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Authenticity of Cornish as seen in forum posts – 2005-2013.

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Abstract

One of the most demanding aspects of the Cornish language revival has been the establishment of a standard orthography. The process of corpus planning for Cornish began with Henry Jenner in 1901 and was further developed by Robert Morton Nance in 1929. Facing academic criticism the community felt that a new orthographic convention was needed – this led to the creation of Modern/Late Cornish (Richard Gendall, 1972; Rod Lyon in 1980s), Kernewek Kemmyn (Ken George, 1986), and Unified Cornish Revised (Nicholas Williams, 1996). The governmentally commissioned and supported Standard Written Form was created in 2008 and reviewed in 2013 based upon input from existing Cornish varieties as well as two compromise varieties – Kernowek Standard (UdnFormScrefys, 2007) and Kernewek Dasunys (Benjamin Bruch and Albert Bock, 2007).

This paper aims to address the notions of authenticity regarding three varieties of Cornish: Kernewek Kemmyn, Kernwek Standard and Standard Written Form. Based upon forum posts from the www.cornwall24.co.uk message board written between 2005 and 2013 the paper, rooted in Coupland's authenticity framework (2003, 2010), presents the incompatible nature of these three varieties and how even a long-desired and governmentally supported orthography can still detract its target language user base. Qualitative and quantitative discourse analyses of posts written by various members of the Cornish language community elicit the points of contention regarding the historicity, consensus and systemic coherence aspects of language authenticity. It also discusses the need for more sociolinguistic research into the Cornish language community of 2018 and the distribution of language users and their use of language varieties.

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- Coupland, Nicholas. 2010. "The authentic speaker and the speech community", in: Carmen Llamas and Dominic Watt (eds.), *Language and Identities*. Edinburgh University Press