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Editorial

This issue captures a zeitgeist in the relationship between language documentation and technology. Five articles deal with two related topics in very different ways. Three equipment reviews illustrate the amazing rate at which improved audio recorders are becoming available to linguists, and imply that the way in which linguists use these devices is relatively unproblematic.

On the other hand, two articles provoked by Nathan's article in the last issue argue that the documenter's video camera is a methodology rather than just a device. Regardless of whether we fully understand how the various forms of putative information in video recordings are to be represented, theorised, validated or utilised, more and more field linguists will be using them due to technological advances that make handling of video much easier, and due to programs such as DoBeS that actively promote the use of video for language documentation.

The debate about the role of video is positive because it can never be a bad thing to ask practitioners to explain what they are doing and why; whether the debate broadens into examining how language endangerment becomes a rationale for all manner of technological applications remains to be seen.

David Nathan, Paul Trilsbeek, Marcus Uneson

Suggestions and contributions welcomed at:
LAN@mpi.nl

Next deadline for copy:
Nov 1, 2007

Archiving

Video – A Linguist's View (A Reply to David Nathan)

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In my 2003 paper *Multilingual, multiperson, multimedia: Linking audio-visual to text material in language documentation* ([1], Section 4), I argued that using and archiving video is the best way of doing language documentation. Digital video recording is easy and cheap; it includes good audio; and there are a number of good annotation tools. More and more people are using video all the time. The paper noted these points in favour of video:

1. it identifies speakers in multiperson conversation;
2. it captures the environment and objects in it;
3. it renders paralinguistic expressions;
4. it records sign language;
5. it shows signs that alter propositional meaning;
6. it shows gesture elucidating force;
7. it is preferred by the community as a record;
8. it costs less and less to store as technology improves.

Nathan concedes that the usefulness of video for point 4 (sign language), along with music and dance, is not disputed. He claims that points 2 (display of relationship to environment and objects) and 3 (paralinguistics) can be of value, but of limited value because not everything of relevance can be 'in frame'. This is of course true, just as not every relevant sound is picked up by an audio recorder. Often though, the relevant objects are brought into frame, such as when people demonstrate a technique or paint a picture while they talk, or when a place is visited so that a person can comment on the visual field right there. The notion that using a video camera will 'tempt' fieldworkers not to record deeper social relationships seems to undervalue their capabilities and training.

Point 1 (identifying speakers) is not mentioned by Nathan but it is an extremely important practical factor. Video is almost essential for recording multi-person conversation. When listening to audio recordings of

such conversations, with their overlaps, disfluencies and background noise, it is often extremely hard (even for the original participants) to work out who was speaking, or who was being addressed. This problem largely evaporates with use of video.

The history of linguistic fieldwork is dominated by monologue – story narration and one-to-one structured interview and elicitation. This is perhaps why we imagine that distinguishing several voices is not a problem. Yet even in these genres a multiperson aspect applies – narration as co-narration; or elicitation from a group of people (often valuable when people offer different answers or argue!). These genres offer only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the ways of talking in a community. Conversation is the more common form, and it often varies considerably from the speech styles used in story telling and interview. Conversation provides the basic data for many researchers such as conversation analysts, linguistic anthropologists and child language acquisition researchers. Some of these have long embraced the use of video (e.g. see the CHILDES database [2]).

Nathan is quite right in saying that films and videos are made in all kinds of ways for different purposes. Perhaps the dominant one is 'telling a story' in a documentary or ethnographic film, which is quite different from the kind of record we need for documentation. I had the privilege of doing a short course in video with two great ethnographic film-makers, David and Judith McDougall, who introduced me to the debate between Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson 70 years ago, where Mead took the position that film could be used to 'record events', and Bateson that all filming was subjective, selective and partial. The truth is somewhere in between, and the key is for would-be language documenters to understand that a fuller record is possible, from which they can subjectively select and edit elements for various purposes. This is what we have been doing in the ACLA project ([3]); in collaboration with community members, fieldwork footage is edited together with framing material to make DVDs of project news to be circulated in the communities.

I cannot understand Nathan's comments about video equipment being intrusive. Basic cameras are now very small, quite similar in size to the smallest audio-recorders, and not threatening to people in most places in the world, who are usually familiar with similar technology. Bulky equipment which may be used by professionals (but which is becoming increasingly less bulky) is rarely necessary for language documentation fieldwork.

The other set of reasons advanced by Nathan for reconsidering use of video has to do with the economics of digital archives. I am no expert here, but in terms of storage there seem to be many people who believe that storage costs will continue to decrease as technologies improve. The spectre of wanting to or having to use high quality media standards in archives is not really applicable in the majority of cases, as MPEG2 or MPEG4 seem to be adequate for the average documentation video, and I cannot see how these formats conflict with preservation goals.

Nathan's suggestion about video training is of course welcome. Such training should be aimed at true documentation video, not making short films or documentaries except as by-products. It should also include basic editing to remove unusable footage, and training in providing metadata, which will reduce the burden on archive technical staff, whose labour may be the major cost threatening to blow out the budgets of video-rich archives.

I would conclude that Nathan's fears about problems with use of video for fieldwork are largely unfounded. It would be a great shame if we retreated from the benefits of current and evolving video technology. Rather than a vision of archives stuffed with "barely watchable" video, I prefer to entertain an optimistic view of a resource in the future which will have a rich record including visual information, to which researchers and makers of educational and community material can return again and again for new 'takes' on the data.

Links

[1]: http://hdl.handle.net/2123/1429

[2]: http://talkbank.org/data/

[3]: http://www.linguistics.unimelb.edu.au/research/projects/ACLA/

Video – A Technologist's View (A Reply to David Nathan)

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In LAN 9, David Nathan wrote a very interesting article about the use of video for language documentation purposes. This article is meant as a response coloured by a slightly technologically biased view and by the view the DoBeS programme chose after intensive discussions during its pilot phase in 2000 and 2001. While there are many thoughts in Nathan's article that I certainly share, there are also some arguments – in particular in his summarising paragraph – that I do not agree with.

Documentation methodology

Nathan argues that "video can only complement documentation's methodology". This is true, but why stress this? This is true for all primary sources that are added to enrich a documentation, if you take the

traditional linguists' view. According to this view a description of the structure of a language is the ultimate goal in describing a language. The basis for the underlying analysis work is the primary material. Decades ago, descriptions of a language were based on 'impressions' that a linguist got in the field while carefully listening to the produced speech. If you step away from the linguists' view and adopt the indigenous community view, the priorities will be completely different: video is seen as much more valuable than only audio and certainly much more valuable than just texts. We can assume that similar priorities will also hold for future generations.

What do audio recordings add, given that the researcher managed to make good recordings, which is as difficult as making good video recordings? They give everyone access to most information about communicative acts and even the surroundings that may be conveyed by sound signals. Having access to such material means that we don't have to rely on the impressions of the linguist anymore and that we can add further analysis. Dependent on the insights of the field at that moment we could go back to the signal and carry out new analyses in order to revise existing interpretations or to add new ones. This is a huge step forward, knowing that impressions are very much dependent on many factors.

What do video recordings add to the documentation? They can give us information about all non-verbal parts of communicative acts that are conveyed by the sequence of two-dimensional images and can give us a much better insight about the environment in which a language is spoken. Typical non-verbal information types that can be found are gestures, signs, facial expressions, emotional state, body posture, etc. Thus the information video may add a range of contributions, from phonetics (lip movements) to semantics (directional gestures) and even pragmatics (iconic gestures).

Admittedly, there are situations where video and perhaps even audio recordings seem to be superfluous: if you just want to collect a list of words occurring in certain situations, then pen and paper are probably sufficient. Nevertheless, video recordings generally convey very important and useful linguistic and non-linguistic information about communicative acts which are the basis of a language documentation. Some other aspects that indicate the potential of video recordings include:

- Languages are spoken in a cultural background, under certain environmental constraints and in specific situations. These factors that can be captured to a certain extent with the help of video and are important for future analysis.
- Languages vary in how gestures are used. In our high-tech world we learn to communicate fluently via the telephone without using non-verbal channels. In many cultures the situation may be completely different, e.g. gestures may have an important role in disambiguating the meaning of an utterance.
- Nathan's point about representational quality is not really convincing, although it has to be considered seriously when starting a project. We are currently very happy that more than a century ago people made sound recordings with the help of wax cylinder technology. The quality is very low compared to current techniques, but these recordings give us unique material about times that are now past.
- Children who may become interested in certain cultures and languages are much more attracted by media material showing real faces in real circumstances than just linguistic descriptions. The documentation we are creating now is to a large extent directed towards the wishes of future generations.

Costs of video

The benefits need to be compared against the costs. Let's first make some rough comparisons about costs for storage space and manpower:

- 1 hour audio recording (16 bit linear PCM at 48 kHz stereo) requires 0.72 GB (cost ~ 0.7 euros)
- 1 hour video recording (MPEG2, archive quality) requires 3 GB (cost ~ 3 euros)
- 1 hour video recording (MPEG4, web streaming quality) requires 0.6 GB (cost ~ 0.6 euros)
- 1 hour researcher, making recordings, etc. (cost ~ 25 euros)

Creating transcriptions, translations, morphosyntactic descriptions and a lexicon costs much more in comparison to all the abovementioned costs. Merely transcribing one hour can take more than 20 times the real recorded time, i.e. the costs for transcribing one hour of recording are more than 250 euros. The costs for storing all textual material such as annotations, lexica, etc. can be neglected.

The MPI archive currently holds about 25 TB (terabytes) of digitised data. Many computer centres currently have a storage capacity of more than 25 PB (petabytes – a factor of 1000 times as much), mainly used for storing the large amounts of data that the natural sciences generate. For such centres, the cost of storing endangered languages data is almost negligible. The costs of data storage also depend on the individual goals of an archive. The MPI currently has its own multi-layered storage system, to maintain two copies, to store both backend and presentation video formats, and to

give flexible access to all data. The costs of such a setup cannot be neglected. But, as has been shown for some regional archives that collaborate with MPI in a grid of archives, other schemes are possible. A local archive could just focus on storing the presentation formats (e.g. MPEG4 video) and leave the storage of the high-quality copies to a backend archive. A typical system with a capacity of 5 TB costs less than 10,000 euros, i.e. per GB the costs are about 2 euros and therefore negligible compared to the costs for the researchers. For reasons of simplicity I ignore the costs for local system and archive managers, since these are dependent on many factors. Normally, the largest part of the archiving cost is the cost of curation, but this may be independent of the file sizes of the objects (curating textual data is often most expensive).

Thus, to summarise: in the whole chain of linguistic documentation and archiving, the linguist who is creating the documentation is the most expensive part and other costs can almost be ignored. Contrary to Nathan's claims, the added value of video is certainly in proportion to the costs, if you have proper solutions for archiving and curation.

Filmmaker argument

Nathan says that, according to filmmakers, video should be used to tell a story and therefore requires careful planning for the shooting and the techniques being used. Most often, however, in language documentation, the video itself is used to illustrate a story that is already being told. While obviously some basic videographic skills will help a researcher to produce better looking material, it would be better to spend more time on making recordings before it is no longer possible rather than on planning every shooting very carefully.

Technical aspects

Nathan compares high quality video (DV) to more compressed formats such as MPEG2, and argues that it could be desirable to preserve the physical video tapes until we have enough storage capacity available to store the DV data. While in general we are very much in favor of storing the highest possible quality (preferably uncompressed formats), the difference between the quality of DV compressed video and MPEG2 compressed video is not huge, particularly if a separate linear PCM audio file is extracted from the DV source as well. MPEG2 (DVD quality) video is adequate for most studies and can capture a lot of the communication information such as gestures and facial expressions. Non-compressed formats as created by film industry are currently not relevant to our field, since the fieldworkers don't use the same expensive recording equipment.

A more important question is whether the standards that are being used can be easily converted to some other format once they become obsolete in the future. For both DV and MPEG2, the probability is fairly high given the wide adoption of both formats.

The effort required to capture video from current digital sources is not that high if one has established an efficient digitisation workflow and if the researchers provide video recordings according to certain technical recommendations. Somewhat more problematic is handling video in the field, where storage space and power supply is often limited.

Conclusion

To conclude, we would recommend the following regarding the use of video for language documentation:

- make as many video recordings as possible to document as much as we can before it is too late;
- leave the linguistic evaluation of a part of the material to later generations if necessary;
- find proper archiving schemes that fit with the goals and the budget;
- find proper curation schemes.

Technical Section

Review: Audio Recorders Zoom H4 and Korg MR-1

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Flash-based audio recorders are becoming more popular amongst language documenters. During the last year, flash-based media (SD, Compact Flash, etc.) have become nearly as inexpensive as minidiscs or DAT cassettes. This means that flash recorders are an option even in those circumstances where it is not possible to regularly transfer the recordings to a computer. Here we present reviews of two new devices on the market: the Zoom H4, and a new hard disk based audio recorder, the Korg MR-1.

Zoom H4

Zoom H4

Overview

The Japanese company Zoom is a relative newcomer to the audio recording market; they are known mainly for their guitar effects processors, which they have been producing for over 20 years. The Zoom H4 ([1]) is their first attempt at a solid-state field recorder. It comes with AC adapter, microphone windshield, USB cable, tripod adapter and Cubase multi-track audio recording software for the PC.

The H4 uses SD memory cards with a maximum capacity of 2 GB, which provide a recording time of almost 3 hours when recording stereo 48 kHz 16 bit wav files. The device is powered by 2 AA batteries. Using high-capacity 2700 mAh NiMH batteries, a recording time of almost 6 hours can be achieved. The SD card and batteries are located under a cover at the top of the device. The placement of the SD card slot is a bit awkward; it is rather difficult to remove the card.

In its design, the H4 bears an undeniable resemblance to the high-end Sony PCM-D1, with a similar X-Y stereo electret condenser microphone pair at the top of the device. Although the D1 is a more professional device costing about 6 times as much, the H4 has one 'pro' feature that the D1 does not: the H4 has two balanced, phantom powered XLR microphone inputs, which can be used to connect high-quality microphones. In addition, the H4 has two 1/4 inch (6.3 mm) balanced jack connectors. Note that if a stereo microphone is used, a splitter will be needed to connect it to the two mono inputs.

The H4 can record 16 or 24 bit audio at sampling rates from 41 to 96 kHz, however the usefulness of the higher bit depth and sample rates in such a compact device is questionable. It has two modes of operation: stereo mode and 4-track mode. It also comes with a wide range of onboard audio effects. The 4-track mode and audio effects are targeted towards the recording musician and are of little use for linguistic fieldwork, and we do not describe them here. An additional feature of the H4 is that it can be used as a USB audio interface (digitising device) for direct-to-disk recording to a computer.

Operation

The operation of the H4 takes some getting used to, mainly due to its confusing joystick button on the front. This button is used for the playback controls and for entering the menus (there is a menu for input and one for other settings), but strangely cannot be used to navigate within the menus. One needs to use the jog dial on the side of the device.

The four buttons on the front that are used to select the tracks in 4-track mode double as preset buttons in stereo mode for selecting recording format settings (96 kHz wav, 48 kHz wav, 44,1 kHz wav, and mp3). These are typically settings that one does not want to change accidentally, so we would have preferred to see them hidden as menu choices. On the other hand, to adjust the recording level, which is something that one would like to control by a button, one needs to go through the menu! The LCD display of the H4 is rather small and so is the text size, which might be a problem for some people.

One minor flaw is that the red light that blinks when the device is writing to or reading from the flash card adds some noise to the recorded signal. But this noise is practically inaudible and therefore this is not a huge problem.

Conclusion

The recording quality of the H4 is good, the built-in microphones are of good quality and so are the microphone preamplifiers. Especially when using the balanced XLR inputs with high-gain condenser microphones, excellent results can be achieved. All in all, the H4, at its price point of 300 euros, is a good audio recorder with some design flaws that one has to get used to.

At the time of writing, Zoom have announced another solid state audio recorder, the H2, priced at around 200 euros. The H2 has four microphone capsules, which enable a range of stereo and surround recording configurations. It is smaller than the H4 and has a stereo mini-jack rather than the H4's balanced XLR inputs. It seems that Zoom have addressed some of the flaws of the H4; the user interface in particular looks much more intuitive. The H2 should be available by August 2007.

Korg MR-1

Overview

The Korg MR-1 ([2]) is a pocket-sized audio recorder, containing a 20 GB hard disk drive. It comes with a small stereo clip-on microphone, AC power adapter, carrying pouch, USB cable, and software for Mac and PC. It costs about 650 euros.

The MR-1 can record 1 bit DSD (Direct Stream Digital) audio, a 'High Definition' audio format with a very high sample frequency of 2.8 MHz. This format is used in the production of Super Audio CDs (SACD). In addition, the MR-1 can also record in standard wav and mp3 formats. It is still a matter of debate whether 1 bit, high sample frequency audio is better than multi-bit audio with a lower sample frequency. In any case, the quality of audio recording is determined by the weakest link in the chain. The MR-1's microphone preamplifiers, for example, while of good quality, fall far short of being able to make use of the DSD format's dynamic range (120 dB) and frequency response (10 Hz – 100 kHz). Even more unmatched is the included stereo microphone which handles a maximum frequency of 12 kHz.

Regardless of whether the DSD format sounds better or is suitable for such a portable device, it is of little practical use for today's field linguist. While Korg call DSD a "future-proof" format, there is currently almost no software available to work with it, certainly not any within the budget of the average linguist. So before one can work with the recordings, they need to be converted to linear PCM wav (which can be done using the included AudioGate software package for Mac and PC).

Operation

The MR-1 is fairly easy to operate; it has five buttons on the front for basic recording and playback functions and there is a push-scroll wheel at the side for navigating through the menus. The LCD menu display is quite large and easily readable. As with the Zoom H4, the recording level must be set by going through the menu – buttons would have been better. There are two mono 3.5 mm jack microphone inputs, and the supplied stereo microphone has two mono jack plugs. A splitter cable would be required to connect most other stereo microphones.

The MR-1 has a large recording capacity due to its built-in 20 GB hard disk. When the MR-1 is connected to a computer, it appears as an external USB hard drive, so one can easily copy the recorded files across.

The only major drawback of the MR-1 is that it uses a built-in lithium battery that only provides 2 to 2.5 hours of recording. This makes it useful only in situations where one has regular access to mains power, or an external battery or solar power pack. It would have been much more convenient if the device was powered by standard rechargeable AA batteries. A minor nuisance is that the display does not indicate the battery level when charging, so there is no way to tell when the battery is full while the device is connected to an AC power supply.

Korg MR-1

The sound quality of the MR-1 is very good. The supplied stereo microphone also performs reasonably well. One thing to keep in mind is that the MR-1's internal hard disk drive is not completely silent. It isn't very loud, but since its disk activity is audible, one needs to keep the microphone at least one metre away from the device when recording.

Conclusion

Overall, the MR-1 is a high-quality portable audio recorder. Unfortunately, despite its large recording capacity, its continuous recording time in the field is limited by its built-in battery.

Links

[1]: http://www.samsontech.com/products/productpage.cfm?prodID=1901

[2]: http://korg.com/gear/info.asp?a_prod_no=MR1

Review: Audio Recorder iRiver H320

Bernard Howard
SOAS, London

Introduction

The iRiver H320 ([1], [2]) is a versatile and compact device at just 103 x 62 x 23 mm and weighing 183 g. It has a 20 GB hard drive (a 40 GB model called H340 is also available) and USB connectivity; and its media capabilities extend to a FM receiver, mp3 player/recorder, text viewer and data storage, and a picture viewer for jpeg and bmp images.

Listening mode: Radio, wav and mp3

As an audio player (wav/mp3) and in radio mode the iRiver H320 is similar to today's popular players such as the iPod, with 20 GB storage space for recorded or pre-recorded audio. In listening mode it can be connected to headphones or an amplifier via the line out socket to provide good playback sound quality.

Record mode

The iRiver H320 records only in mp3 format. While mp3 is not optimal for making original language documentation recordings, the H320 can still be useful for storing and playing back audio, or as a backup recorder. The internal microphone provides only mono recording, although stereo recording is optionally available when using input from the tuner, external mic and line in (although selecting mono mode in these cases will provide twice the length of recording).

iRiver H300 series

The sample rate is fixed at 44.1 kHz but the bit rate can be set from 40 to 320 kbps (limited to 40 to 128 kbps for the internal mic). The recording quality using the internal mic was quite reasonable when using 128 kbps but noticeably poorer at lower bit rates.

Using an external Sony ECM-MS957 microphone it was easy to make good stereo recordings at 44.1 kHz, 320 kbps. Other tests using the same mic (recording my son playing piano at 128 kbps and a blues band in a pub at 256 kbps) were also good.

In doing these tests, I discovered a mysterious quirk where the H320 suddenly stopped recording, despite the battery being half full and there being plenty of space on the hard drive. Eventually I found in the manual that the H320 is set to stop once a recording reaches 200 MB in size (and this setting is not user-changeable!).

Connectivity

The H320 has USB connectivity which allows data to be transferred to or from a computer. It is thus a useful device for backing up or transferring audio recorded on a solid state recorder (such as a Marantz PMD670 or 671; see the review in LAN 4). Other devices (such as digital cameras, memory sticks, mp3 players, etc.) may also be connected to the H320 using its host USB socket. This allows files to be loaded to and from these devices without the need for a computer, and seemed to work without complication.

Battery life and powering options

The iRiver H320 is powered by its internal battery or its external mains power supply. The internal battery is a lithium polymer battery which will power the H320 for about five hours of recording and longer for listening in radio or player mode.

Like some iPods, the iRiver 320's battery charge is gradually lost even if not used, and was empty after about four days. This means that it will typically need to be charged before use. Charge time from completely empty is about 3 hours. It can be charged from its mains charger, a car cigarette lighter socket (with suitable 12 to 5 volt adapter), or using a USB charger (although charging via the USB connection was quite slow).

An auxiliary battery pack that allows the H320 to use ordinary AA alkaline or re-chargeable batteries can be purchased optionally, and is strongly recommended to provide flexibility in field situations.

Controls and display

Learning the controls of the H320 was a bit frustrating and required an afternoon with the instruction manual. For example, to access the menu, the NAVI button must be pressed for about one second; pressing it momentarily gives a listing of the current tracks playing. Similarly, short and long presses are used to different functions on various buttons. Usefully, all controls may be locked by using the hold switch.

The colour display is clear, with enough resolution to display digital photos. It is adjustable for brightness, contrast and duration (from 1 second to continuous display).

Manufacturer's backup

I was not sure how helpful the manufacturer may be if a problem occurs. When I contacted iRiver's European website to ask whether the H320 is still in production and about the expected performance of the battery, they didn't answer my questions but instead suggested that I send the machine in for a check up and an estimate on the repairs required! (I didn't send it to them).

Conclusion

I found the iRiver H320 to be a useful and pleasing travelling companion for both recording, listening and data transfer, provided you are able to keep it charged. Although the H320 is now no longer manufactured, there are plenty of second hand ones available (including refurbished H320s with replacement internal batteries from the iRiver site).

Editor's note

The iRiver H100 ([3], [4]) series has much in common with the H320 (and both are discontinued). One of the differences, however, is that the H100 can record to wav format, which makes it more attractive to the linguistic fieldworker (although this unit should be tested – reviews are welcome!).

Links

[1]: http://www.iriver.com/product/p_detail.asp?pidx=42

[2]: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iriver_H300_series

[3]: http://www.iriver.com/product/p_detail.asp?pidx=43

[4]: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iriver_H100_series

LAN back issues available at:
http://www.mpi.nl/LAN

News in Brief

The CLARIN Research Infrastructure Initiative

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The European Commission recently decided to fund the CLARIN and DARIAH Research Infrastructure projects with the clear perspective for a long-term investment. CLARIN is going to tackle the lack of integration and interoperability in the field of Language Resources and Technology (LRT), i.e. it wants to take steps to overcome the enormous fragmentation in our field. It will make use of standards for language resources where possible and develop new ones where necessary. It will offer web services mechanisms for resources and tools with the goal that users can more easily access LRT according to their needs. Currently, we have support letters from 22 European countries to support the CLARIN work with substantial national funds. About 90 institutes from 31 European countries and a large number of non-European institutes have already expressed their great interest to participate.

DARIAH is another Research Infrastructure proposal from the humanities. It wants to bring together national centers that give active computational services to the humanities disciplines and promote standards and eScience methods.

Currently, final negotiations are done with the EC and the national governments to ensure the funding not only in the 3 years preparatory phase, but also for the coming decades and first work has been started to setup the working structure in terms of work packages and working groups. All interested persons that have expertise in the area of LRT are requested to participate. Some limited funds are available to support the engagement of experts that have not yet been registered.

The initiators know that it will be a difficult and time consuming path to realize some of our dreams with respect to an integrated and interoperable LRT landscape, but it is time to make first steps and it seems that we will get support to also do the next steps. For questions you can contact Peter Wittenburg.

Announcements

Anniversary Conference at SOAS

A conference on Language Documentation and Linguistic Theory is being held on 7–8 December 2007 at SOAS to mark the 75th anniversary of the Department of Linguistics at SOAS, and the 5th anniversay of the Hans Rausing Endangered Languages project. For further details, see

http://www.soas.ac.uk/departments/departmentinfo.cfm?navid=892

HRELP Language Documentation Funding Available

The Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project at SOAS grants up to 1.5 million euros each year for the documentation of endangered languages. Applications for the current round of grants have deadlines of October 8, 2007 and January 2, 2008 (depending on type of grant). For further details, write to eldp@soas.ac.uk or visit the HRELP website at

http://www.hrelp.org/grants/

Expressions of Interest: Software Development at SOAS

The Endangered Languages Archive at SOAS is planning to advertise soon for a software developer, either as a short-term contract or a longer term position. If you have an interest in working in this small, dynamic project in London, please contact David Nathan informally at djn@soas.ac.uk.

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