

Gary F. Simons

## **Ensuring the Sustainability of Language Resources**

Something is sustainable when it can be maintained indefinitely at a desired level. Clearly we want the language resources that are the products of our text technology to be used far into the future. This presentation proposes five characteristics of language resources that are necessary for usability. The resource must be *discoverable*; it cannot be used unless the prospective user is able to find out that it exists. Once discovered, the resource must be *accessible*; it cannot be used unless the prospective user can gain access to it. Once accessed, the resource must be *authentic*; it cannot be used if it is not a faithful copy of the originally created resource. Once accessed, the resource must be *intelligible*; it cannot be used if the user is not able to make sense of the content. And finally, once accessed the resource must be *interoperable*; it cannot be used if it does not interoperate within the user's working environment.

Sustainability begins with the *creator* who brings a resource into existence. It must be created in such a way as to give it adequate levels of the five necessary conditions for use. But a strong initial state is not sufficient to ensure sustainability; over time a resource will fall into disuse and eventually become lost as the conditions for use fall below acceptable levels. Long-term sustainability requires the work of a *curator* who takes on the responsibility to sustain the necessary conditions for use. As a guide to ensuring sustainability of language resources, the presentation will explore the respective roles of the creator and curator with regard to each of the five necessary conditions of use. The role of infrastructural networks like OLAC and DRIVER will also be explored.