

Albert Boché

Kath Which radio station do you broadcast?

Albert I broadcast Breton lesson on Radio Bro Gwened, which in French we call an Herbergé, and in Breton Her be ge, and we broadcast from Pontivy.

Kath So your programmes are aimed at what kind of person?

Albert At the beginning it was for, for those who didn't know Breton at all, beginners, complete beginners, but gradually we, we understood that it, it err interested other people as well because they used to, to phone, someone phoned me, he speaks Breton of course, he said "You have made me proud of my language", so erm, in the end, well now what we try to do is, of course, we try to make people learn some Breton but mostly to show what can be done with Breton and they, they can note that you can speak in Breton about just anything like in any other language. But of course there are words which err are missing in err dictionaries. I have had to, to create words for, for my needs and someone has come to them from what he says, I have never counted them, he says I have created about 400 words for different things, for example, err there is no word in any dictionary for an "Institute". Now, I am member, I am a member of L'Institut Culturel de Bretagne and, um, they have a sort of cunning translation because they have no word for "Institute", they call it the High School of the country, but I want to have a real, accurate language like English or French and Institut Culturel, that isn't a High School. An Institution is in the dictionary as 'insavadur', so I said if we say 'insavadur' for Institution, ipso facto we must say 'insavad' for Institute; in English two words, Institution, Institute, in Russian Institute, Institutsia, in German Institut, Institution, all languages in Europe have two words, so we have, we must have two words so err I created the word 'insavad' so to me it's Insavad, sevinadur Breir(?) or Breizh, it's not a school, that's one example.

Kath And is that in the dictionary now? Have they changed the dictionary to add your words into it?

Albert They asked me to renew the dictionary, which is the most used by err students, and you know, collegians, lyciens, that is Secondary schools and Grammar schools if you like and erm, there is none of them, of the dictionaries which is up to the job. Err there are a lot of mistakes, bad translations, one word you find in the Breton-French part, you can't find it in the French-Breton part and so on. There is a monk's work to do there and we have started on that now with the Institut Culturel so I go once, once a month to work on that dictionary and of course we add things, take, take out things and so on and we, we are still working on the words starting with "d".

There are a lot of words, I don't know how many pages with "d" but it's very slow work to do, we want to be accurate, precise and rigorous so we don't go very fast but it's very interesting.

Kath How did you become a part of the Radio Bro Gwened?

Albert Knowing my interest for languages and Breton in particular, we used, we used to joke, some of us speak several languages and in French we say "polyglot" which is a Greek word – polyglot - and it's a funny word many people don't know - polyglot, polyglot - so we said "Oh je suis un troglodyte". C'est quoi troglodyte? C'est quelqu'un qui parle plusieurs langues – troglodyte. " But you know between polyglot and troglodyte for many people they don't know the difference. I have, I have a shortcoming which is err I have a tendency to joke about anything, except death maybe.

Kath So how many, how many languages do you speak?

Albert Ah well, before I had the problem of my eyes, I, I was learning err the seventeenth but I had to stop. That was Chinese but I, I, I studied two books all the same. Before I have studied Japanese, Persian, Hindi, Esperanto, of course when I couldn't read any more I had to stop all that and I restrained myself to Breton, English and French but I can hold a simple conversation in Italian, German, Spanish, Esperanto, err Russian but in those days I could speak very well Russian. I was erm chosen among many others to go to Moscow as an interpreter to the French exhibition so I had the opportunity of talking a lot of Russian there. I am interested in everything I can say; of course gardening. I used to work on a farm in England when I was young, when I was learning English, with Bill and Pamela. They were interested in err organic farming so I got to know err what the Soil Association was. Since I've been interested in err organic farming, organic gardening especially gardening without digging because when it's organic enough you don't have to, to dig the earth, the earthworms do the job for you. That's what I learned with Bill and Pamela so I have a garden which I work err in that way you know I make compost, which is an English, an English word by, by the way, and err I don't use any chemicals at all, any chemical err fertilizer at all, only compost and the first time I created a such garden was in 1954. I was probably the first in Brittany in those days and that made people laugh. "You don't use fertiliser, you won't get anything!", but after 2 or 3 years I got better potatoes, and erm better beans and I used to bring err, I brought seeds, broad beans, because here people don't eat broad beans, back then we had broad beans, and in the end they came to see my garden to see how I did it, instead of coming to see me, to laugh, to laugh at what I did, so there's been a change completely and now of course I am often asked to go to talk about organic gardening for different groups, young, in groups of young people and so on, generally in Breton. I could do it in English because I learned all that in English but I adapt myself to the err, to the audience.

With apologies for any incorrect Breton spellings.

