

Skians 2022

Peter Lanyon Lecture room 5, Penryn Campus, TR10 9FE

1 October 2022

Programme

10.00 **Arrival Peter Lanyon Lecture room 5, tea provided.**

10.20–10.30 **Welcome and presentation by Garry Tregidga: The Language and Society Unit and developments at the Institute of Cornish Studies**

10.30–12.30 **Education in Cornish and Teaching issues:**

Debbie Darling: The role of language ideologies in shaping Cornish language education

Jon Mills: Language Variation: Teaching and the Needs of the Learner

Charlie Fripp: Falling in love with a language: pedagogical lessons from learning Kernewek

Lucy Ellis: The first year of teaching Cornish at the University of Exeter

12.30–1.30 **Lunch: Seminar room**

1.30–2.30 **Perceptions within the language community/ learners:**

Piotr Szczepankiewicz: Authenticities of the Cornish – a mixed-methods approach

Nick Brennand: “How is Cornish doing?” A sociolinguistic study into the attitudes and perceptions of the Cornish language revitalisation among Cornish speakers.

2.30–2.45 **Break**

2.45–3.45 **Specific Language research:**

Nicholas Williams: Expressing the future in Cornish.

Ken George: *vs po na ges?* That is the question.

3.45–4.00 **Plenary session**

Abstracts

Deborah Darling: University of Helsinki; University of Exeter (from autumn 2022)

The role of language ideologies in shaping Cornish language education

Language ideologies are beliefs and attitudes about language structure and use that are shaped by cultural, economic, moral, political and social forces. These forces provide rationales for which, where, when, and how languages should be used. Language ideologies then are important for minority language contexts, such as Cornish in Cornwall. Survey research conducted by Ferdinand (2019) suggests a positive attitude to Cornish among residents of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly but, at the same time, greater presence and visibility of Cornish is not desired. This raises the question of why it is not desired.

In this presentation I will share my post-doctoral research proposal that seeks to address this question by analysing how language ideologies have shaped attitudes towards Cornish. I will provide examples from newspapers to show how media discourses, which will be one area of focus, may shape rationales for the value of Cornish. The second area of focus is educational contexts since they are the most important venues for influencing language beliefs and ideologies (Spolsky, 2017). As such, schools and colleges will be important settings for gaining insights into the attitudes and perceptions of the Cornish language and how this affects Cornish (language) education.

Jon Mills: University of Kent

Language Variation: Teaching and the Needs of the Learner

A pluricentric language is one that has more than one codification or standardised form. Many languages around the world are pluricentric, such as French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Chinese and English. Pluricentricity stems from the normal variation found in all natural languages. The only languages without variation are conlangs: constructed languages that are artificial, invented or fictional. Present Day Cornish language variation is in part due to differing codifications being taught; or as I call them, didactolects. The current situation entails problems firstly for the learner, who needs to be able to communicate with the Cornish language community as a whole, secondly for the teacher, who needs to be able to teach the variation within the Cornish language community, and thirdly for the Cornish language community itself, which currently lacks harmony. Many countries have found ways to cope with pluricentricity and language variation in their teaching. Teaching Cornish language variation is essential for three main reasons: learner needs, language community needs, and showing respect to others.

Charlie Fripp: Falmouth University

Falling in love with a language: pedagogical lessons from learning Kernewek

What is it that makes us learn?

“A major problem for contemporary education involves encouraging students to engage in learning” (Munro)

This paper will look at current ways that Cornish is learnt and taught and ask whether there are lessons that can be applied to teaching generally.

“Kernewek is a living language with several hundred fluent speakers and with a wider community of around 10,000” (Monk and Berry, 2020)

A Learning Community is an “intentionally developed community that exists to promote and maximize the individual and shared learning of its members.” (Lenning 2013) With limited resources, Cornish language learning has had to involve the creation of a community. This includes excellent and passionate teachers and volunteers, Yeth and Werin and a variety of activities, including the Pennseythen Gernewek and even camping trips. Students can access a variety of learning resources, from the formal examination structure of the Kesva an Taves Kernewek, to books and apps.

Using qualitative research by interviewing Cornish language learners, we will look at whether there are any lessons that can be applied to the teaching in other subject areas, with particular reference to Learning Communities.

Lucy Ellis: University of Exeter

The first year of teaching Cornish at the University of Exeter

This paper describes the initiation and delivery of the first year in history of undergraduate Cornish teaching at Exeter University. In September 2021 the first cohort of undergraduate students started a module called Cornish for Beginners. From the perspective of one of the two tutors, the paper tells the story of the vision and the objectives of the University in offering this module, recruitment strategies, the pedagogical approach to the teaching, the teaching and assessment methods and the outcome of the first year of teaching. In addition, the paper offers anonymised insights and observations on the following themes: initial motivation of the students to choose the module (why would anyone want to learn Cornish at University?), the demographic characteristics of students (who were they?); data gathered on student feedback (did they like it?) and feedback on the experience from the tutors (how was it for us?). The paper will finish by offering some thoughts on the impact of the presence of the module on campus, the impact on current and future research and the future planning and development of Cornish on campus/campuses.

Piotr Szczepankiewicz: Adam Mickiewicz University

Authenticities of the Cornish – a mixed-methods approach

Authenticity is a relative and contextual concept (Lacoste, Leimgruber & Bryer 2014: 1) which is ground in one's expectations regarding an object's truthfulness, genuineness, originality or faithfulness to the original. Language authenticity is no different as language may be deemed authentic (or inauthentic) depending on the judging individual or group. It is commonplace among speaker of majority and minoritized languages alike to juxtapose native speakers and learners, standard languages and dialects, language change and language purity, pragmatism and symbolism. The Cornish language is not an exception; yet, being a language which completely ceased to be a community language in the 18th and 19th century, and has been undergoing language revival since the beginning of the 20th, it faces its own unique challenges and understandings of authenticity. The aim of this paper is to elaborate upon these understandings by combining the results of the author's 2019/2020 survey directed at Cornish language speakers and semi-structured interviews in 2022. The survey (n=118) sought demographic information and answers to 52 Likert scale question on different aspects of authenticity. The interviews (2-3 hours each in most cases) were conducted with a variety of Cornish speakers and are analysed using thematic analysis.

Nick Brennan: Manchester Metropolitan University

“How is Cornish doing?” — A sociolinguistic study into the attitudes and perceptions of the Cornish language revitalisation among Cornish speakers.

Language revitalisation issues grew within the 20th century with much progress being made into the 21st century. The Cornish language revitalisation has a long and detailed history fraught with many problems in its journey to today. Within the history of Cornish revitalisation many opposing ideologies and attitudes created contention and problems with progress. Within the 21st century great progress has been made with the Standardised Written Form and government recognition. Academics who wrote on Cornish at the time were hopeful for the future of Cornish. This paper aims to explore the attitudes and perceptions of Cornish speakers to the current progress of Cornish revitalisation by asking questions on the Cornish revival and current issues in Cornwall today. This research used a mixed method approach adapting Carmen Llamas' Survey of Regional English (SuRE) framework. Following an adapted framework of the SuRE, the study used a questionnaire in which 9 participants took part, with follow up semi-structured interviews in which 6 participants took part.

This study is a work in progress.

Nicholas Williams

Expressing the future in Cornish

The sense of the present-future tense is not always apparent. Sometimes it is present in sense, e.g. *ef a lever* 'he says' and sometimes future: *ef a gyf yn araby yn mount tabor guelynnny* 'in Mount Tabor in Arabia he will find rods'. This ambiguity was avoided in the traditional language in several ways:

The 3rd singular present-future received *-vyth* to make an unambiguous future: *carvyth, welvyth, prenvvyth, gyllvyth, clowvyth*. This formation was not widespread.

The future was more and more often made periphrastically with *gwil* or *mynnes*: *me a wra dos, me a vyn dha weles*, etc. This use of *mynnes* had lost all trace of volition. Examples.

Note also that *me a drig* means 'I will dwell, I will remain'. To express the present 'I live' Cornish says *yth ov vy tregys*. Examples of both.

The verb *bos* has no present-future form. It has however, a habitual present, e.g. *me a vyth gylwys Ke* 'I am called Ke'. This tense develops future sense: *ty a vyth genen nefre* 'you will be with us for ever.' Notwithstanding *byth, beth* 'will be', in the later language *gwil* is sometimes used with *bos* to express the future: *me a ra bose*. Examples.

To distinguish present sense from future sense the verb increasingly appears with the long forms of *bos* and the quasi participle after *ow*: *Nyns esos ov attendya an laha del vya reys; in crist yma ov cresy; ny gesan ny ow ry, ow gava, ow cresy, ow cara, ow trystya mar perfect dell vea res thyn; Thera vi kouz, thera vi lâol* 'I say'. Further examples.

Ken George: Kesva an Taves Kernewek (Cornish Language Board)

vs po na ges? That is the question.

In Bewnans Ke, the word for 'is' corresponding to Breton *eus* / Welsh *oes* is spelled in two different ways: In negative statements meaning 'there is not', it is spelled *es*: in a direct statement, it usually appears as *nyn ges*, and in an indirect statement, as *na ges*. In almost all positive statements, it takes the form *vs*. These include 'is' following a noun (e.g. BK28.82: *otham vs a dvs fuer* 'a need is of wise men') and *vs* used relatively (e.g. BK11.10: *arluth vs in vhelder* 'Lord, who is on high'). These different spellings suggest different pronunciations, perhaps *vs* ['oe:z] and *nag es* ['nages].

Similar distinctions are found, though not so clear-cut, in the Ordinalia and PA; these texts tend to have *vs* for positive phrases and *us* for negative ones. TH has *vs* for positive phrases and both *es* and *us* for negative ones. BM makes no distinction, using *us* for both; neither does CW, which uses *es* for both.

All of this is examined and interpreted. Its significance for the revived language is considered.