

FOURTH CAMBRIDGE CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT

LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT: ORTHOGRAPHY DEVELOPMENT FOR LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND REVITALISATION

ABSTRACT BOOKLET

Michel Bert (Lyon II)

Dealing with the graphization of Francoprovençal in France

The development of a unified spelling is at the heart of current discussions within the framework of activities to revitalize Francoprovençal in France. Multiple instances grow in such project: the Region Rhône-Alpes, which has established a language policy for the Francoprovençal and prepares an interregional charter mentioning the development of a standardized spelling of scholarly circles and teachers, and some militant groups. The current national context is also favorable: the Francoprovençal could be recognized as school language in some places by the Ministry of Education. In addition, the reform of school timetables in France has led to a strong demand from local associations of speakers so they offer entertainment around francoprovençal to children, the vast majority do not even know.

As researchers from axis of Endangered Languages Research Laboratory of Dynamic Language (Lyon 2 University) we participate in ongoing discussions, both as experts from socio-political institutions, policy makers, but as linguists field accompanying some local initiatives. In our communication we will focus on specific issues facing today the graphization of Francoprovençal.

Local associations are currently the most active players in the transmission of the language. We describe their writing practices and show that, in the absence of a standardized spelling established, they spontaneously adopt a vision polynomic spelling when they are faced with the dialectal variation. This practice is also necessary for the variation due to language obsolescence (very strong in associations where native speakers are now very rare, language is no longer transmitted as their mother tongue for several generations). But this practice is sometimes questioned when considering the associations to publish a dictionary to talk to them, for example, or when they work in schools: the lack of standardized spelling, going against the dominant ideologies and models transmission that exist in schools, where the weight of the standard is very heavy, especially in France. However, associations, such as children seem appreciating this kind of initiatives, which would argue instead for a continuation of the practice of writing, while encouraging them to think about their coexistence with any standardized spelling.

Matthias Brenzinger (CALDi, Cape Town) & **Sheena Shah** (CALDi, Cape Town)

Towards a N!uu practical orthography for the ǀKhomani community

The N!uu language project at CALDi is engaged in developing an alphabet for this non-Bantu click language spoken by only five members of the ǀKhomani community in South Africa. The main focus is on reducing this highly complex language to writing (almost 120 distinctive sounds, including a large number of clicks). Further challenges towards establishing a practical N!uu orthography include:

The remaining N!uu speakers are non-literate and speak Afrikaans as their first language. N!uu was considered extinct among scholars, as it was not used in natural conversation for decades. As a result of lack of exposure to the language, the few elderly speakers have difficulties expressing themselves in a wide range of everyday topics.

For the last nine years, language teaching efforts are mainly confined to the elderly Katarina Esau, who is assisted by her literate but non-N!uu speaking granddaughter Claudia. The various N!uu teaching materials have not been systematically developed and more problematically, they reflect various transcription conventions that were employed by academics conducting numerous language documentation projects over the last 15 years.

Afrikaans is the mother tongue of all ǀKhomani and younger community members are literate in Afrikaans. Despite this fact, previous orthographies introduced were mainly English-based.

The project activities aim at negotiating a N!uu orthography together with the speakers and we will facilitate community workshops in which members will be familiarised in using a practical N!uu alphabet. Being aware of the crucial importance of natural transmission of endangered languages, we accommodate the community's aspiration of having their language not only spoken by future generations, but also recognised as a written language.

Avelino Corral Esteban (Madrid)

The difficult task of finding a standard writing system for the Sioux languages

This study attempts to give an overview of all the different spelling systems (Riggs (1854), Williamson (1852), Buechel (1924), Deloria & Boas (1941), Rood & Taylor (1975), White Hat (1980s), SICC & DNC (1990s), Koontz (1990s), FNU (2003), and Ulrich (2008), among others) that have been created since the 1800s for the three mutually intelligible varieties of the Sioux language (Siouan: USA and Canada, 30,000 speakers), namely Lakota, Nakota, and Dakota, with the aim of deciding which of them represents more faithfully the pronunciation of the language. Once all these writing systems have been compared, I attempt to give an account of the current situation of each of these writing systems in the Sioux territory and discuss the fact that, although the LLC's orthography has become the standard writing system in most of the reservations, there is an ever-increasing conflict between the native speech community regarding the selection of this common writing system, since most of them think that it is the traditional system (based on Riggs' and Buechel's orthographies) that should be used. All in all, it seems obvious that a quick consensus should be reached if we are interested in the preservation and revitalization of this beautiful ancestral language.

James Costa (Oslo)

Enshrining language in dialect: Orthographic dilemmas and the non-standardisation of Shetland Scots

Shetlandic is widely used in the Shetland Isles (Scotland) in literature, education and even in public signage. Yet it has no single spelling system, and its speakers are mostly content with calling it 'da dialect'. Dialect itself is seen as a category enabling freedom in terms of expression of self and place, the functions usually ascribed to language and standard being occupied by English. The closest Shetland comes to a standard is in spelling, John Graham's (1979) *Shetland Dictionary* acting as a reference to many on the islands.

Why is this, and how then is legitimate public language constructed? What benefits, if any, derive from the continued association with 'dialect' rather than 'language' (a category often associated with standardisation), and for whom? Is this situation to be read in terms of tolerance and a democratic approach to language use? Or can other explanations be suggested?

Tracing the discourse on Norn in linguistic and poetic works through the 19th and 20th centuries I seek to show how Norn is consistently construed as "the real language" of Shetland, a feature encapsulated in spelling, which in turn acts as a shrine, or a shroud, for the old language.

Franco Finco (Udine) & Paolo Pascolo (Udine)

Writing in Friulian: Official Script or Spontaneous Spelling?

Friulian is a minority language belonging to the Rhaeto-Romance family, spoken in the Friuli region (northeastern Italy) by more than 500,000 speakers, the vast majority of whom also speak fluently Italian. In the last 60 years the number of speakers has dropped, especially in the younger generations. The official recognition of this linguistic minority is very recent and began in 1996 with the regional law n. 15. This law also provides for an official Friulian script, established to normalise the different writing systems used by the local organisations. This writing uses some diacritical marks to distance itself from the Italian one, but this creates difficulties in the use, especially with the modern means of communication (sms, twitter, online chat, social networks, etc.). The official script is taught in language classes and is used in public communication (road signs, newspapers, institutional or formal documents, etc.), but most people commonly use a simplified and not-codified writing system. The aim of our communication is to present the results of a research in progress on the use of official Friulian script, with its advantages and disadvantages, and the characteristics and potential of the spontaneous spelling.

Steve Hewitt (UNESCO)

Breton orthographies: an increasingly awkward fit

Breton has a venerable, if increasingly skewed orthographical tradition, so there can be no question of *developing* a Breton orthography from scratch. Early Modern Breton begins in 1659, when Maunoir introduced the iconic <ch> against French <ch> and systematically indicated initial consonant mutations. For most of the 19th c., one track continues traditional Early Modern habits, the other innovating and systematizing, leading ultimately to the 1908 KLT (Kerne-Leon-Treger) standardization, which in turn fed into the 1941 *Peurunvan* (ZH; “fully unified” [with the traditional Gwened, SE]) orthography. The 1955 *Orthographe universitaire* (OU) “while removing certain inconsistencies, introduces new ones”. The 1975 *Orthographe interdialec* (ID), aimed at including the best of both ZH and OU while ensuring better coverage of regular dialect correspondences, did not go as far as possible in that direction. At each stage of modern spelling reforms, unfortunate choices have been made, often owing to insufficient comprehension of interdialec correspondences. At the same time, the implications of the massive shift in users from native speakers to learners have not been taken properly into account. Finally, at no point has there been a real debate on the relative merits of a simple monodialec standard vs a more complex supradialec standard.

Kerry Hull (Brigham Young)

When Letters Represent More than Sounds: Ideology vs. Practicality in the Development of a Standard Orthography for Ch’orti’ Mayan

With the Pan-Maya Movement in the 1980s there was a need to standardize the bewildering number of orthographies that had been used to write Mayan languages. This move anticipated the revitalization efforts that would require publishing resources in the native languages. In 1986, the Guatemalan Academy of Mayan Languages spearheaded this effort to formalize a single orthography for the 22 Mayan languages of Guatemala. In this paper, based on my fieldwork experience of working with the Ch’orti’ Maya over the past 15 years, I discuss the challenges encountered by the Ch’orti’ in adopting and promulgating this new orthography. I show that while accepting in principle the agreed upon orthography, some of the Ch’orti’ revitalization groups sought further changes, driven not by idiosyncratic phonological concerns of correctness relevant to Ch’orti’, but by ideology; they wanted to distance their orthography as much as possible from that of Spanish. Indeed, as I argue, their changes were towards less phonologically transparent, less correct, and less effective in terms of learnability. Finally, having been a part of many of these debates, I discuss the differing perspectives between Western linguists and the Ch’orti’ as to which orthography best serves the needs of the Ch’orti’.

Mari Keränen (Tromsø)

The development of Kven and North Sámi orthographies

Kven is an endangered Finnic language spoken in the northernmost Norway. The standardization of Kven started in 2007 by a committee who made decisions concerning orthographic principles, and has progressed to the writing of a grammar that will be published soon. The first aim of the standardization is to develop a textbook norm to support revitalization and language education. North Sámi is also an endangered language with some tens of thousands of speakers in Sweden, Finland and Norway.

Kven has a phonemic orthography corresponding to standard Finnish. The North Sámi orthography has varied for the past 150 years with several reforms, with the latest one in 1979. It can be described as a compromise of several principles, in order to serve all the language community as widely as possible in all foundation states.

In my paper I will review and compare the development of and discussions around the orthographies of Kven and North Sámi. I will also point out some of the problems and challenges that have arisen!

Rosangela Lai (Firenze)

The impact of a standardized orthography in Sardinian dialects: towards a restructuring of the phonological system

Sardinian is an endangered Romance language spoken in the island of Sardinia that stands in a diglossic relation with Italian (Rindler-Schjerve 2000; Marongiu 2007). In spite of enjoying official recognition (Law 482/1999), Sardinian is classified as endangered by UNESCO (Moseley 2007). As a result of poor parental transmission (Rindler-Schjerve 1998, 2000), the relative standing of Sardinian and Italian has been unbalanced in favour of Italian. Nowadays the domains of use of Sardinian are drastically restricted (Marongiu 2007) and most young people can be classified as imperfect learners (Rindler-Schjerve 1998, 2000).

To contrast the decline of Sardinian, the Autonomous Region of Sardinia has developed a standard orthography, called 'Limba Sarda Comuna' (henceforth LSC). LSC chooses not to record various phonological patterns already at risk in young imperfect learners i.e., the presence of some word-initial geminates not available in Italian (Cf. Bolognesi 1998), the alternation among voiced stops and zero in external sandhi (Cf. Wagner 1941), the stratification of the phonological lexicon (in the sense of Ito & Mester 1995). These phenomena are being replaced by the correspondent Italian patterns. The predictable outcome would be that orthographic conventions devised to preserve Sardinian will end up favouring a shift towards the Italian phonological system.

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Katherine McDonald (Cambridge) & Nicolas Zair (Cambridge)

Changing script in a threatened language: reactions to Romanization at first-century Bantia

The Tabula Bantina has been seen as a textbook case of attempted language revitalisation in the ancient world. Dating from the early 1st century BC, it is one of the last known texts in Oscan, a language of Ancient Italy. It is written in the Latin alphabet, and apparent mistakes in the text have suggested that the writer(s) did not have L1 competence. It is often supposed that Oscan as a written language had already died out in Bantia, necessitating the adoption of the Latin alphabet when it began to be written again. We argue that aspects of its spelling appear to be based on Greek orthography. Since the Greek alphabet was used to write Oscan in the area around Bantia, this suggests that the use of the Latin alphabet was a deliberate choice. Rather than the Oscan language being partially revived as a show of regional identity, a community that was still using its traditional language felt compelled to change its script. This paper seeks to unravel an intertwining of influences on the script of a community whose ethnolinguistic vitality was under threat, and shows how the threatened languages of the past reacted to pressure from dominant political powers.

Christopher Moseley (UCL)

Who Owns Vernacular Literacy? Assessing the sustainability of written vernaculars

This paper deals with the sustainability of written vernaculars, and draws on responses to a survey I conducted among linguists and missionaries engaged in creating Roman-based orthographies for 30 previously unwritten languages. Much has been written about the value of literacy, vernacular or not, for indigenous peoples, but comparatively little has been concerned with the propagation of the written vernacular to a critical mass of self-sustainability. A sustainable vernacular is not necessarily the same as a language emerging from endangerment. A purely oral language is transmissible without being codified, but in the interdependent world of the twenty-first century, only written codification of a language enables it to be sustained to a critical point of viability can ensure its intergenerational propagation. The following factors come into play in ascertaining this critical point of viability:

- ratio of numbers of native speakers to those of impinging languages ;
- present status of other measurable factors, such as those on Fishman's GIDS;
- present status of the orthography in the eyes of the speakers;
- incorporation of the vernacular into the local education system.

François Nemo (Orléans) & Antonia Cristinoi (Orléans)

Lexicography on the edge: orthographical issues in an Amazonian context

Our aim will be to discuss orthographical issues from a lexicographic perspective in the context of quickly changing societies in which massive lexical erosion under way, which could - and should - be countered to a large extent by conservation concerned dictionaries.

Based on our experience of field lexicography in French Guyana, we shall discuss these orthographical issues in the context of the Palikur language (Maipurean), starting with a presentation of the history of Palikur's orthography and of the results of an empirical survey aimed at measuring orthographical competence among its speakers.

We shall then discuss issues which emerge when orthographical issues meet lexicographical ones, starting with orthography as an obstacle for dictionary use, due to its unpredictability, and with the role of the lexicographer as first "orthographer", and then moving from the dilemma between "language preserving" choices or "orthography preserving" ones, to the importance of realizing that if dictionaries are essential to orthographical standardization, it is not possible to presuppose an inexistent orthographical competence, which forces to reconsider important aspects of the lexicography of endangered languages but also to consider the fully lexical dimension of orthographical issues.

Evaristo Ovide (Salamanca)

*Who decides when and how to write a language? Two case studies of endangered languages:
Asturian in Spain and Qom in Argentina*

The Asturian language was standardised (orthography, grammar and dictionary) in a process of about 20 years, starting in 1981, when the Academy of the Asturian Language was formed. Nowadays, society has fully accepted the standard. The writing of the Qom language has started mainly in 1995, when the language started to be studied by the future indigenous primary teachers at CIFMA Teacher Training Centre (Chaco province, Argentina).

In both cases, there are certain common questions to be asked about how to write the language. However, the differences in socioeconomic, cultural and political circumstances of the linguistic community make some questions more relevant than others in each language. These factors will be addressed in the presentation and we will explain why, as a result, in our work with the Qom and Wichi people in Argentina, we support an approach where the non-indigenous scholar advises and trains the indigenous community, but does not take the lead decision-making role in the process. We believe this leads to a much more realistic and sustainable revitalization of both, the language and the community.

Chia-Jung Pan (Nankai)

Rethinking the Orthography Development and its Linguistic Consequences in Formosan Languages

This study attempts to deal with the orthography development and its linguistic consequences. Two highly endangered Formosan languages are examined. Tsou is spoken in central-southern Taiwan, with hundreds of speakers. Saaroa is spoken in southern, with no more than 10 speakers. Taiwan reported evidentiality in some Formosan languages. As late as a few decades ago, large sections of the most Formosan languages could not read or write. On December 15, 2005, the Council of Indigenous People and the Ministry of Education of Executive Yuan, Taiwan established a standard orthography system (i.e. Roman characters) for all Formosan languages for the purpose of language revitalization. Despite the clear advantage that it helps decelerate language extinction, the creation of a standard orthography brings some challenges. For example, the standard orthography puzzles the existing native speakers with the use of some phonemes and morphemes conditioned in a particular linguistic environment. Besides, the standard orthography ignores the important distinctive feature—vowel length that the Saaroa speakers are highly sensitive. The other challenge is that the standard orthography does not fully coincide for reasons of learnability. In a moribund language like Saaroa, young people use their knowledge of English to pronounce all the standard orthographic characters. This gives rise to some linguistic consequences, e.g. ignorance of vowel length, collapse of some morphophonemic rules, and so on. Hence, the case study of two Formosan languages suggests that developing orthography for language maintenance and revitalization should consider the needs of the speech community. In addition, the possible entailing linguistic consequences should be taken into account.

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Bénédicte Pivot (Lyon II)

Is graphization unavoidable for revitalization of postvernacular languages ?

In continuation of the presentation on the issue of choice of a standardized spelling for francoprovençal, (Bert Michel) this paper proposes to address the challenges of graphization in the context of projects to revitalize endangered languages in oral tradition, relying on data from two doctoral research fieldwork, rama language in Nicaragua and Francoprovençal in France (Pivot 2014).

This communication will question the effect of ideologies and teaching models that affect how local actors think and defend the revitalization of their language, assigning an important role in writing and therefore focusing on issues of standardization. I will question these positions in the context of languages for which there is no real desire to revernacularization and have the characteristic of being postvernacular, that is to say that their secondary semiotic level is more important than the semantic level Primary (Shandler 2006).

These two features raise the question of their inclusion as part of a revitalization through formal education and consequently the place and role of writing in these cases: what standard written and for what? These questions arise when thinking supports education but are also present when local actors wish to publish their dictionaries or their local productions, written "in their own way" and then they are faced with discourses delegitimizing their production for lack of standardization.

Thus, the central question of this paper is: why discourses attempt 'in general' to prove unavoidableness standardization to "save" a language? and how standardization is probably unsuitable for postvernacular languages.

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Silvia Randaccio, Claudia Soria & Carlo Zoli (CNR – ILC)

Standardized orthography: a shoe for a bare foot

A standard written form is necessary for every language to meet today's technological expectations. Only a standardized orthography can access modern tools such as Google Translator and the like. Moreover, writing is the only possible approach to the domains of administration, bureaucracy and education. Therefore, language standardisation should not be regarded as an enemy of autochthonous languages but as a small price to be paid to support minority languages in the real world and in the cyberspace.

In this paper, we will present the joint experience of CNR-ILC and Smallcodes in the use of standardized orthographies for the design of digital tools for minority languages, and report about different approaches to orthography standardisation that were encountered over the years: from a top-down approach of Friulian to a moderately polynomial approach of Alpine Occitan; from an "umbrella-like" spelling system of Dolomitan Ladin to a mixed logographic and polynomial system of Rromani.

Summing it up by a metaphor, a standard orthography is like a shoe for barefoot people. At first it is a bit uncomfortable, but then the foot fits the shoe, the shoe fits the foot and, at that point, one can walk in any terrain and any weather.

Kathleen Sackett (SIL)

Committee-driven goal centered orthography development

Recent discussions have debated whether orthography development is the linguist's or the community's task. Orthography development for vulnerable languages can encourage language maintenance and revitalization efforts. However, a new orthography may enhance development or hinder it (Grenoble & Whaley 2005:159) Like Sebba (2007) and Bow (2012), I maintain that orthographic decisions are ultimately the community's to make. However, input from linguists can aid the community in creating a sustainable orthography.

In 2011, the Tsakhur living in Azerbaijan determined it was important for language maintenance to create a Latin-based orthography similar to Azerbaijani's Latin-based orthography, because the Cyrillic-based orthography used by Tsakhur in the Russian Federation complicated mother tongue literacy efforts. Through this case study I show that a community can make effective orthographic decisions to meet their goals. By examining the community's goal for their language and culture, their contact with other written languages, their view of what is necessary for success, the opportunities available to them for mother tongue literacy, and how community members use technology, the community, with insights from a linguist, is capable of creating an orthography that not only promotes language vitality but wider community acceptance.

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Julia Sallabank (SOAS) & Yan Marquis (Guernsey)

Spelling trouble: ideologies and practices in Giernesiei / Dgernesiais / Guernesiais / Guernésiais / Djernezié...

The indigenous language of Guernsey is not standardised, and has no official orthography. It is highly endangered, but there is increased demand for written Giernesiei (e.g. signage, slogans, tattoos, jewellery, social media).

Examination of writing practices reveals a wide range of spellings, and inconsistencies between rhetoric and practices. Some speakers/learners, influenced by diglossic notions of 'correctness' and prestige, favour French-style spellings for Guernesiais; but most islanders are literate in English only. Language activists may focus on differentiation from dominant or related languages. Learners, meanwhile, may benefit from a systematic, transparent, practical spelling which recognises the lack of accents on English-style keyboards. The researchers are involved in documenting the speech of the last native speakers and in developing learning materials for adults; these would be greatly facilitated by an accepted language description and orthography.

The resolution of such tensions does not depend on impartial assessment of which orthography is the most efficient, but on community dynamics which may be fluid and not immediately obvious. Given that the future of Dgernesiais rests with learners, it is important to develop an orthography which is useful for learners and teachers, yet acceptable to native speakers. Proposals and options will be discussed.

Christine Schreyer (British Columbia, Okanagan)

Reflections on the Kala Bijaṭuwā, a three year old alphabet, from Papua New Guinea

In this presentation, I provide Kala community members' reflections on their three-year old alphabet, as well as my own observations about new literacy, in order to address whether developing an orthography has created problems or benefits for native Kala speakers. In summer 2010, I helped speakers of the Kala language, spoken in six coastal villages in Morobe Province in Papua New Guinea (PNG), decide which symbols to use for their new alphabet. Kala speakers, who were concerned about language shift occurring within their communities, had developed a Kala Language Committee (KLC) with help from my colleague, John Wagner in 2006. As PNG educational policies state that children can attend school in their mother tongue for their first three years of schooling, the KLC saw the creation of an orthography as an essential educational tool. In the summer of 2013, John and I returned to the Kala villages to continue work with the KLC and I was curious to see how the orthography had fared since its inception. While many academic articles describe best practices for orthography creation, few provide community reflection on success of the writing system and this presentation is intended to help bridge this gap in orthographic studies.

Margarita Valdovinos (Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Berlin)

Orthographies in the making: The dynamic construction of community-based writing systems among the Náayeri of Northwest Mexico

During the last twenty years, Mexican government has created a series of programs to promote reading and writing in Native languages among Indigenous peoples. This disposition has impacted the way Indigenous peoples think about languages, taking them to see writing and reading in their language as imposed from the outside.

As literate Indigenous teachers and young scholars become involved in the creation of practical orthographies for their languages, they use Spanish as the main inspiration for the development of their writing systems. This situation has brought many problems for the way people analyze their language, as they minimize all aspects others than the ones present in Spanish.

I have developed writing classes for young people and linguistic workshops for teachers and adults in Náayeri communities. These activities took me to adopt a particular perspective on orthographies and consider them as being always *in the making*. This dynamic view, widely accepted by the community, has transformed the perception of written language among its inhabitants.

In this presentation, I will show the progression of this community-based project and its results. So far, it has shown me that the collaboration between scholars and the Native community is not only desirable, but necessary.

Daniele Viktor Leggio (Manchester) & **Yaron Matras** (Manchester)

Social networks as centres of language codification

Romani, the language of the Roma people, has traditionally been confined to informal domains of oral, familiar face-to-face communication. According to national and European authorities, Romani expansion is hindered by the dialectal and geographical fragmentation of its speakers. However, the language is increasingly being written in various computer-mediated environments. Using social network analytical software, this paper investigates the emergence of written forms of Romani on comments to YouTube videos. The paper will show how the interactions of Romani speakers create various networks, each characterized by the adoption of the immediate spoken variety of the users, usage of the Latin alphabet and minimal distancing from the orthography of differing standardized languages. In spite of such variation, communication between users takes place and some networks even attract speakers of different backgrounds. These findings show that codification carried out spontaneously by a speech community dispense with the choice of a variety and the adoption of an orthography, while at the same time allowing for effective communication and the expression of a common identity. The Romani case highlights how linguistic pluralism, an open and non-ideological approach to language codification, can effectively lead to the emergence of literacy.

Catherine Young (SIL)

Participatory Approaches in Orthography Development for Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE):

Insights from Non-Dominant Language Communities

The potential of literacy and education in local languages is a key to language maintenance and revitalization. Orthography development is a crucial component in the implementation of effective mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE), an approach which can enable non-dominant languages to be used in education. Orthographies need to be acceptable to speakers of local languages as well as to other stakeholders in the education process. A participatory process, inclusive of the language community, educators and technical consultants enables a process to achieve acceptability and ownership of writing systems, particularly for non-dominant languages.

This paper will review the different components of developing a good orthography and will highlight how participatory approaches release local voices for quality decision-making in effective orthography development. The paper will look at several case studies, particularly of non-dominant language groups in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in the Southern Philippines and review the ways in which participatory approaches enabled non-dominant language communities to begin MTB-MLE in formal education as a response to changes in the national education policy of the Philippines.