I will propose a different model for EIB.

Julia Sallabank (SOAS) & Yan Marquis (Guernsey)
Learning and very small language: goals, aims, methods

We present results of British Academy-funded research which investigated the experiences, needs, motivations and goals of adult learners of a small, highly endangered language. Guernesiais (Guernsey, Channel Islands) may now have only 200-300 mainly elderly fluent speakers, and only 6 people under the age of 60 who can hold a sustained, impromptu conversation. In such a context, effective adult L2 learning becomes paramount for future transmission. Learning and teaching a small, highly endangered, post-vernacular language differ in many ways to a major national or international language: instrumental reasons such as business or travel are irrelevant, and the language may be perceived as having little practical use. Research methods included interviews, lesson observations and an online questionnaire. The findings have implications for language planning due to the outcomes, demographics and ideologies revealed: lack of progression beyond beginner level; failure to engage younger prospective speakers; and demotivating comments from older native speakers. Teacher training is lacking, and multimedia materials are requested to compensate for lack of native-speaker input. In future research we plan to re-interview the cohort to gauge progress for a longitudinal view, and to conduct comparative studies on other small languages.

Tony Scott Warren (L'Office du Jèrriais)
Dé rein à l'av'nîn – From nothing to Eternity

Until 1999 there was no teaching programme for Jèrriais for Jersey's children, but a survey of parents discovered an unexpected demand. Although some funding was made available by the government, no curriculum or materials existed, and those employed to implement the programme, while fluent speakers, were not teaching specialists. How then could a curriculum be designed for this highly endangered language?

Ari Sherris (Texas A&M)
Doing Safaleba literacy in school through situated practice, activism, and translanguaging

Safaleba is a Gur language spoken by 7-9,000 speakers in a rich multilingual and remote rural area of Ghana. Within a 30-kilometer radius of Safaleba towns 11 additional languages are spoken (i.e., Birifor, Choruba, Dagaare, Deg, Gonja, Jula, Kamara, Lobiri, Siti, Vagla, and Waali). Ghanaian language policy mandates literacy instruction in Gonja and English in the Safaleba area. Safaleba subsistence farmer-teacher-activists in the largest Safaleba town, Mandari, are pushing aside Gonja to teach reading and writing in their language in government primary schools. The purpose of this paper is to describe how literacy curriculum design and evaluation transpire when situated in the social and cultural practices of the Safaleba speech community. The Safaleba curriculum demonstrates how 6-8 year olds are authoring little booklets after they go on fieldtrips into the community and listen to community member's talk about what they do. Intriguingly, translanguaging is evident in the talk-to-text design and subsequent interview data. Examples of materials and instructional practices will be shared as well as the cycles of review and evaluation that include community elders and young teachers. Data are from field notes, document collection, video and audio interviews, and photographs— part and parcel of a large ongoing classroom ethnography.

Rob Teare (Isle of Man)
Curriculum Planning for Manx Gaelic

Manx Gaelic suffered a dramatic and persistent decline from the imposition of the 1870 Westminster Education Act onwards. By 1961 the number of speakers was deemed to be too low to be worth recording on the census. The language has seen a reversal in fortunes since then, and since 1992 Manx Gaelic lessons have been available to primary and secondary pupils and a Manx Medium primary school was established in 2001. There are issues that are unique to curriculum design for endangered languages that are not only complicated by the paucity of resources available, but also by the unique context of the language. There is usually little funding available for the development and production of resources and 'off-the-shelf' adaptations of curriculums designed for major languages are in many regards inappropriate. There are also unique difficulties stemming from the neglect and lack of formal education, in particular further education and teacher training for the target language. Evaluation of curriculum design can also be problematic because of the low numbers of pupils studying, or studying through, the language. This paper will outline the key issues in curriculum design for endangered languages and discuss how curriculum design for Manx Gaelic has dealt with them.

Monica Ward (Dublin City)
Curriculum design - A complex process that needs a collective intelligence approach

Curriculum design for language learning is difficult regardless of the target language. However, there are extra complexities to consider in the case of endangered languages. The role and responsibility of the school or the education system to help to teach/maintain/promote/disseminate the language all influence the design of the curriculum. The curriculum should focus on the process of learning and not just the product. To some extent, the curriculum varies depending on the stage of endangerment of the language, the pedagogical and economic resources available and what curricula currently exist if any. However, it should not be a case of competing sides (e.g. the linguist or the community) – no one party has all the answers, knowledge or skill set to design a curriculum in isolation, rather a collective intelligence approach should be adopted. Where possible, lessons should be learnt from the design of other endangered language curricula and the approach should be to try to replicate the good

bits and avoid the not-so-good bits. Even if resources are very limited, it is possible to develop useful learning materials using modern technologies. This paper looks at the issue of curriculum design in the context of two different endangered languages: Irish and Nawat.