Editor’s Note

Welcome to the second edition of CLS News for the year 2010. It’s already mid-year and as a Centre, it’s time to look back and reflect on our achievements over the past six months or so and also strategize on our plan of action for the last half of the year.

Apart from our usual chores at the Centre such as translation services, we were privileged to have a MALEX workshop which was conducted by our Northern partners in the MALEX Project. The workshop was aimed at equipping staff with basic skills in lexicography. CLS would like to commend Dr. Daniel Ridings, the workshop facilitator, for a well organized and fruitful workshop. Time and again, it has been said that projects such MALEX should focus on capacity building and transfer of skills for the sustainability of such projects. This workshop basically achieved this objective.

The next edition of CLS Newsletter will be issued between July and September 2010. Meanwhile, CLS Editorial Board would like to wish all the readers a wonderful reading time.

Mario S. Thodi Arnold F. Mboga
Assistant Editor

CLS - WHAT IT OFFERS

The Centre for Language Studies was established on instruction 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, Ciyawo, Cisena, Citonga, Clomwe etc. The Centre also recognises 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:

The Director,
Centre for Language Studies,

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Consultants from the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) visited CLS on 22nd April 2010 to evaluate the effectiveness of Language rights fellowship in connection with projects and conferences that CLS has conducted over the past few years with funding from OSISA. The team consisted of Professor Alfred Mtenje from the University of Malawi and Professor Neville Alexander from the University of Cape Town. Issues that were discussed centred on the Malawi Language Mapping Survey, Assessment of the effectiveness of the HIV and AIDS messages survey and the Conference on Training of Teachers of African Languages for primary schools in the SADC region. Some recommendations were made during the meeting. For instance, it was observed that:

- There is need for OSISA to provide funds sometimes for smaller publications like grammars, orthographies and word lists apart from funding big projects.
- OSISA should also consider capacity building for members of staff in the organizations that it works with particularly in language related ICT.

**MALEX WORKSHOP**

Dr. Daniel Ridings of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) conducted a MALEX workshop at the Centre for Language Studies from 18th to 29th April 2010. Participants to the workshop were language experts from CLS and Chancellor College. From CLS, the following members attended the workshop: Mr. Alick Bwanali, Mr. Arnold Mboga, Mr. Matthews Msokera, Mr. Francis Botha Njaya, Mr. Ahmmardouh Mjaya and Mr. Mario Thodi. From Chancellor College, the following members attended: Mrs. Edith Shame Kalilombe, Ms. Mervis Kamanga and Mr. Winfred Mkochi. The
major themes of the workshop were: computer literacy, corpus and corpus linguistics, corpora and terminology. It is expected that Dr. Ridings will come again in November 2010 to continue with the training. Members appreciated the training, which provided some basic skills in lexicography.

**TRANSLATIONS**

Over the past few months, CLS has been engaged, as usual, with translations from various organizations from both the private and public sector. The most recent, however, were documents for the Anti Corruption Bureau and the Malawi Law Commission. The following documents from the Anti Corruption Bureau have been translated into Chichewa: *Great Lakes Fraud and Corruption Prevention Policy* and the *Corruption and Fraud Prevention Policy for Central Region Water Board*. From the Malawi Law Commission, the following documents have been translated into Chichewa and Citumbuka: *Booklet on the Review of Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Laws, Prevention of Domestic Violence Act (PDVA), Review of the Education Act, Booklet on the Development of the Gender Equality Law* and *The Development of Child Rights*.

**MOTHER TONGUE DAY CELEBRATED**

World Mother Tongue Day which is commemorated on 21st February each year was this year commemorated in Malawi for the first time on Saturday May 15, 2010 at Mzuzu Upper Stadium in Mzuzu City. The event was organized by the Mzimba Heritage Association and sponsored by the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA). The commemoration attracted a cross-section of people including traditional leaders, religious leaders, academics, civil servants, teachers, students and ordinary folk. Activities for the day included traditional dances such as Ingoma, Vimbuza, Beni and Mganda.

Highlights of the day, however, were reading of poems, stories, essays and letters in a variety of languages including IciNdali, Cisukwa, Citumbuka, Cimambwe, Cilambya, Isingoni, Kyangonde, Citonga, Cisenga, Elomwe, Ciyawo, Cisena, Chichewa and signing in Malawi sign Language.

Three papers were presented at the gathering. Professor Lazarus Miti, the OSISA Language Rights Fellow, spoke about the role of OSISA in promoting indigenous local languages in the Southern Africa region. Ms Juliana Mwase, the president of the Malawi Association of the Deaf, shared...
with the audience the benefits of supporting the Malawi Sign Language Project. Professor Pascal Kishindo, the Director of Centre for Language Studies, presented the keynote address entitled *Valorising Neglected Languages for Development*. The presentation charted the levels of development of each Malawian language, and reminded the audience that a lot still needs to be done for the languages in order for them to be used in official domains. The commemoration was graced by the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Culture and Wildlife, Honourable Shadreck Jonas.

**STAFF ISSUES**

Mr. Hilton Madona, Senior Executive Officer at CLS is on transfer to the central registry office at Chancellor College. He is expected to report at Chancellor College on 1st June 2010. Mr. Madona, who has been with CLS from 2001, will be missed by CLS staff. He will be replaced by Mr. Zgambo from the Centre for Educational Training and Research (CERT). CLS Management and Staff wish Mr. Madona all the best as he takes up new challenges at the college.