

Editor's Note

In its quest to keep readers updated on issues at the Centre for Language Studies, CLS News is back with this third edition in the year 2009.

As usual, so many things have taken place at CLS over the past three months such as translations, Chichewa language course and of course the ongoing MALEX Project. Special mention, however, should be made of the Citumbuka and Ciyawo grammatical terms which CLS has now finished refining after working on them for almost two years. What remains now is for the grammatical terms to be published so that everyone should have access to them. It should also be noted that a few years ago, CLS developed orthographies of these two languages which many people are now using. This is a good development for the two languages because this has come at a time when the Malawi Government, through the Ministry of Education, is considering implementing the mother tongue instruction policy in lower primary school classes. CLS Editorial Board would therefore like to congratulate both the Citumbuka and Ciyawo Sections at CLS together with their technical committees on the job well done.

The fourth and final of edition of CLS Newsletter for 2009 will be out in the month of October. We wish all our readers a happy time.

Mario S Thodi
Editor

Arnold F Mboga
Assistant Editor

CLS-WHAT IT OFFERS

The Centre for Language Studies was established on request from Government on 1st April, 1996 to take over some of the responsibilities and facilities of the dissolved Chichewa Board. The Centre's main responsibility is to promote and develop Malawian languages. To do this, the Centre conducts research/consultancy in Malawian languages such as Chichewa, Citumbuka, Ciyao, Cisena, Citonga,

Cilomwe etc. The Centre also recognizes the educational, social, economic and political importance of non-African languages like English, French, German, Portuguese, Spanish and others. It therefore, carries out research and consultancy in these areas as well.

Among the many services the Centre offers are:

- Translation of materials from one language into another.
- Interpretation of speeches
- Editing of materials in various languages.
- Conducting short courses in both Malawian and non- Malawian languages e.g. Intensive Chichewa courses for foreigners.
- Collaborating with foreign research centres.

The Centre has professionally trained experienced and dedicated members of staff. For more information, please write to:

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CITUMBUKA AND CIYAWO GRAMMATICAL TERMS REFINED

CLS has been developing Citumbuka and Ciyawo grammatical terms over the past two years. Between 29th and 30th June 2009, CLS, with funding from NUFU, organized a two day meeting at Annie's Lodge, Zomba,

whose aim was to make a final review of the grammatical terms. Apart from CLS language experts, participants at the meeting included teachers, academicians, members from language associations and native/competent speakers of either Citumbuka or Ciyawo. It is expected that the refined terms will be published in due course.

EVALUATION OF MALEX PROJECT

A three person consultation team engaged by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) led by Shibru Tedla of Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, visited CLS to evaluate the MALEX Project. The evaluation process included the demonstration of the electronic corpus and dictionaries of Chichewa, Ciyawo and Citumbuka, interviews with the MALEX Project team and private discussion with the two PhD candidates Jean Chavula and Alick Bwanali.

CHICHEWA LANGUAGE COURSE

From 22nd June to 31st July 2009, CLS offered a six week intensive Chichewa language course to Mr. Jason Price, an anthropology PhD student from the University of California, Berkeley, in the US. Mr. Price will return to the US in August but is expected back in Malawi sometime next year to conduct research on mental related illnesses in Malawi. CLS offered a similar course to another anthropology PhD student from the University of Cambridge in the UK, Ms. Jessica Johnson, between January and March 2009. It is pleasing to note that

Ms. Johnson is now speaking Chichewa quite fluently and has taken up the challenge to integrate with the rural community to conduct her research. She is currently staying in Onga Village, Sub TA Onga in Chiradzulu district where she is researching on human rights and gender violence.

EDITING AND PUBLISHING WORKSHOP

The Book Publishers and Association of Malawi (BPAM) organized a three day workshop for editors and publishers, which was aimed at improving skills in editing and publishing among staff who work in various publishing houses in Malawi. At this workshop, Professor Pascal Kishindo, Director of the Centre for Language Studies, in his capacity as a text book author, presented a paper entitled *A Practical Guide for Text book authors*. CLS Newsletter editor, Mario Thodi, also attended the workshop. The workshop was held at Shire Lodge, Liwonde from 15th to 17th May 2009.

TRANSLATION OF THE SADC PROTOCOL ON GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

The NGO Gender Coordination Network organized a one day workshop to sensitize stakeholders on the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. The meeting took place at Sunbird Mount Soche on 19th June 2009. At the meeting, the Centre for Language Studies (CLS), as a language authority in Malawi, was entrusted with the task of translating into Chichewa, *The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development* document. It was also indicated that once the

Chichewa version is translated and published, CLS will further be requested to translate the same document into Citumbuka. CLS was represented at the meeting by the Chichewa Language Specialist, Mario Thodi. CLS has completed translation of the document into Chichewa.

ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR, CIYAWO SPECIALIST VISIT CASAS

The Acting Deputy Director Ms. Jean Chavula and the Ciyawo Language Specialist, Mr. A.N.U Mjaya, who is coordinating a CASAS adult literacy support initiative in Malawi, were invited to attend a CASAS Joint Donor meeting at CASAS head office in Cape Town, South Africa. The meeting took place on 27th July 2009 and it was officially opened by the Minister of Education from Sudan, His Excellency Dr Peter Adwok Nyaba. Delegates to the meeting came from Sudan, Benin, Uganda, Kenya, Mozambique, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Namibia. Reports on various CASAS activities in these countries including Madagascar, Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, South Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo, were presented and discussed. At the end of the discussions resolutions were made. The reports principally highlighted progress on the following:

- Harmonization of the orthographies of similar languages.
- Language policy in general and language in education policy in particular
- Adult literacy support

initiatives

- Production of primers, readers and monographs
- Capacity building in research for endangered languages

Representatives of donors, namely OSISA and NORAD including a delegation from the Taipei embassy in South Africa also attended the meeting.

LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION POLICY BUDGET MEETING

The Centre for Language Studies (CLS), which is the secretariat of the Language in Education Policy Taskforce, organized the Language policy in education budget meeting from 26th April to 30th April 2009 at Hippo View Lodge, Liwonde, with support from GTZ-BASIC Education. Participants to the meeting included representatives from the Taskforce, which is chaired by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST), Directorate of Basic Education (MoEST), representatives from the MoEST Finance and Administrative Department, Malawi Institute of Education (MIE), Malawi National Examination Board (MANEB), GTZ- Basic Education, Domasi College of Education, Blantyre Teachers Training College, Lilongwe Teachers Training College and Chancellor College among others.

The budget for the policy was drawn based on the following activities:

- Identification of key strategy areas of the policy
- Defining main goals of each area

- Defining strategies and objectives for each goal
- An outline of interventions needed to achieve the objectives
- Providing indicators for each objective

Timeframes for the activities were drawn and each activity was assigned a responsible office.

The proposed language in education policy aims at allowing pupils in the lower primary school classes i.e. standards 1 to 4, to learn using their most familiar languages as media of instruction.