

## OLMi Workshop 2026

### Tools for minority languages: practical solutions for speakers, learners and teachers

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#### **Title: Aligning Ecology and Engineering: A Community-Centred Framework for GenAI Chatbots**

This contribution draws on a Resource-Based Model for Revitalisation (Vetter & Strasser 2026). It understands resources as practices, activities, tools, and methods that explicitly require minoritised language use and operate within specific language ecologies. We argue that GenAI Chatbots can function as powerful resources that open opportunities for everyday language use and learning (particularly, but not exclusively, for new speakers), provided that they are embedded in the respective language ecologies and designed and governed through community-centred processes. Conversely, unguided or purely technology-driven chatbot development for minoritised languages risks reinforcing existing asymmetries and harming minoritised languages in rapidly evolving AI-mediated domains.

In this contribution we explore how to design a respectful development pathway for minoritised-language GenAI Chatbots that is ethically robust, linguistically adequate, and aligned with language ideological clarification (Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1998, Kroskrity 2009, Bodó et al. 2023). Following Kroskrity, we understand language ideological clarification as a process, in which questions, emotions and beliefs that possibly hinder revitalisation are identified and examined. Clarification concerns key questions such as “What is the aim of the revitalisation?”, “Which varieties should be promoted?” or “Who counts as a legitimate speaker of the language and why?”

In the process of preparing a new project, we propose a participatory and collaborative framework grounded in existing guidelines developed in the Horizon Europe project “RISE UP – Revitalising Languages and Safeguarding Cultural Diversity”) for working with minoritised communities and for discussing GenAI in minoritised language contexts, emphasising bottom-up agency, mutual respect, and long-term collaboration.

Design and evaluation are linked to the “Six A’s” quality criteria - Availability, Accessibility, Advertisement, Actuality, Acceptance, and Activation - to ensure resources elicit engagement and contribute to revitalisation (Cajka et al. 2024). The development pathway will be developed for the concrete example of Burgenland Croatian, main components of the contribution include a. the creation and maintenance of data infrastructure b. issues of language prestige and c. aspects of acquisition and learning. As to evaluation, participatory strategies are suggested. The evaluation foregrounds community knowledge about language use and communicative contexts and recognises that resources are ecology-specific and not straightforwardly transferable across settings.

Situating chatbots within this framework aligns applied linguistics perspectives (ecology, new speakers, usage-based learning) with technical development, and treats conversational AI as one resource among others that can expand domains of use while respecting community priorities and safeguards. Illustrative references to existing minoritised-language chatbot efforts underscore both feasibility and the need for careful, community-led adaptation.

#### **References**

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