

FOUNDATION FOR ENDANGERED LANGUAGES

OGMIOS



The Canadian Language Museum, Toronto. See the interview with the Director, Elaine Gold, in this issue.

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Why not take the chance to meet online each Sunday evening for half an hour?

I thought it would have been fun to invite a different special guest each time, as a surprise. And we got started! Since 2012 we used to organize conferences and meetings in Lombard... we did 50 in different cities and on different topics with different specialists, professionals and teachers (from fashion to botanic, from architecture to astronomy and so on).

But since things changed this year and gathering for Lombard conferences was and is still not possible, we took the chance to meet online.

Last Sunday [in October 2020] we were fourteen people for example, 7 women and 7 men, coming from Switzerland, Mantova, Milan, Bressa, Bergem, Crema, Verbania. Some were Lombards living abroad. In each meeting, some people already know each other, others don't.

In our meetings, each participant speaks his own local variety of the Lombard language with others. This allows each participant to keep his own variety practiced and helps the ones who are developing linguistic rights awareness, that our local varieties are mutually intelligible to a very large extent, in practice totally after the very first experiences! This is a very important point for endangered languages that are not officially recognized as 'languages' by the State and are not allowed to be used as vehicular languages in national media and schools. At this stage of endangerment, in some areas Lombard is by now spoken almost exclusively in the houses with or only by grand-parents, and young potential speakers tend to ignore that they can use exactly the same 'dialect' they are used to hear only in their grand-parents' kitchen in order to talk about everything (science, art, culture...) with people living 350Km far away, namely at the other side of the Lombard speaking region. During these meetings they make the pleasant discovery that they can practice their own 'home dialect' with a lot of people living in a good portion of Northern Italy and Switzerland, and even abroad! They discover that their 'home dialect' is one of the local varieties of the Lombard language.

They discover that they have another language, and that nobody had told them before!

We thought that this is a great chance that we have: we can carry on speaking Lombard from the nearest and the furthest corners of our region and of the world. This is why we organize each Sunday those free online Lombard talks open to anyone who is happy to join and

6. News Articles

Mez'oreta insema : Lombard conversations online

By Simona Scuri

The idea of organizing talks in Lombard via Google Meet or Zoom came to some associated with our association *FarLombard*, *associazione per la lingua lombarda*, soon after our first pandemic lockdown in Lombardy (occurred in March-April 2020).

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try. It is a good exercise to listen, speak, learn and have fun in Lombard!

