

CONFERENCE REPORTS

1st World Congress on the Power of Language: Theory, Practice and Development, 22-25 May 2006, Queen Sirikit National Convention Center, Bangkok, Thailand

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The First World Congress on the Power of Language: Theory, Practice and Development in the Year of Languages took place 22-25 May, 2006 in Bangkok, Thailand, to promote the impact of the power of languages on world progress and peace. It was held in honor of H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's 50th Birthday, in recognition of her dedication to languages.

The Organizing Committee was comprised of the Rotary Foundation of Thailand, a Consortium of Thai Universities, Professors and Professional Organizations, and was co-organized by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). The contributors and sponsors included the Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB), Department of State, United States, Sapiens International Corporation, Thai Airways International Public Company Limited and BICS 2000 Company Limited.

There were three hundred and eighty-five conference participants, representing thirty-one countries: Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, China, France, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Jordan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, South Korean, Taiwan, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, and Vietnam.

On 22 May, 2006, the Congress was declared open personally by H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn. This was followed by keynote addresses by Joan Bresnan (Stanford University), Huang Youyi (the Translators Association of China) and Jane Fernandes (Gallaudet University) on the topics "Rethinking linguistic competence," "Translation industry in a Growing Economy," and "Enriching society: Recognizing the value of deaf people and the indigenous sign languages," respectively.

On 23-25 May, 2006, there were a variety of session types that participants could attend, including: plenary, oral presentation panel

discussions, workshops, poster presentations, and exhibitions. Panel discussions were summarized by rapporteurs. An interpreting service including booth, headset, and Thai/English and sign language interpretations were provided in plenary and panel sessions.

The Congress featured three plenary sessions as follows:

Invited speakers	Titles of the papers
Plenary 1	
Claudia Angelelli San Diego State University	The power of the language interpreter: agency as controversy
Jerold A. Edmondson The University of Texas at Arlington	Tai linguistics and Tai settlement in Southern China and Northern Vietnam: the power of language over the past
Gary Patrick Barkhuizen University of Auckland	Language teacher learning, teacher teaching and learner learning: A package deal narrative
Plenary 2	
Nea Stewart-Dore Central Queensland University, Australia	i-link, i-think, i-know, i-show: A model for literacy teaching and learning in curriculum areas
Brian Gray Charles Darwin University in the Northern Territory, Australia	From CLE's to the present: explorations in providing access to literate discourse for Australian indigenous students
Pei Xiaorui Peking University	The design and development of the CFL teaching system
Plenary 3	
Tan Sri Datuk Pandikar Amin Haji Mulia Adviser to the "Badan Bahasa dan Kebudayaan Iranun," Malaysia	Ethnic minority language: Inseparable assets of a nation; Malaysia's experience
Gothom Areeya Mahidol University, Thailand	Language-War and Peace
Huw Jarvis University of Salford, UK	The impact of computers on changing notions of language, language learning and language pedagogy.

The Congress organized eleven Panel Discussions as follows:

Panel numbers	Themes
Panel 1	Challenges on becoming professional translators and interpreters
Panel 2	Voices of ethics: Power of literature
Panel 3	Professional translation and interpretation: A UN perspective
Panel 4	National language policy and planning

Panel 5	Tapping local cultural assets for social development: the case of indigenous sign languages
Panel 6	Language and socio-economic development
Panel 7	The second language acquisition approach to Thai for peace and participatory democracy
Panel 8	Language and conflicts: the politics of language in international law
Panel 9	How to best teach languages
Panel 10	The roles of the English language development Center
Panel 11	Romanization, transliteration, and transcription for globalization

A workshop on “Teaching of literacy: Concentrated language encounter techniques” was also arranged by Brian Gray (Charles Darwin University, Australia), Nea Stewart-Dore (Central Queensland University, Australia), and CLE Team leaders (Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand).

There were thirty-nine sessions of paper presentations. Each session consisted of three to five presentations. They were grouped thematically into 11 tracks as listed below:

Track #	Academic Tracks	Track Chairs	Track Co-Chairs
Track 1	Language and Linguistics	Somsong Burusphat (Mahidol University)	Sujaritlak Deepadung (Mahidol University)
Track 2	Language and Education	Wanida Anchleewittayakul (Suan Dusit Rajabhat University)	Pamela Mackenzie (International Network for Development, India)
Track 3	Language and Communication	Ngamthip Wimolkasem (King Mongkut’s Institute of Technology North Bangkok)	Suraphi Tansansom (KMITNB) Bubpha Saetoblol (KMITNB)
Track 4	Language and Literature	Trisilpa Boonkajorn (Chulalongkorn University)	Wariya Chinwanno (Mahidol University)
Track 5	Language and Socio-Economic Development	Saowalak Rattanaich (Srinakharinwirot University)	Barry Clements (Mahidol University)
Track 6	Language and Minorities	Suwilai Premsrirat (Mahidol University)	Susan Malone (SIL International)
Track 7	Language and Politics	Sompong Wittayasakphan (Chiangmai University)	Philippe Doneys (Bangkok University)
Track 8	Language and Law	Deeyu Srinararat (Thammasat University)	Scott Lopez (University of Sydney) Chutamanee Onsuwan (Thammasat University)
Track 9	Language and Translation and Interpretation	Maneerat Swasdiwat Na Ayutthaya (Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi)	Hannelore Lee-Jahnke

Track #	Academic Tracks	Track Chairs	Track Co-Chairs
Track 10	Computer Language	Virach Sornlertlamvanich	Krit Kosawat (NECTEC) Wasin Sinthupinyo (NECTEC)
Track 11	Innovative Issues	Sumlee Thongthew (Chulalongkorn University)	Nawapan Mercado and Ismael Mercado (Kasetsart University)

Twenty sessions out of thirty-nine sessions were in Track 1 and Track 2. A compact disk containing abstracts of all papers was also provided.

There were four poster presentations as follows:

1. Human-based and computer-based methods of assessing knowledge of scientific language
2. Power of English seen in the new IT Japanese corpus
3. Distributed multilingual dictionary across multiple sites.
4. Using video streaming as a web-based instruction tool to enhance English pronunciation

The First World Congress on the Power of Language: Theory, Practice and Development has covered multifaceted aspects of languages. It was organized by a committee led by Bhichai Rattakul (Convener), Noraseth Pathmanand (Chair), Somphop Sooksing (Vice-Chair), Saowalak Rattanavich (Vice-Chair and Liaison Officer), and Maneerat Sawasdiwat Na Ayutthaya (Secretary). Credit for the great success of the Congress should be extended to the program track committee led by Udom Warotamasikkhadit, Fellow of the Royal Institute of Thailand.

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3rd International Conference on Austroasiatic Linguistics (ICAAL 3 pilot meeting), 28-30 June 2006, École Française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO), Siem Reap-Angkor, Cambodia

Reported by SUWILAI Premsrirat, Mahidol University, Thailand
George van DRIEM, Leiden University, The Netherland

History of the conference. The 1st International Conference on Austroasiatic Linguistics (ICAA.L 1) was held at the University of Hawaii in Honolulu in 1973. The proceedings of this conference were published in 1976 in a volume edited by Philip Jenner, Laurence C. Thompson, and Stanley Starosta, et. al. The 2nd International Conference on Austroasiatic Linguistics (ICAAL 2) was held at the Central Institute of Indian Languages in Mysore in 1978. A bound set of mimeographed papers from this conference is kept in the Cambridge University library.

At the conclusion of ICAAL 1, no provisions were made to reconvene. After that the conference did actually convene again at Mysore in 1978 as ICAAL 2, but once again no provisions were made to reconvene. At this time, political developments in Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and China made it difficult to conduct linguistic fieldwork on Austroasiatic languages in these countries. Austroasiatic linguistics also went into a period of relative decline as empirical linguistic research and analytical language documentation went out of fashion due to the international influence of anti-empiricist trends in linguistic theory prevailing at the time. Despite the pivotal importance of Austroasiatic languages for our understanding of the prehistory and the ethnolinguistic demography of South and Southeast Asia, not to mention the intrinsic interest of individual Austroasiatic languages and Austroasiatic historical grammar, the only forum for scholars of Austroasiatic linguistics for decades would take the form of incidental special sessions at conferences devoted to other related themes.

On the 30th of August 2001, on a nocturnal stroll through the old heart of Perigueux, two senior Austroasiatic scholars, Gerard Diffloth of École Française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO) in Siem Reap and Michel Ferlus of the Centre de Recherche sur les Langues d'Asie Orientale (CRLAO) in Paris, told George van Driem about the history of ICAAL and lamented the fact that the conference had not reconvened since 1978. Subsequently at Siem Reap, Gerard Diffloth and George van Driem decided to raise funding from the Dutch national research council NWO and l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient to convene an informal gathering called the ICAAL 3 pilot picnic at Siem Reap in July 2006 and revive this forum from its slumber. Michel Ferlus was unable to attend the pilot picnic, and so Gerard Diffloth became the only person to attend ICAAL 1 and ICAAL 2 as well as the ICAAL 3 pilot picnic.

1. Programme of the ICAAL 3 pilot picnic

The three day pilot meeting was organized in an informal way, chaired by Gerard Diffloth and George van Driem. The participants consisted

of eleven people. The topic and theme of each section and paper presentation in the meeting are provided.

First session: *The very small languages*

- **Suwilai Premsrirat:** Austroasiatic languages on the verge of extinction: Efforts for revival of Chong, Nyah Kur and So (Thavung).
- **Nicole Krupe:** Che'Wong language.
- **Nick Enfield:** Sketch of Kari language, upland Laos.

Second session: *The small languages*

- **Theraphun Luangthongkum:** Final fricative *-s and *-h in proto-T'in (Mal-Pray) reconstruct lexicon.
- **Anvita Abbi:** Clitics and incorporation in Pnar.
- **K.S. Nagaraja:** Khasi

Third session: *History matters*

- **George van Driem:** Austroasiatic phylogeny and the Austroasiatic homeland in light of recent population genetic studies.
- **Roger Blench:** Why are Aslianspeakers Austronesian in culture?
- **Gerard Diffloth:** Austroasiatic expressive in historical perspective.

3. Resolutions of the ICAAL 3 pilot picnic

The pilot group re-established the International Conference on Austroasiatic Linguistics (ICAAL) and undertook the following measures:

- (1) The members of the pilot group appointed the following Scientific Committee to ensure quality control and the continuity of the ICAAL:
Gerard Diffloth, École Française d'Extrême-Orient, Siem Reap
Nick Enfield, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen
Keralapura Shreevinasaiah Nagaraja, Deccan College, Pune
Nicole Kruspe, University of Melbourne
Therapan Luangthongkum, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok
- (2) In addition, it was resolved that Gerard Diffloth would be the chairman of the Scientific Committee. Any change of chairmanship can be decided at any time by a simple majority vote. Decisions of the Scientific Committee are made by the majority.
- (3) Upon the departure of a member of the committee, the standing Scientific Committee will approach an appropriate candidate to take the place of the departing committee member.
- (4) It was further resolved that the ICAAL would meet biennially, and that the organising committee of any given ICAAL in any given year will, at its own discretion but in consultation with the standing Scientific Committee,

designate a panel of experts for the screening of abstracts. It is the prerogative of the standing Scientific Committee to intervene if the need arises.

(5) Acting upon the generous invitation of Professor Nagaraja, Deccan College at Pune was designated as the venue of ICAAL 3 in November 2007.

(6) Statements of readiness to host the 2009 ICAAL were received from Mahidol University in Bangkok, the Royal Academy at Phnom Penh, and from Paul Sidwell and Doug Cooper in Bangkok.

(7) Statements of willingness to host the ICAAL in future were expressed on behalf of the University of Melbourne, Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi, the National Council for Education, Research and Training in Shillong, and from the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen in cooperation with Leiden University.

(8) The ICAAL website was set up at Leiden University, where it is maintained by the International Institute of Asian Studies (IIAS) in collaboration with George van Driem of the Himalayan Languages Project.

(9) Papers presented at the ICAAL can be individually submitted to existing journals for publication, such as *Mon-Khmer Studies*, *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient*, and so forth. Alternatively, a volume of selected conference papers and additional invited papers could be prepared by individuals who undertake such initiatives at conferences and approach appropriate publishers on behalf of their initiative.

Links

École Française d'Extrême-Orient

<http://www.efeo.fr/>

Leiden University

<http://www.leidenuniv.nl/>

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