Iraqw Texts in Society

Applicants

Supervisor Name	Institute
Maarten Mous	LUCL
Lea Zuyderhoudt	LUCAS, LU Cultural Anthropology

Project description

The project aims at creating a digital collection of folk tales, songs and oral history of the Iraqw of Tanzania. There is basis of transcribed audio and video collection (about 100.000 Iraqw words) and the beginning of a local Iraqw Literature Project team who are have started video collection and transcription themselves which we want to support and encourage. Our aim is to annotate the data in order to make them accessible for academic research in oral history, linguistics, anthropology, literature; to do some of that research ourselves (Ba2 students in linguistics were able to write incipient articles on a variety of topics on the basis of what is available already). We want to develop a cooperative model of data gathering and sharing in the speech community as well as in the academic community. Technically this involves building on an earlier CLARIN project (Automatic Annotation of Multi-modal Language Resources) aimed at (semi-) automatic transcription of Iraqw speech, (semi-) automatic tagging and feeding into a digital dictionary with an easy interface. In addition, we need to find ways of presenting the material for Iraqw speakers on mobile phone and televisions.

Research Trainee Profile

The s.a.'s will annotate texts , search for methods to automatise the process, help to implement such methods. The research trainees should be able to work with different programmes such as ELAN, be inclined to digital methods and web page design and ready to learn the structure of Iraqw. At least one should be linguistically trained. The trainees have the option of accompanying MM on a research trip to the Iraqw and to do a *stage* locally if feasible. Any level, Ba, or (Res)Ma, is possible depending on the background and motivation of the individual student. The trainees will use the corpus for a concrete research project on a linguistic topic of the grammar of Iraqw (supervised by MM) or a cultural text structural topic (supervised by LZ) resulting in co-authored articles.

Collaboration

Maarten Mous is a linguist and specialist of Iraqw. Lea Zuyderhoudt is specialist of oral literature and very familiar with collaborative research with Amerindian societies such as the Blackfoot. The complementary backgrounds are vital to the success of the project, will improve MM's capacities in organising local cooperation for academic research; will enrich LZ's experience with another, socially very different society and with linguistic tools for texts.

Deliverables

VU Academy Assistants Proposal 2013-2014

1. New Iraqw issue(s) in the [Verba Africana](#) series.
2. Two articles on topics of Iraqw grammar and Iraqw storytelling
3. An extensive corpus of annotated Iraqw texts, usable for future research in a number of disciplines and for teaching
4. An important boost to academic-speech community cooperation
5. Develop an [ORA](#) research proposal (Cultural heritage and identity in a globalising post-colonial nation: The case of the Iraqw and Gorwaa of Tanzania). Preproposal is currently under evaluation.

Planning

January 2018	Research visit MM+ to the Iraqw
	Contact with Radboud U Phonetics about possibility of operationalising results of earlier AAML CLARIN project
February 2018	Inventory and technical description of all potential Iraqw material
	Establishing equivalences of transcription practices and of glossing practices
	Formulating desiderata from speech community
	Start with text analysis in ELAN
	Digitise materials where necessary and fruitful
March 2018	Proceed with text analysis
	Searching for options to automatise glossing (partly)
	Provide feedback to tests of automatic transcription (to be repeated)
April 2018	Proceed with text analysis
	Discuss and test topics for corpus research for articles
	Develop more automated tagging
	Proceed with testing automatic transcription tool
	Report results to speech community
May 2018	Proceed with earlier activities
	Test first attempts at taggers
	Decide on topics for articles
	Develop queries to corpus for articles
June 2018	Make inventory of friendly dictionary formats
	Formulate analysis of results of corpus search for articles
	Write protocol on how to expand the corpus
	Prepare for open publication of the corpus
July 2018	Write and submit articles
	Prepare community usable dictionary formats with content
	Test presentation of corpus with potential user groups
August 2018	Finalise publication of corpus
	Finish what needs to be finished

Student Application
Interested students should send an electronic letter to both applicants clarifying their motivation and their capacities: m.mous@hum.leidenuniv.nl & l.m.zuyderhoudt@hum.leidenuniv.nl