Thinking outside the (archival) Box: Innovative uses of Jules Henry’s Field Notes

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Thinking outside the (archival) box: Innovative uses of Jules Henry’s Field Notes

By actively seeking and embracing collaborative projects, archivists and linguists can create dynamic opportunities for teaching and learning in both academia and indigenous communities.

Project Examples

**Unicamp State University, São Paulo, Brazil**
- 1,600+ pages Xokleng/Laklãnõ field notes, correspondence, and photos scanned in St. Louis
- Digital files transferred by dropbox to linguists graduate student Odair Vendovato in Brazil

Outcomes:
- Vendovato identifies 326 myths and stories among 990 scanned field notes
- Creates indexes in Portuguese and English + increase usability of information

**Washington University in St. Louis**
*Indigenous Peoples and Movements in Latin America*
- Rectenwald and Vendovato, via Skype from Brazil, discuss scanning project with class (images right)
- **Professor Bret Gustafson** encourages undergraduates to volunteer at archive for independent research projects

Outcomes:
- Students connect abstract academic ideas with real-life
  - Discuss how indigenous people are using archive documents and linguistics to support human rights
- Undergraduates exposed to 21st century field work skills
  - Learn digital standards needed for preservation
  - Create and understand importance of metadata

Ways to cultivate partnerships
- Maintain awareness and respect for the community of people from which information originated
- Leverage digital technology whenever possible
- Seek partners across academic disciplines
- Remain open to new concepts and ideas

Future Projects
- Vendovato at Unicamp University
  - produce Portuguese versions of 6 unpublished myths adding IPA notation to original phonetics
- Xokleng / Laklãnõ Schools
  - use written myths in language instruction and community blog projects (delayed due to massive flooding of village in 2014)
- University Archive
  - Place materials online for greater access
  - Encourage undergraduate student involvement
- Locate partners in Argentina to expand projects with Pilaga community

References

About Jules Henry
- Studies anthropology under Franz Boas, Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, and Hans Uldall at *Columbia University*
- Lives with the Xokleng Laklãnõ, Santa Catarina, Brazil (1932)
- Writes dissertation on grammar (1934); published as Jungle People (1941)
- With wife, Zunia Henry, lives with the Pilaga, Gran Chaco, Argentina (1936); co-author book *Doll Play* (1944)
- Professor at *Washington University in St. Louis* teaching social anthropology, linguistics, and sociology (1947-69)
- Zunia donates field notes and personal papers to WUSTL University Archives (1988)

Examples of materials

Background
Ethnographic and linguistic notes and photographs were gathered by Jules Henry in the 1930s while he lived with two indigenous communities:

- Xokleng / Laklãnõ (southern Brazil) *
  - *at the time called Kaingang Indians*
- Pilaga (Argentina)
  - Both languages classified as endangered in 2014 [1]
  - Archived documents contain valuable information for linguistic revitalization if reconnected to source communities [2]

Challenges
- 6+ linear feet of paper documents located in St. Louis, Missouri, USA [3]
- Speakers of Xokleng and Pilaga located in South America
- Most documents handwritten, limiting OCR
- Pages lack identifiable order or key to notations
- Only general information on photographs (i.e. “Kaingang”)

Examples of materials

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References

http://libguides.wustl.edu/jules-henry
How can indigenous people in South America benefit from the wealth of information locked into these pages?

Vendovato’s analysis of the scanned documents reveals **326 indigenous language stories**, including different versions of same myth with variations of characters, scenes, or dialogues. Archival documents contain valuable information for language revitalization efforts. In order to make these materials usable to all stakeholders, archivists and linguists should actively seek out and embrace collaborative projects.

**Archival documents contain valuable information for language revitalization efforts. In order to make these materials usable to all stakeholders, archivists and linguists should actively seek out and embrace collaborative projects.**

**Outcomes**
- Linguistic Scholarship
- Village schools
- Laklano web portal
- Photo identification
- Myths classified / organized

Were cataloged 326 stories, many of which are different versions of same myth with variations of characters or scenes, dialogues or additional elements not narrated in a version but in other versions with more or less detail. A fact and even complementary versions of a narrative marked by Jules Henry in some others. We found 7 narratives with the version in the indigenous language and Jules Henry translation of which one had already been published by him in the work Jungle People (1944). Of total pages, 270 are registered in phonetic transcription without any disallowance or translation of Jules Henry, and only on one page there is reference to the title of narrative that follows, as shown exemplary in Annex 1. In the first observation researcher, these seem to be the pages containing the narratives and myths collected in his first. Other 673 pages are in English, typewritten, with the title narrative and , in many cases , names of characters phonetically transcribed by hand, as shown exemplary in Annex 2. It is possible that many of these narratives typed already in English corresponding to other contained in the group of 270 pages in transcription Phonetic only . These pages in English, 34 have set title.

**Number of Stories**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pages per story</th>
<th>Number of Stories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 or less</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or more</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Documents enviados somam 998 páginas de mitos e narrativas Xokleng recolhidas por Jules Henry durante sua permanência entre os Laklānō.”**