OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

API-Powered Dictionaries
For Digitally Under-Represented Languages

Sandro Cirulli
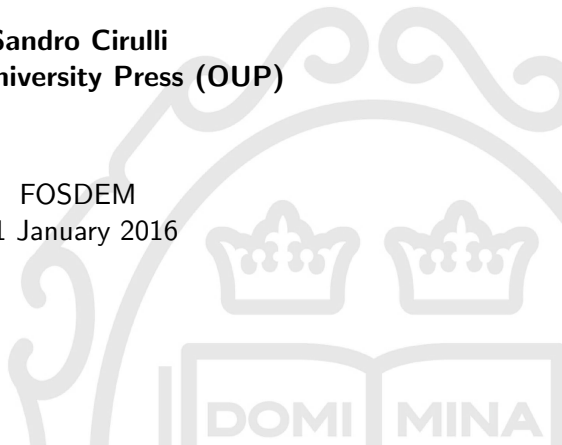**Oxford University Press (OUP)**

FOSDEM
31 January 2016

Table of contents

Less than 5% of the current world languages are in use online

Kornai A (2013) *Digital Language Death.* PLoS ONE 8(10)

Oxford University Press (OUP)

- Oxford University Press (OUP) is a world-renowned **dictionary publisher**

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

- OUP launched the Oxford Global Languages (OGL) initiative to **digitize under-represented languages**

- In September 2015 OUP launched two African languages websites for **isiZulu** and **Northern Sotho**

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Oxford Global Languages (OGL)
Vision

- **Localized websites and digital access** for multiple languages

- Language communities contributing content (**crowdsourcing**)

- Supporting **digitally under-represented languages**

- **Flexible data** serving multiple needs

isiZulu and Northern Sotho websites powered by APIs

What is an API?

- API stands for **Application Programming Interface**

- A (Web) API is a set of rules for **exchanging information** with a website

- An API is a **machine-to-machine interface for receiving and sending data** via HTTP requests

RESTful API
for OGL websites

Demo

Benefits of API
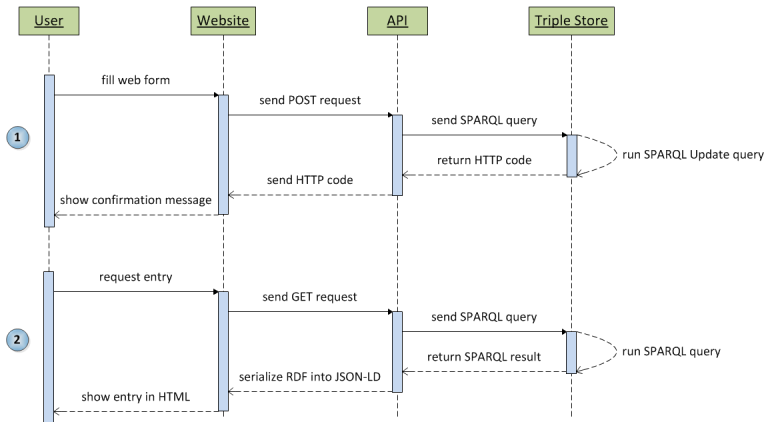
- **Reusability**: data for other languages can reuse the same API thus reducing costs

- **Flexibility**: data can be shipped in multiple formats (XML, JSON, JSON-LD, RDF, etc.)

- **Integration and Automation**: external systems, applications, and developers can easily integrate and consume data

How to contribute

- Contribute new content to **isiZulu, Northern Sotho, Urdu, and Malay** dictionaries - more languages in the next months!

- Try out our **API**

- Experiment with our **SPARQL endpoint** at https://github.com/OUP-DTG/sparql_endpoint

- We are recruting!
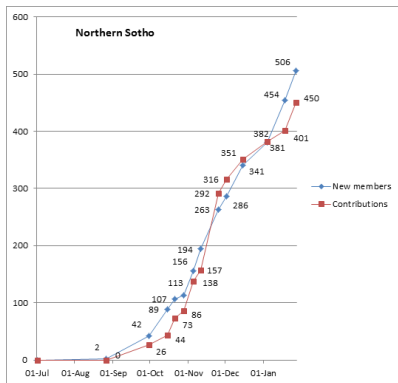
Summary

- ▶ OUP launched the Oxford Global Languages (OGL) initiative to **digitize under-represented languages**

- ▶ isiZulu and Northern Sotho dictionary websites are **powered by APIs**

- ▶ **Contribute** to the OGL initiative and try out our API and SPARQL endpoint

Thank you for your attention!

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Contact:
www.sandrocirulli.net/contact
sandro.cirulli@oup.com

Slides:
www.sandrocirulli.net/fosdem2016

Links:
OGL programme: www.oxforddictionaries.com/ogl
isiZulu website: zu.oxforddictionaries.com
Northern Sotho website: nso.oxforddictionaries.com
SPARQL endpoint: github.com/OUP-DTG/sparql_endpoint