

2016 Annual report of the ACLC research group: Revitalizing Older Linguistic Documentation (ROLD)

Coordinator: Dr. O.J. (Otto) Zwartjes

Web page: [ROLD](#)

Members:

- Otto Zwartjes (ACLC), senior researcher, coordinator
- Astrid Alexander- Bakkerus (ACLC), senior researcher
- Norval Smith (ACLC), senior researcher
- Manfred Woidich (ACLC), senior researcher
- Liesbeth Zack (ACLC/ NWO), senior researcher

ACLC PhD candidate:

- Anna Pytlowani: *What the 'lost' manuscripts of Joan Josua Ketelaar can tell us about Dutch Colonial linguistics*. Promotor: Prof. dr. Fred Weerman, co-promotor: Dr. Otto Zwartjes

External PhD candidate:

- Roxana Sarion: *A diachronic account of Cariban: evidence from the 17th century missionary linguistic corpora in the Province of New Andalusia*. Promotor: Prof. dr. Carlos Cabanillas (Universitetet i Tromsø), co-promotor: Dr. Otto Zwartjes

External members:

- Cristina Altman
- Sabine Dedenbach Salazar Sáenz
- Wolf Dietrich
- Toon van Hal
- Henning Klöter
- Gonçalo Fernandes
- Joaquín Sueiro Justel.

Description of the research group:

The members of the group investigate older texts (colonial, postcolonial, missionary and non-missionary, word lists of travelers and historians) with the following objectives: historical linguistics, the history of linguistics and sociocultural analysis. The aim of historical linguistics is to describe older stages of languages as well as (processes of) language change, while the history of linguistics studies early thinking on languages and linguistics. Linguistic documentation is a crucial part of both branches. These studies are often interrelated with those of the cultural context in which colonial societies developed.

The members who work on missionary linguistics focus on the European expansion, colonisation and Christianisation after the discovery of the New World, which was accompanied by the study and recording of the native languages of the Americas. In the same period, Christian missionary activities culminated in Asia. Almost without exception, grammars, dictionaries and doctrinal texts in the indigenous languages were composed by missionaries for missionaries. The results of recent research demonstrate that many missionaries, if not most, had an excellent command of these 'exotic' languages and often focused on the idiosyncratic features of the native languages; they also approached the challenge of comprehending indigenous cultures through their languages. The work of these missionaries was hardly known in the Old World and, until today, many works have never been studied nor analysed in a satisfactory way. Other members work on non-missionary texts with the same objective, such as the pre-modern description of colloquial Arabic as it was spoken in Egypt and the disclosure of linguistic and ethnographic documentation in the Americas and the Philippines and networks of transcontinental information in the 18th century.

Areas of interest:

- Historiography of Linguistics
- Historiography of Missionary Linguistics (Phonology, Morphosyntax, Lexicography, Pragmatics)
- Sociohistorical and Historical Anthropological Linguistics
- Linguistics of Ethnohistory
- Colonial, Postcolonial and Pre-modern Linguistics
- Linguistic Documentation
- Descriptive Linguistics
- Sociolinguistics
- Typology
- Translation Studies
- Lexicology, Lexicography and Semantics
- Early-modern documentation of linguistic variation and change.

Research highlights in 2016:

- In 2016 one of the major activities was the 9th International Conference on Missionary Linguistics, which was organized in co-operation with university of Vigo (Spain) and the Ateneo University in Manila, Philippines, with presentations by the members of the ROLD-group Joaquín Sueiro Justel, Rebeca Fernández Rodríguez, and Gonçalo Fernandes and a key-note lecture by Otto Zwartjes.
- In November 2016, the 10th anniversary was celebrated with a book exhibition at the University Library (Bijzondere collecties) and a workshop conference. The conference and book exhibition were organized by Liesbeth Zack, Astrid Alexander-Bakkerus, Rebeca Fernández Rodríguez and Otto Zwartjes.

- Completed PhD: Pierre Winkler: (Defence: November, 24th, 2016). Promotor: Prof. dr. Olga Fischer, co-promotor: Dr. Otto Zwartjes