

**Tenth Cambridge Conference on Language  
Endangerment**

**12<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

**ABSTRACT BOOKLET**

Bettina Beinhoff (Anglia Ruskin University)

*Applying ethical principles across fields: from endangered languages to constructed languages research*

Over the last two decades, authors like Austin (2010), Dwyer (2006), Good (2018) and Rice (2006) have established very nuanced ethical principles and frameworks for work with endangered languages. In this paper I will argue that in the decade ahead this work on ethics could inform how research in emerging areas of linguistic inquiry is conducted. Using my recent project on constructed/invented languages as a case study, I will show areas of shared concern for constructed and endangered languages. I will also present how ethical principles and guidelines which were originally developed for work with endangered language communities informed my work with constructed languages and their creators. This has led to very fruitful exchanges and was fundamental to successfully completing this project.

Based on my experience, I will argue that central ethical principles, such as ongoing informed consent, reciprocity, knowledge of the specific (sub)culture/community are relevant for work with constructed languages and their creators, but that these present themselves in different ways in the language creation community than they do in endangered languages. I argue that identifying and acknowledging such differences – and acting upon them – are essential steps towards making these ethical principles work in other areas of linguistic research.

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Hannah Davidson (University of Oxford)

*Challenges investigating the Telugu language in Mauritius*

Telugu came to Mauritius in the 1800s with the arrival of indentured labourers from Southeast India. Telugus have always constituted a minority (3%), alongside other Indian backgrounds of Hindus (40%), Muslims (17%), Tamils (7%) and Marathis (2%) (Rajah-Carrim, 2005). Today the language is only maintained within the education system as an ‘ancestral’, post-vernacular language and rarely heard outside mainstream or extension schools (Venkanah & Auleear Owodally, 2023; Yenkanah et al., 2023), although in 2011, 1600 people claimed to speak Telugu at home (Statistics Mauritius, 2023). To explore language use and attitudes of the Mauritian-Telugu community, a small-scale study comprising questionnaires and interviews was conducted. One major challenge was reaching people not already active in teaching/learning the language. 17 people completed the questionnaire, but taking just one question as an example, 100% said they had an emotional connection to the language. Apart from confirming dwindling usage and some positive attitudes, this small, unrepresentative sample cannot tell us much. Interviews with two teachers/researchers and an enthusiastic member proved more insightful, highlighting themes of significant governmental support but considerable regional variation in engaging with the language. This paper invites discussion of appropriate methodologies for eliciting meaningful data from less-engaged members of minority/endangered communities.

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Nicole Dołowy-Rybińska (Polish Academy of Sciences)

*The ideology of collateral languages and the challenge of language revitalisation: Findings from the ethnolinguistic vitality survey*

Collateral languages belong to the same language family as the dominant language, are intelligible with it and have not been recognised as full languages in the past. The term 'collaterality' is based on Kloss's distinction between languages 'by distance' and 'by development', which have acquired a position in the course of their functioning and are used in different domains. Collateral languages are often regarded - by their speakers as well as by scholars - as dialects of the state language and are therefore valued as subordinate to it. Thinking of collateral languages as dialects activates language ideologies which, reflecting power relations, maintain a socially and politically imposed hierarchy between speakers of dominant and collateral languages. The ideology of collaterality refers to the perception of such linguistic varieties as 'incomplete', 'inferior', not in need of state protection or a writing system.

This paper presents some results of the survey of ethnolinguistic vitality conducted in five regions of Poland (Kashubia, Silesia, Mazuria, Podhale and Podlachia) as part of the project "Linguistic Diversity in Poland" (2021-2026). I will discuss how the ideology of collaterality reinforces language endangerment and how it affects language revitalisation efforts undertaken by communities.

Ianto Gruffydd, Marco Tamburelli and Florian Breit (Bangor University)

*Investigating the relationship between early exposure and explicit and implicit attitudes towards Welsh and English*

This paper explores the relationship between early language exposure and the language attitudes of Welsh-English speakers in north-west Wales. We collected quantitative data from a total of eighty-four participants (mean age: 28.76) across two studies using a combination of methods. Study 1 measured explicit attitudes via the Attitudes Towards Languages questionnaire (AToL; Schoel, et al., 2012), while study 2 employed the Implicit Association Task (IAT; Greenwald et al. 1998) to collect data on implicit attitudes. In both studies, early language exposure was measured via the LSBQe (Breit et al. 2023), providing ratings on usage within and outside the family. IAT results show some – though not all - types of early exposure as significant factors in how participants perceive Welsh and English, while the AToL analysis returned no statistically significant factors, which may indicate explicit measures' inability to discern attitudinal differences in situations where both languages are perceived positively.

Overall, our findings indicate the importance of early language exposure in forming implicit attitudes, which suggests that increased means of exposure, particularly beyond educational contexts, should receive more attention in Welsh language policy and planning, and more generally in minority language situations where a good level of educational use has been established.

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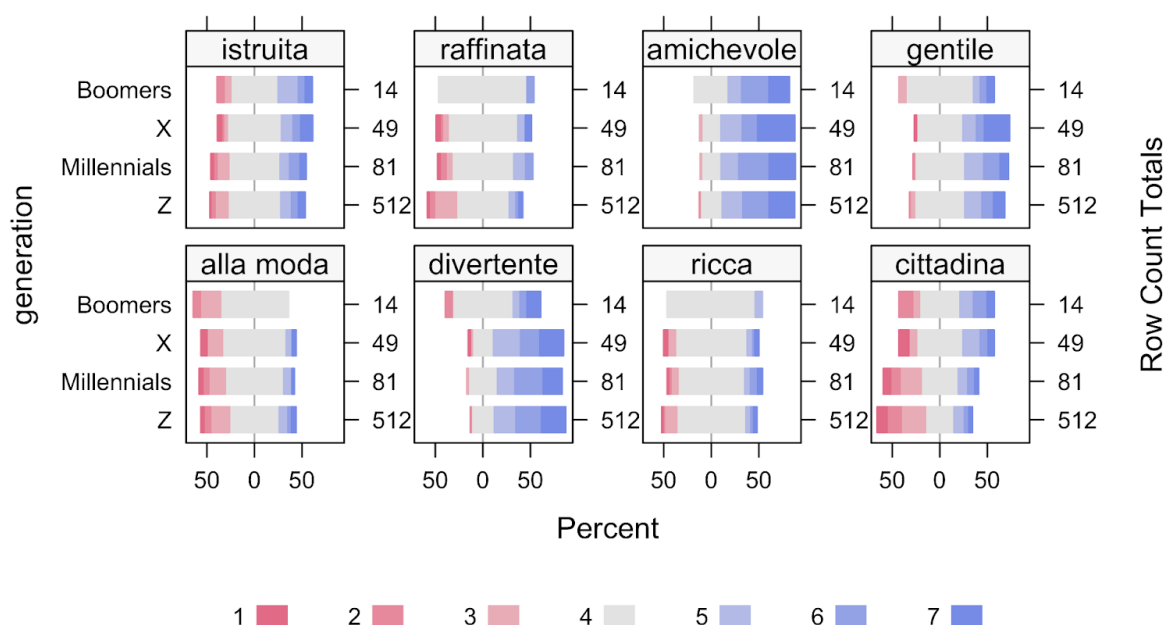
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*Comparing language attitudes, use and competence in the northern Italian speech communities of Emilian and Veneto*

Building upon the comparative analysis conducted on Emilian and Esperanto in Hampton & Coretta (2023), this follow-on analysis seeks to empirically test the hypothesis formulated in the initial investigation. The prior research aimed to observe attitudes, addressing three key aspects: (i) spaces of language use, (ii) language attitudes in the two communities, and (iii) the relationship between spaces, language attitudes, and competence. Despite Emilian, a Gallo-Italic language of Italy, being maintained in fewer spaces compared to Esperanto, the study revealed that it is still somewhat maintained in local spaces. Overall, the relationship between language attitudes and competence is modulated by spaces of use: at lower proportions of spaces of use, language attitudes are more positively correlated with language competence, while at higher proportions of spaces of use, the relationship between attitude and competence is reduced.

In this talk, we present our work-in-progress analysis on a new dataset, focusing on speakers of Veneto as part of an ongoing study investigating language attitudes in northern Italy (cf. Figure 1). By expanding the scope of our analysis to include Veneto, we anticipate gaining deeper insights, shedding much-needed light to the ongoing discourse on the preservation and promotion of minoritised languages in the region.

*Figure 1– Attitudes towards Veneto by generation*



Hampton, J., & Coretta, S. (2023). Measuring spaces and observing attitudes: a comparative analysis on the language practices of Emilian and Esperanto speakers.

<https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/jqgku>

Mark Hopkins (The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology)

*Educational policy as power play, and its effects on endangered languages in Britain, Brunei and China*

This paper takes as context a career teaching English alongside endangered languages in Europe and East Asia and makes specific reference to the 3 “islands” of Jersey, Brunei and Hong Kong, all dependent on a “mainland” for legitimation of their “bilingual” indigenous-plus-English educational language policies. The languages - none of which enjoy equality with the dominant national language / English - range from a *patois* whose remaining function is as linguistic signifier of a “piece of France thrown into the sea and picked up by England” (Hugo, 1866), through a community language whose societal use is circumscribed by a 40-year-old national ideology (MIB, 1984), to a widely-spoken language with global reach and local educational primacy, but which at a state level is downplayed as a regional dialect of standard Chinese. These 3 examples show in different ways how a “hydra” (Rapatahana & Bunce, 2012) or dominant language ideology impacts on educational language status and policy, determining the minority language’s rights to revitalisation or even survival.

The methodology is comparative and relies principally on documentary analysis, in an attempt to situate *jèrriais*, *Bahasa Dusun Brunei* and 廣東話 (*gwong-dung-waa*) in the discussion about endangered languages and concomitant loss of linguistic and cultural diversity

Natalia Jardón (Central European University)

*Galician as a minority language in Asturias*

Galician is one of the native languages of Asturias, spoken by approximately 40000 people in the west, between the river Navia and the river Eo. Despite being part of a well-recognized language group (Galician-Portuguese), it is treated by the Asturian Language Academy and the policy makers of Asturias as an independent minority language, distinct from Galician. In this talk, I begin by showing how the language spoken between the Navia and the Eo indeed has all the distinctive properties of Galician, both at the phonological and morphosyntactic levels; then I move on to discuss the extralinguistic factors that may explain a certain *policy of denial* chosen by the Asturian authorities, a policy aimed at what I call “exterminio amable” (lit. *kind elimination*) of the Galician language from this territory. I present the main tenets of this policy, including:

1. change of name (avoidance of the name *Galician*);
2. marginalization in the public sphere (institutions, media, schools...);
3. alienating written standard;
4. practices of language colonization using the Asturian language; and
5. practices of cultural assimilation to what is understood as “prototypically Asturian”.



Shihan de Silva Jayasuriya (Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London &  
University of Cambridge)

*Endangerment of Languages in Sri Lanka*

Sri Lanka is an Island in the Indian Ocean whose strategic importance attracted traders in the Early Modern Period. The Island's colonial period (1506-1948) broadened the ethnolinguistic spectrum adding to the complexity of the linguistic landscape post-independence. Linked to identity, the major languages Sinhala and Tamil were accorded official status. The prevalent colonial language – English – was given the status of a link language. This scenario has left the smaller ethnic groups such as the Sri Lanka Malay and Sri Lanka Portuguese speech communities disempowered. Empowerment of languages is entangled in the power politics of the ruling elite. Portuguese rule of the maritime provinces came to an end in 1658; and domination was only 61 years. The Dutch who drove out the Portuguese were superseded from the coastal areas by the English whose language became the official language from 1815 when the entire Island came under British rule until 1956, eight years after independence. Education policies consolidated the major languages and marginalised the languages spoken by smaller ethnic groups. This paper concerns the linguistic implications on the languages of colonial communities, those who came into being during the colonial era – the Sri Lanka Portuguese communities and Sri Lanka Malay communities. The pressures on these communities through education policies and struggles by the major ethnolinguistic groups will be considered.

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Soung-U Kim (Università di Napoli L'Orientale)

*Language ideologies, linguistic descriptive practice, and the writer*

Linguistic variation becomes pertinent time and time again in our descriptive-linguistic work, e.g. when determining languages and dialects. Usually during our training, we are taught an 'apolitical' approach: dialect-language concepts are irrelevant for empirical description, since this distinction is merely a socio-political issue (Hudson 1996: 36; Bobaljik and Pensalfini 1996: 6). But what if 'linguistic facts' in grammar writing were moulded according to the nationalist-linguistic ideologies of the creators? Against this backdrop, I reflect on my work on Jeju Island, South Korea: in what ways did my 'diversifying language ideology' that examines Jeju as an independent Koreanic language impact my descriptive outcomes? Highlighting aspects such as the scope of grammatical description or fieldwork methodology, I conclude that for descriptive work in many endangered-language contexts, the use of concepts such as 'language' and 'dialect' is non-trivial: they must be reflexively aligned with the worldview and responsibilities of linguist writers to avoid discourses that marginalise endangered languages. I suggest to reframe grammar writing and linguistic description as a constructive act where linguist authors undeniably are socio-political actors, and who construct inherently political representations of language that are mediated by the writers' ideological backgrounds.

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John Knipe (Converse University)

*Metaphor and discourse in linguistically liminal spaces: A matter of life and death*

Metaphors relating to language shift abound. Similarly, metaphors regarding reversing language shift (RLS) began to emerge in the late 1980s. Most of these metaphors relate to biology and ecology (e.g., language death, language endangerment). Countering the predominant formalist approaches to linguistic analysis, cognitive linguistics (CL) contends that language is usage-based and emerges from lived human experience. Within the framework of CL, metaphors are viewed not as arbitrary, but rather the outworking of deep cognitive structure shaped by our contexts and experiences. In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, society is more attuned to such metaphors. This qualitative phenomenological study investigates the metaphors Gaelic Medium Education teachers use to refer to the processes of language shift and reversing language shift as contextualized in their own settings. Three teachers were interviewed and their responses were analyzed using Charteris-Black's (2004) model of critical metaphor analysis (CMA). The participants employed mainstream metaphors relating languages to organisms as well as the metaphor of possession. As metaphors are shaped by lived experiences and conversely shape our thinking, the findings have implications for policy and practice surrounding reversing language shift of Scottish Gaelic. The researcher posits alternative metaphors for these concepts that may be useful going forward.

*Interactives and the documentation of Thulung (Eastern Nepal)*

In this presentation, I wish to address the question of gaps in the documentation of Thulung, a language of a few thousand speakers from Eastern Nepal.

Having worked on Thulung for the past 20 years, and built up a fully annotated corpus of 10+ hours of spontaneous narrative, I have a solid understanding of the prosaic language but a very limited sense of the expressive language (to use Haiman (2018)'s terms for this dichotomy). This is on account of my corpus being imbalanced, consisting primarily of single-speaker materials in which interactives (the word category made up of interjections, discourse particles, ideophones, vocatives, etc, as per Heine (2023)) are naturally underrepresented.

The reasons for these gaps are twofold: interactives primarily occur in dialogical materials involving two (or more) speakers, which are more difficult to collect and annotate (e.g. Dingemanse & Liesenfeld 2022); interactives do not have a clear place in the grammaticographical templates used for the production of descriptive grammars (Lahaussais 2016; Kelly & Lahaussais 2021).

This talk will present some solutions to reintroduce interactives into the documentation of Thulung.

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Carlos Yebra Lopez (University College London)

*Revitalising Endangered Languages through AI: The case of Ladino (Judeo-Spanish)*

This presentation explores the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) chatbots (DialogFlow, ChatGPT 4, Bard) in revitalising endangered languages.

Traditionally, training AI chatbots in a language relied on extensive datasets, posing challenges for low-resource or endangered languages. However, recent advancements have simplified this process by enabling training on limited datasets, reducing manual labour significantly (Patel 2023).

In this presentation, I will discuss specific techniques like Open AI's Reinforcement Learning from Human Feedback (RLHF), along with topics such as voice recognition and scripts, and case studies of various minority and indigenous languages, including Icelandic, Ladino, Chinook Jargon, and Nuu-chah-nulth.

As part of my discussion, I will focus on my own personal AI journey in revitalising Ladino (Judeo-Spanish), covering aspects like data collection, machine translation, legacy chatbots, LLM chatbots, application development, and community evaluation.

I will conclude that being able to read material in their endangered languages, and to practise these languages with an AI chatbot, can empower the remaining speakers to fight intergenerational language loss and counter individual language attrition, thus also coming to see their languages as part and parcel of today's reality, rather than archaic, dying entities.

Connor McCabe (University College Dublin)

*Feature correspondence and change in Munster Irish intonation: contact explanations versus historical links*

This paper discusses challenges in attributing change in intonation patterns in Munster Irish (MI) between 1928 and 2020-21 to language-internal vs external/contact factors. MI is spoken as a community language in Counties Kerry, Cork, and Waterford, and into the 20th century was spoken in Counties Clare and Tipperary. A phonetic study measured delay between metrically prominent syllables and high pitch in MI intonation data from 1928 (digitised archival recordings) and 2020-21. Two patterns emerged: (1) delays of 50-100+ ms (1928 Cork/Kerry), and (2) alignment within 50 ms (1928 Waterford/Tipperary/Clare; 2020-21 Cork/Kerry/Waterford). Pattern 2 was initially explained by influence of Germanic-type prosody. Heavy contact with English united the geographically disparate Clare and Waterford/Tipperary in 1928, and increase in the same in 2020-21 Cork/Kerry matches the shift towards Pattern 2. However, prior dialectological connections between Clare and Waterford/Tipperary have now emerged. It is plausible as a hybrid explanation that an older Pattern 2 was reinforced by its correspondence to an English-type intonational strategy. Further work on local English and neighbouring Irish varieties' intonation is required. Beyond the Irish context, this encourages caution in prematurely accepting simple explanations for change in minority/endangered varieties couched purely in terms of contact.

*Automatic Speech Recognition & Transfer Learning for Endangered Languages in the Himalayas*

By the end of the century, over half of the 6500 languages spoken in the world will die out (Turin, 2007). Nepal's situation is particularly dire: of the 120+ distinct languages identified in the 2011 census, 60 are endangered due to globalisation, socio-political unrest, and environmental challenges. The loss of these languages also means the loss of unique cultural and religious identifiers. Given this, there is a need for methods and tools to preserve linguistic diversity. A major challenge in language preservation, however, is the transcription bottleneck (Shi et al., 2021): transcribing one minute of audio requires an average of 40+ minutes (Durantin et al., 2017). This becomes even more complicated for endangered languages with no (standardised) orthographies or documentation. While advanced automatic speech-recognition (ASR) tools are available, they are often ineffective for these extremely low-resource languages (Foley et al., 2018). In this talk I will present joint work with Rolando Coto-Solano and Charles Ramble on Dzardzongke, a highly endangered language spoken in Lower Mustang, Nepal. Using Wav2Vec2 models fine-tuned for low-resource languages (Coto-Solano 2021, 2022), we show that endangered languages benefit from a specific set of optimisation procedures; different types of data augmentation, transfer learning from and the development of a new romanised orthography. Fig. 1 shows representative examples of reference+prediction. For Dzardzongke, it is clear that tones (indicated in orthography by a mixture of acute accents <ódrong> and voiced consonants <bomo> for high and low tones in specific phonological contexts) are still difficult, which is unsurprising given the languages on which the Wav2Vec2 model is based. We trained and fine-tuned models for Dzardzongke based on 50min, 2h and 3h15m of training data, getting a median word error rate (WER) of 0.32 with dictionary correction and a character error rate (CER) of 0.07. These results are an important step towards addressing challenges in language endangerment in Nepal, showing promise resulting from a collaborative both engineering and linguistic expertise.

<b>Dzardzongke controlled near-native narrative</b>			
1. [smt-041-296]	"When 2 (more) came, Ódrong-Gepo arrived at the end"		
Target transcription	nyi onga ódrong gepo katsa ru dzangi léparak	CER	WER
5 mins	ngi o nga odrong gepo katsa ru dzangi leparak	13	62
251 mins	nyi onga ódrong gepo katsa ru dzangi leparak	<b>7</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Dzardzongke native conversation in noisy environment</b>			
2. [smt-005-896]	"Then all of a sudden, having gone outside."		
Target transcription	da japtowe phita la sori	CER	WER
5 mins	ta jzapdi phitala sori óo	48	100
251 mins	da zaptsi phitala sori	<b>20</b>	<b>60</b>
251 mins + Dict	da lapti phita sori	32	<b>40</b>

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Keao NeSmith (University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa)

*LinguAvengers: How Bilbo, Harry Potter and Aslan teamed up with Pele, Maui and Kanaloa to save a dying language*

If language revitalization is to be successful in the coming years, it is vital to develop strategies that engage students of all ages in activities that align with contemporary cultural trends and interests. One such strategy involves the creation of high-level reading materials.

Reactions to recent releases of Hawaiian translations of tremendously successful pop-culture productions, such as the Harry Potter book series, Tolkien’s *The Hobbit*, and Frank Baum’s *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* have shown that even adult learners want new and exciting books of high quality made available to them in Hawaiian. Engaging fictional universes and pop-culture fandom are a way to draw attention to communicative language learning, pragmatics, language socialization, neologisms, and a host of other areas of language acquisition. The integration of modern pop-culture icons alongside traditional culture ones in additional-language teaching provides opportunities to marry language teaching training and practice in new ways when such iconic stories are integrated as the medium for presenting language. The implications for rejuvenating endangered language communities this way present exciting prospects for language teaching, maintenance, and the proliferation of speakers.

meaning of ‘revitalise’: to invigorate, spark enthusiasm, create excitement, inspire joy & pleasure



Margaret Mary P. Okon (University of Calabar) and Paulinus Noah

*Challenges and possibilities of reviving endangered Nigerian minority languages: the Kiong perspective*

Kiong, a Delta Cross minority language, is 'severely endangered' by UNESCO's standard as it is 'only spoken by the oldest few', similar to many other minority Nigerian languages. Current literature on the language do not paint a bright picture. The constellation of factors responsible for Kiong's moribund status include: minority status, language policy, speakers' attitude, oral culture, neighbourhood influence, globalization and limited domain usage. The present study suggests measures that can revive Kiong, such as: speakers' attitudinal reorientation, government support, pragmatic implementation of the new national language policy, documentation, orthography development, role in education, use in social media, infrastructural development and increased usage domain. The study examines how the 2023 National Language Policy and emerging technologies can assist in fleshing these measures. Data for the study came through field elicitation via digital and manual recording and the library. The Approach used in this study is UNESCO's Nine Scale 'Language Vitalization and Endangerment' and 'overall sociolinguistic situation'. This study affirms that Kiong is critically endangered and imminently coasting towards extinction if the less than one score septuagenarian speakers pass away without intergenerational transmission. We therefore solicit urgent pragmatic language shift measures from all stakeholders to upgrade Kiong sociolinguistic status.

Abhimanyu Sharma (University of Cambridge)

*Language policy legislation and the Irish language in Northern Ireland*

The aim of the talk is to analyse language policies directed towards the Irish language in Northern Ireland (NI). For a significant part of Northern Irish history, Irish has remained marginalised in NI. In 2022, Westminster passed the *Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act 2022*, one of the most important aspects of which was to repeal the Administration of Justice (Language) Act (Ireland) 1737 that prohibited the use of Irish in legal proceedings. In view of this important change that came almost after 25 years of the Belfast Agreement, I want to focus on three issues in this talk. The first of these examines the initiatives that Stormont has taken or plans to take in order to implement the 2022 Act. Second, in addition to the few policies that explicitly deal with the Irish language, I focus on ‘less discussed policies’ i.e. statutes that putatively pertain to different domains such as healthcare, business or the media, but contain legal provisions that have a bearing on the use of Irish in NI. Finally, I examine how or to what extent the rhetoric of ‘wastage of taxpayers’ money’ that was brought forth by those who opposed the promotion of Irish has changed since the 2022 Act. Methodologically, the paper relies on CDA for analysing statutes as well as discourses on Irish. A more general aim of the paper is to assess the way forward for the Irish language in NI.

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Diego Sidraschi and Emanuela Li Destri (Università degli Studi di Udine)

*Sociolinguistic analysis of Sappada/Plodn multilingual repertoire*

Sappada/Plodn is a village of about 1300 inhabitants in the Italian North-Eastern Alps. Sappada is one of the Germanic linguistic islands of Friuli Venezia Giulia and presents a rather articulated linguistic repertoire that includes the use of at least four linguistic codes: Italian and Friulian (Italo-romance languages), Comelian (Ladin language) and Plodarisch (South Bavarian German dialect).

This paper will present the results of a recent sociolinguistic survey that involved approximately 10% of Sappada inhabitants, who were asked to fill in a questionnaire concerning the competence of the different codes of the repertoire and their use within different linguistic domains and communicative situations, and their attitudes towards the repertoire codes.

The data draw a clear picture of the slowly declining linguistic competence (active and passive) of Plodarisch and the relative weight of the other minority varieties in the repertoire. Moreover, the communicative habits of speakers within the linguistic domains and different communicative situations allow us to investigate some essential parameters for the study of the external vitality of Plodarisch, such as intergenerational transmission and the linguistic attitudes of speakers towards the local variety.

Philippa M. Steele (University of Cambridge)

*Writing endangered languages: lessons for the future from the ancient past*

Writing is an important component in efforts to maintain endangered languages. This paper argues that a better understanding of the nature of writing as a socially situated phenomenon should be prioritised to support script/orthography creation and/or conservation. Recent case studies have begun to acknowledge that community wishes are more important than achieving perfect phonological representation in a script, but there is need of a coherent theoretical framework for wider application. As a social practice and aspect of visual culture, as much as a means of language notation, writing must be assessed with respect to its wider cultural significance and potential.

Building on research of the CREWS and VIEWS projects, this paper uses historical case studies – where we can study the trajectory of languages and writing systems diachronically alongside long-term motivations for language/writing loss – to develop a framework for future study. Ancient examples indicate that accurate phonological representation does not correlate strongly with long-term survival, for instance. Other factors appear to be more salient, including the visual distinctiveness of the language, relationships between writing and cultural identity and the language's presence in everyday visible landscapes. Such observations can help us build new approaches to the writing of endangered languages.

*A study of the nature, trigger, and direction of attrition in L1 Syntax*

A large-scale population exchange occurred in 1947 on the eve of the split of India into Pakistan and Hindustan. On a facebook website that records the stories of the migrants in their native language, videos of 30 migrants over 80 were analysed. The participants speak Saraiki as L1 and Hindi as a dominant language (Shackle 1976). Punjabi is the dominant language in Pakistan. The recordings were analysed by the first author of this project, who is a native speaker of Saraiki and belongs to the area from where most of the migrants left.

The change of ditransitive and transitive verbs into intransitive verbs, the detachment/deletion of pronominal suffixes from verbs, the loss of gender and number agreement markers with adjectives, the epenthesis of the ergative marker, the loss of palatalization (which is common in Saraiki (Bashir and Connors 2019)), the substitution of high vowels, implosives, and fricatives with low vowels, explosives, and stops, respectively, were found in the speech of the migrants. Overall, the dominant languages and markedness seem to majorly contribute to the attrition of the migrants' language. Importantly, not only Hindi but Punjabi, which is dominant in Pakistan from where the migrants left, also seems to contribute to the attrition of L1.

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Emilia Wąsikiewicz-Firlej (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań) & Piotr Romanowski  
(University of Warsaw)

*Revitalising Kashubian in Poland: Examining Language Status, Use, Education and Future Prospects*

The purpose of this talk is to present the status and use of the Kashubian language in Poland as well as its revival and education. First, we provide characteristics and classification of the Kashubian language, map the territory where it is used and profile the community of its speakers. The outlined historical background illustrates the impact of the external, political factors on the status of Kashubian and tracks its way from the undermined “dialect” to the officially recognised regional language. Despite the growing awareness and strengthening of the Kashubian identity, as evidenced in the 2011 and 2021 census, the actual use of the Kashubian language in everyday communication is rather unsatisfactory, primarily due to the failure in intergenerational language transmission in families. In this context, the integrated top-down policies securing the vernacular’s legal status and its presence in the system of formal education as well as bottom-up educational initiatives come to the fore in language revitalisation. Thus, we take a look at the presence of Kashubian in the formal system of education in Poland, by analysing legal basis, curricula, teacher education as well as educational practices at the pre-school, primary school and secondary school levels. Our analysis pointed to the declining number of young people speaking Kashubian and their low interest in learning it at the secondary level, as reflected, among other things, in poor participation in the secondary-school final examination in Kashubian. These findings signalled that despite the secured legal status of the Kashubian language and the growing awareness of its community, certain problematic issues remain and protective measures need to be taken to prevent language loss.

Laura Wright (University of Cambridge)

*On Implementing Language Policy with regard to Llanito in Gibraltar*

Llanito, the historic Western Mediterranean hispanic variety spoken in Gibraltar, is currently dying out. Although there are one or two monolinguals left they are elderly, and the majority codeswitch Llanito with English, but only in specific discourse environments. Llanito is the language of proximity and domesticity, English is used for matters formal, intellectual, of serious content, and is the language of the middle class (Gibraltar has a quasi-caste system conferred by birth or marriage, not education or wealth). Adults self-edit when speaking to children and switch (or attempt to switch) to English. Younger adults speak monolingual English with just residual clause-connectors *pero* 'but', *con que* 'so' and tag-question *no*. Discourse markers and interjections are now English (e.g. [i:30] has given way to *wow*), with a generational rift running through families. In February 2023, a four-person team was put together at the University of Cambridge to describe and revitalise Llanito. In October 2023 elections were held in Gibraltar, and we managed to position Llanito into the manifestos of both contending parties. In this presentation we will explain what we did and how we did it, and the considerable challenges that remain in ensuring that the ruling party implements its promises.

Weijing Zhou (Yangzhou University) and Francis Nolan (University of Cambridge)

*Perception, use, and prediction of endangered local dialects in Jiangsu Province among college students*

According to official statistics released by China's State Language Commission (2015), over half of China's 120 existing languages are in decline, and more than 20 are endangered. Moreover, numerous local dialects of one language, which are the same in written form but distinctive in lexical and tonal systems, are being endangered at high speed. Jiangsu Province ranks first in its dialect diversity. Due to China's mandatory and comprehensive campaign to promote Putonghua (official Mandarin) since the 1960s and urbanization waves since the 1990s, young generations born since the 1990s have been largely identified as "dialect-free" generations. Although 70 of over 110 Jiangsu local dialects have been added into China's Audio Database of Chinese Language Resources for documentation, how to revitalize them among young generations remains problematic and the key issue is to get young people to notice, approve, and use them. Via questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, the present study surveyed the perception, use, and prediction of their endangered local dialects among 1192 college students from Jiangsu Province. The paper presents examples of some endangered local dialects, outlines the students' attitudes, and suggests potential applied linguistic approaches to revitalization.



Jelena Živojinović, Roberto Dapit and Francesco Costantini (University of Udine)

*Sociolinguistic Dynamics of Slovene Linguistic Islands in Friuli, Italy: Endangerment and Preservation Efforts*

This study presents a sociolinguistic analysis of three Slovene-speaking communities in the Friuli region in Italy: Resian (Val Resia), Tersko (Valle del Torre), and Nediško (Valli del Natisone). These varieties, in contact with Friulian and (regional) Italian, represent unique linguistic enclaves with distinct sociolinguistic dynamics. In line with previous research on Germanic communities in Friuli (Costantini 2021, 2022), through a comprehensive analysis based on interviews to a balanced sample of the members of the communities, we assess the endangerment and vitality levels of these minority languages. Following standard parameters in sociolinguistic research (see a.m.o. Jones 1998), key examined criteria include: participants' residency history, proficiency self-evaluation, contextual usage patterns, and attitudes toward the minority language. By delving into these factors, we aim to provide valuable insights into the sociolinguistic landscape of these communities. Our research not only contributes to the understanding of language preservation efforts but also informs minority language policy development in multilingual contexts. Understanding the dynamics of these linguistic islands is crucial for implementing effective revitalization strategies and ensuring the preservation of linguistic diversity in the Friuli region.

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**THE DECADE AHEAD:**

**NEW RESEARCHER HIGHLIGHTS**

**ABSTRACTS**

Branka Arrivé (CERMOM, INALCO)

*Saving Judaeo-Spanish a hundred years ago and now: reversal of strategies*

According to UNESCO's language endangerment scale, Judeo-Spanish is "severely endangered", with an estimated 60,000 speakers, most of whom are over 70. Its demise had already been announced when it was still widely spoken, in early 20th century, when Sephardic intellectuals engaged in the "language question", proposing either to replace Judeo-Spanish with another language or to "improve" it. One of the "improvement" policies was re-Hispanicization, advocated by a minority of scholars from the northern Balkans, adopting contemporary Castilian as their model and eliminating Hebrew and Turkish vocabulary. This trend did not have many followers and disappeared with the death of its promoters. Today, Judeo-Spanish is a post-vernacular language mainly saved by research and, unexpectedly, by the Covid-19 pandemic, when learners, researchers, and native speakers started gathering in "digital homelands", Judeo-Spanish-only speaking communities, such as *Enkontros de Alhad*, *Ladino21* and *Los Ladinadores*. This paper proposes to compare the language policies applied during the re-Hispanicization period in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and today. A lot of competing policies are at play, all sharing the idea that Judeo-Spanish should assert its identity by distinguishing itself from Spanish, using its own orthography and promoting attested vocabulary and morphological forms distinct from Spanish.

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Abdul Awal (University of Lodz)

*An Exploration of Endangered Languages in Bangladesh*

This study examines the grave issue of endangered languages in Bangladesh, a country with abundant linguistic diversity. Despite the cultural richness of this nation, many indigenous languages are at risk of disappearing. The purpose of this study is to uncover the primary factors that contribute to the decline of these languages and explore the consequences of this loss on cultural heritage and identity. This study used a mixed method approach that combined qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative analysis involved ethnographic fieldwork, interviews with native speakers, and linguistic surveys. The quantitative aspect encompasses the statistical analysis of language vitality, trends of the speaker population, and the impact of socio-economic factors on language preservation. The findings reveal that globalisation, urbanisation, and the dominance of Bengali, a national language, are significant contributors to the endangerment of local languages. This study also highlights the critical role of education, the media, and government policy in exacerbating or mitigating this trend. In conclusion, this study emphasises the urgent need for comprehensive language preservation strategies. These strategies should include educational reforms, community initiatives, and policy interventions to revitalise endangered languages. This study not only contributes significantly to the field of linguistics, but also offers practical recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders in Bangladesh to protect and enhance their linguistic heritage.

Stuti Bhagat (University of York)

*Unveiling grammatical gender indexicality in Kurukh – an endangered North Dravidian language*

Kurukh is an endangered North Dravidian language spoken in different parts of the Indian subcontinent. The dominant languages of the regions where Kurukh has been spoken are increasingly replacing its use in many domains. The present aim is to report the results of the fieldwork that has been carried out in India and Nepal. It investigates the alteration in gender feature because of the social norms and influence of dominant languages.

The language has a subject-verb agreement where the gender feature is a grammatical indexical gender marker. It morphologically marks the gender of both the speaker and addressee instead of the referent's gender. (Ekka, 1972; Flemming, 2012; Dunn, 2014). This phenomenon is discussed as 'gender indexicality' (Rose, 2018; Haas, 1944) which varies across languages. A set of prerequisites that determines the indexicality pattern are combination of the gender of the interlocutors – Men-Men (MM), Men-Women (MW), Women-Men (WM), and Women-Women (WW).

The data collected is being processed and the predictors i.e., age of the speakers, language use, and social involvement in specific domain suggests simplification of Kurukh's complex gender system. The preliminary analysis indicates erosion of WW gender indexical forms.

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Stefanie Cajka (University of Vienna)

*Seizing the decade ahead: A proposal for quality criteria for language safeguarding and revitalisation methods*

Numerous languages in Europe and around the world are endangered. The development and implementation of language safeguarding and revitalisation methods is one way to promote minoritised languages and aid in their survival. However, not all methods have reached their full potential and some offer room for improvement. Therefore, this presentation proposes and discusses quality criteria for language safeguarding and revitalisation methods.

This paper is based on research conducted in the HORIZON EUROPE project “RISE UP – Revitalising Languages and Safeguarding Cultural Diversity”. The main objective of the project is to empower endangered language communities in Europe, with a focus on five case studies: Aranese, Aromanian, Burgenland Croatian, Cornish, and Seto. Using ethnographic research and a survey that was distributed to all five case study communities (n > 300; still ongoing as of 29th February 2024), various resources that promote endangered language learning and use were identified. Based on these findings, quality criteria for language safeguarding and revitalisation methods were defined.

This presentation introduces the RISE UP project, elaborates on the research conducted within the project, and proposes the quality criteria. The aim is not only to present these criteria, but also to critically discuss them within the research community.

Further information

Project website: <https://www.riseupproject.eu/>

Louis Coeyman (University of Glasgow)

*Challenges ahead for the Scots revitalisation: perceptions of Scots' languageness*

In this paper, I examine the concept of “Scots language”, and more precisely the extent to which Scots is perceived as a language and the ideologies that are at play in these perceptions. Scots is another Germanic language spoken in the United Kingdom and is often described as a “sister language” to English. However, unlike English, Scots is a minority language which is stigmatised and lacks an official written standard. Based on a series of focus groups conducted with various stakeholders in education across Scotland, this presentation explores folk perceptions of language boundaries and the complex question of what makes a language “a language”. Some of the key topics this presentation will address include the perceived connections and boundaries between Scots and English, the belief that Scots is slang and is not a whole language, and the view that Scots may still be an independent language. Overall, this presentation contributes to having a better understanding of how folks categorise languages into discrete entities and of the criteria they use to do so.

Jack Greeney (SOAS, University of London)

*Minoritised languages and India's new education policy: A Policy and Attitudes Analysis of Awadhi*

This work examines education policies and attitudes affecting Awadhi—a minoritised north Indian language—speakers, an analysis demanded by the recent publication and forthcoming implementation of National Education Policy 2020, seeking to implement ‘mother tongue’ education over the coming decade. Combining top-down policy and bottom-up attitudinal analyses, literature gaps regarding minoritised language use in Indian education are filled, concluding that NEP provisions are unlikely to be successfully implemented regarding Awadhi due to the lack of a clear plan, ambiguous language, and current sociopolitical context; despite being an important religious/literary language, Awadhi is recognised neither regionally nor nationally, meaning it will likely be overlooked during policy implementation by states.

Furthermore, qualitative and quantitative research elicited opinions of Awadhi speakers—currently largely omitted from policy discourse—on Awadhi’s potential educational use. This work found that although both men and women strongly support Awadhi’s sociocultural value, while men highly supported Awadhi’s use in education, women were strongly against, overwhelmingly preferring Hindi/English—concurring with Nepalese findings (Thakur and Yadav, 2013)—primarily for future employment reasons. However, mother-tongue education has been shown worldwide to be more effective than national languages (Heugh, 2005). These findings allow policymakers and activists to better understand women’s concerns—often overlooked in policymaking (Weldon, 2002)—regarding Awadhi’s educational use.

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Erin McNulty (University of Glasgow)

*New Speaker Identities and Implications for Language Policy: The Case of Manx*

Manx, the Goidelic language of the Isle of Man, has a community of around 2200 speakers (Isle of Man Government, 2022). Due to Manx's extreme minoritization, all members of Manx's speaker community are 'new speakers', having acquired Manx through means other than first language transmission (Ramallo, O'Rourke, and Pujolar, 2015: 1).

The complexity of the relationship between language and identity is evident in the Manx community (McNulty, 2024). Moreover, the Manx Language Network has a goal of increasing the numbers of speakers of Manx to 5000 by 2032. The role of the language in constructing a Manx identity has been increasingly foregrounded (McCooey-Heap, 2020), which will likely play a role in achieving these goals.

This paper uses a corpus of ethnographic fieldwork data explore the following research questions:

1. How do Manx New Speakers understand a Manx identity?
2. What role does the Manx language play in constructing identity in the Isle of Man?
3. How might the above factor into language policy and planning for Manx?

The paper offers a view into Manx identity and language use, exploring how conceptions of linguistic identity might help or hinder language planning goals.

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Olga Olina, Bruno Behling, Bastian Ilgner (Humboldt University of Berlin)

*Assessing Language Endangerment in Urban Contexts: Berlin's Heritage Languages and their Speakers*

Since Krauss's groundbreaking 1992 article highlighting the urgent need for language documentation, several models have been developed to assess language endangerment (AES, EGIDS, LEI & UNESCO Atlas). While these models identify globalisation and urban migration as key factors, their applicability is limited, as they assess language endangerment on a global scale and do not account for growing heritage speaker communities in urban centres.

In this talk, we discuss factors relevant to the assessment of language vitality in urban contexts, using Berlin as a case study. According to the Berlin-Brandenburg Statistics Office, about one in five Berlin residents comes from a non-German cultural background, with over 160 different countries represented (SBEE), making it a highly multilingual city.

We conducted 30 interviews with speakers of 35 heritage languages residing in Berlin, investigating language use, community size and cohesion, and their attitudes towards passing on their languages to the next generation. We found that although existing models provide a foundation for understanding language vitality in urban settings, they overlook several relevant factors and include others that are less applicable.

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Julia Peck (University of California, Berkeley) & Nesi Altaras (Stanford University)

*At-Home Language Nesting for Ladino: Reflections on an Emerging Language Revitalization Strategy*

As language loss and emigration intensify in many threatened language communities, the next decade of revitalization efforts requires our attention to the needs of diasporic language communities and those with no living fluent speakers or signers. It also demands that we prioritize the revitalization of language in the home space, what Sallabank (2011) calls the “phatic route.” This presentation considers a promising and emerging revitalization method that does both: at-home language nesting (Zahir 2018), in which a learner is supported to designate a room or area of their home as a “nest” for the language and to use the language there regularly, “reclaiming domains” (activities) in that room one by one. Specifically, this paper reflects on an ongoing at-home language nesting project for Judeo-Spanish (Ladino) which was developed through linguistic fieldwork in Istanbul in Summer 2023 and piloted in Spring 2024 among the students of UC Berkeley’s first Ladino language class. We discuss the potential advantages and challenges at-home nesting presents, its practicability in diasporic endangered language communities, and the ways in which it might fit into a broader toolbox of language revitalization strategies in the next decade and beyond.

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Madeleine Strait (University of California, Berkeley)

*New Approaches in Old Spaces: Language Revitalization in a Museum Setting*

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, staff at the Field Museum of Natural History faced the difficult task of finding safe and effective ways to celebrate Native American Heritage Month in November of 2020. Previous celebrations included cultural performances, lectures, and special visitor days for community members. However, given the ongoing threat of the pandemic and in acknowledgement of the ways in which Native communities were especially impacted, it was decided that any celebration would need to be individually experienced and be accessible to visitors who could not attend in person. The initiative that emerged to address these challenges was the creation of exhibition labels for items throughout the museum written in Indigenous languages, which would then be broadcast across the museum's social media pages. This label-making project was a grassroots, staff-led effort to bring Indigenous voices, knowledge, and languages into the museum space, and the result was a new type of engagement with Native and non-Native community members around the subject of Indigenous languages. Thus, the pandemic spurred new, creative approaches to celebrating Native American communities by expanding the representation of, and access to, their languages both within the physical space of the museum and online.

*The right to language: wartime challenges and terminological pitfalls that shape language policy and planning in Ukraine*

Language policy plays a significant role in the modern world and is even used by totalitarian states as a lever of influence in geopolitics. The so-called “protection of the Russian-speaking population” in Ukraine is a vivid example that became one of the reasons for the Russian Federation to start a full-scale war against Ukraine. This fact jeopardizes the existence of not only the Ukrainian language as the state language but also all endangered languages represented in the territory of Ukraine, in particular Crimean Tatar, Karaite, and others. Recently, the law “On ensuring the functioning of the Ukrainian language as a state language” was adopted, which connects the phenomenon of the state language with such categories as interethnic communication, protection of human rights, and national security<sup>1</sup>. Using the example of Ukraine, it is proposed to consider how war affects language policy and planning. In particular, the following questions will be discussed: the protection of endangered languages; the phenomenon of derussification and the debate on the transition to the Latin alphabet of some endangered languages as well as the Ukrainian language; the role of terminology translation in the field of national language policy and planning as a tool of geopolitical influence.

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Honghui (Rita) Zhu (Trinity College Dublin)

*What kind of Chinese do you really speak?*

The People's Republic of China (henceforth China), is home to a myriad of languages. Officially recognized as a multi-ethnic, multilingual, multi-dialectal, and multi-script nation, China has designated Putonghua — standardized Mandarin — and standardized Chinese characters as its national lingua franca and script (Ministry of Education, 2017). Since the inception of the Putonghua Promotion Policy in 1958, further solidified by the 2001 Language Law (Rohsenow, 2004), Putonghua has played a predominant role across the societal spectrum.

Transitioning to the domain of higher education, this paper examines the positioning of Putonghua within Sino-foreign universities. These institutions, characterized by their partnership between Chinese and foreign educational entities, are ostensibly English-dominant in terms of instructional language. However, through an analysis of auditing and interview data gathered from three such universities, this study reveals some presence of regional dialects — including Shanghaiese, Sichuanese, Suzhounese, and Cantonese — within these English-centric academic environments. While Putonghua is the primary language of instruction in China's education system, this study reveals a lack of regional languages as expected. It notes, however, that Sino-foreign universities serve as critical domain for the maintenance and discourse of these dialects in the context of English's global predominance.

Aitor San Emeterio Zubizarreta (University of Salamanca)

*That's not real Leonese: Addressing the disconnect between new and traditional speakers of a severely endangered language*

The aim of this presentation is to show how the lack of a common standard variety of Leonese, as the Astur-Leonese varieties spoken south of Asturias are collectively known, reflects on the overall disconnection between patrimonial and new speakers. Unlike it is the case for Asturian, there is no one standard variety of Leonese, particularly among traditional speakers, a context in which Spanish serves as the normative reference and means of interdialectal communication. This situation of extreme diglossia not only accelerates language shift, but also appears to foster the mostly unidirectional convergence of Leonese with Spanish, which is the focus of the larger fieldwork-based study this investigation is a part of. On the other hand, new varieties have emerged among urban new speakers, particularly within the overlapping spheres of language activism and teaching. These new standards are based on traditional Leonese dialects, yet they are seldom recognised by traditional speakers, who are also not significantly involved in efforts towards standardization and revitalization. Instead, these processes are primarily driven by urban new speakers, who perceive the detachment between the two speech communities as a serious challenge for the language's survival.