



UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI

Centre for Language Studies

CLS: WHAT IT OFFERS

The Centre for Language Studies was established on instruction from government on 1st April, 1996 to take over some of the responsibilities and facilities of the dissolved Chichewa Board. The Centre's main responsibility, is to promote and develop Malawian languages. To do this, the Centre will conduct research/ consultancy in Malawian languages such as Chichewa, Chitumbuka, Chiyao, Chisena, Chiitonga, Chilomwe etc. The Centre also recognises the Educational, Social, Economic and Political importance of non-African languages like English, French, German, Portuguese, Spanish and others. It will, therefore, carry out research and consultancy in these areas as well.

- Among the many services the Centre offers are:
- Translation of materials from one language to another.
- Interpretation of speeches.
- Editing of materials from various languages.
- Conducting short courses in both Malawian and non-Malawian languages
- Collaborating with individuals/ organisations in the writing of textbooks and readers in Malawian and non-Malawian languages.
- Collaborating with foreign research Centres.

PROGRESS ON THE DICTIONARY PROJECT

Work on the Chichewa dictionary project is now almost completed. This first Chichewa monolingual dictionary provides the following information:- head words, marker for obscene words, tone markings, word etymology, part of speech, noun class (if the head word is a noun), definition of the word, synonyms, variants of the head word (if there any) and idiomatic definition (if there any).

It should be mentioned here that the obscene words have been marked deliberately as a warning to users of the dictionary that such words should not be used anyhow. Free usage of such words is a taboo and may be offensive to some people.

It is hoped that the final art work of the dictionary will be sent to publishers by mid February 1999. Contacts have been made with publishers namely Dzuka, Jhango, Longman, Macmillan and Heinemann publishing companies. Interested publishers will have to submit their tenders to the Centre for Language Studies.

CHICHEWA INTENSIVE COURSE

A Chichewa intensive course is currently on for three missionary couples. The course which takes learners through the basics of the language also covers some cultural aspects of the language. The students have already started using the little knowledge that they have gained within the past few days of attending classes. The course started on 1 February and will run for two weeks.

MALILIME JOURNAL

The first issue of volume 1/99 is now in its advanced stages and will be out soon hopefully by April. just be on the look out.

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