Language Technology Overview

April 12, 2023 @SIL Cameroon

Language Technology Team

@ SIL Cameroon



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A copy of this presentation can be found at:

http://LangTechCameroon.info/mt





Introduction

Just after independence, language developers began developing Cameroonian mother tongues (MT) in order to make them viable and learnable. Before independence, little or no attention was paid to most MTs at the levels of; sociolinguistics, phonology, morphology, lexicography, grammar, and syntax, which could eventually result in language endangerment and loss.

Introduction

Language developers, notably the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), the National Association of Cameroonian Languages Committee (NACALCO), the Cameroon Bible Translation Association and Literacy (CABTAL), communities, and some state universities coupled with a favourable linguistic political atmosphere and this resulted in efforts of learning and teaching the MTs. In line with the attempted efforts, technological endeavours were implied.

Introduction

The implication of technology establishes the basis for the examination of how it was/could be used in multilingual learning within the present era coupled with some challenges and opportunities. This discussion will also encompass who the learner is, how he/she uses technology, what elements of technology are used, and the location of the user.



What can LangTech do for you?



Computers by Frank Herbert

What do such machines really do?

They increase the number of things we can do without thinking.

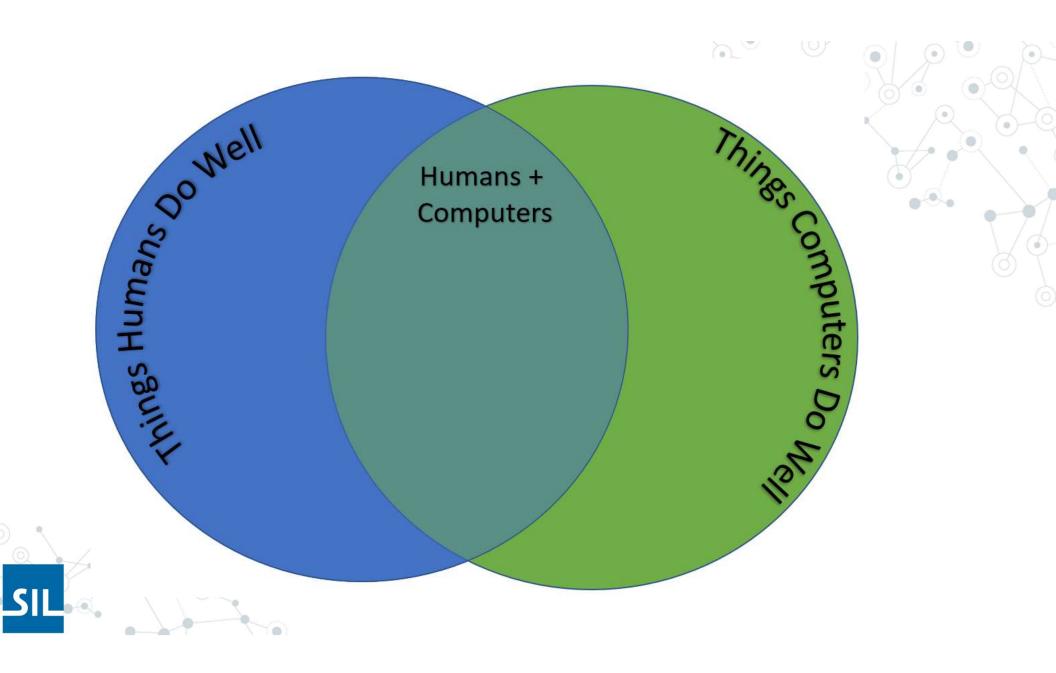
Things we do without thinking — there's the real danger.

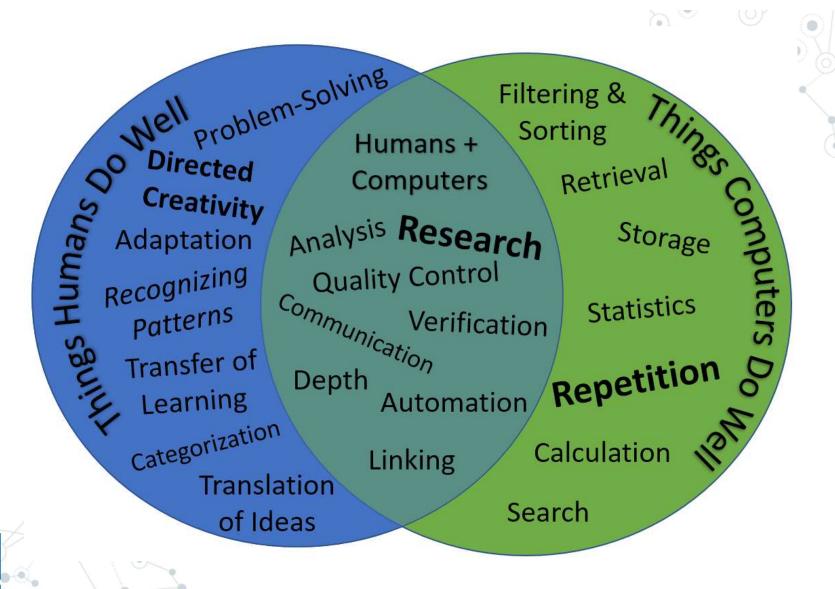
À quoi servent de telles machines, en réalité?

À accroître le nombre des choses que nous pouvons faire sans y penser.

Voilà le vrai danger... les choses que nous faisons sans y penser.











Challenges





Personnel Challenges of Using Technology in Learning MTs:

- There is an imbalance in digital divide (urban and rural area folk disparity)
- Limited qualified trained personnel (many teachers/learners are not computer literate)
- Time demanding (Presentation preparation at home requires time)



Infrastructure Challenges of Using Technology in Learning MTs:

- Financial barriers (e.g., purchase of equipment by havenots)
- Absence of power supply in typical rural settings
- Limited connectivity (internet connection access hampers distance learning and research)



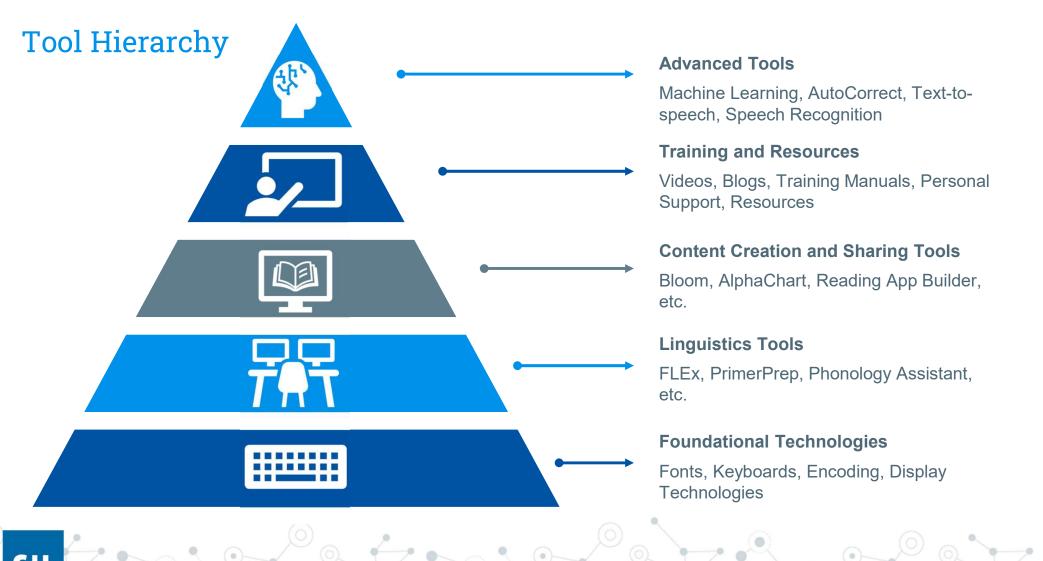
Language-Specific Tech Problems

- Some languages do not have established orthographies
- Mother Tongue fonts are limited in circulation
 - Few computers in public places have good MT fonts.
- Computers and phones do not currently assist with spelling in the mother tongue.
- Keyboards are not simplified for MTs
- Stress in combining characters to produce certain letters.



How can SIL Language Technology help?





LangTechCameroon.info



Welcome to LangTechCameroon.info

Posted on July 12, 2016 by Matthew

- If you want to quickly download the Cameroon Keyboard, click here!
- If you are more interested in appropriate fonts for Cameroonian languages, click here.
- Si vous désirez vite télécharger le Clavier camerounais, cliquez <u>ici</u>!
- Si vous vous intéressez plus aux polices pour les langues camerounaises, cliquez ici.

Search

External

- Cameroon Keyboard for Android
- Detailed Language Software Information
- Lingtran Language Technology Training Website (English)
- LingTranSoft Language Technology Community
- Outilingua Formation en Technologie Linguistique (Français)



https://langtechcameroon.info/



Foundational Technologies





Encoding Support

Font Encoding Support

Wod





Character Fallback

Just because a font has all of the characters, that doesn't mean in will display correctly.





Foundational Technologies: Fonts

- Charis SIL
 - https://software.sil.org/charis/

Charis SIL



Abdàáḡiɔ̀ʉ॑ Abdàáḡiɔ̀ʉ॑ Charis SIL est l'une des premières polices conçues pour les imprimantes laser. Il fournit un texte clair et concis. (Recommandé pour les livres imprimés, la littérature et des textes longs).



Charis SIL Literacy

Abdàágìðu

Abdàáġŧɔ̀ʉ́





https://software.sil.org/lcgfonts/download/

Foundational Technologies: Fonts

- Doulos SIL
 - https://software.sil.org/doulos/

Doulos SIL



Abdajajaju

Abdàágɨðɨ

Doulos SIL est une police Unicode sérif semblable à Times New Roman. **Doulos SIL** est recommandé pour les transcriptions phonétiques, comme les caractères sont clairs et sans ambiguïté.

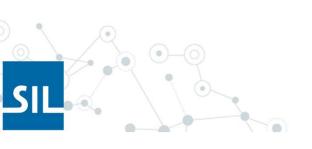


Doulos SIL Literacy (Alphabétisation)

Abdàágīðu

Abdàə́gɨɔ͡ʉ





https://software.sil.org/lcgfonts/download/

Foundational Technologies: Fonts

- Andika
 - https://software.sil.org/andika/

Andika



Abdàáḡiɔ̀ʉٰ *Abdàáḡiɔ̀ʉ*ٰ Andika est une police d'Unicode sans-sérif conçue spécialement pour l'utilisation dans l'alphabétisation et pour les besoins des lecteurs débutants. L'accent est mis sur des lettres claires qui ne seront pas facilement confondus avec d'autres. Andika est recommandé pour les primeurs, livres pour enfants et ressources pour les lecteurs débutants.



Foundational Technologies: Fonts

- PrimaryLines
 - <u>https://langtechcameroon.info/primarylines/</u>

Welcome to Cameroon!

εẅəœƴʉɨɔ øɗæ αçɓŋ

EWƏŒYUIDÒDÆABŊ



Foundational Technologies: Cameroon Keyboards

- AZERTY and QWERTY
 - MSKLC for Windows
 - <u>https://langtechcameroon.info/cam-keyboard-msk/</u>
 - Cameroon Keyboard for Android
 - https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=info.lan gtechcameroon.keyboard
 - Keyman for Windows, Mac, Linux, Android, iOS
 - https://keyman.com/keyboards/h/cameroon/



Cameroon QWERTY (Desktop)



https://help.keyman.com/keyboard/sil_cameroon_qwerty/



Cameroon AZERTY (Desktop)



https://help.keyman.com/keyboard/sil_cameroon_azerty/





Cameroon AZERTY and QWERTY Touch





https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=info.langtechcameroon.keyboard

Foundational Technologies: Minimum

- SIL maintains fonts and keyboards that cover all languages under the GALC
 - https://www.sil.org/resources/archives/32295
- There is an opportunity for simplified single-language keyboards and more decorative fonts.
- Word lists from languages can be added to Keyman keyboards to enable autocorrect.



IPA Keyboards

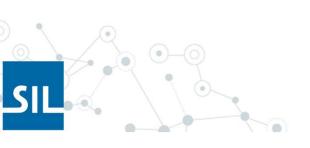
- Mature IPA Keyboards for QWERTY/QWERTZ
 - Keyman:
 - https://keyman.com/keyboards/sil_ipa
 - Microsoft:
 - https://scripts.sil.org/cms/scripts/page.php?site_id= nrsi&id=uniipakeyboard
- Neither version is ideal for AZERTY
 - Need help!



Communication Tools

- Social Media:
 - WhatsApp
 - Telegram
 - Facebook
 - Ayoba
 - Instagram
 - TikTok

- Google Meet
- Zoom
- Moodle

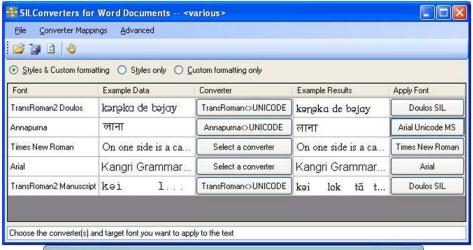


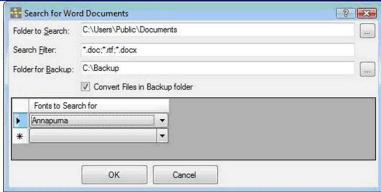
Taking it Online: Literacy Classes on WhatsApp?





SIL Converters







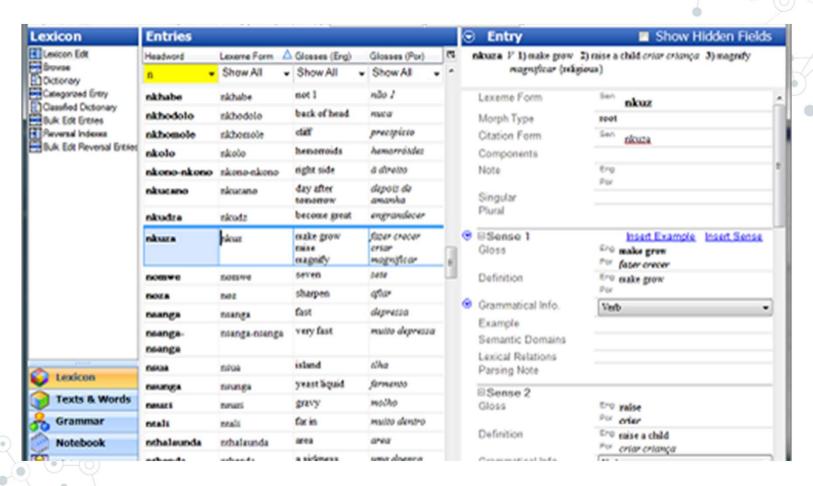


Linguistic Tools





Linguistic Tools: Fieldworks Language Explorer (FLEx)



Webonary



Akoose-English Dictionary

Akoose-English Dictionary

<u>a</u>	b	<u>C</u>	<u>d</u>	<u>e</u>	3	9	f	g	<u>h</u>	Ì	j	<u>k</u>	1	<u>m</u>	<u>n</u>
0	2	p	r	<u>s</u>	ţ	<u>u</u>	v	w	у.						

h

hâ [hâ] (Cntx.var. háā) conj. then, so. Háā Yésue áhóŋléné áwab e'só. Then Jesus was transformed in front of their eyes.

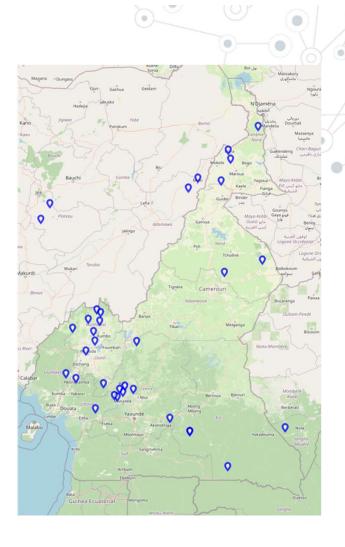
haa [hà:] n 1. illicit gin, whiskey. Haa adíi melâm mmēd. Haa is our own whiskey.

háā Cntx.var.of hâ.

haké [hàké] part. not. Haké bwěm é'syöön é'kíne epun ehóg. Not all clothes dry the same day. Syn. saké.

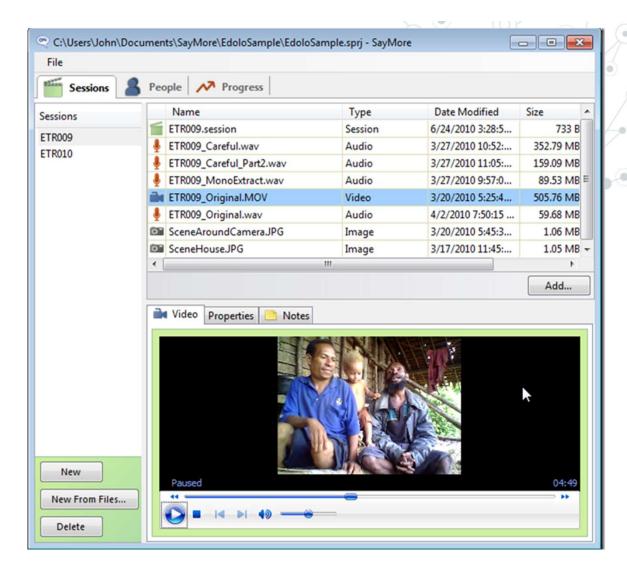
háwa [háwà] Pl. háwa. (From: English hour) n 9/10. o'clock, hour. Háwa ehéé déke? What time shall we go?

hébte [hébtè] (From: German Heft) n. exercise book.



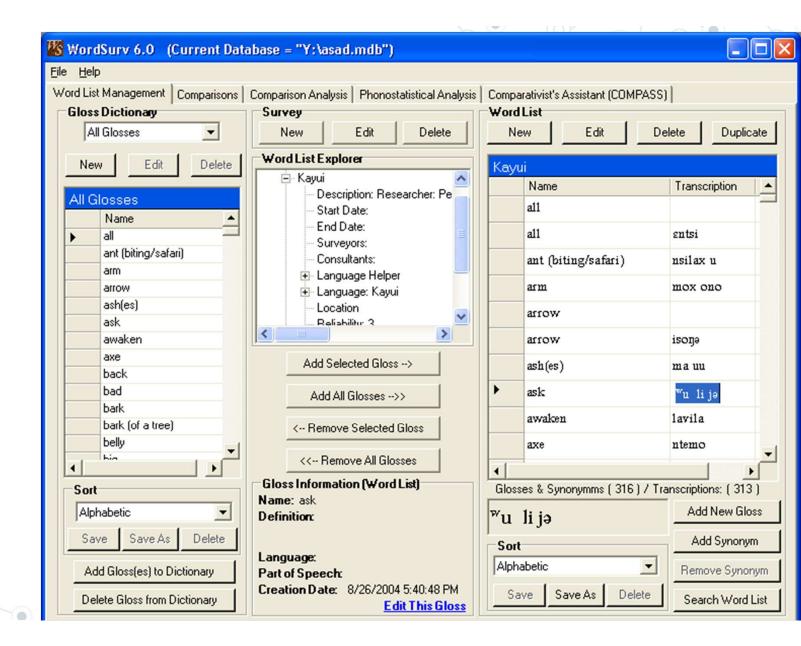
https://www.webonary.org/

SayMore





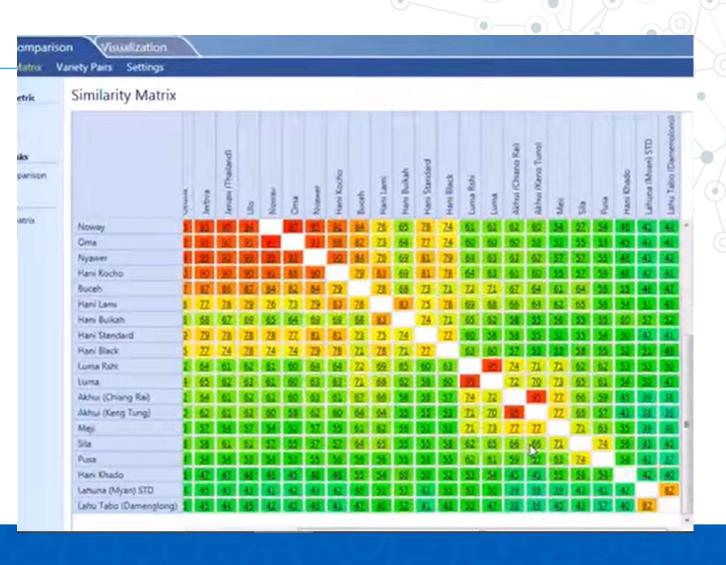
WordSurv





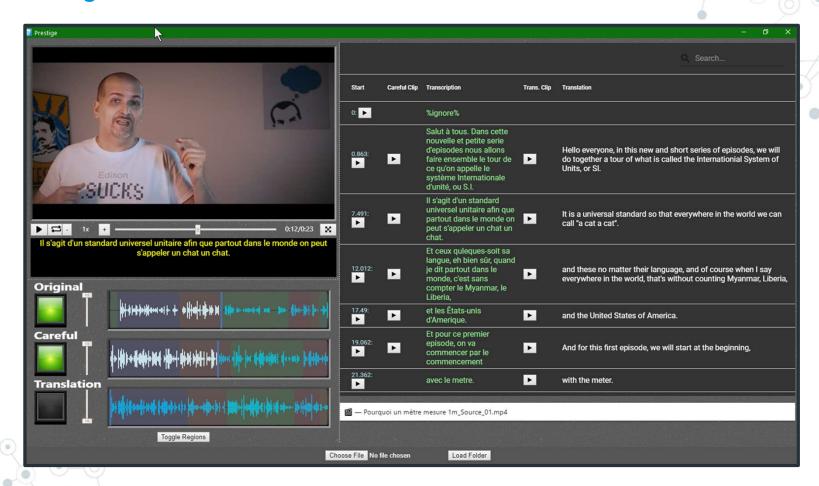
Cog

https://software.sil.org/cog/



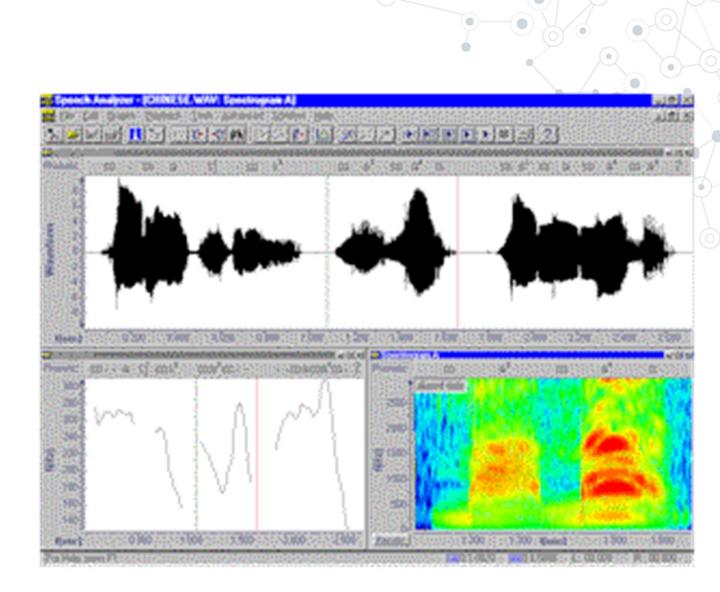


Prestige



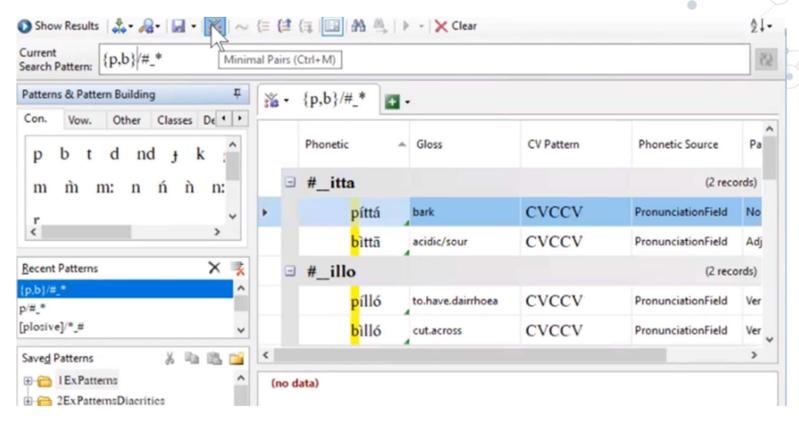


Speech Analyzer





Phonology Assistant



- https://software.sil.org/phonologyassistant/
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IW_nv2kzeeg

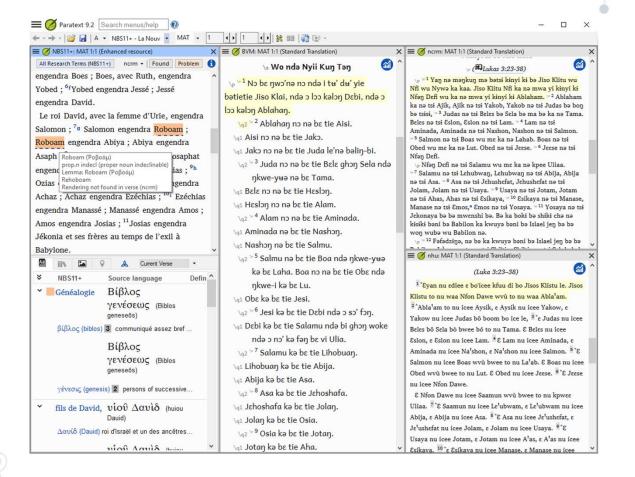


Content Creation Tools





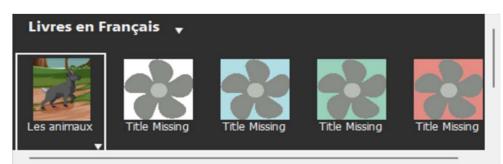
Paratext: Bible Translation









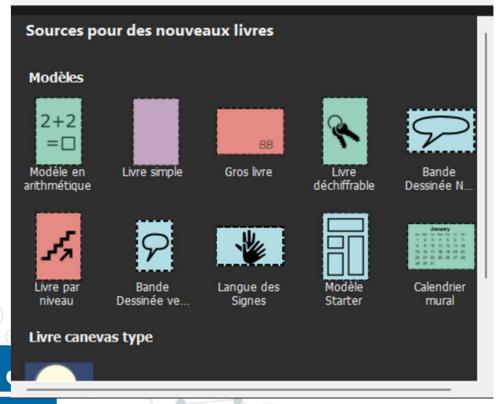






https://BloomLibrary.org







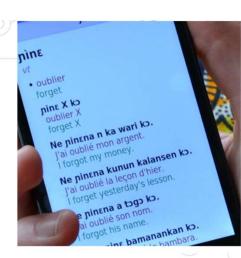
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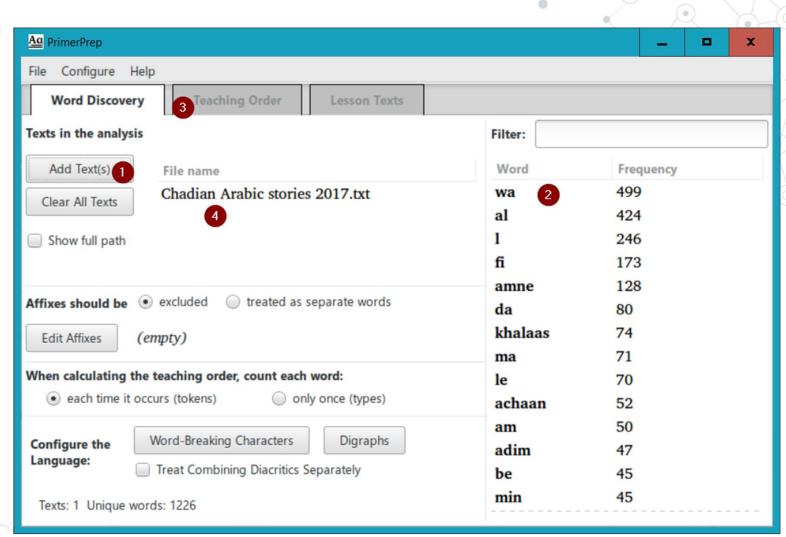


App Builders

- Scripture App Builder
 - https://software.sil.org/scriptureappbuilder/
- Dictionary App Builder
 - https://software.sil.org/dictionaryappbuilder/
- Reading App Builder
 - https://software.sil.org/readingappbuilder/
- Keyboard App Builder
 - https://software.sil.org/keyboardappbuilder/



PrimerPrep





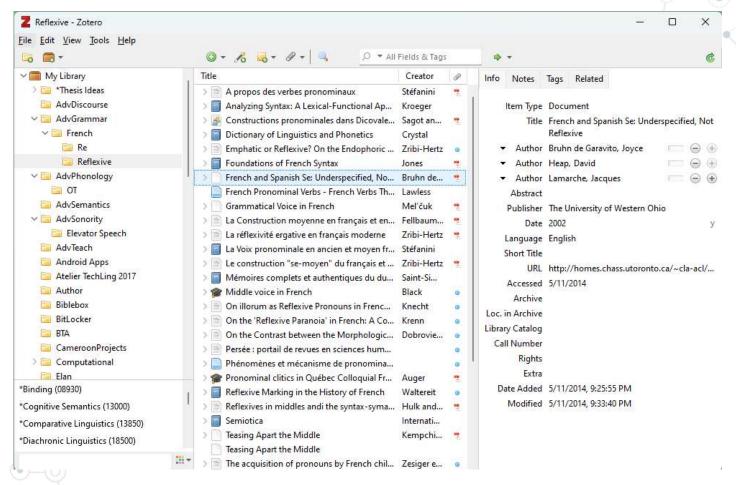
AlphaChart

Jəkwan ləlab ma Daba

ab 6 cd de ə f g gb gw h hw i j k kp kw l m mb mgb n nd nj ng ngw o prssltuv vb w y z zl Сс B6 Dd Dd Aa dahba bakalaf **G**aram cevek dəvər dawa beke Gg Gb gb e G Ff Gw gw Hh Hw hw falam gbəl gwazla hidi hwihwil ərsla gənaw



Zotero



And others

- Microsoft Office
- Adobe InDesign
- LibreOffice
- Scribus
- Gimp







Training and Support





Support Sites

- General Technology
 - https://community.software.sil.org/
- Scripture Software
 - https://community.scripture.software.sil.org/



Training Resources

- Each software website:
 - i.e. https://paratext.org/training-and-support-links/
- Language Technology (English)
 - https://lingtran.net/
- Technologie linguistique: (French)
 - https://outilingua.net/





Advanced Tools





Spelling Checking and Predictive Text



LibreOffice Logo Source: https://www.libreoffice.org/



https://vimeopro.com/lingtransoft/keydev2020/video/399132672



Text-to-Speech, Machine Translation, etc.

- eSpeak
 - <u>http://espeak.sourceforge.net/</u>
- Many others...

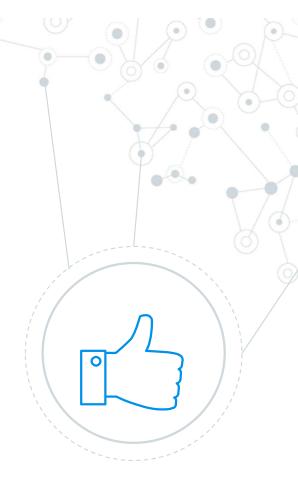




Where are we?

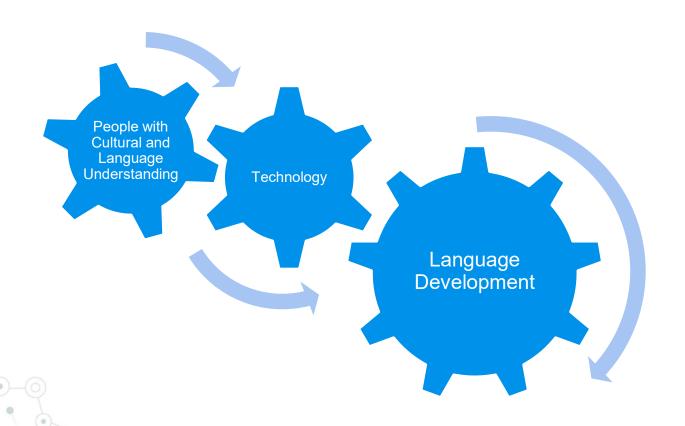
With the mature state of global language technology, developing or promoting a language is no longer a technical impossibility.

Challenges of personnel, communication, logistics, access, training, funding and resource development in the mother tongue are the next hurdles to overcome through working together.





Where are we?





Opportunities





Opportunities for using Technology in MT

- Collect wordlists and morphological information to create predictive text dictionaries for keyboards and spellcheck for desktops.
- Promote installation and use of the Cameroon Keyboard as high speed which results from practice.
- Language communities can create easier to use languagespecific keyboards (with SIL's assistance if needed).
- Promote use of Cameroon-complete fonts.



Opportunities for using Technology in MT

- Community members and researchers can create and share base materials using available tools:
 - Books, Primers, Dictionaries, Talking Stories, etc.
- Government, communities and elites could create philanthropic centres and equip them.
- Resource centres could spread to cities to grant access to distance learning.
- Solar panels can provide reliable power for rural folk and schools.

Opportunities for using Technology in MT

- SIL, CABTAL, NACALCO and Universities are ready to offer help if sought
- SIL renders training on language technology (hundreds of lang workers are trained in communities and universities)
- Improve on the use of time through practice and reuse of prepared materials.



Conclusion

It is normal to face challenges in using technology for MT learning as it applies in every real-life situation. When there are challenges, efforts are made through research to overcome them. As such, challenges are a motivating factor to seek to exploit existing opportunities.

Conclusion

- Above all, communities without orthographies as a starting point can seek needed help from the institutions referred to in this discussion. These partnerships can promote language use and development (of both mother tongue and foreign languages) at home and abroad through domestic and distance education.
- Even if SIL cannot boast of having answers for every question, research is continuing to find solutions for further questions and challenges.

Thanks!

Any questions?

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