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Klingon as Linguistic Capital

A Sociologic Study of Nineteen Advanced Klingonists

**[Hol Sup 'oH tlhIngan Hol'e'
wa'maH Hut tlhIngan Hol po'wI' nughQeD]**

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Bachelor's thesis, Soc 346, 41–60 p

Spring semester 2004

Supervisor: Bo Isenberg

Department of Sociology

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The Klingon language was created as a "verbal movie-prop" for Star Trek and was not supposed to be a language for human communication. But today thousands of persons have studied Klingon and 20 – 30 persons can be considered fluent in the language. A linguistic field of power, a linguistic market, has been formed. The purpose of this thesis is to research how the Klingon language speakers have experienced the development of the artificial language Klingon during its 20 years of existence. I will also examine the informants' opinion towards Star Trek fandom. The method used is qualitative; I have interviewed Dr Marc Okrand, creator of the Klingon language, and Dr Lawrence M. Schoen, founder of the Klingon Language Institute (KLI). I have also conducted an Internet interview with 17 advanced Klingonists.

As a theoretical framework I use Bourdieu's theory on symbolic capital, Berger's & Luckmann's discussion on secondary socialization and Ferguson categories of Language development.

For Klingon the process of language development is a social process. It is an ongoing dialectic exchange between Marc Okrand and the Klingonists. The KLI acts as a socializing institution and plays an important role for the standardization of the language together with Klingonists with high linguistic capital.

Star Trek is becoming less important for the development of Klingon as only a minority of the Klingonists consider themselves as trekkers and by the modernization of Klingon that gives the language more vocabulary not related to Star Trek concepts.

Keywords: Klingon, artificial language, linguistic capital, sub-cultural capital, socialization, language development.

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Chapter 1 | Introduction [bl'reS]

The topic of this thesis is speakers of an alien language. No, not a *foreign* language -- *alien* as in from outer space. Does that sound strange? Good! Because it actually is a bit strange and certainly most interesting.

Sociologists have always known that language is fundamental to social life and we study this phenomenon from different perspectives; the language part in socialization, Symbolic Interactionism, Discourse analysis, Ethnomethodology etc. Sociolinguists concern themselves with the linguistic behaviour of groups of people; for them language is a property of a social group, rather than of an individual (Labov 1994).

But surely sociologists don't study aliens and their linguistic relations of power? Well, we probably would if we ever got access to an alien society, but in the meantime I will study the fictional alien language Klingon and its human speakers.

In Sweden the word "Klingon" doesn't say much to most people. The term Star Trek rings some bells, but it is not common knowledge as in the United States where Star Trek is a part of American culture. The Klingons are an alien race in the Star Trek universe and have been around since the 60's. Their language – Klingon – is a fully functional language made up for the films and television shows. And Klingon is actually studied and spoken by thousands of people. From zero to thousands Klingonists in twenty years. How does a language react when leaping from fiction to reality and suddenly getting speakers? Or with Bourdieu's term: when a *linguistic market* forms? And in what way does the participants in the linguistic market influence the language?

A study of a language movement cannot be undertaken without a declaration of the authors' own involvement in it. I have been a member of the Klingon Language Institute (KLI) since 1997 and studied Klingon a bit some years ago. I am fascinated by the phenomenon but have never mastered the language.

1.1 Problem and purpose

When the Klingon language was created in 1984 it was just supposed to serve as a "verbal movie-prop" in a Star Trek film and not to be a language for human communication. Today it is a living language with numerous speakers organized in the KLI. Language as such is a social phenomenon and the fact that people decided to learn Klingon and start to use it for communication certainly is sociologically interesting from different angles. To learn an artificial fictional language is by no means necessary. It has no practical use or value outside the social group of Klingonists. However the language is growing both in terms of speakers and in vocabulary and grammar. The language's development is a result of social interaction and conscious decisions in the small community of Klingonists. Saussure once stated that we are bound to the languages as it is, but as Tauli points out such a view overlooks the influence of individual initiative in change of social customs and codes as language. Imitative instinct, authority, prestige and power are all forces that influence such changes

(1968). Therefore I find it interesting to examine and explain social relations among Klingonists by the social process of language development.

The purpose of this thesis is to research how the Klingon language speakers have experienced the development of the artificial language Klingon during its 20 years of existence. I will also examine the respondent's opinion towards Star Trek fandom. Do you have to be a Star Trek-fan to study Klingon? The answer might seem obvious, of course the Klingon Language is linked to Star Trek, but when the language is developing into a living language maybe the links to Star Trek are becoming less important.

1.1.2 Research questions

In this thesis I will present two questions. Within the context of each of these questions I set out to answer two sub-questions.

1. How do nineteen advanced Klingonists experience the development of the Klingon language 1984-2004?

What influence do they think the KLI and the Klingonists have on the language?

What forms of speaker initiated language development do they think are socially acceptable within the community?

2. To what extent are Star Trek and Star Trek fandom important for the development of the Klingon language?

Why do the respondents study Klingon?

What importance does the identity as trekker have for the Klingonists?

“Trekker” is the term used for fans of Star Trek. There is a difference between the terms trekker and trekkie. Trekkie is the most die-hard fan that lives for Star Trek. The trekker is a fan of Star Trek. (Gibberman, 1991, 117).

1.2 Previous research

My thesis is, as far as I know, the first sociologic study of the Klingon language phenomenon. Some linguistic studies of Klingon have been done and more interesting in this context, a socio-linguistic study. In 1999 Judith Hermans made a sociolinguistic profile on Klingon speakers in her Masters thesis. Part of her study dealt with language as a sociological group marker, because her tentative hypothesis was that Klingon speakers were a sociolinguistic group. But her conclusion is that the Klingonists are not a sociolinguistic group at all. The respondents did not have a clear image of their own group, nor did they have the distinct attitude that goes with a real sociolinguistic group. Their only common denominator was a shared interest in the Klingon language and Star Trek (1999).

Peter G. Foster has made a major sociological study of Esperanto. It is an analysis of the history of Esperanto from a sociological point of view. Particular attention is paid to the links between Esperanto and values as peace and understanding (1982).

The phenomenon of Star Trek and its fans has been studied in the field of cultural studies. I have not found any study that focuses on the sub-group of Klingon fandom, however Jennie E. Porter discusses female Klingon fans challenging gender roles. By role-playing a Klingon in the convention context women can express sides of themselves that they are supposed to suppress in their daily life (1999).

Chapter 2 | Background [qun]

When studying the Klingon community it is necessary to know the historic background of artificial languages. Klingon is not an isolated social phenomenon, rather one language in a long line of artificial languages. Involvement in artificial languages movements is mainly a social activity. It is also essential to know the background of Klingon and the organisation behind the Klingonists. A short description of the language will be presented to give the readers a flavour of the alien tongue.

2.1 Artificial languages

Klingon is an artificial language, which means that it is a deliberately constructed language with no native speakers (Fasold, 1984, p. 64-65). Esperanto is perhaps the best-known example of an artificial language. Artificial languages are usually divided in *a priori* and *a posteriori* languages. A *a priori* language means that the language is entirely composed of invented elements not to be found in any existing language, and is often based on a logical classification of ideas. An *a posteriori* language is based on elements of grammar and vocabulary from one or more natural languages. Many artificial languages are a mixture of the two approaches. (Large, 1985).

The idea of constructing languages is old. In ancient Greek the physician Galen (BC 130-200) thought of this. The Abbess St Hildegard created a language of 900 words in the 12th century. But it was first in the 17th century the interest in artificial languages became serious. At first it was mainly scholars who wanted to create a rational, philosophical *a priori* language that would reflect “nature” as it was revealed by 17th -century science. Gradually the interest shifted towards *a posteriori* languages as an international auxiliary language. A constructed language would be acceptable for all nationalities.

Most of the early artificial languages were just ideas, outlines for languages or with just a handful of speakers. The first artificial language that gained support and interest in some amount was the *a priori* language Solresol created by Jean-François Sudre in the middle of the 19th century. Solresol is based upon the seven musical notes, and can be played as well as spoken.

Although few people remember Ludvig Zamenhof's name, many heard about his creation: Esperanto published in 1887. Esperanto is an *a posteriori* language and resembles the languages in the Indo-European linguistic family, both in grammatical structure and in vocabulary. It was designed to be easy to learn and understand. It is clearly the most successful among artificial languages, in the sense that in the course of 115 years it has gained a stable speech community (Forster, 1982).

The differences between an artificial *a posteriori* language and a natural language are only one of degree. All natural languages are to greater or smaller extent created by conscious decisions such as dictionaries and spelling reforms. Many natural languages have undergone quite big planned changes. Take the two Norwegian languages Landsmål and Nynorsk that originally was constructed by one person, Ivar Aasen, on the basis of archaic dialects (Tauli, 1968, p. 22-23). This science is called Language Planning, a sociolinguistic discipline. The greatest success of Language Planning is probably the revival of Hebrew as a language in Israel. One could argue that Modern Hebrew in fact was an artificial *a posteriori* language before it got native speakers.

Pidgin languages are interesting because they share the feature of the artificial languages by not having any native speakers. A pidgin is a hybrid language with vocabulary from one language and grammatical structure from another. When pidgin becomes the native language for a speech community it is called a creole language (Fasold, p. 63-65). Pidgins could be described as deliberately created *a posteriori* languages and thus be classified as artificial languages.

Another group of artificial languages are those created for literary purposes in books or films. Often the languages are just described or the readers get an exotic word or a short sentence. But in some cases the languages are important to the plot or even *are* the plot. In “Nineteen Eighty-four” by George Orwell (1949) the role of the language Newspeak it is not just important to the plot; it is a fascinating thought on how the state can control the minds of its citizens by reforming the language. In “A Clockwork Orange” by Anthony Burgess (1962) the readers actually learn the fictive language Nadsat while reading the book. And in some cases the author makes up complete languages as Tolkien with the Elvish languages Quenya and Sindarin in “The Lord of the Rings”. (Meyers, 1980).

A last category of languages that can be described as artificial are computer languages as Fortran and Pascal, which are constructions with syntax and vocabulary. But they are designed to pass instructions from a human to a computer and not for human communications.

2.2 The Klingon language

The Klingon language is a by-product of the popular science fiction TV-shows and films Star Trek. In the original TV-show in the 60's the Klingons never spoke their native language. In the first film “Star Trek: The Motion Picture” (1979), the world heard spoken Klingon for the first time. In the opening scene a few lines of Klingon is barked out on the bridge of a Klingon warship. In the beginning the actors improvised the speech of their Klingon characters. When Paramount Pictures planned the third Star Trek movie: “Star Trek III : The Search for Spock” (1984) they also planned to use more of the Klingon language to make the movie more consistent. They contacted the linguist Dr Marc Okrand to design a language that would have an “alien” feeling to it. Okrand reviewed the linguistic material available and on this basis invented the language known as **tlhIngan Hol**.¹

Marc Okrand never intended anyone to actually learn the language. His thought was that scriptwriters and actors would consult his work when creating Klingon characters. The Klingon Dictionary (TKD) was published as a merchandising product for fans to collect.

No one realized that Klingon would become a language for human communication.

2.2.1 The Klingon Language Institute

The Klingon Language Institute (KLI) was founded by Dr Lawrence M. Schoen in 1991 with the intent of “bringing together individuals interested in the study of Klingon linguistics and culture, and providing a forum for discussion and the exchange of ideas” (KLI web page). Dr Schoen, as a college professor, modelled KLI after academic professional organisations and their journal, **HolQeD** (**Hol** language **QeD** science), is a scholarly journal that utilizes blind peer review and is indexed by the Modern Language Association. The KLI

¹ There is more than one Klingon language. Most notable is Klingonaase from John M. Ford's novel “The final reflection” (1984)

has translated and published “Hamlet”, “Much Ado about Nothing” and “Gilgamesh” in Klingon. Over 1 500 persons from 50 countries has joined the Institute.

2.2.2 tlhIngan Hol

Klingon, or **tlhIngan Hol**, is a guttural, agglutinating OVS-language. OVS means that the word order is object-verb-subject, i.e. the reverse order of English. The OVS word order is very rare in natural languages only about 1 per cent has this word order (Comrie, 1996). Okrand tried to make Klingon as alien as possible for English-speakers. Therefore the language includes combinations of grammar and sounds that does not exist in any human language. Klingon is an *a priori* language; most of the vocabulary is arbitrarily and made up by Okrand. But some words have connections to English and other natural languages; Okrand likes to put in jokes in the Klingon words. As the word for fish – **ghotI'** – according to an old joke the word “ghoti” in English is pronounced “fish”: *gh* like in “enough”; *o* like in “women”; *ti* like in “nation.”²

This is an example of Klingon from the TKD:

puq legh yaS – the officer sees the child
puq child, **legh** see, **yaS** officer

This simple sentence shows the OVS-structure. But often Klingon sentences are much more complicated considering that Klingon noun can carry more than five affixes and verbs more than ten. (Okrand, 1992). A more complex two-words sentence from TKD:

bljatlhHa'chugh qaHoH – If you say the wrong thing I will kill you
bl- you/none, **jatlh** speak, **-Ha'** undo, **-chugh** if, **qa-** I/you, **HoH** kill

This shows the use of prefixes and suffixes. The verb **jatlh** (speak) is embedded by affixes that make the word mean “If you say the wrong thing”.

2.2.3 Orthography and phonology

There are two ways to write **tlhIngan Hol**. Most Klingonist use the romanized way to write that Marc Okrand invented to make it easier for the actors to pronounce the language. The capital letters indicate that it should be pronounced differently from English. The other way to write is with the Klingon writing system **pIqaD**. The **pIqaD** used by the KLI and most Klingonists has for many years been called **pIqaDqoq** – so called **pIqaD** because the Klingon writing system is just mentioned in the TKD but no examples are given. In the movies and TV-shows glyphs resembling the **pIqaD** that the KLI uses are shown, but no explanation is given. (Schoen, 1992).

Ⓐ	Ⓚ	Ⓜ	Ⓝ	Ⓔ	Ⓘ	Ⓢ	Ⓣ	Ⓛ	Ⓞ	Ⓝ	Ⓝ
a	b	ch	D	e	gh	H	I	j	l	m	n ng
Ⓞ	Ⓟ	Ⓠ	Ⓡ	Ⓢ	Ⓣ	Ⓤ	Ⓥ	Ⓦ	Ⓧ	Ⓨ	'
o	p	q	Q	r	S	t	tlh	u	v	w	y

² Okrands jokes can be brought down in four categories: *Onomatopoeia*; ‘aw’ sting, *Orthography*; ‘ugh be heavy, *Simple puns*; toy’ to serve (a master), *Grammatical jokes*; paw to arrive – paw’ to collide. (Schoen, 1992)

Chapter 3 | Theory *[nger]*

In the process of building the theoretical framework for this thesis I have found it constructive to search not only sociological literature but also sociolinguistic. The field of sociolinguistics has two major subdivisions, one with language as starting point and the other with society. The later approach could be described as a special form of sociology where language is seen as a social problem and resource. Ferguson compare it to “political sociology” (1968, p. 221) and Fasold say that it is “. . . far more a socio-political matter than a strictly linguistic one.” (1984, p 261). And Labov says that sociolinguistics concern the linguistic behaviour of groups of people (1994). From sociolinguistics I intend to use theories on language development.

3.1 Bourdieu’s forms of capital

In his theory on symbolic capital Pierre Bourdieu’s discuss three main forms of capital: economic, cultural and social. Capital can be translated to assets or resources and thus not only mean solid things that economic capital represents – as money and property. Symbolic capital could for example be a noble title, an academic degree, or a prestigious job; in other words, things other than money that may open doors for you within a group or in society. The term cultural capital is a kind of symbolic capital that usually derives from a finer social background and knowledge about the fine arts. Social capital concerns relationships, such as kinship, friendship and networks. In addition to these major types of capital Bourdieu uses several subcategories of capital as linguistic, academic, intellectual, information and artistic capital.

All human actions take place within social fields, which are arenas for the struggle of the resources. Individuals, institutions, and other agents try to distinguish themselves from others, and acquire capital that is useful or valuable on the arena. Different fields could be the field of politics, religion, philosophy or linguistics (1991, 1992).

3.1.1 Sub -cultural capital

Sarah Thornton has remarked that what unifies Bourdieu’s forms of capital is that they are all to be found in his own social world where the participants have a high amount of “institutionalised cultural capital” (Thornton, 1995, p 11). She argues that it is possible to observe subspecies of capital in other less privileged fields and coined the term “sub-cultural capital” to use when studying youth and popular culture. Thornton means that “hipness” is a sort of sub-cultural capital. In the world of Star Trek fandom sub-cultural capital could be trivia knowledge, a fine collection of merchandise, a stylish uniform or the ability to speak Klingon. Sub-cultural capital is not as closely linked to class as Boudieu’s cultural capital. It “confers status on its owner in the eyes of the relevant beholder” (ibid.)

3.1.2 The linguistic market

Linguistic capital is one of Bourdieu’s subcategories of capital. The value of the capital in this case is how one speaks. If someone from, let’s say, the upper class in Great Britain as much as open her mouth she immediately receives a linguistic profit. The very nature of her speech says that she is

authorized to speak, so much that it hardly matters what she says. Of course there are situations where an upper class accent is totally wrong and will be a problem instead of an advantage.

The struggle of linguistic capital takes place in the field of linguistic. Bourdieu speaks of a linguistic market that appears as soon as “someone produces an utterance for receivers capable of assessing it, evaluating it and setting a price on it” (Bourdieu, 1993, p.79). So when two persons meet and start to speak they form a linguistic market for the moment. But a linguistic market can of course be much larger and more abstract.

Bourdieu refers to the market for Latin in France of today as an example. This linguistic market is threatened and therefore defended by people speaking Latin. To guarantee the preserving of the market it needs new speakers, so therefore the people who have invested in Latin try to defend Latin in the school system. Often the defenders speak as if Latin has some value outside the market (as logical qualities) but in practice, Bourdieu says, they only defend the market and protect their position. Without the linguistic market their competence is no longer a capital (Bourdieu, 1991).

In the case of Klingon it certainly is a linguistic market. It is a threatened market because it is rather small and the Klingonists who have invested in Klingon would have to defend their market by getting more speakers.

3.2 Socialization

Berger and Luckmann are important theorists in this field of the Sociology of Knowledge. They explain how we accept the reality of everyday life based on a social stock of knowledge that we develop, we incorporate into institutions, meld into a symbolic universe, which we then pass on to future generations and further reinforce via socialization. This process of socially constructing reality through language, signs and social interactions is so all-encompassing such that it becomes difficult to challenge. (1966)

The process by which children, or other new members of society, learn the way of life of their society is known as socialization. As children grow older secondary socialization takes place and the main agents are the school and peer groups (ibid. pp. 149). Adults continue the socialization for specialist roles in society through education systems and social groups by building on the basic assumed primary socialization. Doctors learn to be doctors and journalists learn to be journalists. And it would be reasonable to presume that Klingonists learn to be Klingonists and that the KLI in this process acts as a socializing institution.

Socialisation can never be totally effective, and the subjective reality it imposes is subject to continual erosion; for this reason, every viable social group must develop means to reinforce and maintain their social reality. Berger and Luckmann writes: “The most important vehicle of reality-maintenance is conversation” (ibid. 152). Additionally, letter writing can serve as a means of bridging conversational discontinuities. Nowadays e-mail and Internet provide important forum for communicative exchanges that construct, maintain and reinforce individual or group points of view. This perspective is interesting while most communication in the KLI and Klingonists community take place on Internet.

3.3 Language development

Languages are not static systems. They are constantly in a dynamic flux. Speakers can choose from the use of one language, dialect or style to the use of another in a different situation. Speakers

always have alternatives available and the existence of alternatives makes Language planning possible. One approach in Language planning is Language development a field with Charles Ferguson as a leading name. Ferguson uses three categories for measuring language development: graphization, standardization and modernization. (Ferguson 1968).

Graphization means the adoption of a writing system and the establishment of spelling and other orthographic conventions, such as capitalization and punctuation. Ferguson remarks: “the use of writing leads to the folk belief that the written language is the ‘real’ language and speech is a corruption of it.” This often leads to the opinion that the written form becomes more conservative and that the spoken form may be regarded as derived from it.

Standardization is the process of one variety of the language becoming accepted as the “best” form of language. One dialect or regional languages are singled out to be the standard language in a nation or speech community.

Modernization is the process to make a language more up to date, by providing the language with specialist vocabulary needed in a modern society. According to Ferguson there are two aspects: the expansion of lexicon of the language by new words and expressions and the development of new styles and forms of discourse. Garvin uses the term intellectualisation (Garvin1973) for Ferguson’s modernization.

The new vocabulary a developing language needs can either be created from elements already existing in the language or by borrowing terms from some other language.

Ferguson’s model is not created to analyse artificial languages but should be able to apply on any language developing.

Chapter 4 | Method [*mIwmey*]

The main objective of this thesis is heuristic. I want to unveil and explain the reasons and the background for the social process of the Klingon language development from the viewpoint of the respondents. Through a qualitative approach one is able to gain an insight of experiences that individuals have. The method for gathering information used in the study is therefore primarily qualitative and I have designed my research as a case study.

The phenomenon I am studying is well suited to be researched in a qualitative case study; the study is particularistic in that it focuses on a rather specific phenomenon and group of people. It is heuristic, as it never has been studied before. Inductive as my study does not put forward a hypothesis that I intend to test and verify or falsify, instead I am interested in revealing new relationships and understandings. And it is descriptive as it shows the influence of personalities on issues and includes vivid material. (Merriam, 1988). I am interested in process, meaning and understanding and want to describe my findings with words rather than numbers. The need of an overall picture has also motivated my choice of qualitative method. (Holme och Solvang, 1991)

Generalization in a statistical sense is not a purpose of qualitative research and the results in my study should not be taken as valid for the whole community of Klingon speakers. But one should also bear in mind that the total population of advanced Klingon speakers is quite small. In all probability the 19 persons in my study constitutes more than half of the total population of advanced Klingonists.

4.1 Research design

I have designed a research mix consisting of interviews, Internet interviews and documents to gather data for my study. Interviews are a common feature of the qualitative approach and I have done two “expert interviews” with the two most important persons in the Klingon language movement: Dr Marc Okrand, creator of the language, and Dr Lawrence M Schoen, the founder of the KLI. Then I have constructed a qualitative survey, which I call an Internet interview that has been sent to 24 advanced Klingonists. I also use documents (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, chapter 6) of various kinds; the KLI’s journal **HolQeD** and the KLI e-mail discussion list.

The interviews were conducted in three steps. First I interviewed Lawrence Schoen, analysed his answers and then constructed the Internet interview and finally when I had the data from the Internet interviews I interviewed Marc Okrand. In a qualitative study the analysis of data is not a separate phase of the study, it is a dialectic ongoing interaction between data collection and analysis (ibid. pp. 204). The analysis starts with hunches when formulating the first draft to your research problem.

The interviews with my two “experts” were semi-structured in-depth interviews and done by telephone for more than one hour. I had a prepared guide of topics and a few prepared questions but let the interview be a conversation and tried to slip in questions naturally if it was needed

(Andersson, 1994). Both interview subjects are very used to being interviewed and to talk about Klingon, which made the interviews easy.

My Internet interview is a qualitative survey with open-ended questions (ibid. p. 26-27). I chose this way to reach a large part of the Klingonist community; I have probably reached a majority of the Klingonists that are fluent in Klingon. The alternative was to do fewer telephone interviews, which I turned down as I had the unique opportunity to reach a large part of a population with a qualitative approach.

The Klingonists community is scattered around the world and are held together by the Internet. Most Klingon communication is conducted on the KLI's e-mail discussion list. The respondents are therefore used to express themselves in written language and to respond to an Internet interview would not be a major problem for them. The character of the questions is also suitable for written answers. It may be hard to respond in an initiated and extensive manner to questions on language development during one short interview occasion. The quality of the answers will probably be better if the respondent have time to think it over. My respondents have in most cases responded lengthy and extensive. Answers to one single question that takes more than one page to elaborate are not unusual.

4.2 Selection of informants

Researchers usually cannot make direct observations of every individual in the population they are studying. Instead, they collect data from a subset of individuals – a sample. There are two basic types of sampling: probability and non-probability sampling. For a qualitative case study the method of choice is non-probability sampling (Merriam 1988).

The selection of informants is crucial (Hammersley & Atkinson, pp.133-139). The two most important persons in the Klingon language movement Marc Okrand and Lawrence Schoen were obvious choices for my study. On a very early stage I made sure that Marc Okrand was willing to take part in my research.

The selection of informants for the Internet interview can be described as a judgment sampling – I have used my knowledge and judgement in selecting a unit of the population for study. As a member of the KLI and as a long time observer of the KLI's e-mail discussion list I have a pretty good knowledge of which Klingonists who would be relevant to my study. I wanted the most advanced Klingonists who are actually fluent in Klingon. Although thousands of people have studied Klingon not many has mastered the language in both written and spoken form. It is hard to estimate exactly how many that is fluent in Klingon. "Fluent" is hard to define in a community with no native speakers as a reference. Lawrence Schoen estimates that between 20 and 30 people could be considered fluent. With a more stringent definition, it might be as few as 10.

Of the selected informants ten have earned the title of Beginners grammarian "a title of great honor and respect in the KLI. It refers generally to one with an acknowledged deep command of the Klingon language" (KLI Wiki). The Beginners grammarian, they serve one at the time, helps all beginners on the e-mail discussion list. Several of the informants, not being Beginners grammarian have concluded the third and highest level of the Klingon Language Certification Program. Others selected for the study have showed their mastery of the language in the journal **HolQeD** and on the discussion list.

4.3 The Internet in interview

The participants received the Internet interview by e-mail with an introduction letter. I got their e-mail addresses from the KLI's mailing list, which I also explained in the letter. All informants were guaranteed anonymity (Andersson, pp. 127). Most of the respondents would probably have participated in the interview with their own names, but to be sure that as many as possible answered as honest as possible I thought it best to make it clear that their answers would be handled anonymously. This causes some trouble for me when writing the thesis. In such a small community it is hard to make the answers anonymous for others in the community.

Two reminders were sent out to encourage as many as possible to complete the interview.

The questions are arranged in different themes. First I have a few background questions and then some questions about trekkers, conventions and fan groups. The next batch of questions concerned the social process of language development and thereafter the Klingon writing system **pIqaD**. Finally I ask some questions on the respondent's view of the future of Klingon.

4.4 The researcher's role in a case study

In a qualitative case study the researcher is the primary instrument for collecting data and analyse it according to Merriam. This research approach is not suitable for all; the researcher must have tolerance for ambiguity, be sensitive to the context, to the data and maybe most important; to personal bias (1988).

As I stated in the introduction I am a member of the KLI and I have visited the **qep'a' chorghDIch** -- the eighth world conference of the KLI. I have met Marc Okrand and Lawrence Schoen as well as several of the informants in my Internet interview. The fact that I am a Klingonist and that I am known to a part of the community probably made it easier to get access to my informants – something that otherwise can be a problem for researchers as Hammersley & Atkinson points out (1995, chapter 3). They also discuss insider-problems that I certainly have; every experience I have from my years as a member of the KLI, will in some way reflect the way I formulate my questions and interpret the interviews. I am aware of the risk of me being biased and try to think of it whenever I am in a situation where my selections can influence the study.

4.5 Qualitative analysis

Qualitative analysis strives to unveil and interpret underlying patterns. The source of much of the methodological thinking behind qualitative research comes from the hermeneutic tradition. This tradition is concerned with interpretation and understanding, and the hermeneutic approach within the scientific field of sociology is characterised by its object of study, the unique actions of man and phenomena seen in their respective contexts of time, space, and meaning. The interpretation in itself is dependent on the researcher's power of insight. It is therefore of utmost importance that the researcher keeps an open mind so that new aspects of the text are allowed to stand out. Hence the hermeneutic research is, in opposite to the positivistic, subjective in the meaning that the researcher consciously uses his/her values in the research process (Tebelius, 1987).

The analysis is influenced by a number of factors such as the social context, time, the respondents and the respondent validation. (Hammersley & Atkinson). I have taken these factors in account as well as the concepts of validity and reliability. Internal validity deals with the question of how one's results match reality. With qualitative methods the problems with internal validity is minor (Merriam, pp. 174–188). I have used the triangulation method respondent validation as a strategy to ensure internal validity (Hammersley & Atkinson, pp. 230–232). I use multiple sources of data and have interviewed informants with different positions within the organisation. External validity deals with the question to which extent the results of one study can be applied to other situations. To guarantee external validity I have used informants from both the US and Europe, and my informants consist of a majority of the total population. (ibid. pp. 173–177). Reliability refers to the extent to which one's results can be repeated. This is problematic as human behaviour (and language) is never static. (ibid. p. 170). The measures taken are triangulation, explaining my research situation and the theory and method behind the study to make it possible for others to repeat my study.

Chapter 5 | Result [ta'] and Discussion [vIngach]

I sent out 24 Internet interviews. Two e-mails bounced and never reached their recipients. 17 returned the Interview. 11 are Americans, 1 Canadian and the other 5 respondents are from Europe; 2 Germans, 1 Polish, 1 Belgian and 1 Swede. 4 are women and 13 men.

The average age is 36 and so is the median age. The youngest respondent is 24 and the oldest 51.

The education level of the informants is high. Only 1 has never attended college or university. 3 persons have a PhD and 1 is a graduate student. 4 have a Masters degree (two persons even have several different degrees) and 3 have a Bachelors degree. And the remaining 5 persons have “some college”. The last group includes students.

In 1999 Judith Hermans made a sociolinguistic profile on Klingon speakers in her Masters thesis:

“The average Klingon user in my survey is a Caucasian male, about 31,5 years old, living in a city somewhere in the United States. ...He speaks English as his first language and has a high education . . .”
(Hermans, 1999, p.42)

Her survey is not based on the exact same population as I am studying. Everyone with some interest in Star Trek and Klingon could answer and not just the advanced speakers. But the results are quite in line with my results. Notice that the average age in the 1999 study was 31,5 years. That means the average Klingon user in Hermans study would be 36, 5 years today!

Besides the group of informants that have answered my Internet interview I also have my two expert informants Marc Okrand and Lawrence Schoen. In all 19 informants.

5.1 The Klingonists

I have given my 17 Internet informants aliases from A to Q to keep them anonymous. In a small community like this it is extra hard to guarantee the respondents confidentiality. Therefore I have not given any exact age, and as matter of fact I don't give any age at all for the few female respondents. I have also decided just to state if the respondent is North American (USA, Canada) or European (Germany, Belgium, Poland and Sweden). In a few cases I have exchanged words or concepts in quotes not to give their identity away. I have made sure that these changes not influence the context (Kvale, 1997).

Adam is in his thirties and has a high academic education. He doesn't consider himself a trekker and studies Klingon primarily because he likes languages. North American.

Bert is in his forties and has studied at college but doesn't have a degree. He doesn't consider himself a trekker anymore. He studies Klingon because it is an interesting language and because he shares many interests and attitudes with other Klingonists. North American.

Charles is in his forties and has an academic degree. He states that he is a trekker and has studied linguistics. He thinks that Klingon is a mental challenge that makes you think in different ways and Klingonists tend to be his kind of people. North American.

David is in his thirties and has a high academic education. He doesn't think that he is a trekker and has studied linguistics. Klingon interests him as he has a general interest in language. European.

Erica has no academic education. She considers herself a trekker and is active in fan organisations and attends fan conventions. She has not studied linguistic but several languages and she started to learn Klingon because she was a trekker. European.

Fred is around thirty and has some college but no degree. He is a trekker and has become even more interested in Star Trek after learning Klingon. He has studied linguistics and is fascinated by Klingon's "non-human" character. North American.

George is in his twenties and has an academic degree. He used to be a trekker but doesn't consider himself to be one now. He has studied linguistics, but it was his interest in Star Trek that originally led him to Klingon. But now he studies Klingon because he finds the language and its speakers interesting. North American.

Henry is in his thirties and has some college education but no degree. He doesn't consider himself a trekker, but are interested in how the Klingons are depicted in Star Trek. He has never studied linguistic but several languages. He learned Klingon to use as a code language among his friends, the more he learned about Klingon and Klingons the more interested he became. North American.

Irwin is in his thirties and has a high academic education. He thinks he is a trekker and has studied linguistics. He studies Klingon mainly due to his big linguistic interest. North American.

Jenny has a high academic education. She used to think of herself as a trekker but doesn't watch Star Trek anymore. She has studied linguistics and her interest in languages and Star Trek led her to Klingon. European.

Kim has an academic degree. She doesn't consider herself to be a trekker and has studied linguistics. She doesn't really know why she studies Klingon, it has just intrigued her for almost a decade. North American.

Larry is in his thirties and has an academic degree. He says he's not a trekker and that he has not studied linguistics. He likes languages, especially unusual ones, and therefore studies Klingon. North American.

Morris is in his twenties and has some college education but no academic degree. He used to be more of a devoted trekker but still consider himself to be one. The study of languages is just a hobby and he has gained most of his general linguistic knowledge by learning Klingon. He started to learn Klingon to improve his Klingon role-playing character. European.

Ned is around fifty and has an academic degree. He says that he's not a trekker. He has never studied linguistics. He has always been interested in languages and started out to learn several, and one day he stumbled over the Klingon Dictionary. North American.

Oscar is around fifty and has an academic degree. He is not really a trekker and has studied several languages. He enjoys learning languages and especially artificial ones because they are easy to learn. North American.

Paula has an academic degree. She doesn't consider herself to be a trekker anymore. She has never studied linguistics but languages. Klingon was the first language she encountered that didn't have Indo-European roots and that made it interesting. Klingon speakers are guaranteed to be interesting and therefore she continues her studies.

Quentin is around thirty and has some college but no degree yet. He states that he has been a trekker but not anymore. He really doesn't know why he studies Klingon, but it was Klingon that made him interested in linguistic, which he now has studied. European.

Lawrence M Schoen, 44 years, has a PhD in psycholinguistics and is the creator of the Klingon Language Institute (KLI). He really doesn't consider himself a trekker even if most people assume he is in his position. He attends fan conventions but only when he gives speeches.

Marc Okrand, 55 years, has a PhD in linguistics and is the creator of the Klingon language. He says he has become a trekker now, but was not when he started with Klingon.

5.2 To be socialized as a Klingonist

Already in the brief presentation of the informants we can see something interesting. Only a minority of the Klingonists identify themselves as trekkers. Several of the Klingonists say that they have been trekkers in the past but have ceased to be so. And then we have a group who don't consider themselves as trekkers at all. Lawrence Schoen who has a very good knowledge of members of the KLI, can see two major groups interested in Klingon:

“You have people who are Star Trek fans, trekkers or trekkies, and within that group you have people who are Klingons . . . members of both groups are drawn to the language . . . particularly among the Klingon fan, they are role-playing, they have a Klingon persona, they use make-up, uniforms, so they want some of the language to complete their character if you will. And sometimes they get hooked on the language. The other group could care less of the Star Trek, they have no real interest in Star Trek, they come to the language because of the language. These are the people that probably already studied Esperanto or Tolkien's Eldarin languages or dozens of other naturally occurring languages”

Lawrence Schoen estimates that 60—70 per cent of the people that have ever been members of the KLI were drawn in by the popularity of Star Trek. And more than half of the people who have stayed by the KLI were people drawn in by the language.

Most of the informants have studied linguistics or languages and there seems to be no difference between trekkers and non-trekkers in this regard. Some of the respondents have actually gotten their interest in linguistics or languages from Klingon.

“After finding Klingon in my High school days, I went on to study linguistics (or, rather—me being a computer person and all—language engineering) at university. Before finding Klingon I was utterly disinterested in grammar, and language.”

Quentin

Fan organisations function pretty much as other organisations also as social hierarchies where fans share a common interest also competing over fan knowledge, access to the object of fandom and status (Hills, 2002, chapter 2). In the world of Star Trek and Klingon fandom things like uniforms, trivia knowledge, official rank in the fan organisation, possession of autographs and other collectable memorabilia etc. give status. This is the sort of cultural capital that Bourdieu uses as a metaphor. Sarah Thornton has adapted this to sub-cultural capital for fan culture (1995).

So for fans dressing up as Klingons and role-playing Klingon characters one kind of sub-cultural capital would be the knowledge of Klingon phrases or even better to speak Klingon.

“They love the language, they consider it a part of their culture, it's very important, some of them make a greater effort than others to learn it, some of them may not learn it very well, but they all wanna learn some words and phrases. The ones who are organized into clubs, or “ships” I guess, usually have somebody who is the “language officer” . . . they like to incorporate Klingon phrases in their ceremonies and things like that. But even if they don't speak it well they are all very aware of that it is a part of the

whole thing, to be a Klingon and do it right; you should get the language right as the same way as you should get the right kind of bumps on your forehead and the right kind of things on your uniform.”

Marc Okrand

There seems to be some sort of consensus among my informants that even most Klingon fans think that it is weird to actually learn to speak Klingon. Several informants mention that the dressed-up Klingons lack the patience to really study Klingon beyond a few phrases.

“They vary from admiration of our skills; to impatience with what they perceive as extreme rigidity about something that they want only to use in their own way, to probably feeling that we are too extreme about the language, in the same way they would feel about a member of their group who spent ages and ages working on his costume gloves, while the rest of his costume was not adequate.”

Paula

At least up to a certain degree the knowledge of Klingon would render you sub-cultural capital among most fans. If you pay too much attention to the language it seems as you risk losing sub-cultural capital in the wider Klingon fan circle.

The Klingonists community is a linguistic market with the terms of Bourdieu (1992, p.79). Thus, the symbolic economic rules are relevant and the Klingonists speech varieties function as linguistic capital on the hierarchy of the legitimate language. Well, maybe big word for a small language. But the better your Klingon is the more linguistic capital you have.

The Klingon fan in an ordinary (not focused on the language) Klingon fan group will not be valued after her linguistic capital before she really takes the step to use Klingon for communication. As long as she memorise Klingon phrases she may gain sub-cultural capital in her fan setting. To know the right Klingon phrase in a situation or to be able to help fellow Klingon fans with translations enhance her status in the eyes of the relevant beholder (Thornton, 1995, p 11). However, linguistic capital gets its value first on the proper linguistic market, and the linguistic market is almost synonymous with the KLI. When she gains linguistic capital, she may lose her sub-cultural capital if the ordinary Klingon fans, as my informants indicate, perceive Klingon speakers as weird.

Many Klingonists seem to lose their interest in Star Trek after speaking Klingon a while. This may be a result of that the average age is higher among Klingonists than Klingon fans. Star Trek fandom is in many ways a youth culture (Gibberman, 1991).

However the KLI as a socializing institution is probably one reason for the fact that many Klingonists not consider themselves as trekkers anymore. In the process of Klingonists becoming Klingonists is not only the process of languages learning. A kind of secondary socialization (Berger & Luckmann) is occurring when interacting in the peer group of KLI. Officially the KLI emphasize that they not are a fan organization. Their journal it is not a newsletter or a fanzine, it is supposed to be a scholarly journal, indexed by the Modern Language Association, that uses blind peer review. The education level of the Klingonists is as we have seen very high and it would be reasonable to assume that the use of an academic language and style is endorsed.

“. . . We received many, many members, people joining up and then not renewing, because they thought they were joining a fan club. And were upset or perhaps disappointed to discover, that they were expected to work and learn a language . . . they complained the journal wasn't fun and that it was hard. I'm sorry they have seemed to be misled somewhere . . . it's not a fan group!”

Lawrence Schoen

The KLI as a socializing institution may not encourage the social role of being a traditional Star Trek fan, but rather the academic identity, as most of my informants have. On the other hand there is no contradiction between being a fan and using academic methods to examine the subject of fandom. Matt Hills talks about the “fan scholar” who is not properly recognised in academia: “Bizarrely, the fanzine-as-dissertation has been entirely ignored in academic work on fandom” (2002, p. 18).

5.3 The social process of Language development

The next set of questions concerns the development of the Klingon language. When asked for the most important aspects of the development of the Klingon language most respondents don't mention changes in the language but structural social occurrences as the forming of the KLI, the Paramount decision to give the Klingons a language, the publishing of the Klingon Dictionary, Internet, the KLI's mailing-list, getting a critical mass of speakers and that Okrand is still active in the development of the language.

“Our use of the Internet is clearly instrumental in Klingon's development. We use the language daily, we have the Wiki, the KLI website, the e-mail discussion forums, the MUSH, **Qo'noS QonoS**. If it weren't for the KLI, I think Klingon speakers would have a very difficult time staying in touch and using the language. Finally, I think the fact that it's Star Trek has a lot to do with it, too. The fact that there's a rich fictional background to the Klingons gives this language incredible character, and makes speaking it fun. If you're speaking Esperanto, you can't ask yourself, 'how would an esperantoan express this idea,' because there's no such thing as an Esperantoan. There are fictional Klingons with a fictional culture, so one can ask 'How would a (fictional) Klingon express this idea,' and that makes it more fun.”

Adam

Regarding to actual changes in the language the KLI's yearly wishlist for new words and grammar to Okrand are mentioned and so is the speakers' ability to stretch and pull a language when using it for communicating thoughts. Clearly a social course of action, the speakers in the KLI are active agents in the language development.

“. . . The expansion of the role (and list) of idioms and expressions. The expansion of the use of polysyllabic roots, for that matter (which used to be rare, but new words often are bisyllabic now).”

Irwin

a/ The ever-expanding vocabulary.

b/ New ways of expressing various ideas, e.g. the phrase: **X-vaD Y ponglu'** to express the meaning of “Y is called X”. Premodifying NPs with **meH**-clauses, as in: **vutmeH mlw** (the way of cooking sth)”

Jenny

Larry presents an idea that I think plays quite a big role for many Klingonists: the meta-context.

“I think the most important aspect of the development of the language is that in a way it pretty much doesn't develop, except through occasional revelations from Marc Okrand. All of the notable members of the language community engage, to some degree, in the fiction that Klingon is a real, natural language spoken by a race of real aliens, and that the only access we have to the language is Dr. Okrand and Maltz, the Klingon prisoner Dr. Okrand keeps in his basement. We know it isn't true, of course, but it allows us to concentrate more of our efforts on using the language rather than debating what to do with it or how to improve it.”

Larry

Many Klingonists choose to perceive and treat Klingon as a “real”, actual alien language and not as an artificial language. Thus they are not interested in creating new words for human concepts. Their goal with the language is not that it will be as easy as possible to use for humans, but rather they want to understand how *Klingons* use their language. This adds another dimension to the Klingon community. To become a notable member among Klingonists linguistic capital is not enough -- you need cultural capital as well to know how a *Klingon* would think in a certain situation. Or more specifically: how the group of Klingonists think Klingons think.

Klingon was originally just a movie-prop and had no linguistic market outside the movie set. In what way has Klingon changed by the fact that it now is used for human communication? Most of my informants points out the increased vocabulary, if no linguistic market existed Okrand probably wouldn't bother to expand the vocabulary. Several informants also mention the social dimension that the users push this development of the language.

“If nobody had started speaking it, I'm sure that TKD would've been the end of it. What's more, the expansions have often been in directions pushed by those who are using it; Okrand has been known to respond to our requests and wishlists. Finally, I think the grammar has been explored and exploited much more fully than it would have been otherwise. I'm not even talking about expanding the grammar here so much as realizing the ramifications of the rules as they were initially defined.”

Charles

Klingon has, so to speak, been “humanized” when used for human communication. Instead of thinking and acting as Klingons the Klingonists tend to act as in the social context of humans. Irwin mention that Klingonist wind up being more polite than Klingons would and Adam points out that back in 1985 Klingon had many Star Trek-related words as “tricorder” and “transporter” but not so many for every day objects such as “table” and “window”. But one of the Europeans, Quentin, has noticed an American influence on the language:

“It's become more influenced by American word usage and grammar. (Though it's, of course, not quite like American...) Examples of this are the interpretations of words like “know”, “think” and several other basic concepts. The corresponding Klingon words are often taken to include the same meanings as their American counterparts, though, when coming from another language . . . this can look truly bizarre. (In my language we uses one word to express “to know a person” and another for “knowing (or to have knowledge) about something”—while American does not distinguish the two.)”

Quentin

Most Klingon communication takes place on an Internet mailing list. Many Klingonists can read and write Klingon for years before they meet other Klingonists and actually get to speak and hear the language spoken. The fact that most Klingonists learn to write the language before they get a chance to speak it has influenced the language according to most informants. Two persons don't think it has made any difference at all.

“It encourages a rather ‘formal’ style, with a heavy emphasis on ‘perfect grammar’ and using phrasing to compensate for the lack of nonverbal cues in communication.”

Bert

“Usually, when someone starts learning a foreign language his or her teachers and the native speakers s/he meets tend to be more concerned with how well the beginner manages to get the meanings across. Whether s/he uses perfectly grammatical constructions is a secondary matter. With Klingon the situation

is different. Grammatical accuracy seems to be more viewed as far more important than fluency. I still remember the moment when I spontaneously produced my first sentence in Klingon. I felt really proud of myself yet all the feedback I got from an experienced learner who was listening to me was: “Well, you’d better not use questions as objects, you know” (or something to this effect).”

Jenny

The pronunciation seems to be an issue, every speaker tend to pronounce it in his or her own way according to George. Irwin says that many skilled Klingonists don’t know that their pronunciation “stinks” and they probably convey it to others. Two of the American speakers have stated that they had problem understanding accents from Australian and Canadian Klingonists. One of the European Klingonists had problems to understand the accent of American Klingonists. Another problem is the hearing of the language; even the most advanced Klingonists are not used to hear other speaking Klingon.

“Well, it’s very clear that people read and write better than they speak and hear. My hearing of the language continues to lag behind all my other skills, mainly because I get so few chances to hear it from people who really know how to speak it. I don’t imagine my experience is atypical. Even speaking it is easier to master than hearing it, because you can speak to yourself. But you can only usefully hear the language when spoken by someone else (and someone who knows what they’re doing).”

Charles

The language appears to be in a process of standardization were the KLI and speakers with linguistic power tries to standardize the pronunciation and speaking conventions. I will discuss this more using the terms of Ferguson below.

I asked my informants if they thought that the Klingon language had all the vocabulary it needed. Most informants answered no. Technical terms for many scientific fields as physics, chemistry and medicine are missing almost entirely. Computer terminology and many basic every-day words for humans (as road, bread, picture, sun) are also missing. But the Klingonists agrees on that everything can be said in Klingon even if some words are lacking.

“Actually, yes. Many concepts require long-winded descriptions, but anything is doable. It may take an entire physics and chemistry lecture to describe the concept of pi-bonding, but you would understand the term in Klingon by the time I was done, as you never would if I simply said “pi-bonding . . . We have no vocabulary for anything between the navel and the knees, but I can still write explicit pornography using metaphor: **be’ uSDu’ joj nuj yIQ ‘el loD peng** (the man’s torpedo enters the wet mouth between the woman’s legs) . . . Discussing anything in Klingon is like having a discussion with a smart ten year old. You CAN discuss anything with a smart ten year old, but you have to explain everything the ten year old has not yet encountered from first principles. (Stupid or inattentive ten year olds are not my problem.)”

Paula

“It also lacks a lot of vocabulary for dealing with modern human culture, but that is to be expected, since the culture of the language is not modern or human. The problems are similar to trying to use Latin in a modern setting - it’s possible, but can be awkward.”

Larry

This is the process in language development Ferguson calls modernizations that I am going to discuss together with the concept of graphization and standardization separately.

The vocabulary of Klingon expands for every year. From 1984 to 1990 the language just grew with a few words, but in 1991 the second edition of the TKD was published with new material. At this time the KLI was formed and Okrand “leaked” new vocabulary to them. In 1997 the biggest single addition to Klingon was made through the publishing of the Klingon for the Galactic Traveller (KGT). In this book Okrand expanded the grammar to explain the

mistakes the scriptwriters and actors had made in the new television show *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. According to Lawrence Schoen half of the about 600 new words originated from the wishlists KLI had presented to Okrand. Since 1996 the vocabulary grows steadily and new words are presented in the **HolQeD**. It has been more common that Klingonists influence Okrand more direct in coining words. Klingonists with high linguistic capital can get the honour of being “a friend of Maltz” and thereby ask Okrand for a word or a grammatical feature. There have also been competitions where the prize is to ask Okrand for a word.

“I think Qanqor’s reoccurring column in **HolQeD**, “From the Grammarians Desk” probably has had a profound influence on the language (among other). One example would be the “prefix trick”, which I think was first observed by Qanqor. This observation later on led to MO’s acknowledgement of the construction. The same goes for using -‘e’ to denote the head word of a **-bogh** construction. More obvious influences are, of course, the **math juppu’** which have been given the opportunity to request a word from Maltz himself. Many of MO’s errors (such as leaving of a **lu-** in **tlhIngan tu’lu’** in the Cheat Sheet section of TKD, and the reversal of the word order in certain toasts) have been “discovered” by other Klingonists, forcing MO to come up with some (more or less creative) explanations. So in a way they have influenced the language. “

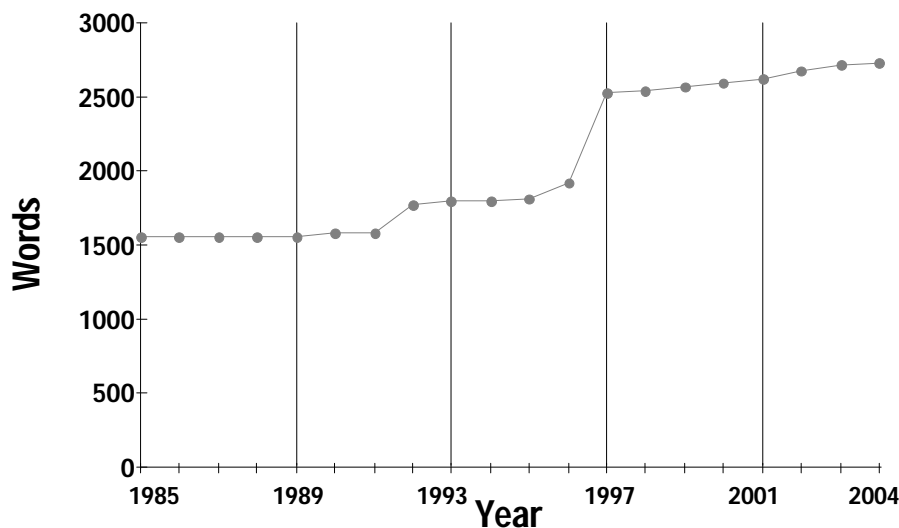
Quentin

Marc Okrand says that he gets ideas on the finer points of grammar when reading **HolQeD**.

“Oh yes . . . especially those “Round Table” discussions . . . that’s are very interesting to me, because they are talking about things I probably haven’t quite thought about because when I made this up I didn’t think of everything . . . it was just a dialog, initially, for the film and it has grown and grown and grown, it is not as I had some great giant Master Plan and I’m only telling you a little bit of it . . . so I say: ‘look what a good idea I got to incorporate that’ . “

Marc Okrand

Number of Klingon words



I have based the figures on the entries in the respective book and added information from the new word list at the KLI homepage and information from **HolQeD**. The Klingon Dictionary (TKD) 1985, TKD 2nd edition 1992, *The Klingon Way* (TKW) 1996, *Klingon for the Galactic Traveller* (KGT) 1997.

5.3.2 Neologism and slang

Marc Okrand has invented most words for Klingon and when the Klingonists need a new word they have to ask him. In living languages new words are formed all the time, some words are maybe just used in small groups as slang while others get widely spread and accepted and are included in the next version of standard dictionaries.

In artificial languages speakers usually take a very conservative role in accepting any reform of the language. This was and is the case of Volapük as well as Esperanto. The conservative view is often caused by a fear for that the language would splinter in different dialects. (Large 1985.) The dominating organisation or the community itself uses its power to try to control the language development. The KLI has taken an official conservative position on neologisms.

“It depends what form they take. The language has several mechanisms . . . for how to create new words, that’s fine! I have no problem with that . . . on the other hand, if you simply say: Hm, Klingon doesn’t have a word for umbrella; lets call it a “murghHo”. You know, NO! You don’t do that. There’s only one man who gets to do that . . . not to say it hasn’t happen in the past, I’ve been guilty to it myself . . . (interviewer: in the case of **HolQeD**?) . . . A fine example! With the best of intentions and to little understanding of the language at the time, I put that forth. And much as he has done for Paramount over the years Marc went in and did me the courtesy of a back fit on saying: Oh yes, that is how you form this kind of compound and we have seen other examples of that . . . “

Lawrence Schoen

Lawrence Schoen invented the Klingon word for “linguistics” **HolQeD** by forming a compound noun of two Klingon words **Hol** – language and **QeD** – science. His position in the community and his linguistic capital made it possible for him to get the word accepted. Okrand canonized it later and the standard for naming other sciences was set. This construction is perfectly legal, but we don’t know if the Klingon has a science for linguistics and if so, if they call it “language science”. That is a reason for many Klingonists not to accept neologisms. In my study seven Klingonists are opposed to the use of neologisms and six are for, four say that they think neologisms are OK as jokes or as slang.

“I don’t like neologisms in Klingon, since they usually can’t be understood without explanation. I’d prefer to recast and to describe if one lacks a word, even if that’s more complicated.”

Erica

“Only from Okrand. Otherwise there would be chaos. But there are some that originated from the users.”

Henry

“It depends on how “neo” is the “logism”. If someone were to use the phrase **tlhuthmeH yuch** for “hot chocolate”, I wouldn’t have a problem with it. And if others began to use **tlhuthmeH yuch** in their sentences, as long as its use for “hot chocolate” was common enough, I suspect it wouldn’t raise a single eyebrow.”

Fred

“In formal speech and writing especially, they should be avoided . . . Compounded neologisms are another matter, especially when they’re legal noun-noun compounds. They’re legitimate coinings, and their meanings are at least theoretically derivable from their components. But experience with Klingon . . . teaches that it’s very easy to create compound words that make perfect sense only *after* you know what they mean, and as standalone words presented without warning in text make no sense whatsoever.”

Irwin

The informants that state that neologism is OK see it as an unavoidable development.

“They are inevitable considering how limited the vocabulary is. However, I personally tend to use one of the three strategies: THE LAZY APPROACH: simply using an English word, e.g. “**DaHjaj bookstore vIghoS**” Today I went/will go to a bookstore

THE SAFE APPROACH: using a phrase which is a description of whatever needs to be referred to e.g. “**DaHjaj paq ngevboh malja’e’/Daq’e’ vIghoS**” Today I went/will go to a business/ place which sells books.

THE CREATIVE APPROACH: using a new word only when its meaning will be clear in the context of its use, e.g. “**cha’ jIl vIghaj. not bep wa’. bep not ‘e’ mev latlh. beptaHwI’ vIpar. bepbe’wI’ vImaS.**” I have two neighbours. One never complains. The other one never stops complaining. I

dislike the one who continues to complain (**bep^taHwI'**). I prefer the one who does not complain (**bep^be'wI'**)”

Jenny

“Keeping the language perfectly learnable from the published books is a valid goal. However, enough people have gotten past the ‘just learning’ stage and are sufficiently fluent to carry Klingon to the level of a ‘living language’. As long as coinages are discouraged, Klingon cannot grow on its own.”

Bert

The Klingonists have clearly different opinions on this matter, but most people can accept neologisms in some forms. Most seems to accept **Duj** (ship, vessel) as a metaphor for car and **jabbi'IDghom** (data transmission group) for mailing list. It is only a couple of people who opposes neologisms rigidly. What does the languages creator think of the use of neologisms?

“It’s great! Sometimes there is no word for that, but we can form a little construction based on using a couple of three words or suffixes following the rules, that’s exactly right, that is exactly what they should be doing . . . If you can make a new word on the basis of what’s there already you should.”

Marc Okrand

Marc Okrand approves and encourages neologisms, by the rules given in TKD, but the Klingonist community is still quite tentative. They fear that an extensive use of neologism would splinter the language, and the community, and make it less alien. Several informants say that they like to recast and stretch the language and think that Klingon would not be as interesting if it had words for everything.

I think a part of the explanation can be sought in a conflict in the middle of the 90’s with another organisation of Klingon speakers, the Interstellar Language School (ILS), and it’s productive leader. ILS produced several language courses and a lot of learning material, but the leader had a different opinion on neologisms than the KLI and produced several neologisms of his own. (As **vengnab** for map, **veng** city and **nab** plan.) This irritated many Klingonists in the KLI and the debate over the ILS’s leader is extensive in the archive of the KLI mailing list. Several warnings of splintering up in dialects were issued. (KLI archive).

Not surprisingly the Klingonists acceptance for slang is better. Only Erica, Ned and Oscar are opposed to the use of slang. Kim accepts it in small fan groups but not within the KLI.

“I don’t like non-okrandian slang because I think that if too many people try to add it’ll become unintelligible and too human. Klingons probably wouldn’t have a word for typical terran concepts . . . Communicating without having all the words is the challenge, which would get lost.”

Erica

The rest of the informants think slang is fun, but emphasises that it is just slang and not “official” words.

With more advanced speakers for every year it is possible that the opinion on neologisms has changed within the community. The more skilled speakers the less need to point out that a word is not “official”. Has the position on neologisms changed?

“Yes, definitely, but not everyone’s position has changed the same way. A couple of people are even more adamant that they should be avoided now.”

Bert

The quote from Bert sums up the results pretty well. Adam, Fred, George and Oscar do see a change to an even more strict position on neologisms. Ned and David can not see a change

of attitude – the position is still strict. Henry, Irwin and Larry observe that the opinion on neologism has loosened up a bit.

“Yes, I think there has been some necessary loosening of conservative attitudes (including mine) as the language comes to serve more people for more purposes and becomes more ‘living’.”

Irwin

5.3.3 A speaker initiated writing system

Klingon is written in two ways: with Latin letters according to a system designed by Okrand to make it easier for the actors to pronounce it and with the native Klingon writing system **pIqaD**. The issue for the Klingonists is that there is no official or canon **pIqaD**. The **pIqaD** used by the KLI and most Klingonists resembles the one seen on screen and has a semi-official status. The question is if the Klingonists should accept the KLI’s **pIqaD** as real **pIqaD** or wait for an official, and thereby real, **pIqaD**? I asked my informants if they used or understood KLI’s **pIqaD**.

“I learned it last week. It’s very simple, just a phonetic alphabet. I now use it to post occasional messages . . . and I read qurgh’s blog (all in pIqaD) daily.”

Paula

I don’t use it, but if I find something written in **pIqaD** I’m trying to read it, which is more like crosswords to me, since I only know some of the letters by heart. Writing **pIqaD** without a computer is almost impossible to me anyway. My Latin letters are hardly readable... And while it’s still not official I won’t learn it.

Erica

15 of the Klingonists in my study can read **pIqaD**, some good and some with difficulty. Only two answers no and say that they don’t understand **pIqaD**. When asked if they think the use of **pIqaD** is widely spread among the Klingonists the situation is quite the opposite. Only 2 informants think that **pIqaD** is widely spread among advanced Klingonists and 14 is of the opinion that it is not widely spread at all. Interesting is also that 5 of the Klingonists say that they recently learnt or started to use **pIqaD**. I also investigated the informant’s opinions of the use of the KLI **pIqaD** even if it is not official or approved by Marc Okrand.

“I am of the opinion that the only thing stopping Marc Okrand from canonizing **pIqaD** is the fact that to do so would contradict years of Klingon onscreen. I think he wants to give us an alphabet, but is blocked for continuity reasons. We are the speakers of Klingon. If every German speaker decided one day to change all the nouns in the language to “Bob”, no one could stop them. Similarly, this is the system we use to write Klingon. Whether Paramount likes it or not, this is the system that is used by Humans, writing the language on Earth in the year 2004.”

Fred

“I feel that **pIqaD** currently is used for making websites and images look like “authentic” Klingon, but otherwise isn’t useful for communicating in the Klingon language seriously. To me, **pIqaD** seems like an arbitrary assignment of symbols to sounds . . . I’m relatively indifferent about this **pIqaD** system, as long as people realize that it is a simple system doesn’t have as much detail as the Klingon language itself, or other languages’ writing systems.”

George

“It’s true it’s not official canon, but it’s also true that 1) there’s *never* going to be any official mapping of Okuda characters to Okrand language, and 2) there are, to my knowledge, no other *unofficial* mappings. So what we have is as official as it’s going to get, and frankly, as official as we really need.”

Charles

The **pIqaD** are widely spread among the informants in my Internet interview and my expert informants are for the use of the speaker initiated writing system:

“The writing system we have is sort of an other generations removed from the language, and is really enforced by the people that use it. So it doesn’t have the same kind of legitimacy, but it is the closest thing we have and it stays in power of that reason . . . possibly in the future we will print books in **pIqaD** and if we do that it will lock it in”
Lawrence Schoen

“The mapping I very cleverly done . . . I think it is great, it makes it so you can write the language . . . I wish I could read it, when I get something written in **pIqaD** I’m able to very slowly figure it out . . . I am glad someone really is doing it and has decided that it is an alphabet and not a syllabary Now we know, cause Michael Okuda³ and I didn’t know that.”
Marc Okrand

Much more official than this it want ever be; the KLI had used it from the start, 89 percent of the advanced Klingonists in my study understands it and Marc Okrand likes the system.

5.3.4 Before the speakers

The development of the Klingon language took some unexpected ways before it had any speakers. During the production of “Star Trek III: The Search for Spock” Marc Okrand had to change the language several times when the actors made mistakes. This expanded both the vocabulary and the grammar. Under the post-production of the film the language changed even more. Scenes originally in English were dubbed to Klingon so the Klingon spoken had to match the lip-sync. Some scenes got another subtitle. **qama’pu’ jonta’ neH** originally meant, “I told you, engines only!” But it was decided that this line would get a subtitle saying: “I wanted prisoners!” As you can imagine this changed both the vocabulary and grammar (Anderson, 2001). An other example of changed subtitles that produced new words are: **vaj toDuj Daj ngeHbej DI vI’** “Shooting space garbage is no test of a warrior’s mettle”. Compare it with the sentence **vaj toDDujDaj ngeHbej DIvI’** “Then the Federation will certainly send a rescue ship”. The first line is a re-purposing of one take of the second. Every word of the line is a new word published in the TKD addendum. (ibid.) From the beginning Klingon had no homophony but the mistakes during the movie production forced Okrand to introduce it to the language.

5.4 Graphization, standardization and modernization

As we have seen the process of language development is a social procedure in the KLI. It is a dialectic exchange between Okrand and the Klingonists that makes the language to develop.

Charles Ferguson uses three categories for analysing language development: graphization, standardization and modernization. Even if the process of development in natural languages is quite different from that of Klingon I think Fergusons theory would be a good frame for a discussion on the Klingon language development.

1. *Graphization*. Ferguson writes: “the use of writing leads to the folk belief that the written language is the ‘real’ language and that speech is a corruption of it” (1968, p. 223). In Klingon the written language existed before the spoken and several informants in my study has mention that this fact has made the spoken language “formal”. Maybe the spoken form of Klingon not yet has been “corrupted”?

The Klingon writing system **pIqaD** is interesting in the development of Klingon. It is an element in the language that not derives from the official sources; Paramount or Okrand, the speakers themselves and the KLI have enforced it. Some Klingonists have not been sure of the

³ Michael Okuda was scenic designer for Star Trek: The Next Generation and responsible for how the Klingon writing looks on TV.

writing system status and in my study it shows that most of my informants didn't believe that the use of **pIqaD** was as widely spread, as it seems to be. Several of the Klingonists have also just started to learn and use **pIqaD**, which might be a sign of acceptance of the writing system.

2. *Standardization.* The process of standardization is when one variety of the language is becoming widely accepted as the "best" form of the language. I think that Klingon is in a process of standardization. Several of my informants have talked about the importance of not splintering up the language in dialects. The conservative attitude against neologisms is often justified by the risk of ending up as a divided community. The KLI as a socializing institution has an official conservative holding against neologism, but prominent members with linguistic power can drive through neologisms and grammar interpretations.

It also reasonable to assume that the standard Klingon language is influenced by American English through its many and prominent Klingonists from the United States. Two European informants feel that Klingon words, idioms and grammar often are interpreted in an American way. Some of the American Klingonists say that they had some trouble understanding Australian and Canadian accents at first, which may indicate that the standard pronunciation is American. Marc Okrand says that people tend to interpret the meaning of Klingon words in an English way.

Pierre Bourdieu describes the creation of a legitimate language as being imposed by the dominant speakers of a legitimate language through a process of rationalization. "The grammarians...tend to consecrate and codify a particular use of language by rationalizing it and 'giving reason' to it. In so doing they help to determine the value which the linguistic products of the different users of the language will receive in the different markets" (Bourdieu, 1991, p.59).

Ferguson has seen a number of features recurring in cases of language standardization and one is; that one or a few writers serve as models for the literary use of the standardizing language. Fasold ask who does language planning and replies: governments as well as individuals (1984, p. 251). And Tauli defines standardization as: "prescription of linguistic norms by official or authoritative private institution, that decrees what is correct and what is incorrect in a language" (1968, p. 155). The KLI as organisation is very important for the language and is such an authoritative private institution that Tauli means. I would also say that the KLI could be said to be a socializing institution with the terminology of Berger & Luckman. (1966). Hence would it be reasonable to assume that the KLI plays an important role in the standardization of Klingon.

"... if you take the Klingon speaking community in a broader sense than just the KLI ... they go of in totally different directions, they put words together in a way that the KLI will frown of ... it's a different speaking community ... it's a different dialect and you can't say its wrong ... there's not one way to do it."
Marc Okrand

The Klingon linguistic market is larger than just the KLI. But as Okrand indicates, other Klingon speakers do not treat Klingon in exactly the same way as the KLI and their endorsed standard version of the language. The power relations which dominates a linguistic market and which gives certain language producers a linguistic profit presuppose that the linguistic market is relatively unified (Bourdieu, 1992, p. 81). To get a linguistic profit in a small language community, as the Klingon, it is necessary with standardization.

According to Bourdieu the educational system plays an important role to impose the standard language. Teachers give recognition to legitimate language and writes comments as "slang" and "gibberish" in the marginal. (1991, pp. 48-49). The dominating agent on the Klingon education

market is the KLI. They supply a Klingon postal course, a Beginners column in their journal and most important the Beginner grammarian in the e-mail discussion group. The educational system is with the terminology of Berger & Luckmann an agent of secondary socialization. Conversation, that also includes letter writing, is the most important “vehicle of reality-maintenance” (1966, p.152). As most Klingon communication takes place at the KLI’s e-mail discussion group this is the KLI’s foremost “vehicle of reality-maintenance”. Several informants has comment on that the spoken Klingon is very formal and close to the written form due to most communication still is written. The standardization process, encourage this formal use of the spoken language.

3. *Modernization* (or intellectualisation). This category is probably the one where Klingon has most in common with the languages problems of developing countries that Ferguson had in mind; the lack of specialist vocabulary. This is for example the case for many languages today that borrows computer terms from English. Most informants say that Klingon lacks specialist vocabulary needed to talk about medicine, technology and all kinds of sciences. Hence, getting these words would be what Ferguson means by modernization in language development.

Modernization of Klingon can be made in three different ways: coinage of new word (Okrand), borrowing of words from other languages or forming neologisms by the Klingonists themselves.

Okrand continues to give out new words in a slow but steady pace. Borrowing words from English is fairly common; Jenny calls it “the lazy approach”, but just for occasional words. The whole meta-context of Klingon would loose its point if you import an entire set of specialist vocabulary. It remains for the Klingonists to work with neologisms if they want to modernize Klingon fast. Charles, Paula and Adam discuss computer terminology that has been frequently debated at the mailing list as well. Some Klingonists think that it would be all right to create neologisms in this specific area because it deals with a specific human matter.

“. . . On the one hand we all agree that working on a project like that will help the community, but on the other it’s clear that the project will require so much slang and neologisms that we don’t all feel comfortable working on it. And since we’re talking about something that’s decidedly human (who knows what Klingon computer systems are like, whether metaphors such as “file” or “folder” mean anything to them), the old stand-by answer of “how would a Klingon describe this” doesn’t necessarily apply. So it seems to be another catch-22. We’ll have to get comfortable with a way past this dilemma, for the good of the language.” **Adam**

Modernization is one important way for the Klingonists to defend their linguistic market by getting more speakers. To attract more serious speakers it is necessary to demonstrate that Klingon really is a complete functional language. For trekkers it may be enough to use Star Trek terms in Klingon but to attract people from all fields of life it is necessary to be able to really discuss all fields of life. It is important for the Klingonists that Klingon is perceived as a real language.

“. . . perhaps demonstrating that Klingon can be used in a “serious” way and isn’t just a stupid waste of time for crazy fans.” **Irwin**

“By letting more people know it’s an actual language . . .” **Fred**

“Targeting the linguistically interested might be a better venue than targeting Star Trek fans going out there and raising awareness that Klingon is in fact a real language, not just a collection of phrases.” **David**

“Demonstrate that it is usable as a language in general situations. “ **Bert**

Chapter 6 | Conclusion [*berthlam*]

Twenty years is a short period in a language's and a speech community's history. But in the case of Klingon the language has developed from scratch to a language that it is used for human communication every day of the year. The language is still growing and has not yet acquired all the vocabulary that a modern language needs.

I have interviewed 19 of the perhaps 30 most advanced Klingonists to explore how they experience the Klingon language development.

Most of the development of the language that the Klingonists referred to is structural and social; the mailing list, the forming of the KLI, getting a critical mass of speakers, Okrand being involved in the language etc, occurrences that laid the foundation for a linguistic market. But they can also see how the language has changed when being used by people for everyday communication and that it lacks vocabulary for certain things.

They all think that the KLI and Klingonists is part of the language development to a higher degree than just by influencing it by establishing new speech patterns by speaking. The moulding of the language is a dialectic social process between the creator of Klingon Marc Okrand and the Klingonists. The KLI presents wishlists for new words and grammar to Okrand, who respond in one-way or another. Prominent Klingonists get to ask Okrand for new words and this can also be a prize in competitions within the KLI. Okrand reads the KLI's journal and get ideas from how the Linguists use or speculate over the language. Sometimes mistakes happen that change the language; Okrand's own mistakes and faults connected to the films and TV-shows, which Okrand try to incorporate with a plausible explanation. The Klingonists has also constructed and enforced a Klingon writing system called **pIqaD**. This development of the language is initiated and controlled by the speakers and is neither official (from Paramount) nor canon (from Okrand). Still it is widely used and accepted among my informants.

Usually the Klingonists are very tentative to speaker-initiated development of the language and take a very conservative attitude against neologism, even though Klingon has rules to form new compound words. Many fears the language will break up in dialects. The resistance to neologisms maybe have its roots in the fiction of Klingon being a real alien language and in a conflict in the middle of the 90's with another organisation focusing on Klingon language but with a more liberal view on neologisms. With the approach that the Klingonists are exploring an alien language and culture, it would be absurd to make up words yourself instead of asking a native. Moreover they find it more challenging to recast and re-think than to make up a new word. A smaller group of Klingonists think it is inevitable to use more neologisms when Klingon is in a process to be a living language. But this opinion is controversial in the KLI and newcomers will be corrected and lectured if suggesting creating new words. This is often seen at the KLI's e-mail discussion group.

The KLI is a socializing institution with the terminology of Berger & Luckman and the e-mail discussion group is their foremost "vehicle of reality-maintenance". With Ferguson categories graphization, standardization and modernization I have analysed the Klingon language development. The speaker initiated Klingon writing system sorts under graphization. The Klingon language is in a process of standardization. Since a large majority of the speakers are Americans the interpretation of words, idioms and pronunciation tend to be from an American-

English point of view. And this sets the standard. The KLI has an important role in the standardization by its character of socializing institution and as an educational organisation.

Pierre Bourdieu stresses the importance of the educational system to impose a legitimate language. In the linguistic field, the linguistic market, the value is measured by linguistic capital. Klingonists with a high amount of linguistic power has more authority on Klingon and can also in some degree influence the language by neologisms, a special interpretation of a grammatical issue or by defining what is proper Klingon.

The Klingon linguistic market is by its size threatened. The Klingonists needs more speakers. One way to attract these is by modernization of the language, to make it more useable in a human everyday context and to give it specialist vocabulary. This is a way to distance the language from Star Trek.

The Klingon language is a by-product of Star Trek. Still the majority of the Klingonists in my study doesn't consider themselves as trekkers. The KLI will not be perceived as a fan group, it is modelled after academic professional organisations and their journal is a scholarly journal that utilizes blind peer review and is indexed by the Modern Language Association. Several of the Klingonists said that they had been trekkers but are not anymore. I have drawn the conclusion that this may have to do with the KLI's role as a socializing institution. The KLI doesn't want to be perceived as a fan organisation. In this peer group several Klingonists with a high amount of linguistic capital say that they are not interested in Star Trek, others say they have lost interest in Star Trek. And furthermore, the educational level is high and academic language and thinking is endorsed. A newcomer seeking her social role of a Klingonists may be socialized in a way that reduces the initial fan identity.

Most of my respondents say that they study Klingon for their interest in language. Most have studied linguistic or languages. Some study Klingon due to their big interest in Star Trek.

In the ordinary Klingon fan world where role-playing and dressing-up as Klingons is the major activity, the knowledge of Klingon is to be considered as sub-cultural capital, in the eyes of the relevant beholder. Though to be a Klingonist seems not automatically to get you sub-cultural capital. By judging from my informants opinions there is a conflict between Klingon fans and Klingonists. To actually learn the full Klingon language is seen as a waste of time and somewhat strange. In my opinion this conflict can be connected to the fact that the KLI states that it is not a fan organisation. It may as well be a result of different focuses; the KLI's primary concern is intellectual and the fan groups activities is more practical (creating uniforms, Klingon weapons etc.)

A Klingon fan that gets sub-cultural capital by learning Klingon phrases will not be valued after her linguistic capital before she really enters the proper linguistic market and uses the Klingon for communication. This linguistic market is almost synonymous with the KLI.

Star Trek has certainly been vital to the development of Klingon but it seems as it is loosening in importance. The language is growing outside the Star Trek settings and a majority of its advanced speakers are not trekkers. A final break with Star Trek will come when Klingon get native speakers. In the mid of the 90's D'Armond Speers made an attempt to bring up his son bilingual and only spoke Klingon to him until he was 3 ½years old. Then the kid realized that his father also spoke English and didn't want to speak Klingon anymore. Rather than harming their relation D'Armond Speers stopped speaking Klingon to his son.

But when the day comes when someone has Klingon as a native tongue the language will start to develop in a natural way and Star Trek, Marc Okrand and the KLI will all lose linguistic power. You can't tell a real Klingon how to use her language.

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Internet sources:

<http://www.kli.org>

<http://www.kli.org/tlhIngan-Hol>

<http://www.kli.org/wiki>

Appendixes

Internet interview

1. What is your age?
2. What is your sex?
3. What is your educational level?
4. What is your nationality?
5. Do you consider yourself a trekker?
6. Are you, or have you been, a member of some other Klingon or Star Trek fan organisation?
7. What do you think about fan conventions?
8. What attitude do you think that members of ordinary Klingon fan organisations have towards the Klingon language and its speakers?
9. Have you ever studied linguistics or related subjects?
10. Why do you study Klingon?
11. How would you describe the most important aspects of the development of the Klingon language?
12. In which way do you think Klingon has been influenced/changed by the fact that the language now is used for human communication?
13. Most people learn to write Klingon before the learn how to speak it. In which way do you think this has influenced the language?
14. Do you think that any Klingonist or the KLI have influenced Marc Okrand in coining new words or developing new grammar? Please give examples.
15. What is your position on neologisms in Klingon?
16. Are there any neologisms that have been widely accepted by Klingonists? Please give examples.
17. Are there any neologisms that just have been accepted by a small group of Klingonists? Please give examples.

18. Do you think the position on neologisms have changed over the years when more people actually can understand and speak Klingon?
19. What is your position on (non-okrandian) slang in Klingon?
20. Do you think the Klingon language, as known today, has all the vocabulary and all the grammar that is necessary for extensive human communication in all fields of life? Please give examples.
21. Do you use or understand pIqaD (KLIpIqaD)?
22. How widely spread do you think the use of pIqaD is among Klingonists?
23. The KLI has used pIqaD officially for over ten years, but it is not okrandian canon. What is your opinion on the role of pIqaD in the Klingon community?
24. What do you think will be the role of pIqaD (KLIpIqaD) in the future?
25. Do you think Klingon need more speakers to survive as a language?
26. How do you think Klingon can attract more speakers?
27. How do you think Klingon will develop in the future?
28. Do you have any other comments on the development of the Klingon language?

Klingon words occurring in the thesis

- be'** female, woman (n) [TKD]
bep complain, object, gripe (v) [TKD]
berthlam conclusion
bertham end (of an opera, play, story, speech)
Also appropriate for ending a thesis. (n) [HolQeD v12n2p8; Okrand e-mail]
bIr be cold (v) [TKD]
bl'reS beginning (of an opera, play, story, speech)
Also appropriate as introduction of a thesis (n) [HolQeD v12n2p8; Okrand e-mail]
cha' two (num) [TKD]
chorghDIch eighth (num) [TKD]
DaHjaj today (n) [TKDa]
Daj 1. be interesting (v) [TKD] 2. test inconclusively (v) [TKDa]
DI garbage, rubble, debris(n) [TKDa]
DIVl' federation, organization (n) [TKD]
ghaj have, possess (v) [TKD]
ghoS go onward, approach, go away from (v) [TKD]
ghotI' fish (n) [HQ10:4 p.5]
HIq liquor, ale, beer, wine (n) [TKD]
HIvje' glass (tumbler) (n) [TKD]
HoH kill (v) [TKD]
Hol language (n) [TKD]
HolQeD linguistics (n) [KGT]
Hut nine (num) [TKD]
jatlh speak (v) [TKD]
jIl neighbor (n) [TKD]
joj area between (n) [TKD]
jonta' engine (n) [TKD]
jup friend (n) [TKD]
latlh additional one, other one (n) [TKD]
legH see (v) [TKD]
loD male, man (n) [TKD]
majQa' well done, very good (excl) [TKD]
malja' business (n) [TKD]
maS prefer (v) [TKD]
mev stop, cease (v) [TKD]
mevyap stop, (it is) enough (excl) [KGT]
mIw step, stage (in a process) (n) [KGT]
neH want, desire (v) [TKD]
ngach debate (v) [TKD]
ngeHbej cosmos (n) [TKDa]
nger theory (n) [TKD]
ngev sell (v) [TKD]
not never (adv) [TKD]
nugh society (group of people with shared culture) (n) [TKD; KGT]
nughQeD sociology (n) [Okrand e-mail]
nuj mouth (n) [TKD]
nuqjathl what did you say?, huh?, what? (excl) [TKDa]
paq book (n) [TKD]
par dislike (v) [TKD]
paw to arrive (v) [TKD]
paw' to collide (v) [TKD]
peng torpedo, missile (n), **cha** (plural form) [TKD]
pIqaD Klingon writing system (n) [TKD]
po' be expert, be skilled (v) [TKD]
pong name, call (v) [TKD]
potlhmeY important things (n). Can be used for the abstract section of a thesis. [TKD; Okrand e-mail]
puq child offspring (n) [TKD]
qama prisoner (n) [TKD]
qang pour (from one container into another) (v) [KGT]
qaS occur, happen (v) [TKD]
qep meeting (n) [TKD]
QeD science (n) [TKD]
Qo'noS Kronos (the Klingon home world) (n) [TKDa]
QonoS journal, log (n) [TKD]
qun history (n) [TKD]
Sup resource (n) jo (plural form) [TKD]
tetlh roll, scroll, list (n) [KGT]
tlhIngan Klingon (n) [TKD]
tlhutlh drink (v) [TKD]
toDDuj rescue ship (n) [HQ8:4 p.11]
toDuj courage, bravery, mettle (n) [TKDa]
toy' to serve (a master) (v) [TKD]
tu'lu' someone/something finds it, there is (v)
vaj 1. warrior (as a concept) (n) [TKDa] 2. so, then, thus, in that case (adv) [TKD]
vi' sharpshooting, marksmanship (n) [TKDa]
vut cook (v) [TKD]
wa' one (num) [TKD]
wa'maH Hut nineteen (num) [TKD]
wa'maH ten (num) [TKD]
yaS officer (n) [TKD]
yIQ be wet (v) [TKD]
yuch chocolate (n) [TKD]
'aw' sting (v) [TKD]
'el enter, go in (v) [TKD]
'Iw blood (n) [TKD]
'oH it (pro) [TKD]
'ugh be heavy (v) [TKD]
'uS leg (n) [TKD]
'uQ dinner (n) [TKD]

Examples on neologisms and slang given by my informants in the Internet interview

baS chIS silver (**baS** metal **chIS** be white)
baS Doq copper/brass (**Doq** be orange, be red)
baS qIj iron (**qIj** be black)
batlh bInID Good try! (**batlh** with honor **nID** attempt, try)
batlh well (with honor)
chabDu' breasts (**chab** pie –**Du'** plural suffix for body parts)
chopchuq kiss (**chop** bite –**chuq** one another
nga'chuq perform sex)
Dochameyvay' “thingamajig” (**Doch** thing –
mey plural suffix **vay'** something, anything)
Duj car (ship, vessel)
ghew HaQchor honey (**ghew** bug **HaQchor** saccharin)
HaQchorqoq sugar (**HaQchor** saccharin –
qoq so-called)
Hov leng Star Trek (**Hov** star **leng** voyage)
jabbl'ID message (data transmission)
jabbl'IDghom mailing list (transmission group)
juH Hol home language (**juH** home **Hol** language)
juHHov sun (**juH** home **Hov** star)
juHDAQ webpage (**juH** home **DAQ** site, location)
malja' shop (business)
muD Duj airplane (vessel of the atmosphere)
naHHom Doq lingonberries (**naH** fruit, vegetable –**Hom** diminutive **Doq** be orange, be red)
nga'egh masturbation (**nga'chuq** perform sex –**'chuq** one another –**'egh** oneself)
nIm let cheese (**nIm** milk **let** be hard)
nImqoq soy milk (**nIm** milk –**qoq** so called)
nuj bIQ spit (**nuj** mouth **bIQ** water)
nuqeDajatlh “whachamacallit” (**nuq** what?
Da- you/it **jatlh** tell, speak **nuqjatlh** what did you say?, huh?, what?)
pabpo' grammarian (**pab** grammar **po'** be expert)
paqHom pocket book (small book)
pemHov sun (**pem** daytime **Hov** star)
peng penis (torpedo)

pIn tIn director (big boss)
Qel “Dr. Pepper” (doctor, physician)
qel discuss with an object (consider)
QIn tetlh mailing list (**QIn** message **tetlh** list)
qoQ Coke
QoQghom'a' orchestra (**QoQ** music **ghom** group, party, band –**'a'** augmentative)
Qu' job (task, mission, chore)
qughwI' motorcycle (**qugh** cruise –**wI'** thing which does)
ramoy ram nighty-night (**ram** night –**oy** endearment)
rurwI'Daq museum (**rur** resemble –**wI'** thing which does **DAQ** site, location)
rurwI'pa' art gallery (**rur** resemble –**wI'** thing which does **pa'** room)
tI fruit and/or vegetables (vegetation)
tIr Soj bread (**tIr** grain **Soj** food)
tlhIchmey cigarettes (**tlhIch** smoke –**mey** plural suffix)
thoqo' asshole (Klingon version of a name of a annoying person on the mailing list)
vengnab map (**veng** city **nab** plan)
yaH place of work (duty station)
yaq delicious
yav Duj car (**yav** ground **Duj** ship, vessel)
yID be jewish
yIH cat (tribble)
'I' armpit (Someone on the mailing list asserted that there was a word **'I'** in Klingon, and that it meant “armpit”. Nobody could figure out where he got **'I'** from, but he absolutely insisted it was a real word. Eventually, Mark Shoulson searched the mailing list archives and found the first ever reference to **'I'**. It had been in a post he himself (Mark) had written, and it used **'I'** as a hypothetical word, in a posting explaining why making up words was a bad idea. At the **qep'a'** that year Okrand was told the story. He was amused, but then he turned and asked the Klingonists: “So what is the word for 'armpit'?” And they answered back: “What's the word for 'armpit'?!?” And Okrand answered “**'I'**.”
'o' butt (aft)