(Soledad) Hello everyone and welcome to our first Lingua Café voice podcast. Lingua Café is dedicated to the tensions between language rights and digital technologies, and the project is among the Jaaklac initiative's intentions, which I direct, that is dedicated to research and advocacy on critical digital education.

This year we organized the Lingua Café Panorama, a collaborative research on the advancements and drawbacks from the field, With activists, technologists, academics, community organizers, artists, and more. The Lingua Café Voice, which is a series of podcasts with the Panorama contributors, is dedicated to dive into and entwine insights from the open database. We will then elaborate Lingua Café Educa, which are a set of learning resources available online to expand our community of practice.

And today it is a great honor to inaugurate our Lingua Café Voice with Alex Mendonça from SciELO, cacu from Cooperativa Tierra Comun, Chido Musodza from Localization Lab, Laura Vidal from FLCC Curious Shapes, Mohamed ElGohary from IFEX and Global Voices, Subhashish Panigrahi from Rising Voices, and T from Obsidian Circus. Their significant actions in language justice and digital rights have entailed research, advocacy, event organizing, translations, and more.

We have a very ambitious session and we would love to start by asking everyone about yourselves and your organization in English and or other languages that you speak.

(Alex) Hi, everyone. Thanks for listening. And thanks for having me today. My name is Alex Mendonça. I am based in Sao Paulo, Brazil. I work for an organization called SciELO, and we are an open science infrastructure program in Brazil. We host open access journals.

Now, in Portuguese: meu nome é Alex Mendonça, trabalho para uma organização chamada SciELO. Estou em São Paulo, no Brasil. E o SciELO é um programa de infraestrutura aberta e que hospeda periódicos em acesso aberto.

(cacu) I'm cacu, I am a technologist and digital security trainer. I use he, him as pronouns. And I live and work in Mexico City. I'm part of on tech cooperative. As a cooperative, we focus On supporting human rights defenders, and our work is setting up digital infrastructure for these organizations, for journalists, for activists and human rights defenders, and also with this organization, with these people we try to change digital security.

Now in Spanish: soy cacu y uso los pronombres el. Vivo en una cooperativa donde todas y todos somos socios. Trabajamos con defensores de derechos humanos, periodistas, activistas,

y principalmente instalando infraestructura digital y trabajando también en mejorar la seguridad digital de las personas con las que trabajamos.

(Chido) Hi, everyone. My name is Chido Musodza. I am based in Harare, Zimbabwe. I'm a program associate for community engagement with Localization Lab which is essentially a nonprofit organization that works to make the internet more accessible and inclusive by translating and localizing digital security tools and resources into a wide range of languages.

Primarily what we do is we break down language barriers and promote digital rights globally.

And then in Shona, Makadini henyu, ini ndinoitwa Chido Musodza. Ndinoshanda kunonzi kuLocalization Lab kwatinoita zvekuti matools nemaresources awanikwe mumitauro yakasiyana siyana pasi rose.

Thank you very much.

(Laura) I am Laura and I work with many organizations and I also work with a new emerging organization called Curious Shapes that works assisting non profit organizations devoted to internet freedom in different capacities, research, outreach, and different kinds of consulting.

Y en español: Soy Laura. Trabajo para varias organizaciones, muchas de ellas bajo el paraguas de Curious Shapes y FLCC y hacemos consultoría y también asistimos a muchas organizaciones de libertad en Internet bajo varias figuras, que sea "outreach", que justamente no tiene mucha traducción, pero también investigación y asistencias varias.

(Subhashish) Hi, everyone. My name is Subhashish. I am representing Rising Voices here. I am also on the Global Voices board that hosts Rising Voices. Rising Voices works primarily in three, four major areas. It has a social media advocacy program and campaign that encourages language activists across the world, run social media campaigns and promote their languages on the internet and also share about their work. It helps build networks of such language activists. It provides mentorship and training that way it also connects them with other resources and funding opportunities and so on.

So just to summarize, Rising Voices supports language activists around the world and provides them with resources and training.

I'm going to try to speak in my dialect which is from India, from the Eastern part of India. It is called Baleswari Odia.

ରାଇଜିଂ ଭଏସେସ ସାଙ୍ଗର ମିଶିକି କାମ କରେ । ରାଇଜିଂ ଭଏସେସ language activist -- ଭାଷା କର୍ମକର୍ତ୍ତାମାନଙ୍କ ସାଙ୍ଗର ମିଶିକି କାମକରେ, ପୃଥିବୀସାରା ଟ୍ରେନିଂ, କ୍ୟାମ୍ପେନ ଆଉ ନେଟ□ାର୍କ ତିଆରି କରିବା ପାଇଁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟକରେ ।

Thank you.

(T) Habari, jina langu ni T, or Njoki for the Kenyans. I'm an artist and creator from Kenya, but currently based in D.C. and I'm representing Obsidian Circus, which is an upcoming initiative to support and build a creative ecosystem for queer African artists and creatives, focused on helping people explore identity itself through art and a creative practice, and work on decolonial work and see how art can shape that practice.

So I'm here speaking from the perspective of art as a language, art as a tool for translation. Thank you.

(Mohamed) My name is Mohamed ElGohari. I'm based in Cairo. I currently work as the MENA network engagement specialist at IFEX, an international network of organizations that promote and defend freedom of expression worldwide. But I'll mainly share my experience volunteering and working for Global Voices, an international multilingual community of writers, translators, and human rights activists. I served in several roles, mainly managing and expanding the Lingua project focusing on translating and disseminating Global Voices stories from around the world, making them accessible to a broader audience.

Briefly, Lingua is a multilingual project that translates important global voices stories worldwide, making them accessible to a broader audience through the help of an international, diverse community of volunteers and translators from many backgrounds. Thank you.

(Soledad) Thank you Mohamed. Thank you everyone. I love this exercise of listening to each other in different languages as well. And some of you have shared already a little bit on the work that you've done on digital technologies and language rights.

Would you like to dive a little bit more into case examples to break down for a broader audience? What is it that your organizations are doing and how this is mediated by digital technologies? Mohamed, would you like to start ?

(Mohamed) So as I mentioned, describing Global Voices is, it's an initiative dedicated to ensuring the diverse linguistic communities that they have access to important stories and amplifying voices in digital space.

Translating and allowing the stories to reach a broader audience. Let's say it's done through different activities. Through community building which I think is one of the rare aspects in volunteer translation and especially in the digital rights field. That it supports and coordinates a diverse team of volunteer translators to a strong community. And that enables us through supporting other Global Voice projects like Advox, which is the arm that promotes judicial rights and freedom of expression.

So that means it enables the ability to be deeply involved in advocacy through promoting digital rights, freedom of expression via various campaigns and initiatives. Through focusing on and defending the importance of protecting freedom free expression online. So there are like dozens

of languages and in the Global Voice's Lingua scene, or world, including like Arabic, Spanish, French, Chinese, and other languages like Amhara… going through all regions

(Soledad) A wide range of languages and also topics entwining and kind of an inception of at the same time, problematizing and discussing issues of digital rights with the lens of language rights and facilitating that with a lot of online communities.

(Mohamed) Yes, exactly. Like through, through the stories themselves, through the language themselves. There are several underrepresented languages in Global Voices where almost all languages besides English, even if they are in real life, are major languages, but online they aren't really representative. For example, Arabic, even though it's a major language in real life, its contribution to the global internet content decreases every year. From 5 percent to 3 percent to 0.8 percent over the years. And that makes it more challenging to languages that are underrepresented in real life.

And then that trickles back to their representation online whether it's like technological tools, like even if the language has a written form in the first place and therefore how to find the capacity to like, let's say create keyboards, create even fonts, like languages, like Burmese, for example, didn't have a uniformed font that that has large traction until very recently.

Going back to Lingua, I think its existence itself allows the ability of other projects to work through promoting languages, generally speaking, and underrepresented languages.

(Soledad) Chido, I think from Localization Lab, you do some similar activities, but from a different angle?

(Chido) Yeah, so like we were saying earlier on we're essentially a non profit organization, but we're focused on, yes, language justice, but also digital rights. So some of the activities we have carried out have included translation and localization of digital rights and resources and tools. Training workshops, but more specifically, these would be what we call 'localized sprints', which are rapid one day or two day workshops where we work together with communities, particularly in under-resourced communities or areas to localize or translate tools and resources in the short time as possible and therefore enhance access to those tools and resources and empower those communities with the ability to then exercise and enhance digital resilience when it comes to operating and being in online spaces.

But what we've also done is, we've tried to get communities to self advocate, not just for digital rights itself, but for language diversity and inclusion in the same digital rights space. We've also worked together with the same communities to develop open source tools and resources for localization. So one really interesting example I'll give is when we worked with communities in Southeast Asia, to develop what we call the digital safety tactics. So we spent some time with these communities and tried to unpack and understand what their issues were, what essentially their needs were, where the gaps were emanating from and how they communicate on a day to

day basis. And from that, we then developed the digital security tactics in a way that local people would best understand.

In terms of the languages we work on, it's a wide range of languages, but it's always a focus on the minority or under-resourced languages or regions. We have a lot of English in the internet space, but we don't have a lot of Shona, we don't have a lot of Swahili, and we're trying to get those languages to get more space online, so that's essentially where we tend to want to concentrate on. In terms of our geographical focus, it's global, and so in some instances we've worked with a number of people in the room already in some shape or form. Because of that global perspective and also because our focus is communities and regions, where language rights and digital rights tend to be marginalized on a very large scale.

So yeah, I think that's essentially what we do and how somehow it would twin into what others are doing within the space, but more from a digital rights and Internet freedom perspective.

(Soledad) And that focus on under-resourced communities made me think also of the work that cacu in the Cooperativa Tierra Común have been working with indigenous groups in Mexico.

(cacu) Yes. As a cooperative, we work with different groups. During our digital security training, sessions we noticed that some software were only available on English, not only software, but also manuals. And so that's why we start to localize and tutorials and software. And that in my cooperative, but also in other spaces in some or non-formal spaces like hack labs and hacker spaces we started to do this because we as trainers we find some interesting material in some other languages and we try to not only translating, maybe localizing, adapting resources to people.

And also because we're very lucky that, I feel very lucky because Spanish is talked in a huge region. And and there are a lot of collectives and initiatives that are doing similar work that also we take advantage of this. I mean, this in my cooperative and some collectives. But personally, I am also very interested in some indigenous languages of my region.

One is Nahuatl, is called like this Nahuatl. So, besides learning Nahuatl, I have an idea to have a word list to generate passwords. As I mentioned, I work with digital security. So, when I was working with indigenous communities, I realized that everything was in English, not only the software itself. But in a password generator context you can also use other languages to generate phrases.

So to generate passwords that make a lot more sense to the people. And that's why I started doing this and I guess it's, I think it's a small thing. But I just noticed this, I just found this opportunity, and I think it can be applied to some other indigenous or languages that are not there.

(Soledad) Definitely, supporting the security of indigenous groups digital security, also frontline defenders. Some of them are environmentalists, are also activists and providing that this is accessible and designed with and for these communities as well it's so important.

Laura, would you like to share a little bit about your experiences with Curious Shapes and FLCC?

(Laura) Yeah, actually, I was thinking that one of the experiences that will be interesting for this conversation will be with Mozilla and Tyler will know what I'm talking about because we work together on language inclusion initiatives for the Mozilla Festival in 2023. And I think this one is pretty interesting. And, listening to you all, you see how diverse and how complex the… including languages can be. And even the idea of including languages, actually I like how you say it, Soledad, "it's more of language justice". So it's not including languages that are out and should be in, but it's actually like making more real the experience online where we're talking to each other, which is also very complex because many of us wouldn't be able to talk to each other if we didn't speak English. And at the same time, there's this hunger, there's this need to have more communities represented in the internet freedom spaces.

And so one of the things that we learned in the experience with Mozilla is that this… what we call language inclusion initiatives, they can't go through only translation. Like at the beginning it was believed like, okay, what we can do is to have a bunch of translators. or interpreters, and then people will come. And then one thing that we realized is that having more representation and more just representation of languages also means outreach. You need to go and get your spaces out, you need to make them known, you need to make people feel welcome, feel wanted, and that is a very slow process. So in our first year, including Spanish trying to attract presenters in Spanish, I thought it was like a really big success because there was… there were a lot of spaces and a lot of initiatives that were created in Spanish and in other languages. And also there were materials that were translated in French and I think in Portuguese as well.

But at the same time, I guess that the organizers were, we were curious to see, like the numbers were not as big as we expected. And that's how we learned how important it is that languages can also be accompanied by other efforts. In the case of Mozilla, that one of the aspirations was like to bring more people and also to have conversations that are not North America centered, are not Western Europe centered, but then to be able to do that, you need to bring those ideas into those others.

So there should be a lot of movement. And another thing that we learned is that there's a lot of chaos. So you can have a very organized list and an Excel sheet with all the efforts. And then on the one hand you have translation and then you have workshops and then you have guidelines, and then you have assistance during the event, but then all of the things that happen around that… these are processes that are very difficult to control.

I guess one thing that I really want to put on the table here is that there are so many experiences in this movement devoted to internet freedom and devoted to inclusion and

devoted to representation of justice, that we can talk about language and only talking about language, we're talking about many, many things at the same time.

(Soledad) Definitely. And it's like a Babel tower, where in the end, we communicate with each other. And I would love to learn about the perspective from Rising Voices. Subhashish, which have been your particular actions?

(Subhashish) Absolutely. As I mentioned earlier, the Rising Voices community is fairly large and there are people, the language digital activists, spread across the world. That part of the community and that have always tried to document about their efforts, their strategies and rising forces facilitated many conversations about understanding how different tools and technologies and different strategies and processes exist in all these spaces among these communities and what works where and why it works, what are the learnings that exists from different spaces.

And, yeah, building this network has been sort of the focus of Rising Voices over the last few years and and I think the the community at large the indigenous and endangered language communities at large have always faced several kinds of challenges in their work and Rising Voices has tried to ensure that they have access to different kinds of resources and having access to a network also means that they can ask for support from others, especially those who have done similar work in their own spaces in their own context.

I think Gohari you mentioned about font related challenges or input tool related challenges. That's one challenge that is quite persistent across the board. Many languages that use different complex scripts, for instance, complex writing systems, for instance, have similar challenges and creating solutions in one language also helps in understanding the problems in another language.

And finding solutions for that. And the many developers and the many people, many technologists that also create tools like the example that cacu gave, that create tools that are specific to one community, but the documentation of their process helps others understand similar problems and contextualize those problems and find solutions. So in a way, Rising Voices facilitates such conversations and helps activists share their strategies.

Some of the examples that I might want to highlight here is some of the activities that Rising Voices has led over the years. It has worked quite significantly in Latin America. And I don't speak Spanish that well, I understand a little bit. I'll try to contextualize, but I'm not from the region and I want to highlight that. There's a directory of different activities and different initiatives from Latin America that are created by different activists, and these are mostly in different Latin American indigenous languages. And these activities are really inspiring for other activists in the region, but also for activists outside of the region and these activities and the resources include different tools and how those tools are used or use of social media to promote the language or use of a translation of textbooks or children's books or illustrations by local artists that are used for promoting languages, indigenous languages, particularly, and so on.

Similarly, there are examples of different strategies that are used across different indigenous languages. There's this initiative called digital languages. digital initiatives for indigenous languages. It's a UNESCO supported project and it was published in two different languages. It's a toolkit that contextualizes the strategies across different language communities and how those languages are preserved, revived and promoted using different tools and resources. It was actually done by an indigenous language activist himself who is from Latin America and has been part of several community-led activities.

Similarly, the campaigns that we ran… The six Twitter campaigns that we ran over the years from 2011 to 2021, these campaigns invited many language activists and encouraged them to share about their work. In many ways this was helpful for other activists to learn about activists from different regions. So the peer learning happened in many different ways. And even though these campaigns were run in sometimes in dominant languages. Say for instance, the language the campaign that I was It's called Asia Languages online, and that was in English predominantly, but the activists shared their work that they're doing in their own languages. So that was really helpful. And there's also another project called Mayan Language Digital Activism that supported many activists that are promoting Mayan languages by providing them fellowships and, and these activists were encouraged to share about their work, and that's very well documented.

We recently had the Global Voices Summit in Kathmandu. I'm just returning from that. And for seven days or so, we engaged with many of these fellows and they were able to share about their learning and the process of their language activism in their own respective languages and communities. And many activists that were joining from the rest of the world were able to learn. So I think these are different ways Rising Voices uses platforms to help peer learning.

(Soledad) And the development of communities and documenting these processes and working on language activism all these strategies combined.

I'm very interested on learning through the perspectives also of Alex and of T. Alex, would you like to talk a little bit from more of an academic sector?

(Alex) So at SciELO, we have our main product is our website. This is where people go to read the articles and we have been since the very beginning, SciELO started in 1997 and since the very beginning, our website is available in three languages: Portuguese, Spanish, and English, which are the main languages from the Americas.

And so from the very beginning we started offering the website in three languages. The interface that is what I'm meaning, the articles themselves, are not all available in different languages because the articles come from the journals. And unfortunately resources are not unlimited so they have to really select which articles will be available in different languages. But we, as a program, we stimulate and we encourage journals to publish articles in multiple languages, but we understand there are some limitations, of course.

And the SciELO collection is, actually, the SciELO network is actually composed of several countries. So not only Brazil, there is SciELOalso available in several countries from Latin America and Spain, Portugal and South Africa. And all of these websites, they are also available in those three languages because we provide this package, so when a new collection, when a new SciELO collection is launched, the website by default is available in those three languages.

But going outside of, let's say, the digital realm we also apply those policies to events and even whether they are in person or not. For instance, we… Every five years we hold a conference to celebrate SciELO anniversary. So we had a SciELO 15 year anniversary, the 20 year anniversary. And last year we had a 25 year anniversary. And for all those three conferences we have interpreters in Spanish, Portuguese and English. Anyone that's part of… even if you're just watching it, all the participants, they have access to what it's being said. And what's being spoken on the main stage and they can choose which language they want to hear the talk. And also, if they have questions, if they want to talk, they want to participate in the conversation, they can speak in whatever language they prefer, one of those three languages, I mean, and then it would be translated as well.

So that way we have a much more inclusive participation and we have a really a room where it's more inclusive. And we also take that to our webinars. Again, we have somehow, limited resources. So unfortunately we cannot do that for every webinar, but depending on the message or depending on the targets that the audience for the webinar, we make an extra effort to provide translations, live interpreters, or even afterwards we may provide subtitles we may add other kinds of language to the outputs that we we create.

Ultimately, we want our…the content, the research that we post, that we publish, we want it to be read. So we want it to be accessible. Overcoming those language barriers is a very important thing that we do. And we're always aware of language and how we can be more inclusive.

(Soledad) That is very interesting and connected to what was Laura mentioning about making the conversation real and welcoming and wanting your articles to be read.

T it would be amazing to learn from your particular perspective from the arts?

(T) Many of you have spoken about the tools that you're developing in working with expanding. And I'm curious to bring to the table and encourage people to think about how we can see art and creative practice as a tool for language inclusion for translation, for idea generation, all of these different things.

So we've been thinking a lot about how creative practice can be used as a technology and then also what creative practices can do for technology. So, in the first half, understanding how communities, creative communities can use a creative practice and can use art to better understand the self, to tap into ancestral indigenous knowledge, to build on decolonial work that they're doing, to build on community building, to create their own spaces essentially where they're able to use creative practice to move them through whatever they're doing.

And then also how they can be paired and collaborate with different technologists to build things. So, encouraging people who are in tech, who are having trouble translating… like really complicated and difficult to understand things outside of the tech world to other people. How can creatives become collaborators in that process? How can we use art to look at different conversations, different concepts? Say like an engineer is trying to explain something or trying to make something look appealing to communities outside of the engineer community, so that they can engage their work and expand who they're engaging with. That's when you bring a creative into collaboration and see how they can translate in a very unique way the work that the engineer is doing.

So just thinking a lot about that in the tech space and I think artists are a huge underrepresented group. One, mainly because people tend to see… tend to not see artists as experts in a field or like experts in their relationship with technology. They very much understand what's going on for the creative, for creatives right now, and understand how technology deeply impacts them in their practice. And I think it's important to engage with creatives in this way and see them as experts, just like it's important to engage with youth, for example, in all this activism work, and everything that we're doing to just see people as experts and know that there's they have a deeper understanding of what they are experiencing being in this space.

But as far as Obsidian Circus goes, it's we're developing an art world essentially using world building practices to help artists. Translate the worlds that they are creating for themselves, translate their own practice, translate the collaborations they've been engaging with through worlds, through unique worlds that they can create.

And it's using online, a website as a third space to bridge people, to connect people and have them essentially come in, create… I wouldn't even call it a portfolio space because it's more than that, but just build and show us where they're living and the space that they're living in, sitting within, existing within in a little portal of its own on this website and this online space. And then that's when they can be paired with people. They can be introduced to different people. Someone can look at one of the worlds and be like, this is interesting. I would love to see how this could participate or this could collaborate with what I'm building, what I'm doing.

So yeah, the work really involves bridging creatives with the world and then also really, really empowering creatives as a group that's underrepresented. is often thought about last when we think about all the work that we are doing in different fields.

(Soledad) And I love that kind of perspective also to open our eyes and see a language inclusion through so many different angles.

To close a little bit, because this conversation is very interesting and the idea is to provide a more accessible overview of what we're collecting through the Lingua Café Panorama. We talked a little bit about the challenges and opportunities so far. Subhashish was talking about

funds, about complex writing systems and communicating with developers, how there might be different progresses in different regions, developing tools and peer learning.

So, I'm going to open the question to everyone who wants to pick the mic in terms of which are the challenges and the opportunities on the field so far?

(Laura) I have two examples that I really like and I love sharing them because I learned a lot from them. And one of them was like going around trying to see what experiences were there in terms of expanding digital security tools.

And there was one case of a colleague a few of mine who had a mission in Chile, with a Mapuche community close to Santiago, were, well, I don't remember exactly where they were, but one of the things that they thought, like, "okay, fine, I'll prepare the workshop, I'll translate the guidelines". And then translating the guidelines ended up being a mission on its own, because there were so many concepts that were just not compatible with the mentalities that created those guidelines in English in the first place one example being password, they had to create a whole new word for passport something like close to "secret" or something like that because in the language of that community, because Mapuche is not just like this big language that everybody understands, and it's very easy to communicate with one another, but in that Mapuche language that they will be speaking password was not a concept.

When we're talking about language inclusion, we're also talking about a lot of intercultural communication, especially In the localization space in the digital security space in the inclusion space, because we're talking about a lot of things that are new for some communities or others or that are understood differently.

And the other challenge that I think was very, very telling was this idea of the, to me was very present when I was working with Mozilla in language inclusion efforts. And it is, you know, whenever you want to include languages, that means you need to translate. And translation is always, I guess, the.. how would I call it? It would be like the question, like the usual suspect, if you will. It's like the first thing you think about. If you want to bring languages, you need translators, and that's not necessarily the case. So there are many, many things, it's like a big constellation of things, and that was something that we came up for the guideline for language inclusion for Mozilla is that you need to create a constellation of tools and spaces and initiatives for languages and people speaking those languages. Because I think that's the main point. We're not talking about languages only, we're talking about the people who speak them. And those people have different contexts, different circumstances, different backgrounds. And It's very difficult to come up with one guideline, one formula, one translation effort.

So it's, it's a whole bunch of things that whenever somebody, an organization, a community, a movement want to talk about languages, that's a whole can of worms. And I think it's important to always remember that, you know, like not, not to do it, but be sure that this is not a thing that is, "Oh, let's just bring a bunch of translators and we'll be fine".

(T) I love everything about this. And also I worked with Laura for briefly for translation stuff and talking about like all the constellations and bringing arts into the conversation. But I really love how you mentioned that it's really intercultural translational communication, because I think that's where the nonverbal has a chance to come in where we can use creativity in ways, or as part of this constellation of language inclusion. I think… I always find it really hilarious when I try to communicate a word in Swahili that has absolutely no, like, English definition translation or like experience. I'm like trying to communicate that it's an emotion that has a word in Swahili, but there's no equivalent anywhere else. So I don't know how to explain what it is.

And I think if we look at intercultural translation as just a fun experiment, a fun way to include different nonverbal things and nonverbal ways of communicating, be it through like visual, a visual experience, be it through something that is in song. Music, for example, it's you can always find really interesting and curious ways of bringing people in and making them able to communicate with one another without necessarily speaking to one another, especially if that can cause more separation and more isolation than it would cause any connection.

So I would love to just work with different organizations, people doing different things to see ways that they can expand their minds and their approach to translation, their approach to language inclusion, to something that is not just a verbal, because we often ignore that part. And I think creativity can play a huge role in connecting people, because that's something that we share across communities. There's some creative aspect somewhere in all spaces. And so tapping into that can help translate whatever works that's trying to be translated and then also create new connections and bridge gaps between things that people hadn't realized that they had in common with each other in the first place.

(Soledad) Right. Yes. Being creative. There's no one size fits all, no matter how many processes we document as well. And that's very useful. Subhashish?

(Subhashish) I actually want to build a little bit on what Laura was talking about digital rights and safety and security. There was one Rising Voices project I was a part of, and the idea was to study how digital safety and security issues and opportunities exist across languages. And there were 18 of us studying the context in our respective languages and societies. And it was really interesting to see. How the examples that both Laura and T provided here are very relevant that there are different concepts and they're different. There's no equivalent across languages when it comes to digital safety and security, which is very interesting. We assume often that these are universal issues and the solutions are also universal, but way more complex than that. And then people use different kinds of techniques to deal with the problems that they're facing in their own context.

I'm from India and the language that I studied or the community that I studied is my own community. There's a rampant spread of online scams and people receive sometimes text messages or phone calls, and they and they are asked for an OTP, the One Time Password, and the moment they provide that password the bank accounts are emptied literally. So this is quite a huge challenge in India, and it's ongoing. There's actually a village that was identified to

be a 'scamming village', where there were many small call centers and people would actually be trained there. So that they could make calls that are very convincing and they would sound like somebody's family member or somebody's relative, and they would ask questions or they would say that "I am, I'm in distress and I need some money right now and please share this OTP." When we studied that, we also learned how community members are being trained to mitigate this risk because it affects different people differently. This issue affects women differently. This issue affects many of the marginalized communities differently. And within those marginalized communities, women are affected differently.

So it's really, really complex when you look at the intersectionality of the issue. Taking a sort of a macro overview, we also saw the spread of similar issues in different languages. And this was really helpful because this is a project that was primarily focused on digital safety and security and was supported by OTF, the Open Technology Fund. And so the focus was primarily on language communities and how people are using it, identifying and mitigating risks that are specific to their language community.

But generally speaking Rising Voices also has seen that there's a demand for training and there's a demand for more funding, and both those are unavailable. There are not many trainers available. There's not much funding available for language communities to run projects for language promotion or training activists for whatever the purpose is. And the example that I gave earlier was digital safety and security, but there's also the question of how do people document their content cultural heritage. How do they ensure that the cultural heritage that they're documenting is documented in a space where the community has full access and the community has ownership and sovereignty. And these are the questions that often come up. come into play when we talk about Indigenous communities and communities that have been historically marginalized.

(Soledad) Chido, I guess that there's many topics that resonate with the work with Localization Lab and what you're seeing with that broad overview as well?

(Chido) Yeah, so maybe to start off, like what we've come across, one of the challenges is technical barriers and technical barriers take on a lot of different forms, right? So essentially, the first one is just the developing and maintaining of open source tools itself requires technical expertise and resources. And that's not always possible, especially on the localization front. So like what Laura was saying, just throwing translators at a problem is not going to solve it when it comes to localization of open source tools and resources, the people that are working on the translations literally have to understand the context of what they are translating.

So one time when I was still a contributor. And I was working on, I think I was working on translating, I think it was Text Secure, I think eventually before it changed names. And I was asking questions, what would encrypted mean in Shona? What would network mean in Shona? And you are getting responses that would be correct in any other context, but that's when I quickly realized, okay, so it's not really about knowing what the word means in another language, it's understanding the context as well. And I found that I was the only one that kind of

understood the context, even though I'm not considered an expert level speaker of my language. So that tends to be a very important thing. And for us to, the opportunity there is to make sure that whoever it is that's coming into the space, yes, it may be passion that's driving them, but to provide capacity building so that they have a proper context and understanding of the tools and resources that they're trying to localize into local context.

Something else was brought up. So marginal communities, right, just reaching them is a feat on its own. And ensuring that those resources actually reach those communities, especially the ones that need them the most, is really difficult. Partly because when you're a fully remote organization such as Localization Lab, you're primarily using online tools to try and reach people. And it takes having to collaborate with a couple of organizations and gain their trust within their country perspectives in order for them to grant you access to the communities that they work with. And that's because of the funding limitations, right? Everyone is trying to get funding for whatever project or work that they're doing. And already in terms of language justice and localization, because these are like niche kinds of projects that we're working on, it's already challenging in itself because the question always comes up from the donors, I guess, which is what's in it for us. How does this change us or answer our outcomes, or respond to what it is that we're trying to do at any given point in time. Yeah, so I think those are some of the challenges that I've seen coming up so far.

(Soledad) Thank you Chido. T Would you like to add something?

(T) Yeah real quick about the access to, like, people being trusting with people, bringing them, like, digital tools and asking people to engage online. I found it super interesting with the communities that I work with, specifically, Kenyan creatives that people don't want to be online. Like they want to connect with people in person and I'm fine. I was finding it really challenging to try to connect and try to collaborate with people online and virtually it would always be "Okay. Let me have a conversation with you in person. Let's figure it out. Let's sit down and actually talk about things".

And so I think the West often comes in with this approach. Westerners, when they come in and collaborate with and try to work with Global Majority communities it's this assumption that everyone is going to want to be connected to, connected virtually in some way, shape or form. There's this assumption that everyone has access and everyone wants to continue connecting in this way. And I think that's super important when I'm thinking about like being able to reach people. Because you then limit who you're able to reach and who you're able to and the ways in which you're able to collaborate. If you're strictly thinking, okay, we have to use. remote tools, we have to use this only instead of trying to bridge the two worlds, do something in the physical, do something virtually as well, or figure out a way to give communities access in a way that makes them feel comfortable and safe and seen.

And right now in Global Majority spaces, people don't feel safe. Seen heard and included by a lot of technology is because it doesn't include them. It actively harms them. So I completely understand, like people wanting to steer clear and being like I'd rather collaborate and connect

with people in person rather than being in a virtual space. And I'm just very curious and interested in figuring out how to navigate that.

(Soledad) Thank you. Alex. What are you thinking about in relation to these topics?

(Alex) I love everything that's being said here, and I agree, and it can relate to a lot of them, but I want to bring some attention to accessibility. SciELO has been doing a lot of efforts to increase accessibility, not only in our websites, but also in our content and events, webinars and so on. And a big challenge for us is sign language.

Going back to what cacu was saying about how Spanish is spoken in many different countries, and that's very much true. However, when you think about sign languages, even though you have one language that is spoken in many countries, one spoken language, when you use sign language, you have different versions of Spanish sign languages.

So one thing that comes to my mind is that recently we were invited to be part of a webinar from Archive and they wanted to have sign interpreters to increase accessibility. And that webinar, they had people who spoke Portuguese, people who spoke Spanish in it, and they had interpreters live to translate to spoken Portuguese and spoken Spanish.

However, when they try to hire someone, an interpreter, to translate to make the translation to a Spanish sign language, there was a challenge. There was a barrier because sign language is different according to the country. And because it was a webinar, we didn't know from where people would be attending to. That could be people coming from many different countries that speak Spanish.

So, it would be a challenge because you would have to have one interpreter for each country basically. And that became just unsustainable from a financial point of view. And also we didn't know how to handle that on a Zoom webinar. So this just goes to show. that it's a very complex thing not only from what we have been used to, let's say written language and spoken language, but when you add sign language and accessibility, it adds many extra layers of complexity that we need to overcome and create solutions for that.

(Soledad) cacu, What are you thinking when you talk about decolonizing the access to our societies, our participation in digital societies, and how is that in tension with the digital technologies and languages?

(cacu) Yeah, it's hard when you… all of you were talking. I was thinking in many other aspects that we are not including… or a lot of people. And many of you mentioned illustration, you mentioned other ways to approach the reality. And I was thinking in some other aspects that we don't see, not only the English language. I was thinking in, again, in my topics in digital security that I have seen a lot of guides that are illustrated by some people that are in the context. And I really love, to see a guide not only translated, but with illustrations from local communities. And that makes me very happy.

And Alex mentioned also, that in Latin America, here, we have a lot of regions and but it's not the same how indigenous communities or, I mean even the language is the same, there are a lot of different ways to see the reality or how we experience the digital sphere.

So I also remember in… or I found that there are also a lot of perspectives of how the same topic, how we see, and I like a lot that you Sole, you try to do with youth and also with elders. And in a same topic, how in a feminist perspective, in an indigenous perspective, not only language… With all this talking this came to my mind that a lot of things came with this, that we need more local illustrations, we need more local context, we need more feminist perspectives, we need different age perspectives.

And I think that always happens when we're talking about inclusion. And I think that we are worried about language issues… I think we notice also a lot of other issues, and as you mentioned, colonial issues I know many, many things that I like to think I like to reflect. Yeah.

(Soledad) There's a beautiful complexity of challenges and opportunities in our day and age. And how do we translate that and materialize it into actions. You were talking about the issue of accessibility, issues of genders, of generations, of how languages change and how we can facilitate communications or hinder communications through digital technologies. Alex was talking a bit about the different sign languages and that being included within conversations within the academic spaces as well as online academic spaces.

Mohamed, would you like to share your insights on the challenges and advances so far in this field?

(Mohamed) Yeah, a lot of what I wanted to say is already mentioned, but I wanted to expand on the funding and resource limitation and connecting it with, voluntary coordination where there is and the idea of reach to target audiences where it's because it's not a skill everyone has. And it also in the decision making of funders and managers it's not easy to give the issue of community management enough attention. Something that Localization Lab would have a lot of experience besides Global Voices.

And also wanted to touch on… language on the perspective of translation that translation is, for me, translation has two, let's say degrees, like a one degree is translating just to deliver the meaning and then translation to as rewriting where you are rewriting in another language, not just like translating. So, I need to also treat the importance of understanding, not just for four languages where expressions don't exist, but in there are languages that are cross regional where each country has its own variation of expressions for different technical expressions. Like what computer is, what internet is, and then how to expand on that on guides, how to make the guides more more human where non tech savvy people can consume it as mentioned that engineers or geeks, so that tools can, should be adapted to all humans. And that reflects not just translation, but also design on how a lot of open source tools are designed for geeks rather

than humans. And therefore commercial tools work and succeed more than open source tools, in my opinion, largely on this factor.

There's also, the inequality in the face of censorship where a lot of the world doesn't have the capability to reach blocked tools because of government policies and because of the lack of affordability for let's say, using VPNs, another tool to circumvent censorship. But what is really needed is expanding through communities and expansion in the absolute meaning of the words Lingual experience wise, a background wise there are a lot of volunteers can have a lot of backgrounds and can have a multitude of backgrounds as well. And I think the main thing in my experience is that community managers are crucial on how to maximize the output of these complexities and these different backgrounds into reaching justice in many different forms. Thank you.

(Soledad) Yes. And language is also technical language, geeky languages, making the conversation real and welcoming and resonating with that conversation of how we do these intercultural experiments and share the experiences and build community going beyond translation and yeah, and making a digital world more inclusive of different languages.

We're going to close the session today! Thank you again. We very much appreciate your fantastic contributions, and we hope that this conversation has been enlightening for you as well. We will continue to share insights and experiences in future editions of the Lingua Café Voice in various languages and dedicated to different topics. We'll probably reach out to you again.

And for everyone listening, we encourage you to contribute and to check out the Lingua Café website, contribute to the Panorama, and spread the word and support this collective project. Thank you so much. so much. Thank you everyone. Bye.