ICT for Language Learning

Multi-Disciplinary Language Education with ICT for Vocational Training

Objectives of Presentation

- An introduction to Irish Language (An Ghaeilge), its origins, decline, revival and cultural context.

- An outline of legal training that requires engagement with the Irish language

- The story of how a lawyer designed a language course with colleagues from other disciplines

- The challenges that determined an ICT solution

- The value of getting the ELL award

- Future collaborations and/or development

Evolution

- Modern Irish from 1600
  - impacted by Anglo-Normans

- Middle Irish
  - coincided with arrival of Norse language of Vikings

- Old Irish
  - Latter half of the first millennium
  - used Latin alphabet

- Ogham (Primitive Irish)

- Oral Tradition

Irish Language - 14 Centuries Old

- Celtic language from Goidelic (Gaelic) branch
  - also includes Scottish Gaelic and Manx (Isle of Man)

- Oldest written Literature north of the Alps
  - unbroken literary tradition for fourteen centuries

Origins of The Irish Language

- Primitive version is Ogham

  – used for territorial markings

  – or gravestones
  http://ogham.celt.dias.ie/menu.php?lang=en

From tumblr.com

Digital Images of Old Irish Manuscripts

- Irish Script on Screen (ISOS) is a project of the School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies with the object of creating digital images of Irish manuscripts, and to make these images - together with relevant commentary - accessible on a WWW site. The purpose of such a site is to provide an electronic resource

ACCESS TO THE IMAGES

- The copyright and all other intellectual property rights in the text rest with the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.
http://www.isos.dias.ie/english/index.html

Decline of Use of Native Language

17th- 19th century

- Language of majority of inhabitants until mid 19th century

- Usage declined from 17th century onwards

- Two main 'drivers of decline' were:
    1. Colonisation by the British Empire
    2. The Great Irish Famine from 1845

Language Revival – from 20th century to date

- Irish Independence
  - Article 8 of the Constitution 1937 (after Irish independence from colonialism in 1922)
  - Legislation e.g. Universities Act 1997; Education Act 1998; Broadcasting Act 2001; Official Languages Act 2003

- Belfast Agreement awareness in cultural diversity in smaller language groups: Irish and Ulster Scots http://www.ucd.ie/ibis/filestore/wp2001/07_nicra.pdf

- EU Support
  - Designation as a Treaty Language of EU in 1973
  - Became an official and working language of EU in 2007
  - Support for the creation of the National Terminology Database for Irish www.focal.ie

Culture from Old and Medieval Irish

- Book of Kells
  - A manuscript that contains the four Gospels in Latin written on vellum (prepared calfskin).
  - Estimated to date back to 800 A.D.
  - http://digitalcollections.tcd.ie/home/

- Celts (Corpus of Electronic Texts) Project
  - Ireland's longest running Humanities Computing project profiles a wealth of Irish literary and historical culture on-line http://celt.ucc.ie/language.html

  Old and Middle Irish texts onlined9 at CELT, edited/translated by Rudolf Thurneysen http://www.ucc.ie/celt/thurn.html

Legal Culture - Brehon Law 7th-17th Century

- Prior to English rule, Ireland had its own indigenous system of law dating from Celtic times, which survived until the 17th century when it was finally supplanted by the English common law.

- In the 7th century AD the laws were written down for the first time. Brehon law was administered by Brehons (or *brithem*).

  - They were the successors to Celtic druids and while similar to judges; their role was closer to that of an arbitrator. Their task was to preserve and interpret the law rather than to expand it.

    www.courts.ie

Further Information on Brehon Law

- Brehon Law

A general account of legal practice in the seventh and eighth centuries with discussion of social background and later `brehon' families.
ISBN: 978-1-85500-214-2

A GUIDE TO EARLY IRISH LAW

FERGUS KELLY

DUBLIN INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES
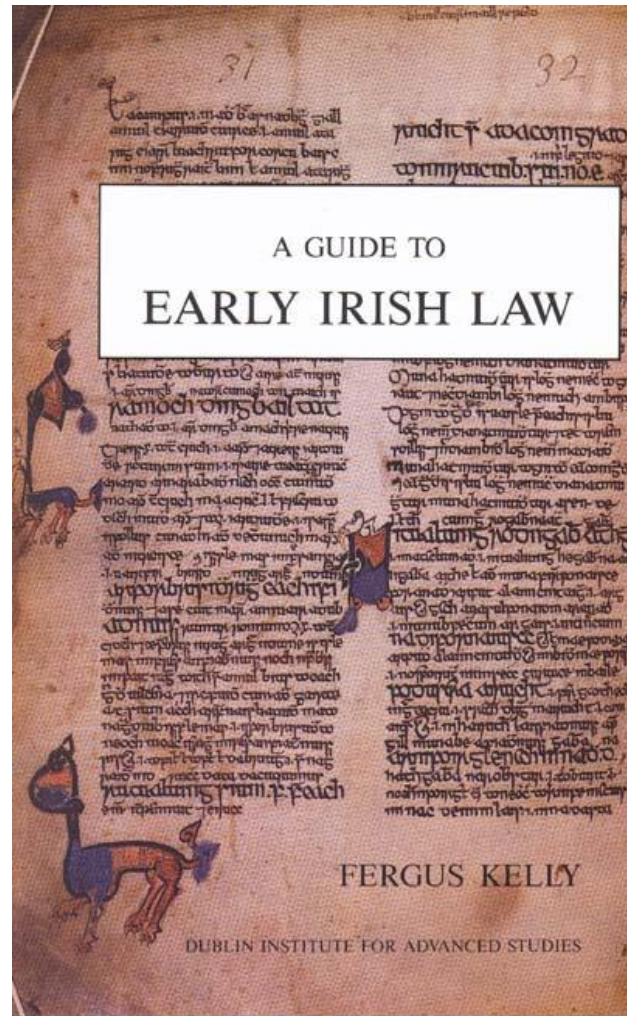
Modern Cultural Aspects of Minority Language

A Symbol of 'Irishness'

- Government pursuit of a policy of bilingualism.
    - "…the Irish language is of particular importance for the people, society and culture of Ireland. As a spoken community language, Irish is unique to this country and is, therefore, of crucial importance to the identity of the Irish people and to world heritage" (Government of Ireland Statement on the Irish Language 2006).

    - Irish is used as the primary daily language of its inhabitants in what are referred to as *Gaeltacht* areas. In 2011 1.77 million inhabitants could speak the language; 70,000 spoke it daily.

    - Increased provision of education through the medium of Irish at all levels and national media

Vocational Legal Training in Ireland

- Ireland's legal system is an adversarial common law system where lawyers are categorised as 'solicitor' and 'barrister'

- The Law Society of Ireland Education Department trains solicitors subject to specific laws from 1954, amended in 2008
  - amended the rules for training lawyers in the Irish language
  - placed a statutory obligation to create new courses in its as part of initial trainee solicitor training as a required element of the Professional Practice Course (PPC)
  - The new courses were called Legal Practice Irish (LPI) and Advanced Legal Practice Irish (ALPI).

Creating new Language Courses - Challenges

- Course Designer responsible was a lawyer – not a linguist!

- The course was required by law and was therefore 'compulsory' for all trainee lawyers

- There was little/no available space in timetable.

- The 2008 law was very specific in its requirements and presented a dual need
  - An elementary course for all trainees (approximately 400) who were required to meet basic meet and greet, legal terminology and referral vocabulary
  - An advanced programme for those who wished to practice law through the Irish Language

Multi-Disciplinary Collaboration

- The skills deficit in a primarily legal vocational environment was to identify the skills deficits and aim to bridge the gaps i.e. a multi-disciplinary approach:
  - Teaching and learning course design skills in legal training using ICT
  - Support from IT colleagues
  - Involvement of linguists with experience in delivering language programmes.
  - The Advanced Programme had to identify
    - a higher level of expertise to include lawyers with Legal Irish linguistic skills and
    - experienced linguists to focus on grammar and translation.

Needs Assessment – necessary skills base

- Knowledge of Law Society policy for training solicitors.

- Experience as a legal practitioner

- Ability to integrate ICT in education

- Identification and recruitment of linguists

- Research of best practice in teaching languages.

- Commitment from colleagues in the IT Department who had installed a Moodle VLE in 2007/8 for other courses
  - Now challenged to explore what Moodle could deliver to meet the course design aspirations for a minority language.

Identification of Core Course Elements

- Reflect PPC course by incorporating a legal platform comprising integrated course materials across general practice disciplines.

- Use Problem-Based Learning (PBL) scenarios framework exploring initial solicitor/client consultations.

- Explore key legal terminology of each of the selected areas of law at LPI level through weekly quizzes and questionnaires

- Employ linguistic translators

Identifying ICT to deliver the course design

- Use website resources identified through research that provided general Irish and legal Irish terminology e.g. www.focal.ie
- Link on-line identified 'background legal information' to scaffold each area of law profiled throughout the course
- Have a bi-lingual interface which required IT to commission the Moodle platform provider an Irish Language page on Moodle.
- Set up the quiz and questionnaire functions of Moodle
- Provide a glossary with sound file for each area of law engaged with
- Ascertain recording capabilities on Moodle to:
  - Host a modelled lawyer-client conversation
  - Facilitate a recording by trainee solicitors

Basic Language Learning Elements with ICT

- Course participants needed to 'see' 'hear' and 'speak' the language
- Moodle met those needs through supporting designed elements:
  – Provision of a glossary with pronunciation of the Irish words
  – Links to background legal information to inform answers to the quizzes and questionnaires
  – Display of the lawyer/client conversation in English and in Irish in the bilingual website in Word and pdf formats (See)
  – Modelling of the correct pronunciation of the general and legal Irish by faculty member on-line podcast (Hear)
  – Recording of podcasts by Trainee Solicitors (Speak)
- The IT team was on standby to support delivery

Blended Learning – a 'Key' Focus

- There was an introductory lecture and a hands-on brief workshop to orientate learners regarding the on-line resources that they were required to engage with

- The course design incorporated the primary teaching an learning principle of reflection on learning

- When three of the six weeks of legal terminology on-line activity were completed there were small group sessions where learners could reflect on and use and clarify the Irish language terminology learned

- Classes were led by a linguist and lawyer linguist

- A similar session took place after the next three weeks work

- A final large group session reviewed the learning in an interactive compilation of the course learning

http://ppclaw.lawsociety.ie/

The Advanced Programme

- The Advanced Legal Practice Irish (ALPI) http://alpi.learnskills.ie/ was built on the elementary LPI structure
  - incorporated a framework of 'lawyering skills'
  - Integrated CEFR and CPD criteria
  - Used a case study framework through the medium of Irish
  - Grammar tasks were paramount
  - On-line discussion between class participants through SpeakApps in the form of LangBlogs

- Detail of the LPI project delivery is explored in *The Confluence of Professional Legal Training, ICT and Language Learning towards the Construction of Integrative Teaching and Learning* i.e. Chapter 10 of Making Connections: Intentional Teaching for Integrative Learning ISBN:1906642206

Reflections and Ongoing Development

- This project would not have worked without a multi-disciplinary collaboration of lawyers, linguists and IT colleagues, in particular, Caroline Kennedy, It Co-ordinator for The Law Society's Education Department

- In-house linguistic expertise was added to the team in 2010, allowing for

  – communication with faculty through Irish and

  – dispensing with the need for outsourcing translation work, which resulted in increased efficiencies and high levels of accuracy

- Regular reviews take place through quality assurance course evaluations from faculty and course participants and in consultation with IT colleagues

The European Language Label (ELL)

- Projects that receive the ELL as quality language projects in Europe are assessed by experts representing the European Commission

- The Legal Practice Irish Courses (LPI and ALPI) won the 2012 ELL.

- The criteria for the assessment was three-fold:
  - Languages for Employability and Competitiveness,
  - Language Learning using New Technologies and
  - The Multilingual Classroom

- ELL has been an invaluable support to our work, as an independent, rigorous and high level independent quality assessment.

- NELLIP reviewed former ELL winners and saw the Legal Irish Programmes of the Law Society of Ireland as transferrable to other paces, hence our presence at this conference.

In Summary

- An introduction to Irish Language (Gaeilge), its origins, decline, revival and cultural context.
- The incorporation of the Irish Language in legal training
- The challenges that determined an ICT solution demonstrating that
  - it is possible to step outside one's comfort zone to work in an interdisciplinary way and
  - collaboration with colleagues produces innovative construction of new knowledge
- The value of getting the ELL award
- We look forward to future collaborations and/or development

Maura Butler, Solicitor, Course Manager (designer of courses)

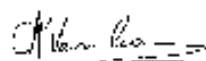**Robert Lowney, Course Administrator (in-house linguist)**

An Séala Eorpach Teanga

The European Language Label

The Irish Jury for the European Language Label 2012 is pleased to award
Cúis Áthais do Ghiúiré Éireannach an tSéala Eorpaigh Teanga 2012 bronnadh a dhéanamh ar

Education Department, Law Society of Ireland
Roinn an Oideachais, Dlí-Chumann na hÉireann

For the project
Don tionscadal

Legal Practice Irish Courses
Cúrsaí Cleachtadh Dlí as Gaeilge

EU Commissioner for Education, Culture,
Multilingualism and Youth
Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou
An Coimisinéir Eorpach um Oideachas, Cultúr,
Ilteangachas agus Óige
An Coimisinéir Androulla Vassiliou

Minister for Education and Skills
An tAire Oideachais agus Scileanna
Ruairí Quinn T.D.

léargas

Lifelong Learning Programme