

# Language Endangerment

*Documentation  
Pedagogy  
& Revitalisation*

25 March 2011  
CRASSH  
University of  
Cambridge



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## *Plenary Speakers*

Peter Austin, Marit Rausing Chair in  
Field Linguistics, SOAS, UK  
*Language Revitalization and Pedagogy:  
a case from eastern Australia*

Nikolaus Himmelmann, Professor of  
Linguistics, University of Cologne,  
Germany  
*On Language Documentation*



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# ***Language Endangerment: Documentation, Pedagogy, and Revitalization***

**Friday, 25 March 2011  
CRASSH, 17 Mill Lane, Cambridge**

## ***Conveners***

Dr Mari Jones (Department of French/Peterhouse, University of Cambridge)

Dr Sarah Ogilvie (Department of Linguistics/Lucy Cavendish, University of Cambridge)

## ***Conference summary***

The First Cambridge International Conference on Language Endangerment will focus on language documentation, pedagogy, and revitalization. It will bring together academics, students, and members of indigenous communities from around the world to discuss current theories, methodologies, and practices of language documentation, pedagogy, revitalization.

Most of the world's languages have diminishing numbers of speakers and are on the brink of falling silent. Currently around the globe, scholars are collaborating with members of indigenous communities to document and describe these endangered languages and cultures. Mindful that their work will be used by future speech communities to learn, teach, and revitalize their languages, scholars face new challenges in the way they gather materials and in the way they present their findings. This conference will discuss current efforts to record, collect, and archive endangered languages in writing, sound, and video that will support future language learners and speakers.

Documentation is of critical and immediate importance, and is often considered one of the main tasks of the field linguist. Future revitalization efforts may succeed or fail on the basis of the quality and range of material gathered, and yet the process may be rapid and dependent on conscious decisions by linguists and language workers who may be analyzing the form of a language for the first time, and codifying it in dictionaries and grammars. Written documentation of course not only aids the process of standardization but also serves important needs and functions within a community in support of language maintenance such as providing the basis for pedagogical materials in schools and helping to create a community's sense of identity. However, indigenous communities and scholars of endangered languages are beginning to realise that the rapid and often artificial nature of this process can

have negative effects - politically, linguistically, and culturally - which feed into issues relating to education and, ultimately, language revitalization.

In addition to the opportunity of sharing experiences with a network of linguists, it is hoped that participants will leave the conference with a new understanding of the topic, innovative ideas for documentation and pedagogy within their own linguistic contexts, and a renewed vigour to implement what they have learnt in their own language situations.

**Wireless access:**

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***Acknowledgment***

The conveners are grateful for the support of The Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH) at the University of Cambridge.

# Programme

- 9.00 – 9.30 Registration
- 9.30 – 9.45 Welcome and Introduction (CRASSH seminar room)
- 9.45 – 10.45 Plenary session 1  
**Professor Peter Austin** (SOAS, University of London, UK)  
*Language Revitalization and Pedagogy in eastern Australia*
- 10.45 – 11.15 Coffee break
- Parallel session 1 Pedagogy** (CRASSH seminar room)
- 11.15 – 13.15 **Arieh Sherris** (Academy for Educational Development, Washington),  
**Tachini Pete** and **Rosie Matt** (Sníiiiio Salish immersion school, Arlee,  
Montana): *Task-Based Language Teaching Practices That Support  
Salish Revitalization Efforts*
- Tania Ka'ai, John Moorfield** and **Muiris Ó Laoire** (Auckland  
University of Technology): *New Technologies and Pedagogy in  
Language Revitalisation: The Case of Te Reo Māori*
- Hanna Outakosko** (Umeå): *Teaching an Endangered Language in  
Virtual Reality*
- Evaristo Ovide** (Salamanca): *Using the Internet and its Associated  
Technologies to Revitalize Endangered Languages*
- Parallel session 1 Documentation** (Seminar room A, upstairs)
- 11.15 – 13.15 **Michael Riessler** (Freiburg) and **Elena Karvovskaya**  
(Potsdam): *Purism in Language Documentation and Description*
- Amanda Hamilton** (University of Hawaii): *A Psycholinguistic  
Assessment of Language Decline in Eastern Indonesia: Evidence from  
the HALA Project*
- Elena Skribnik, Zsófia Kovats, Veronika Bauer** (Ludwig-Maximilian  
University Munich), **Ulrike Zeshan, Hasan Dikyuva, Cesar Ernesto  
Escobedo Delgado** (University of Central Lancashire): *The Relevance  
of Language Documentation for Language Users – Models and Case  
Studies from EuroBABEL*
- Ioanna Sitaridou** (Cambridge): *Towards a methodology: Syntactic  
Investigations of an Endangered Language Embedded under an  
Anthropological Approach*
- 13.15 – 14.15 Lunch

- 14.15 – 15.15 Plenary session 2  
**Professor Dr Nikolaus Himmelmann** (University of Cologne, Germany)  
*On Language Documentation*
- 15.15 – 15.45 Coffee break
- Parallel session 2 Revitalization** (CRASSH seminar room)
- 15.45 – 17.45 **Colette Grinevald** and **Bénédicte Pivot** (Lyon 2): *About the revitalization of a “treasure language”. An Update on the Rama Language Project of Nicaragua*
- Maria Kouneli** (Yale), **Julien Meyer** (Museo Emilio Goeldi) and **Andrew Nevins** (UCL, London): *Whistled Languages: A Continuum of Endangerment Situations and Strategies for Revitalisation*
- Julia Sallabank** (SOAS, London) and **Yan Marquis** (Guernsey): *Language Revitalisation in a Small Community*
- James Costa** (Lyon) and **Médéric Gasquet-Cyrus** (Provence): *Competing Language Revitalisation Movements in Provence: What is Revitalisation Really About?*
- Parallel session 2 Documentation** (Seminar room A, upstairs)
- 15.45 – 17.45 **John Henderson** (University of Western Australia): *Language Documentation and Community Interests*
- David Nathan** (SOAS, London) and **Meili Fang** (Ochanomizu): *Joining the Docs: Envisioning a Revitalisation-driven Practice for Documentary Linguistics*
- Alexandra Lavrillier** (Max Planck, Leipzig): *Linguistic and Cultural Documentation, and Applied Anthropology in Pedagogy among Tungusic Peoples of Siberia: Analysis of two Projects' Methodologies*
- Jeffrey Davis** (Tennessee): *Plains Indian Sign Language (PISL) Documentary Linguistic Fieldwork and Digital Archive*
- 17.45 – 18.00 Closing session (CRASSH seminar room)
- 18.15 – 19.15 Wine Reception sponsored by Cambridge University Press to celebrate the launch of *The Cambridge Handbook of Endangered Languages* (edited by Peter Austin and Julia Sallabank) (Lubbock Room, Peterhouse)
- 19.30 Conference dinner (Upper Hall, Peterhouse)

# ***Abstracts***

## **Parallel session 1: Pedagogy**

**Arieh Sherris** (Academy for Educational Development, Washington), **Tachini Pete** and **Rosie Matt** (Sníííio Salish immersion school, Arlee, Montana): *Task-Based Language Teaching Practices That Support Salish Revitalization Efforts*

Montana Salish speakers are experiencing dwindling numbers (N < 50). The Sníííio Salish immersion school in Arlee, Montana is involved in language revitalization efforts for young learners (ages 2-12). Recent assessments of student Salish oral language development fall short of targeted goals at each age. In response, workshops on task-based language teaching (TBLT) practices were implemented among teachers and site administrators. This paper is a discussion of the form and content of the workshops for Salish educators and the tasks that were created. At the outset, a brief description of the history of TBLT is presented, the theory behind its implementation, and challenges related to task selection and sequencing. The Salish workshops are discussed, including data from an audio-taped focus group of participants on TBLT practices. Finally, the tasks are exhibited and a short videotape of two young Salish learners implementing a task is shown and analyzed.

**Tania Ka'ai, John Moorfield** and **Muiris Ó Laoire** (Auckland University of Technology): *New Technologies and Pedagogy in Language Revitalization: The Case of Te Reo Māori*

In the face of growing globalization, the traditional in-group cultural institutions that sustained intergenerational transmission in speech communities in the past are now perceived as less important by a younger generation. Yet paradoxically, new technologies, a hallmark of globalisation can be exploited and developed to provide innovative ideas for pedagogy and learning that confer a new vigour on the younger generation to re-appraise and learn its indigenous language. This paper draws considerably on the work of Te Ipukarea, The National Māori Language Institute and the International Centre for Language Revitalisation at Auckland University of Technology where new technologies have been used as catalysts and contemporary progressive pathways towards archiving Māori language materials and developing new technologically enabled Māori language pedagogy. The use of modern technologies for archiving and to increase accessibility to quality language for learners of endangered languages will be discussed, using Māori as a case study.

**Hanna Outakosko** (Umeå): *Teaching an Endangered Language in Virtual Reality*

North Sami is an endangered heritage language spoken mainly in Northern Scandinavia. Rapid changes in the demography of this group have led to a situation where anyone wanting to learn this language lives faraway from the other learners. This affects in its turn the possibilities to offer education in this language since the study groups are often small and originate from different regions. Higher education in North Sami at Umeå University in Sweden is therefore given as distance and net-based education. In order to ensure that distance learners and Internet learners of North Sami acquire good spoken skills in the language, a project called Språkens hus (House of languages) at Umeå university is now exploring the possibilities of arranging language activities in endangered or less spoken

languages in 3D virtual worlds such as Second Life. From the fall term 2010 and onwards, part of classes in North Sami take place in virtual worlds and a virtual classroom. The experiences from the beginner course given partly in Second Life imply that virtual worlds have a great potential to meet the changed needs for finding common arenas for speakers and learners of endangered languages.

**Evaristo Ovide** (Salamanca): *Using the Internet and its Associated Technologies to Revitalize Endangered Languages*

Internet and the technologies linked to it (ICTs) have greatly expanded the linguistic and cultural domains of the most widely spoken languages in our global world. At the same time, endangered languages, that were already excluded from the traditional media, have an even smaller presence in this larger world. However, the Web also offers a great opportunity for these languages to have a voice and a presence as it would have not been possible before, though it is normally rather difficult for numerous reasons.

This project seeks to create a theoretical and practical framework consisting of five steps: Documentation, Dissemination, Community, Education and Monetization. Each of these steps considers traditional methods and tries to improve their efficiency and effectiveness by using the ICTs in an interdisciplinary and holistic approach.

The project started last summer with a six-week trip to establish contacts and present the project to the Mapuche People in Chile and to the Toba, Wichí and Mocoví Peoples in Argentina. The ideas of the project were very well received by the indigenous peoples and it will continue in 2011 with a longer stay in those places implementing different sub-projects.

### **Parallel session 1: Documentation**

**Michael Riessler** (Freiburg) and **Elena Karvovskaya** (Potsdam): *Purism in Language Documentation and Description*

The paper discusses best practices in the documentation and description of puristic variants of endangered languages.

Purism is often described as a barrier in language revitalization, but paradoxically, key revitalizers are often also purists. Language choices and inner-group language conflicts are language sociological rather than linguistic phenomena and thus outside the core of linguistic research. However, the documentary linguist has to acknowledge the existence of purism as a phenomenon interfering her or his work at different levels: 1) the completeness of documentation, 2) the linguistic adequateness, and 3) the pedagogical adequateness of description.

It will be shown on the basis of a few examples how purism is interfering with the ongoing documentation and description of the critically endangered Kildin Saami language. Beside heavy lexical and grammatical borrowing from the majority language, the recorded speech of many Kildin Saami speakers shows typical features of attrition or loss on practically all levels of grammar and lexicon. This has recently been documented, e.g., in the seemingly inconsistent use of focus particles and reflexive pronouns in Kildin Saami which do not

simply follow the patterns of contact induced language change but include the conscious introduction of archaic or pseudo-archaic forms by consultants with puristic attitudes.

Language variation should be included as complete as possible in documentation and description. If the linguist also aims at the creation of a language documentation useful for revitalization, however, choices have to be made how variation is represented in text annotations, dictionaries, and grammars produced for the speech community.

**Amanda Hamilton** (University of Hawaii): *A Psycholinguistic Assessment of Language Decline in Eastern Indonesia: Evidence from the HALA Project*

Language loss can be neither identified nor reversed without accurate measures of language vitality. Most current approaches to language strength assessment rely on qualitative measurement techniques such as surveys (e.g., Hinton 2001: 54; Otsuka and Wong 2007: 252) or ratings given to factors surrounding language use and transmission (e.g., Fishman 1991: 87-109; UNESCO 2003). In contrast, O'Grady et al. (2009) propose the Hawai'i Assessment of Language Access, or HALA, a psycholinguistic tool designed to evaluate bilinguals' relative language strengths by comparing the speed and accuracy with which they can access certain lexical items and syntactic patterns in both their languages.

The current study exploits this new assessment technique to discover patterns of language dominance and loss among bilingual speakers of Bahasa Indonesia and Adang, a non-Austronesian language of eastern Indonesia. The HALA tests also incidentally revealed instances of language change through contact that provide added insight into the complex relationship between the village language and the lingua franca. Additionally, we discuss the challenges of psycholinguistic testing in a community where the residents have had limited exposure to Western culture and to contrived experimental settings. We suggest that the HALA project may require modification in order to achieve the universal linguistic and cultural adaptability for which its designers aimed.

**Elena Skribnik, Zsófia Kovats, Veronika Bauer** (Ludwig-Maximilian University Munich), **Ulrike Zeshan, Hasan Dikyuva, Cesar Ernesto Escobedo Delgado** (University of Central Lancashire): *The Relevance of Language Documentation for Language Users – Models and Case Studies from EuroBABEL*

The presenters of this paper are members of the EuroBABEL project partnership. This is a strand under the EU's prestigious EUROCORES research scheme, and BABEL stands for "Better Analyses Based on Endangered Languages".

### Ob-Ugric languages

The endangered Ob-Ugric languages Khanty (Ostyak) and Mansi (Vogul) are spoken in Western Siberia. Research is conducted by the universities of Munich, Vienna, Szeged, Budapest, Helsinki, Novosibirsk and Khanty-Mansijsk.

We give an overview of existing teaching resources and approaches, focusing on didactic techniques developed for teaching foreign languages to children not fluent in the language of their parents/grandparents, and on online multimedia resources. The latter aim at reanalysis of published materials, additional documentation where possible, and an

exhaustive pool of information for linguists, as well as teaching materials for the indigenous community.

We have been developing teaching resources for Khanty and Mansi. Previous work at A. Herzen Pedagogical University and Yugra State University, which had resulted in native expertise in these languages, has now stalled because of political developments - minority philology chairs were closed at Yugra University in 2010. Under these conditions, it is important to develop freely accessible online resources, thereby making the scientific database usable as an educational resource by the language community and the wider public.

### Sign languages in village communities

In village communities with a high incidence of hereditary deafness over several generations, small-scale sign languages are used by both hearing and deaf people in the community. These unique languages are important for linguistics, but are endangered due to social change and pressure from urban deaf communities.

We report on work in several “deaf village” communities, including the Mayan village of Chican in Mexico (Yucatan) with currently 16 deaf people out of 400; an extended “deaf” family with 40 sign language users from a village near Mardin (Turkey); and Bengkala village in Bali with 48 deaf people out of 2,500.

We report on experiences with setting up deaf classrooms, which provide first-time access to formal education for deaf children and teach through the local village sign language. We reflect on the “deaf classroom” model and the concept of village sign languages as “Heritage Languages” in this unique setting. In addition to resources and materials, particular emphasis is placed on the role of deaf researchers in our team.

Further information about EuroBABEL can be found at [www.esf.org/eurobabel](http://www.esf.org/eurobabel).

### **Ioanna Sitaridou** (Cambridge): *Towards a methodology: Syntactic Investigations of an Endangered Language Embedded under an Anthropological Approach*

Using field-work on Romeyka – an endangered Greek language of oral tradition (close-cognate of Pontic Greek), spoken in remote parts of north-East Turkey – as a case-study, the aim of the paper is twofold: First, to develop a methodology for language documentation with emphasis on syntax in geocultural contexts where anthropological approaches are needed. More explicitly, the uniqueness of this project lies in combining state-of-the-art (generative) syntax with an eye for historical change (including contact-induced syntactic change) within a hermetically sealed remote community with a distinctive culture. The combination of ethnography of communication with syntax is not at all obvious and poses several problems most notably: (i) how to design and administer oral questionnaires; (ii) how to integrate questionnaires to a more traditional ethnographic approach. Second, to address some of the ethical, political and practical problems why revitalisation (and all the more, standardisation) must be delayed despite the urgency of a situation. It is claimed that, always depending on the investigative context, the rapid and often artificial nature of this process can have more negative effects than gains. The question then is whether one can “sustain” a language from within a community without taking recourse to revitalisation techniques traditionally used to boost a language, but which often have specific ideological or cultural interpretations.

## Parallel session 2: Revitalisation

**Colette Grinevald** and **Bénédicte Pivot** (Lyon 2): *About the revitalization of a “treasure language”. An Update on the Rama Language Project of Nicaragua*

This paper aims to contribute to the “intellectualization” (a Fishman expression) of the fast growing field of inquiry about language revitalization, from the point of view of field linguists caught into the challenges of revitalization through long drawn working relations to a particular endangered language community, even if they were originally not prepared or equipped for it.

The Rama language project of Nicaragua has been documented from its start (Craig and Tibbitts 1986; Craig 1987, 1992) with a major focus on the working relations between linguists and last speakers (Craig 1987; Grinevald 2001, 2007) leading to more exhaustive proposals for a typology of speakers of EL (Grinevald and Bert to appear). Publications have also treated the confrontations of ideological worlds, as in the choice of language or language variety to be revitalized (Grinevald 2003, 2005).

Twenty-five years into the project, this talk will consider its latest developments, cast within the framework recently proposed by Costa (2010). It will catch the new configuration of actors (foreign experts, activists, speakers, neo-speakers) that has emerged within the context of new legal and institutional contexts. It will present the new discourse of these different actors about the nature of the language to be revitalized, newly relabelled a “treasure language”, and the challenges of its teaching.

**Maria Kouneli** (Yale), **Julien Meyer** (Museo Emilio Goeldi) and **Andrew Nevins** (UCL, London): *Whistled Languages: A Continuum of Endangerment Situations and Strategies for Revitalisation*

Whistled speech is a style of speech in which some phonetic cues of spoken language are emulated in whistled form. Whistled forms of both tonal and non-tonal languages are found around the world. This paper will concentrate on four European whistled languages: Greek (Antia), Turkish (Kuskoy), Spanish (La Gomera) and Bearnais (Aas). The vitality of those languages has been steadily declining, and at least whistled Greek and Bearnais are now close to extinction. Improvement of transportation and telephones reduces the isolation of these populations, lowering the interest for a natural means of telecommunication requiring investment in physical effort or in learning. The categories of disparity of whistlers’ competences are similar to those of speakers of languages suffering a strong vitality loss as described by Dorian (1977). We argue that whistled speech is a relevant example to show that the methods of analysis of language vitality loss are adaptable and efficient even when just part of a language is threatened to die. Several fields may benefit from documentation of whistled speech: acoustics, ecology, anthropology, semiotics, musicology, neuroscience and psycholinguistics. We review existing initiatives for protecting these whistled languages, and present proposals for strategies of revitalization, especially in the case of Antia.

**Julia Sallabank** (SOAS, London) and **Yan Marquis** (Guernsey): *Language Revitalisation in a Small Community*

This paper looks at conflicting ideologies regarding language revitalisation in a small community, and relates these to wider concerns about the aims and effectiveness of language revitalisation. In Guernsey the indigenous language (Guernesiais) is severely endangered and has only received government funding since 2007. Many speakers assume that “getting the language into the schools” is the only way to reverse language shift, but implications such as terminology and orthography development have not been addressed; neither have the needs and desires of (potential) learners. Furthermore, these may clash with purist beliefs about language, especially resistance to change. Previous studies have shown a marked swing in attitudes towards Guernesiais among the general (non-speaker) population, in favour of language revitalisation, but many traditional speakers (and some language campaigners) still see Guernesiais as an inferior variety of French. This paper discusses the effectiveness of current revitalisation efforts, taking into account these contradictory ideologies.

**James Costa** (Lyon) and **Médéric Gasquet-Cyrus** (Provence): *Competing Language Revitalisation Movements in Provence: What is Revitalization Really About?*

This paper proposes to reflect upon a little researched aspect of language revitalization, the presence of competing movements in one single context, and will ask what such situations can tell us about revitalisation movements in general.

Our data consists mainly in articles published in militant newspapers, and were collected over the past five years. Our analyses are informed by extensive fieldwork in Provence (cf. Gasquet-Cyrus 2001, 2006 ; Costa 2010).

Provence is a particularly interesting context for analysing language revitalization movements. Home to one of the earliest language movements in Europe, with the creation of the Felibrige in 1854, it is now the scene of a ferocious battle between rival language revitalization movements. At the centre of the dispute lies the definition of the language itself, as a language in its own right or as a variety of an Occitan.

Our paper will include a discussion of the stakes and consequences of this competition for resources and for an imposition of different categorisations of the world. This, in turn, will enable us to question the way language revitalisation is usually defined as restoration of former usages.

## **Parallel session 2: Documentation**

**John Henderson** (University of Western Australia): *Language Documentation and Community Interests*

The language documentation literature has called for richer, more diverse documentation as a more useful representation of a language in its social contexts. An important development is the recognition that meta-documentation, that is, documenting the research itself, has the potential to make the products more useable in the long-term. The question addressed here is the participation of speakers and communities in determining

the content of the meta-documentation. This paper examines this question in relation to legacy documentation, Laves' 1931 field notes on Noongar, a language of the south-west of Australia, but the general issues are just as relevant to new projects. Community interests are expressed in an extended protocol document, which is tied to procedures for rights and access. The major, and inter-related, themes of this community protocol document are rights and interests, persuasion, validity, authority, recognition, the relationships between language and people, description vs record, language change, and language revitalization. A community protocol of this type is also an opportunity to explore the linguistic culture of the community, and contribute to knowledge of how endangered language communities understand and respond to their linguistic situations. It therefore offers potential benefits for scholarly research as well as for future community use.

**David Nathan** (SOAS, London) and **Meili Fang** (Ochanomizu): *Joining the Docs: Envisioning a Revitalisation-driven Practice for Documentary Linguistics*

This paper poses a hypothetical question: if the goals and methods of documentary linguistics were to be driven primarily by consideration of the needs of language revitalisation, what would the project design for such documentation look like? First, the scope of documentation activity would include researching what teachers, learners, schools, families and local organisations need. Second, documentation would engage with language support factors (such as raising prestige and motivation through usable multimedia documentations), and building in community participation in the design and creation of a range of materials. Third, there would be a greater emphasis on documentation by community members, who can bring appropriate knowledge and priorities to the task and enhance sustainability. Fourth, documentation needs a vigorous and transparent dissemination, opened up to collaborative addition by a wider range of language practitioners and speakers. Fifth, we need an evaluative framework, including pedagogical professionals, for guiding documentation funding and priorities. Finally, documentation researchers could turn their skills to documenting the processes of pedagogy and revitalisation so that others can learn from their experiences.

**Alexandra Lavrillier** (Max Planck, Leipzig): *Linguistic and Cultural Documentation, and Applied Anthropology in Pedagogy among Tungusic Peoples of Siberia: Analysis of two Projects' Methodologies*

This paper will describe and compare methodologies, documentation techniques and the pedagogical efficiency of two projects in which the author participates. Both projects concern Tungusic languages (Evenk and Even).

The first one is a project in applied anthropology; its purpose was to implement the wish of a nomadic Evenk group to have a nomadic school. The school was founded in 2006 and has worked ever since. Its aim is to preserve language by keeping children in the nomadic environment with their parents, who still speak the Evenk language. In addition, according to the pedagogical programme, the children create multimedia documentation products and have access to some ethnographic archives on their own culture.

The other project, started in 2009, is a documentation project on the Even Dialectal and Cultural Diversity led by linguists and an anthropologist from the MPI EVA (Leipzig) and

MPIP (Nijmegen). Its main aim is to collect materials for the DoBeS data base. A further task consists in producing multimedia products for the speech communities (video recordings in Even with subtitled translation, a digital dictionary of the reindeer herding terminology). This kind of data is intended to be used in the future by local teachers and workers of the Culture.

**Jeffrey Davis** (Tennessee): *Plains Indian Sign Language (PISL) Documentary Linguistic Fieldwork and Digital Archive*

This presentation focuses on Plains Indian Sign Language (PISL) and its current use among hearing and deaf indigenous populations. PISL (also called hand-talk) was once used as a *lingua franca* among American Indians of the Great Plains and neighboring cultural areas. Though now classified as an endangered language (due in part to its replacement by English and American Sign Language) PISL is still being learned and used among some Native groups in traditional storytelling, rituals, various types of discourse, and conversational narratives. Working closely with adept signers from these communities, we are documenting PISL for the purpose of linguistic analysis, language preservation, and revitalization. The project incorporates emergent technologies for transcription, translation, and annotation (ELAN, Max Planck Institute) to overcome the challenge that sign language researchers face to effectively make information on sign languages and Deaf culture accessible and of interest to hearing non-signing audiences. Linguistic findings—ranging from lexical and grammatical descriptions to discourse functions and patterns of acquisition—are being integrated into the project's website/online digital archive. The presentation will feature PISL film clips, discuss challenges that arise during documentary linguistic fieldwork among indigenous communities, and emphasize the need for interdisciplinary collaboration between linguists, other scholars, and community members.

**Notes:**



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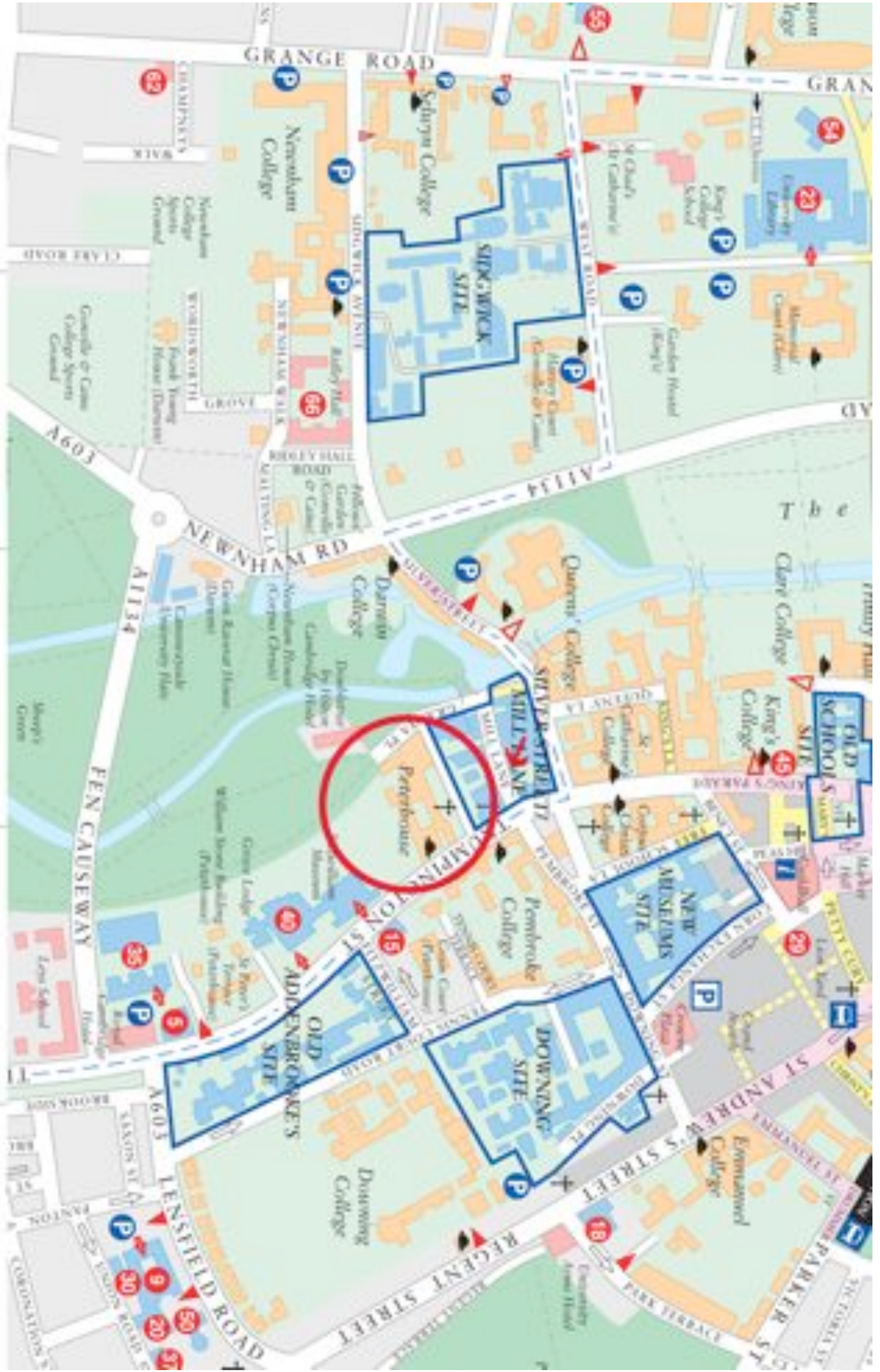
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