Spain, South, and Central America were recruited. This also included Galego.

The State Library of NSW Multicultural Consultant invited the participation of State Library staff whose first languages included Hindi, Slovak, Serbian, Italian, Arabic, Vietnamese, and French.

Volunteers and Friends of the State Library and members of the community contributed with their language skills in Dutch, German, Kannada, Korean, Portuguese, Swedish, Swahili, Somali, Macedonian, Dinka, Bosnian, and Tatar.

The Consultant also recruited assistance from the NSW Public Libraries network with Cantonese, Mandarin, Tamil, Polish, Galego, Filipino, Turkish, and Serbian.

2. Developments in website and content management technology

The development of this website is supported by the State Library of Victoria's Vicnet, which has developed and maintained significant expertise in the areas of multilingual web development and has led the technical aspect and the foundation of the project.

Website technology has developed from providing pages of static html to using sophisticated content structures. Many high traffic, content-rich sites are now structured around an internal database and a series of design templates, with the interaction between the two elements controlled by a series of program scripts. This is the structure underlying MyLanguage as it simplifies management and update processes, allowing many of these to be undertaken by library staff as part of their regular duties.

The role of special technical staff can be refocused on higher level technical and content development issues, while the content management technology takes care of the day-to-day management. Other developments in collaborative global content creation such as Wikipedia and the Open Directory Project allow for new opportunities in content resource discovery.

MyLanguage uses harvesting protocols and methods to expand access to online information resources. The use of scripts to harvest external data to populate an internally-held database is a central feature of MyLanguage.

MyLanguage portal structure

The contents of this internal database can be searched and displayed in response to user enquiries. This process is very similar to the way in which search engines use scripts to populate and index an internal database. This method allows the re-use of externally provided information, including government information, and ensures the information is accessed appropriately by language and topic.

More conventional sites offering multicultural content often have intensive editorial and content selection requirements and processes, with a consequently large staff overhead to cover in their budgets. The MyLanguage portal enables current library staff with specific language or other multicultural expertise to be involved in updating, researching, and adding information resources to the site with little requirement for technical knowledge and so are able to do this as part of their regular duties.

The usage

Since Sept 2007 the usage statistics of MyLanguage show that the website has received more than a million visits.

Oriana Acevedo
Multicultural Consultant, Public Library Services
State Library of New South Wales
oacevedo@sl.nsw.gov.au

A better way to read

In a country with a population of such diverse ethnic backgrounds, supplying materials in community languages will always present a challenge to Australian libraries. Whether a phrase book for an international holiday, a language course for an extended stay overseas, or the latest blockbuster in a preferred tongue, libraries have recognised the need for materials in diverse languages within their collections.

Language difficulties present one of the toughest barriers to obtaining information, and factors such as aging, vision impairment, chronic arthritis, or Parkinson's disease place added pressures on homebound services and language collections. Audio materials in languages other than English are more expensive and difficult to obtain than print. Reliance on others to read newspapers or books can result in a loss of independence and recreational enjoyment.

In 2000 an open source software development gave print disability organisations and libraries around the world the ability to exchange titles through a standardised audio format. DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System) provides a digital quality audio file that allows the reader to skip forward or back and remembers the page they last read. DAISY books are self-described as the better way to read and the standard is diverse enough to be adopted in 55 countries internationally.

Vision Australia is working to build partnerships with DAISY libraries overseas in order to develop a high-quality collection of audio materials for print-disabled, community-language readers. Currently we have a direct supply of German and Finnish books provided by Medibus and Celia libraries respectively, with plans to create local collections of Hindi, Japanese, Dutch, and Spanish materials. With an increasing number of audio libraries around the world embracing the DAISY standard, further expansion is just around the corner.

Do you know anyone who is unable to hold, manipulate, or see a regular print book? If so, the Vision Australia Information Library Service can provide increased access to a whole world of print information. For further information, please contact our friendly Reader Services team on 1300 654 656.

Deborah Mould, Vision Australia
deborah.mould@visionaustralia.org
Siobhan Dennis, Vision Australia
siobhan.dennis@visionaustralia.org

UTS student wins ALIA conference scholarship

Natalya Godbold, a liaison librarian with the University of Western Sydney and PhD student at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), received a $1500 scholarship for the best paper by an early career researcher or practitioner at the recent Research Applications in Information and Library Studies (RAILS) conference, held at UTS on 23 January 2009. The scholarship was sponsored by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and the recipient chosen by the ALIA Research Committee. Natalya was presented with the award by ALIA President, Derek Whitehead.

Natalya's paper, based on her recently completed UTS Masters project, *User-centred design vs. "good" database design principles: a case study, creating knowledge repositories for indigenous Australians*, describes the challenges involved in creating metadata for a database to store the traditional knowledge of Aboriginal clans involved in Traditional Knowledge Revival Pathways (TKRP).

TKRP was initiated in 2001 by elders of the Kuku Thaypan clan from Cape York, who were concerned that the cultural knowledge of their clan would be lost when they passed on. Victor Steffensen, a Tukaluk man who had been learning from the Kuku Thaypan elders for many years, began at their request to record the elders on video explaining their knowledge, beliefs, and practices for future use by their clan. Victor developed a flat file database to store the video footage.

In February 2006 Natalya joined the project to redesign the flat-file database into relational form. She aimed to create a robust, flexible, searchable infrastructure to support the archiving and ongoing use of the traditional knowledge being gathered by indigenous community members. She was struck by the enthusiasm and excitement shown by participants involved in the TKRP project.

> All the knowledge the old people taught me over ten
> years, I want to pay the old people back by showing
> the young people.   – a participant

Usability testing session for the TKRP Database: a group of testers gather around a laptop, passing feedback to Natalya who is on a mobile phone on loudspeaker.

This project presented some interesting challenges. Particularly, the database had to be potentially usable and culturally acceptable to any of the hundreds of clans and language groups in Australia, with their differing needs, languages, and cultures. It needed to be able to take "any data the Elders choose to talk about". Additionally, clans needed to be able to document their knowledge while maintaining cultural duties required of them such as secrecy and custodianship of knowledge. As such it was an honour to witness appropriate examples of the culture, and meet representatives of the Kuku Thaypan, Kuku Yalanji, and Aurukun people.

Natalya is grateful to ALIA for their recognition, encouragement, and support. She acknowledges Victor Steffensen and Dr Andrew Wood of DSTC for the opportunity to be involved in this inspiring project. She also acknowledges Jacqueline Gothe of UTS as well as her UTS Masters supervisors Jan Houghton and Maureen Henninger for their guidance, criticism, and encouragement.

TKRP has been funded and/or supported at different times by Balkanu, NHT, Envirofund, Cape York Peninsula Development Association, CRC Tropical Savannas Management, The Christensen Fund, University of California, James Cook University, ACF, University of Technology, Sydney, NAEA, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, Telstra, the Distributed Systems Technology Centre (DSTC), and Questacon.

Natalya Godbold
PhD student, University of Technology, Sydney
ngodbold@gmail.com

Editor's note: Natalya's paper will be published in a special issue of the Australian Library Journal.

Multilingual glossary : a communication and signage tool

http://www2.sl.nsw.gov.au/multicultural/glossary/

The multilingual glossary is a professionally translated, and culturally appropriate, signage tool for library staff – designed to allow them to communicate simple information to an increasingly culturally diverse community. Regina Sutton, New South Wales State Librarian, launched the Multilingual Glossary in November 2007.

The glossary was developed by a committee of multicultural librarians. Over a period of two years the Working Group of Multicultural Services trialled different approaches to cooperative translations and developed a glossary of commonly-used library terms and phrases. While some libraries have staff that possess language skills, they are generally not qualified interpreters/translators, nor are they necessarily representative of the major language groups in that community. Also, the library staff with language skills needed to assist the public are not available at all times.

The Working Group identified the need to develop a tool that would be easy to access from any library and would not be restricted by available technology or a lack of staff with language skills.

Web-accessible alternatives, such as translation software, were also researched by the Working Group but found to be unreliable – often providing grammatically inaccurate or culturally inappropriate translations.

The glossary allows you to search for specific library service-related English phrases, retrieving a non-English equivalent in one of 49 languages.

It is a cost-effective means of providing information in multiple languages and assists public libraries to respond promptly to the changing profiles of the community.

Global users

The glossary database is a partnership between public libraries and the State Library of NSW, which hosts the website and is available to global users via the Internet. It is a free and innovative contribution to international library-based multicultural services. Positive Feedback through 'request a Phrase' have been received from users such as Vancouver Public Library, Canada; Brooklyn Public Library, USA; Wellington City Library and Tauranga City Library, New Zealand; and from other states including Queensland, Victoria, and Western Australia and several from libraries in New South Wales.

Other applications

The database concept of gathering commonly-used terms in a specific environment has other applications reaching far beyond the library world. For example, Gold Coast City Council wanted to explore the possibility of developing a similar database that will allow them to store translated information in several languages for pet licensing, rubbish collection, recycling, etc. so they could print on request and therefore eliminate some language communication barriers.

Using the glossary

- To view the text in different languages you may need to download the fonts on your computer.
- The fonts and help to install them are available on the screen.