

Creating Orthographies for Endangered Languages

Creating an orthography is often seen as a key component of language revitalization. Encoding an endangered variety can enhance its status and prestige. In speech communities that are fragmented dialectally or geographically, a common writing system may help create a sense of unified identity or help keep a language alive by facilitating teaching and learning. Despite clear advantages, creating an orthography for an endangered language can also bring challenges, and this volume debates critical questions arising from these. Whose task should this be – that of the linguist or the speech community? Should an orthography be maximally distanced from that of the language of wider communication for ideological reasons, or should its main principles coincide for reasons of learnability? Which local variety should be selected as the basis of a common script? Is a multilectal script preferable to a standardized orthography? Can creating an orthography create problems for existing native speakers?

DR MARI C. JONES has published extensively on language death theory and dialectology, principally in relation to Welsh and to Insular and Mainland Norman. Major research monographs include *Language Obsolescence and Revitalization* (1998), *Jersey Norman French: A Linguistic Study of an Obsolescent Dialect* (2001), *The Guernsey Norman French Translations of Thomas Martin: A Linguistic Study of an Unpublished Archive* (2008), and *Variation and Change in Mainland and Insular Norman: A Study of Superstrate Influence* (2015). Her co-authored textbook, *Exploring Language Change* (2005), also engages with a number of aspects of language variation and change. Dr Jones has edited many volumes on language change and on endangered languages, including *Language Change: The Interplay of Internal, External and Extra-Linguistic Factors* (2002), *The French Language and Questions of Identity* (2007), *Sociolinguistique de la Langue Normande: Pluralité, Normes, Représentations* (2009), *Language and Social Structure in Urban France* (2013), *Keeping Languages Alive* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), *Endangered Languages and New Technologies* (Cambridge University Press, 2014) and *Policy and Planning for Endangered Languages* (Cambridge University Press, 2015).

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Philip Griffith Jones (1937–2015)

This volume is dedicated to the memory of Mari's beloved father, Philip Griffith Jones, who encouraged her, inspired her and gave her a sense of wonder. He taught her how precious a gift it is to speak an endangered language, and how important it is to ensure that these languages are kept alive.

Contents

<i>List of Contributors</i>	<i>page ix</i>
1 Creating Orthographies for Endangered Languages MARI C. JONES AND DAMIEN MOONEY	1
2 Who Owns Vernacular Literacy? Assessing the Sustainability of Written Vernaculars CHRISTOPHER MOSELEY	36
3 Hearing Local Voices, Creating Local Content: Participatory Approaches in Orthography Development for Non-Dominant Language Communities MANSUETO CASQUITE AND CATHERINE YOUNG	54
4 Orthographies ‘In the Making’: The Dynamic Construction of Community-Based Writing Systems among the Náayeri of North-Western Mexico MARGARITA VALDOVINOS	69
5 Community-Driven, Goal-Centred Orthography Development: A Tsakhur Case Study KATHLEEN D. SACKETT	88
6 Writing for Speaking: The N uu Orthography SHEENA SHAH AND MATTHIAS BRENZINGER	109
7 Reflections on the Kala Biṇatuwā, a Three-Year-Old Alphabet from Papua New Guinea CHRISTINE SCHREYER	126
8 When Letters Represent More Than Sounds: Ideology versus Practicality in the Development of a Standard Orthography for Ch’orti’ Mayan KERRY HULL	142
	vii

viii	Contents	
9	The Difficult Task of Finding a Standard Writing System for the Sioux Languages AVELINO CORRAL ESTEBAN	155
10	Orthography Development in Sardinia: The Case of <i>Limba Sarda Comuna</i> ROSANGELA LAI	176
11	Breton Orthographies: An Increasingly Awkward Fit STEVE HEWITT	190
12	Spelling Trouble: Ideologies and Practices in Giernesiei/ Dgernesiais/Guernesiais/Guernésiais/Djernezié ... JULIA SALLABANK AND YAN MARQUIS	235
13	Orthography Development on the Internet: Romani on YouTube D. VIKTOR LEGGIO AND YARON MATRAS	254
14	Orthography Creation for Postvernacular Languages: Case Studies of Rama and Francoprovençal Revitalization BÉNÉDICTE PIVOT AND MICHEL BERT	276
15	Changing Script in a Threatened Language: Reactions to Romanization at Bantia in the First Century BC KATHERINE MCDONALD AND NICHOLAS ZAIR	291
	<i>Bibliography</i>	305
	<i>Index</i>	331

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