

NAACLT 2007 Conference Presentation Abstracts

Contributor	Title & Abstract
Aileen Curtin	<p>Development and implementation of first Irish language university credit course in Texas</p> <p>This presentation will describe the presenter’s journey as an Irish language teacher in a Gaelscoil in Ireland to teaching the first University credit Irish language course for the University of Saint Thomas in Texas in 2006. The presenter, a native speaker of Irish will describe the process of developing, creating, and implementing the first Irish language course for graduate and undergraduate students for the University of Saint Thomas in Houston, Texas. The presentation will focus on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiation of contact with the university 2. Creation and design of the syllabus 3. Approval of course by University Academic committees 4. Credentialing issues and SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and School) 5. Outline of content of syllabus, textbook, & assessments used 6. Final outcomes for 21 students who took the course (for both graduate and undergraduate credit) and overall success for students who took the course 7. Future concerns and hurdles that impede may the proliferation of similar Irish language courses at the university level in the United States
B. Diane Beck	<p>Storytelling among the Ojibwe (Anishnaabe): the roles of Language and Story</p> <p>This paper will examine the oral tradition of the Anishnaabe by looking at the roles that language and story play in their spiritual tradition. A comparison of this investigation will be made with the traditionally oral Irish Celtic people. To appreciate these spiritual traditions, the idea of mythos is more crucial to its understanding than logos, which is a view of analyzing and codifying information generally held by post-modernists. Mythos, I believe, is more revealing when interpreting and comparing embedded “truth” in oral traditions than logos. Specifically, this paper will include four objectives:</p> <p>To look at how language and story encode spirituality in the two oral traditions, Anishnaabe and Irish Celtic.</p> <p>To compare the two spiritual traditions expressed through language and story and how they show a unifying motif.</p> <p>To speak to the question as to whether orality rather than literacy makes language and story more efficacious as conveyors of the sacred.</p>

NAACLT 2007 Conference Presentation Abstracts

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	<p>To offer a visual understanding of how storytelling in Anishnaabe tradition is both practical and holistic with a relevance of continuity among its cultural members and those beyond.</p>
<p>Christophe C. ROPERS</p>	<p>Building the non-spontaneous part of KYG (corpus of spoken Breton)</p> <p>Korpus ar Yezh dre Gomz (or KYG) is the spoken part of the CorpBret project which consists in building a reference corpus of contemporary Breton. At a time when the Breton speaking community is drastically changing, the main idea behind CorpBret is to keep a record of what is often referred to as the genius of a language, i.e. the images, metaphors or references on which native speakers would spontaneously base themselves to produce idiomatic utterances. The ultimate goal is to use both the written and spoken part of CorpBret as an integrated electronic language reference tool. The KYG team's mission goes even a bit further as it has also been asked to help improve previous work on a text-to-speech synthesis (or TTS) module that would enable learners to key in sentences of their own and have them pronounced by a synthesized voice.</p> <p>The paper proposes to open on a brief presentation of the state of the art in Breton TTS, specifically pointing out its main shortcomings and explaining whether those are linked to TTS in general or Breton TTS in particular, and how linguistic corpus analysis may help. It will then touch on major epistemological and methodological issues of spoken corpus building (e.g. transcription protocols, annotation scheme, format and software choices, etc.), which, due to high transcription costs, must absolutely be dealt with prior to the actual building work. Insights into the epistemology and methodology of corpus linguistics should help explain why it seemed most appropriate to begin KYG with a formalized non-spontaneous register of spoken discourse, i.e. that of the five-minute</p> <p>An Taol Lagad news flash. The paper will close on a presentation of preliminary results as they will stand at the time.</p>
<p>Colleen Majella Dollard</p>	<p>Using YouTube in Second Language Acquisition</p> <p>This presentation will discuss the benefits of using the YouTube website [www.youtube.com] as a tool in second language acquisition. YouTube, one of today's most popular sites, was started in 2005 as a platform that allows people to instantly and easily 'broadcast themselves'. It facilitates e-communities as do blogs, podcasts, forums and listserves, but with its additional audio-visual benefits, comes closer to the community feel than in the written word e-communities.</p> <p>I will discuss using YouTube in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the assessment process in formal classes

NAACLT 2007 Conference Presentation Abstracts

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as a means to motivate learners to improve their skills • as a means of support and empowerment to the autonomous learner • as a form of instant validation for all learners • as a means of connecting groups of isolated minority language learners <p>I will show samples of various groups of language learners using YouTube to communicate and learn from each other and suggest how it can help us strengthen Celtic language connections between academic and non-academic learning environments as well as speakers from different continents.</p>
Cynog Prys	<p>Use of Welsh in the voluntary sector in Wales: a guide for language planners</p> <p>The 1993 Welsh Language Act established the need for public bodies in Wales to provide services in both Welsh and English to the general public. Although voluntary organisations are not directly covered by the Act, many have followed the lead of the public sector and have developed their own policies to provide Welsh language services to their clients.</p> <p>In this paper I will describe aspects of my PhD research where I look at the experiences of Welsh speakers who receive services from voluntary organizations in Wales. This research has taken the form of interviews with service users in different localities throughout Wales, but predominantly in the Welsh-speaking heartland of north and west Wales. These users are often classified as vulnerable, and providing services in their preferred language is increasingly seen as good practice.</p> <p>I will examine attitudes of both providers and clients to the language, and the wide variations in both expectations and availability of services through the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>To conclude I will evaluate the findings so far and their relevance to the formulation of language policies both in Wales and in the other Celtic countries and similar socio-linguistic communities.</p>
Gearóid Ó Ceallaigh and Daithí Mac Lochlainn	<p>Ranganna Saora ar an Idirlíon: An Historical Movement Embracing the Information Age</p> <p>The object of this paper is to introduce the free online Irish classes offered by Cumann Carad na Gaeilge/The Philo-Celtic Society [CCG]. CCG was first founded by Mícheál Ó Lócháin in 1872 in Brooklyn for “the preservation and extension of the Irish as a spoken language” and reorganized in 2004 with a special emphasis on Ó Lócháin’s foundational objective. This year, CCG took first place in Glór na nGael’s international “Global Gaeilge” contest.</p>

NAACLT 2007 Conference Presentation Abstracts

Contributor	Title & Abstract
	<p>CCG's "Ranganna Saora ar Líne", launched on February 1st, 2007, is the organization's latest offering (among others) to Irish language learners and teachers using the Internet. It is representative of CCG's application of today's informational technology to its foundational aims. In keeping with the Cumann's traditional ethos of making Irish-language acquisition available to all, the classes offered are (1) free of tuition or sign-up fees, (2) based on the time-tested and readily available text, Progress in Irish, by educator and playwright Máiréad Ní Ghráda, and (3) available through "Yahoo Groups", requiring no software downloading. Anyone in the world with Internet access may join the class.</p> <p>The curriculum follows, in part, the ambitious program offered by Scoil Ghaeilge Ghearóid Tóibín. [SGGT] Most of the teacher's in CCG's project also have taught with SGGT and all continue to do so on a volunteer basis. This curriculum facilitates the efforts of those teachers, enabling them to use the experience gained in "live" classes. Also, links are provided to SGGT's sound file recordings for Progress in Irish.</p> <p>In our presentation, we heartily welcome constructive criticism and suggestions. So too, we offer this model to all and would be honored to see it duplicated in some form by the Breizh, Cymraeg, Gaelg, Gàidhlig, Kernewek and First Nations language communities.</p>
<p>Gearóid O Néill & company</p>	<p>Athchúrsáil - Recycling Language Resources</p> <p>In this, the era of conservation and recycling, perhaps it is appropriate even for language resources, to go through a bit of recycling, especially when such resources are scarce. In this paper is described an attempt at just such an effort. The Dinneen Dictionary has been scanned and converted to character form and is being structured, with the help of André Lemeur, according to the XML standard for dictionaries.</p> <p>In the meantime, the pages of Dinneen have been made available on-line as images. The pages have been indexed by word range. To get to the relevant page, type a word, or, indeed an arbitrary piece of text, and the appropriate page will be selected. Of course, if the word is not present, you still get the page in which the word would have occurred.</p> <p>The spelling is not quite what most of us are used to these days. To overcome this difficulty, for the text-based version, the system provides for access by the modern spelling. For example, aibím (I ripen, cause to ripen) would find aibigim.</p> <p>There is a corresponding output equivalent, which shows the entries in the modern spelling, should you choose that option. So the system returns aibím, should you enter abighim, aibgim or aibím.</p>

NAACLT 2007 Conference Presentation Abstracts

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	<p>We should like to express our appreciation to Annette McElligott, Redmond O'Brien, Liam O'Riordan, and Tony Molloy</p>
John Donahue	<p>Using Moodle for Teaching Irish through distance education</p> <p>Moodle is a course management system which allows students to practice points of grammar and learn vocabulary at their own pace. The Moodle Master at Champlain Regional College (Brian Smalridge) has graciously set up a course site called 'Irish 101' for my Irish language students here in Montreal. This is a pilot project to see how useful and how popular such a teaching strategy would prove among non-traditional students.</p> <p>The web site as I have planned it enables my students to practice what they are learning at evening classes. The exercises and 'games' are designed to reinforce points covered chapter by chapter in 'Teach Yourself Irish' by Ó Sé and Shields. At present, there are some exercises for Chapters 1 and 2. At present, the system does not permit an auditory component. Perhaps later versions of Moodle will incorporate this feature.</p> <p>For the conference, I would like to report on the success or failure of the project with discussion of using such sites more widely to bring in students who may not have the opportunity to work with a teacher nearby.</p>
Kevin Drummond	<p>"Piobairean Bhornais" or "Pipers of Bornish" 2003 Scotland 10'</p> <p>A computer animated film in Scottish Gaelic with English subtitles. The narration is from an old recording by Donald John Steward from the School of Scottish Studies Archive. The hypnotic musical score composed and performed for the film by renowned piper Rory Campbell adds to the animation which looks like a moving oil painting. Director Catriona Black (Nielle Dhuibh) has taken a traditional Gaelic story about a young boy who makes a pact with a sinister fairy who lives in a cave on a mountain to learn to play the pipes.</p> <p>It has been shown at various film festivals and on BBC 2.</p> <p>This is a short film a teacher of Scottish Gaelic could consider that might be useful. It is sinister, weird and a bit "arty".</p>
Kevin J. Rottet	<p>Breton vocabulary and lexical borrowing: Pedagogical perspectives</p> <p>Two fairly recent works have focussed on the lexicon of Breton: the Dictionnaire étymologique bretonne (Deshayes 2003), and the recently reprinted Alc'hwez ar brezhoneg eeun (Hémon 2001, originally published in 1935). To be sure, these books have entirely different purposes, the former being a fairly standard</p>

NAACLT 2007 Conference Presentation Abstracts

Contributor	Title & Abstract
	<p>representative of the etymological dictionary genre, and the latter a specially crafted learner's vocabulary of 1,000 words, modeled on Basic English (Ogden, 1930) and intended to represent the minimal Breton vocabulary that a learner must acquire and master in order to be able to engage in basic, everyday conversation. Yet the shared focus on the lexicon of these two works provides an opportunity to take a fresh look at issues of lexical borrowing in Breton and the kinds of issues that borrowings, especially from French, raise for the classroom.</p> <p>We will see the necessity of recognizing that the Breton lexicon is already a composite of multiple strands, including at least the following:</p> <p>native Celtic material. As a Brythonic language Breton has close affinities with Welsh and Cornish, and more distant ones with the Goidelic languages Irish, Scottish Gaelic, and Manx.</p> <p>Latin loanwords dating from the Roman occupation of Britain from 43 A.D. to about 425 A.D. (i.e. before the Bretons' insular ancestors had moved across the Channel). According to Jackson (1953: 76) some 800 Latin words entered Brythonic during this period, hundreds of which are still in use in modern Breton.</p> <p>borrowings from Old, Middle and Modern French, numbering in the many thousands. This is the lexical strand which most serves to differentiate Breton from its sister languages.</p> <p>Breton thus has a very long history of borrowing from French, and already in Middle Breton literary texts such as the well-known miracle plays, it was possible to find some lines of text in which not a single word was of native Celtic stock (Piette 1973: ix). During the twentieth century, borrowing from French came to be perceived as a serious danger for the language, and those interested in a Breton language revival typically undertook to replace as many French borrowings as possible. This leads to a fourth strand of the Breton vocabulary:</p> <p>20th century neology, including borrowing from and calquing on Welsh, in part out of a desire to eschew French loanwords and to emphasize Celtic heritage.</p> <p>In this paper, we will examine how the various lexical strands (especially the third and fourth, which are the ones perceived as problematic) are handled in the two works referred to above (Deshayes 2003 and Hémon 2001) and other recent pedagogical works intended for the teaching and learning of Breton.</p>
Iehnhotonkwas	<p>Combating Language Loss in the Kanien'kehaka</p> <p>This presentation will provide an opportunity to hear how the Kanien'kehaka (Mohawk Nation) are fighting a new crisis within their midst—language loss—with concentration on the language immersion revitalization projects taking place within the</p>

NAACLT 2007 Conference Presentation Abstracts

Contributor	Title & Abstract
	<p>Kanien'kehaka communities; and a special overview on the recent start-up of a Mohawk Language Diploma program on the Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory.</p>
<p>Meggan Lloyd Prys</p>	<p>From 0-to Fluent in One Year? An American's Experience in Wales</p> <p>In this paper I will describe my experiences as an American with no previous experience of Welsh, moving to Wales, and trying to learn Welsh in one year.</p> <p>I will describe the various options open to me to learn Welsh, and the courses that I have taken throughout the year with the aim of mastering the language. These ranged from the three week, 6 hour a day, summer course that I started the day after I arrived in Wales, to the intensive Super-Wlpan and Super-Pellach courses, in which I am currently enrolled.</p> <p>I will discuss the teaching and learning strategies used in the courses, and the strength and weaknesses of a colloquial non-grammar based approach aimed at getting us speaking confidently as soon as possible. I will also look at the different motivations for learning the language, shared within my class, and the difficulties of speaking a minority language when everyone is able to speak English anyway.</p> <p>In closing, I will evaluate and the success of the teaching environment and methods used. I will discuss the positive and negative aspects of this type of learning and how well I have succeeded in reaching my goal of becoming fluent in Welsh.</p>
<p>Roslyn Blynn-LaDrew</p>	<p>Using Irish Language Instructional Material in the United States, or, From "Feoil Capaill" (Nach nItear in Éirinn) to Flirting with the Gardaí</p> <p>This paper examines the image of Ireland as portrayed in teaching materials used for Irish over a timespan of nearly 100 years. For recent materials, I look at the relevance to modern students' lives, whether at university or in adult night-schools. To what degree are the topics that American students really want to talk about actually taught, and what are some suggestions that instructors could add to make the subjects more meaningful? To what degree have the current textbooks kept pace with the rapid changes in Ireland and to what extent do some American learners want to discuss an imagined antiquated Ireland? Sample lesson-plans on current "hot topics," based on classroom experience, will be demonstrated.</p> <p>A decade-by-decade examination of cultural topics appearing in textbooks follows. Can textbooks for Irish or other languages be seen as cultural barometers or time-capsules, with each generation's concerns juxtaposed with traditional teaching methods? Many Irish language teachers in the U.S. debate</p>

NAACLT 2007 Conference Presentation Abstracts

Contributor	Title & Abstract
	<p>whether to keep using the excellent but 1960s-era Buntús Cainte and Progress in Irish or whether to adapt the latest material from Ireland. The latter may be labor-intensive, since the instructor may have developed a program based on the older textbooks and simply recycled it with each new class. Ultimately, each generation of textbooks offers some material that transcends the passage of time and some that is clearly outdated.</p>
Síle A. Scott	<p>Building L2 Vocabulary Through R.E.A.D.ing</p> <p>This talk focuses on one aspect of second language (L2) reading comprehension. There are many things that L2 teachers do to foster reading comprehension, pre- and post-reading exercises for example, but this talk focuses on the explicit teaching of vocabulary. I will explain why I believe this is a worthwhile activity based on what is currently known about how first and second language words are learned and stored in our mental dictionaries. The R.E.A.D. paradigm is based on the process by which we access the mental lexicon. It serves as a template which teachers can use to promote the development of vocabulary skills in their L2 learners. Examples of sample exercises for Irish are provided for each of the elements in the paradigm.</p>