
Invited Talk

Thursday, May 20th, 13:10

Chairperson: **Mike Rosner**

Maltese at the Crossroads of Technological Developments

Ray Fabri

The current linguistic situation in Malta is a complex one, in particular because both Maltese and English, the two official languages of the Maltese Islands, are used by the local population. Maltese is the native language of approximately 400,000 Maltese living in Malta and Gozo and also some communities abroad. It traces its Arabic origins back to the 11th century. At different phases of its history, it borrowed profusely from Romance and later from English. The combination of a root-based and a stem-based morpho-lexis makes Maltese a particularly intriguing language to describe, analyse and model.

In recent years, Malta has also seen very rapid developments in the use of the Internet and mobile telephony. However, one important area in which Malta still lags behind is the development of computational tools and resources. If Maltese is to develop further, 'modernise' itself and survive, it significant investment must be made both in basic language research and in the development of computational and technological resources and tools for Maltese.

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