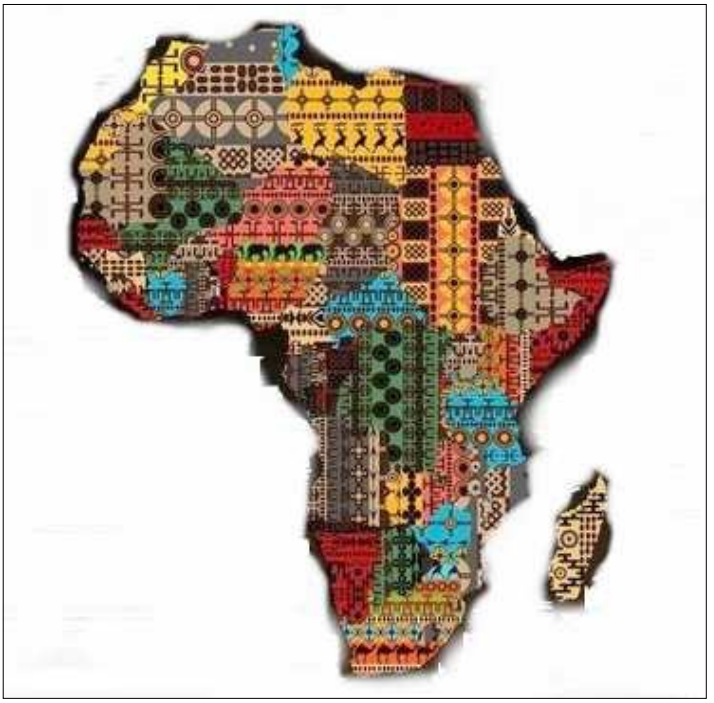
PLURICENTRIC LANGUAGES WORLDWIDE
SERIES 2: RESEARCHING PLURICENTRIC LANGUAGES

Máté Huber – Benjamin Meisnitzer (eds.)

# Pluricentric Languages in Africa and in Other Regions of the World



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and in Other Regions of the World

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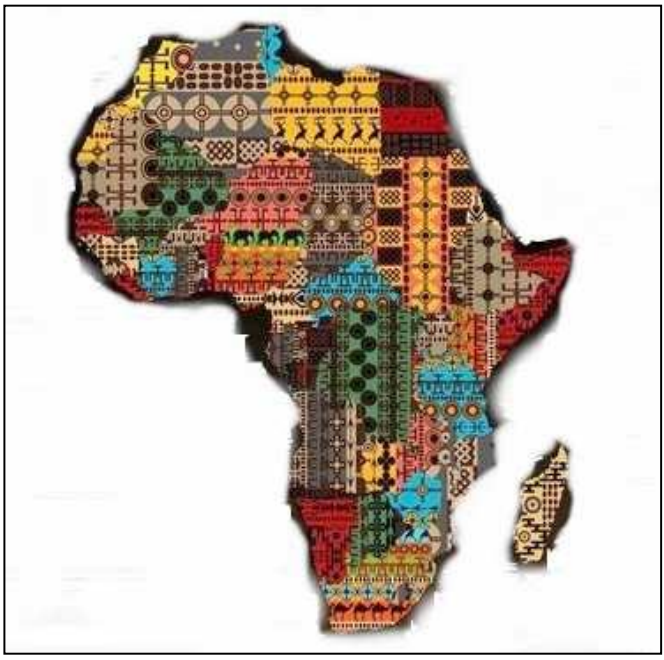

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# Preface

The present volume contains the proceedings of the 10th International Conference on Pluricentric Languages and their Non-Dominant Varieties. It comprises papers that discuss several pluricentric languages and their non-dominant varieties from different regions of the world, much in keeping with the diverse range of topics that were presented at the online conference that was hosted by the University of Leipzig on August 23-24, 2023. As the subtitle of the conference was Pluricentric Languages, Multilingualism, and Linguistic Dehegemonisation in Africa, the primary focus of the volume is also on pluricentric languages in a highly diverse, multilingual African context. To be precise, the first eight papers discuss topics that are in some way related to African language use, whether they concern local varieties of indigenous African languages, postcolonial varieties of European languages that have become localised and nativised in African contexts, or a mixture of both. In contrast, the contributions in the second part of the volume (i.e. the final five papers) are concerned with topics that are related to pluricentric languages and their non-dominant varieties in other areas of the world, such as the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East.

Apart from the heterogeneity that characterises the wide range of languages and varieties addressed in the contributions, they also differ from one another significantly in terms of the theoretical and/or applied linguistic perspectives from which they approach these varieties. However, one thing they have in common, is their openness to linguistic diversity, variation and change, as well as their support for linguistic justice, which is a pivotal characteristic of pluricentric theory in itself.

The first paper by Mena B. Lafkioui, which was presented as one of the keynote addresses at the conference, gives an extensive overview of the language situation of Tamazight as a pluricentric language, shedding light on its pluricentricity, as well as the iconisation and instrumentalisation processes that shape it in a North-African sociolinguistic context. The author points out that in this case, linguistic pluricentricity coincides with the emergence of a translocal Amazigh group identity, exploring the role of language in actively shaping culture through what the author terms 'conventionalised heteroglossia'.

Inês Machungo's paper, then, presents the case of Mozambican Portuguese as an emerging non-dominant variety of Portuguese as a

pluricentric language. In this contribution, which served as the second keynote address at the conference, the author deals with the postcolonial heritage of the Portuguese language in Mozambique, which is, on the one hand, inevitably surrounded by elitist ideologies and linguistic discrimination, but on the other hand, it may also be seen as the key to interethnic and global communication in a postcolonial setting. Against this background, Inês Machungo urges for proper recognition for Mozambican Portuguese through appropriate regulatory instruments.

Kelen Ernesta Fonyuy and Babila Julius Tachu explore the (de)hegemonisation of Mungaka as the lingua franca of Western Cameroon, presenting remarkable empirical data concerning the vitality and inertia of the Mungaka language, and providing ample evidence of the dehegemonisation of Mungaka due to language contact in multilingual Cameroon.

Tamam Youssouf's paper focuses on a lesser discussed variety, Eastern Oromic, from what might be referred to as a second-level pluricentric perspective, providing an exhaustive account of the language situation of the different varieties of Oromo in and around Ethiopia. The author describes Eastern Oromic in considerable detail from both a sociolinguistic and a linguistic perspective, and urges that future standardisation efforts should provide this variety with appropriate status.

Matheus de Araujo Azevedo takes a more theoretical linguistic (morphosyntactic) perspective on linguistic variation in the Portuguese-speaking world, focusing on the use of the definite article before anthroponyms in Angolan Portuguese, relying on first-hand empirical data from an interview-based research project. His paper is a valuable addition to the present volume as it manages to embed this linguistic inquiry in a well-founded social-sociolinguistic context, acknowledging the impact of linguistic contact on the formation of Angolan Portuguese.

Barbara Nicoletti also deals with a postcolonial linguistic situation, namely that of the German language in Namibia, analysing language attitudes toward German and English in relation to nationality within the Namibian German-speaking community. Nicoletti's contribution is also based on empirical research, as it presents the results of the author's questionnaire-based data collection to explore the affective attitudes and feelings of belonging within the German-speaking community in Namibia.

Csenge Aradi, Zsuzsanna Gécseg, Máté Huber, and Dóra Székesi explore a rather original topic, as they shed light on the ideologies and attitudes that

surround African students at the French Department of the University of Szeged, Hungary, where mostly non-native French-speaking instructors, who have learnt French in a highly institutionalised, academic setting, are positioned in stark contrast to their African students, who come from very different linguistic backgrounds, having lived through a wide array of different linguistic biographies, with the French language mostly featuring as a second language in their case, i.e. one that they have acquired as part of natural language acquisition rather than institutionalised foreign language learning. The authors refer to this situation as an unlikely encounter, and present the results of their empirical, interview-based qualitative research on the topic.

As the authors of the final paper in part 1, Christina A. Gomes, Maria Eugenia L. Duarte, and Maria da Conceição Paiva present the findings of their comparative research project on the Dative Shift in Brazilian Portuguese, Mozambican Portuguese, and São Tomean Portuguese. The authors discover similar findings across the three varieties, and since Brazilian Portuguese is a dominant variety, while the other two are non-dominant ones. They draw the ground-breaking conclusion that specific linguistic features are not enough to establish the degree of submission to the original linguistic norms, and they argue that the distinction between dominant and non-dominant varieties should be based (at least in part) on language-external factors related to the socio-historically embedded concept of the linguistic norm.

Part 2 begins with a paper by Marcelo Alexandre Silva Lopes de Melo and Gisele Silva da Costa, in which the authors explore pharyngeal variants in Hebrew in terms of social stratification and stylistic variation. Their results are fascinating and convincing as they suggest that ethnic origin and stylistic variation play a significant role in the realisation of the studied variants.

In continuation, Karine Gauvin's paper presents a highly innovative research project in which she analyses the menu as an object of study to explore the situation of Acadian French in Dieppe N.B., Canada, with a focus on language planning. Her findings are rather telling about the linguistic situation in Acadia, as the menus mostly seem to reflect strong endonormative North American French tendencies, possibly shaped in part by an intricate interplay of intra- and extralinguistic factors such as language contact, culinary practices, and regional identity construction, which in itself goes to show how complex and interdisciplinary Gauvin's contribution is.

Next, Debalina Pal and Aditi Ghosh take us to India, where they study interview sequences from selected Bengali films from a conversation analytical point of view. More specifically, the aim of their investigation is to find out how

the standardised structure of sequence organisation exhibits social hierarchy in these interviews. Their findings reveal that it is the asymmetries in the distribution of conversational rights in these interviews that lead to the discursive construction of a hierarchical relationship.

From India, we continue our journey in Eastern Europe, where Gerhard Edelmann takes us to the Republic of Moldova. In his paper, Edelmann studies the language making, language naming, and language planning processes that characterise the language policy situation in Moldova. After exploring the socio-historical background as well as the ideological basis of the different directions of discourse that surround (and to some extent actively shape) the language situation in Moldova, he comes to the conclusion that Moldovan cannot realistically be considered as a language separate from Romanian, but rather a non-dominant variety of Romanian as a pluricentric language, which is an assumption that completely justifies the position of Edelmann's article in the present volume.

Finally, Chung and Choi provide this volume with a historical linguistic final accord, which is connected to the somewhat problematic NS ideological heritage of the present-day German language in two of its varieties: Germany German and Austrian German. The example of the linguistic remains of NS ideology that the authors choose to analyse is the spelling table used in the two aforementioned countries. Through this example, they manage to demonstrate a unique manifestation of linguistic dominance that is otherwise also generally very important for the description of dominant vs. non-dominant varieties of pluricentric languages.

The editors would like to thank all the authors for their extremely valuable contributions, as well as the reviewers for their helpful comments and efforts, which have been of immense help with improving this publication.

*Máté Huber and Benjamin Meisnitzer*
*Szeged and Leipzig, in June 2024*

# Part 1: Pluricentric Languages in Africa

**In: Máté Huber / Benjamin Meisnitzer (eds.) (2024): Pluricentric languages in Africa and in other regions of the World. Graz, 2024. PCL-Press. p. 15-38.**

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# Pluricentricity, iconisation, and instrumentalisation of language in North Africa and its diaspora

**Abstract**

This study deals with the central role of Tamazight in shaping '*Amazighness*', i.e., the translocal Amazigh group identity, influenced by social, political, and historical factors and fostered by linguistic 'pluricentricity'. Despite the prevalence of functionally dominant languages in daily interactions, discussions about Amazigh identity primarily revolve around Tamazight, highlighting its significant ethnic importance. However, there has been a recent shift in the portrayal of Tamazight, influenced by the evolving perception of Darija as part of Tamazight heritage and interactional repertoire. This shift is driven by governmental instrumentalisation of Tamazight, especially since its official recognition in Morocco and Algeria, alongside ongoing institutional Arabisation efforts. Despite these efforts, Arabisation has failed to replace Tamazight and Darija with Standard Arabic as intended, leading to a phenomenon termed 'Darijation'. The study also emphasises language's role in shaping culture, serving as a crucial aspect of both traditional and contemporary cultural practices. It shows that language not only acts as a conduit for cultural expression, but actively shapes culture itself through 'conventionalised heteroglossia'.

## 1. Introduction to the study

The present study examines how the Tamazight languages form an essential aspect of the Amazigh group identity, usually constructed in opposition to state hegemony, whether in North Africa or in the diaspora. Here, the term diaspora is defined broadly, encapsulating any population dissemination stemming from a shared origin. Regardless of the geographical, ethnical, social, historical, and political diversity of the *Imazighen* or Amazigh peoples – i.e., North Africa's indigenous peoples – and their claim, their recent unified ideological movement has engendered the appearance of a fresh 'postcolonial'

native ethnic group, the *pan-Amazigh* or simply the *Amazigh*, which is supported by a novel trans-local pan-Amazigh collective identity, i.e., *Amazighness*, widely promoted by means of the new media (Lafkioui 2011, 2013). North Africa, also called *Tamazgha* nowadays, in ancient times spanned from the Canary Islands to Egypt, and from the Mediterranean to the northern Sahel. This region is commonly referred to as the 'Maghreb' (al-Maghrib, meaning 'the West'). It denotes the western part of the 'Arab world', typically encompassing much of northern Africa, including the Sahara Desert, but excluding Egypt and Sudan, which are considered to be part of the 'Mashriq'—the eastern part of the Arab world. However, the term 'Maghreb' implies North Africa's Arab origin rather than its native Amazigh origin. Therefore, it is avoided by Amazigh activists, who are seeking linguistic and cultural rights within the challenging environment of Arabisation prevalent in the region.

There are about forty million Tamazight-speakers, six million of whom live in the diaspora. The largest number of Tamazight-speakers live in Morocco. The estimates there vary between thirty and seventy percent of the total population, regardless of their linguistic competencies. Many Tamazight languages are endangered, not only in North Africa's periphery, such as in Mauritania, but also in densely populated regions, such as in Kabylia (North Algeria), for instance.

Furthermore, I will demonstrate that the safeguarding and renewal of the Tamazight languages are associated with multilingualism, wherein various 'pluricentric' languages such as Arabic, French, and Spanish play a pivotal role in North Africa. These languages, along with so many others in the various North African and diasporic contexts wherein the Tamazight-speaking people live, not only form competing sociolinguistic resources within their multilingual repertoires, but also offer certain metalinguistic tools, enabling the renewal of the various writing systems of the Tamazight languages, their grammar, dictionaries, and even their literary canons.

I will also discuss how the Internet, as an instrument of globalisation, allows North African interactants to complete functions of their 'pluricentric' linguistic resources trans-locally and, accordingly, how digital media reposition these functions in the interactive – substantial and cognitive – space. Light will also be shed on the nature and function(s) of multilingualism in interethnic cultural contexts and the way their interactants jointly create language and cultural norms and accommodations and hence contributing to 'conventionalised heteroglossia' (Lafkioui 2019, 2021), which will be addressed in Section 4.

The interactional sociolinguistic approach is appropriate for this study, as it allows careful examination of the complex relationship between language, identity, and power (Goffman 1981; Gumperz 1982; Lafkioui 2019; among others), especially when globalisation processes and effects are involved, which is the case here. Central to this approach lies the fundamental emphasis placed on the 'interactants' rather than disembodied language, as they jointly construct and reconstruct meaning, and produce and reproduce cultural values, including identities and ethnicities.

Therefore, in this study, equally significant as the linguistic features are the extralinguistic features of the interactions, which relate to their historical, social, cultural, and political context. This expansion of the interactional paradigm incorporates concepts from linguistic ethnography and anthropology, particularly concerning the dynamics of 'power' and its instantiation through language, whether practiced or imagined (Blommaert 2010; Bourdieu 1982; Fairclough 1989; Gal 2006; Lafkioui 2013).

In doing so, the study acknowledges the significance of integrating multiple approaches to comprehend human interaction fully. This perspective has been a guiding force since the inception of my research into language and culture, inspired by my consistent engagement in fieldwork activities in North-Africa and in Europe from the mid-nineties. In other words, both the data and analysis presented here are fundamentally 'ecological' as they concern 'the study of interactions between any given language and its environment' (Haugen 1972). The data discussed were gathered in various offline and online contexts, forming a substantial ecological multilingual and multimodal corpus, constructed in Africa and in Europe (see Lafkioui 2015 for corpus methodology).

Accordingly, and as will be demonstrated in the forthcoming sections, my data and findings unveil certain shortcomings within both the 'pluricentric' and 'pluriareality' models, with the latter emerging as a relatively recent alternative to the former. Primarily, the pluricentric model, while normative in nature, fails to grasp the intricacies of the constantly evolving multilingual environments and their sociolinguistic amalgamations, particularly within the context of globalisation. The model's emphasis solely on the notion of 'centre' lacks nuance, with its definition often remaining ambiguous and typically implying a national standard that influences other language standards, usually originating from different nations. The concept of this 'centre' is usually intertwined with the process of nation-state-building and the symbolic significance it carries (e.g., Clyne 1992, Kloss 1967, Muhr et al. 2015, Silva da 2014, Stewart 1968). Conversely,

the pluriareality model adopts a more user-based and corpus-linguistic approach, delving into considerable linguistic analytical depth, as evidenced by works such as those by Elspaß and Dürscheid (2017) and Herrgen (2015). However, it falls short in interpreting these details within the broader sociopolitical framework, thereby overlooking significant sociological and anthropological mechanisms inherent in language representation and usage, both contemporary and historical.

Critique, similar to the aforementioned, can be found in Auer (2021), where he introduces the concept of 'multi-standard language' and which 'is simply one that is standardised differently in different states, whatever the reasons may be'. While the concept of 'multi-standard language' offers a broader framework for understanding multilingual contexts, it lacks specificity regarding the construction of corresponding typologies and their essential parameters. This limitation persists whether dealing with established or emerging sociopolitical contexts and whether conveyed from symmetrical or asymmetrical sociolinguistic positions. Consequently, it does not significantly contribute to the development of typologies tailored to the nuanced multilingualism encountered in Africa and its diaspora, which I term 'layered and stratified multilingualism' (Lafkioui 2008, 2013), a concept that will be examined further in following Section 2.

## 2. North Africa and its layered and stratified multilingualism

Multilingualism in North Africa is an ancient phenomenon and traces back as far as Antiquity at least, with for instance the famous bilingual inscription in Punic vs Numidian, dedicated to Masinissa (circa 238 BC–148 BC), King of Numidia, a kingdom which extended at its largest from the Mediterranean Sea to the north and the Sahara to the south, and from Mauretania to the west, at the Muluya River, to Africa Proconsularis to the east. Despite the myriad of languages and cultures that have traversed North Africa, many of them no longer wield significant influence in contemporary power dynamics. However, some of them have left enduring linguistic traces. For instance, some fairly ancient loanwords from Latin and Greek are still present in Tamazight, serving as reminders of the region's rich multilingual heritage, e.g., the Latin **iugum* > *tayuga* 'pair of oxen', 'pair'.

The languages that continue to hold sway in contemporary power relations can be categorised into three periods. The first period traces back to the Middle Ages, commencing with the Islamic conquests from the 7$^{th}$ century

onwards. These conquests exerted a profound influence on North Africa's ancestral linguistic and cultural landscape. The colonisation endeavours primarily facilitated the introduction of Arabic and its various forms into the predominantly Tamazight-speaking habitat. Initially, the Arabisation process unfolded gradually, yet in contemporary times, it has surged with notable momentum, particularly after gaining independence from Western colonial powers in the 20th century. Arabisation then emerged as a central tenet of the newly established nation-states' policies.

In essence, North Africa embraced the policy of 'Institutional Arabisation', as described in Lafkioui (2011, 2013), effectively sidelining its own ancestral Tamazight languages and cultures in a radical departure from its historical trajectory. Arabisation seamlessly aligned with the nationalist governance model adopted by North African countries post-independence. It drew inspiration from both French centralist Jacobinism and Nasserist and Baathist pan-Arabism, amalgamating elements from both ideologies. Both ideologies advocate for the principle of uniformity: the concept of one nation-state corresponding to one territory, with a singular language and culture.

While North African nations initially sought to align with pan-Arabist movements (i.e., *ʿurūba*) to forge a united front against colonial powers, this alignment led to the adoption of the very ideas they had previously resisted. This included the assimilation of linguistic, cultural, and identity diversity. Strictly speaking, North Africa found itself still under a form of colonial rule—the Arab-Islamic nation—exploited by local central regimes to perpetuate their power while denying the Amazigh origins of their peoples, despite historical evidence to the contrary (see Lafkioui Forthcoming for an overview). To date, Institutional Arabisation has persistently aimed at establishing Standard Arabic as the national language, often invoking Islam as justification for this endeavour.

Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso stand out as exceptions to the Arabisation trend. In the context of Pan-Africanism, these countries have recognised the Tuareg languages as national languages, reflecting a political and linguistic ideology that acknowledges the significance of local languages for the socio-economic development of their regions. Consequently, unlike in the northern Amazigh regions, issues within the Tuareg communities are typically not contested along linguistic lines. However, despite this policy in favour of language diversity, a different approach is taken regarding writing systems. Since the 1960s, there has been a concerted effort to standardise the transcription of national languages, aligning with Pan-African ideals. Latin

script is predominantly used for this transcription, a homogenising measure that has received substantial political and financial backing from international organisations and religious institutions like the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL). Nevertheless, this push for uniformity has not always been warmly received by the Tuareg community, which has a centuries-old, if not millennia-old, tradition of using its native Tifinagh script.

The second period pertains to the wave of Western colonisation that commenced in the 14th century, leaving a considerable linguistic imprint along North Africa's coastline. This era witnessed the introduction of Portuguese, for instance, following the conquest of Ceuta (Rif region, North Morocco) in 1415. This marked the onset of Portuguese expansion into Africa, where it served as a lingua franca. The colonial influence intensified notably from the 19th century onwards, with languages such as Italian, French, and Spanish assuming prominence in North Africa's interactional repertoire. However, today, only French and Spanish retain substantial sociopolitical significance in the region.

The sociolinguistic landscape of North Africa has undergone profound transformations since the turn of the millennium, paralleling the broader processes of globalisation and technological advancement, thereby delineating the distinct third period. These shifts have facilitated greater multilingualism and multimodality, fostering an Amazigh cultural and political renaissance and thereby contributing to dehegemonisation efforts, as detailed in Section 4.

Globalisation and its associated sociopolitical pressures are challenging the dominant Arab-Islamic nationalist narrative that asserts North Africa's Arab origin. Accordingly, we are witnessing notable alterations in language politics in certain countries in the region. These alterations are prompting various population groups to reassess their identities, particularly those who have undergone complete Arabisation, including the *ʿarubi* populations (e.g., from Casablanca), many of whom believe they are descended from the Arab tribes that migrated to North Africa, especially from the 11th century onwards. The proliferation of DNA tests among these *ʿarubi* groups, often conducted by younger generations, frequently reveals an Amazigh (i.e., North African) origin. The revelation of Amazigh ancestry among these *ʿarubi* individuals and their subsequent quest for identity have sparked considerable debate on social media platforms. Presently, North Africa testifies to a complex sociolinguistic landscape characterised by 'layered and stratified multilingualism' (Lafkioui 2008, 2013). In this context, the various languages in use do not hold equal sociolinguistic status or serve identical sociocultural functions. Instead, the

sociolinguistic hierarchy of languages is primarily determined by national and local policies. Both offline and online, the activation or non-activation of different linguistic resources inevitably signifies variation in interactive functions and the social categories associated with them by the interactants. The main linguistic resources presently participating in North Africa's multilingual landscape include:

1. The Tamazight languages and their local varieties (Afroasiatic), which are indigenous to North Africa (see Section 3).
2. Darija or Darja (or variants), which is a gradually varying language continuum that spans North Africa and functions as a lingua franca, emerging from the interaction between Tamazight, its substratum and sole endogenous component, and Arabic since the 7th century. In addition to the substantial influences of Latin and Greek on Darija, adstrata of Tamazight since Antiquity, the impact of Portuguese, Spanish, and French is even more pronounced, with the latter two still actively contributing to its development, along with other 'pluricentric' languages like English. Consequently, Darija encompasses more than the commonly understood translation of 'Arabic dialect' or its national equivalents, like e.g. 'Moroccan Arabic', 'Tunisian Arabic', 'Libyan Arabic' or their abbreviated counterparts like e.g., 'Moroccan', etc. Hassaniyya is also part of this continuum, forming its peripheries not only geographically but also linguistically. Its distinctive features arise from contact with various sub-Saharan languages, such as Wolof (Niger-Congo). Hassaniyya is principally practiced in Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and the Western Sahara.
3. Sub-Saharan African languages, such as Songhay (Nilo-Saharan), Fula (Niger-Congo), and Hausa (Afroasiatic), which are regularly encountered as contact languages among the Zenaga and Tuareg Amazigh peoples in the Sahara and the northern Sahel.
4. Arabic, and its classical, standard, and colloquial varieties (Afroasiatic).
5. Indo-European languages: French and Spanish mainly as ex-colonial languages, next to English as 'the' international language.

Mother tongues and heritage languages, such as Tamazight, often hold the status of unofficial, minority, or second language (L2), making it challenging for them

to compete with dominant languages like Standard Arabic—the language of Islam and its *ʾumma*, the transnational Arab-Islamic nation—or languages such as French, the sole official language in France, or even English, widely regarded as the preeminent international language, gaining increasing social and interactive significance in the wake of the electronic revolution. 'Heritage language' refers here to any given minority language acquired at home or in social contexts that promote languages other than the dominant ones, typically native or immigrant languages.

As a result, the structures and functions of linguistic resources exhibit a layered and stratified (i.e., hierarchical) nature, contingent upon the context and the interactive position from which the interactions occur. These positions may be categorised as socio-politically or culturally dominant, affording high status (e.g., Standard Arabic in North African public institutions), or dominated, with low status (e.g., Tamazight in North African public institutions and spaces), or somewhere in-between (e.g., Darija in N. African public institutions and spaces, including in Tamazight-speaking regions). In alignment with this linguistic stratification, identities, as interactive semiotic productions constructed during socio-cultural interactions, are likewise layered and stratified (Lafkioui 2013).

Furthermore, Darija is progressively assuming the role of a lingua franca in North Africa, permeating even contexts traditionally reserved for dominant languages. For instance, discussions on French literature in academic settings, where the presence of Standard French was once predominant, now observe a notable presence of Darija. This trend is particularly evident when codeswitching occurs, also including Tamazight. The growing prevalence of Darija across various interactional domains is a direct consequence of Institutional Arabisation, which designated Standard Arabic as the sole official language. This policy was reinforced across all societal levels in the 1980s and intensified further since the 1990s. As a result, even subjects previously taught in French, such as mathematics, are now predominantly taught in Standard Arabic in national education systems, often interspersed with codeswitching involving Darija, French, or English.

In North Africa, the process of Institutional Arabisation persists as a significant sociopolitical endeavour deeply rooted in Arab-Islamic culture. Despite its persistence, this policy, which aims to promote Standard Arabic across various domains, notably fails to fully supplant the widespread use of

Darija. This reality underscores a shift from Arabisation towards what can be termed 'Darijation' – the systematic adoption and proliferation of Darija throughout all strata of society, including formal interactional settings. Darija now pervades North African society, particularly gaining momentum in Morocco, where until recently the majority was Tamazight-speaking, some even exclusively so, especially in rural areas. The aggressive implementation of Arabisation initiatives in the 1990s in Morocco and Algeria dramatically altered the sociolinguistic landscape, precipitating a rapid transition from Tamazight to Darija. This shift, closely linked to the promotion of Sunni Islam, strategically employed religious institutions, exemplified by the establishment of the 'Institut Mohammed VI pour la formation des Imams Morchidines et Morchidates' in 2013 by the Moroccan monarchy. Within such institutions and others of similar nature, imams undergo specialised training and are strategically positioned to promote the adoption of Standard Arabic within the framework of Islam. This move served dual purposes: thwarting the spread of Shiism while coercing Tamazight speakers to relinquish their native tongue in favour of Darija, often perceived by policymakers as a dialect of Standard Arabic, thus advancing the Arabisation agenda. Consequently, many Tamazight speakers adopt Darija not only as their primary language but also as the medium of instruction for their children, driven by aspirations for academic success and societal integration, sometimes compounded by religious motivations. Notably, certain religious figures, including official imams, actively disparage Tamazight and its cultural traditions, such as *Yennayer*, the Tamazight New Year celebration (around January 12$^{th}$), often denouncing them while paradoxically speaking in the very language they seek to undermine.

These findings underscore a crucial inquiry into how the so-called 'Tamazight project' navigates the complex landscape of language policies in Morocco and across North Africa, where similar political mechanisms prevail. Specifically, the question arises: how can Tamazight hope to survive, let alone thrive, when dominant political entities establish commanding institutions like the 'Institut Mohammed VI pour la formation des Imams Morchidines et Morchidates' at the very heart of societal interaction? Institutions such as these, operating under the guise of religious and nationalist ideologies, wield significant control over societal discourse and exert influence both locally and beyond. Remarkably, media reports have highlighted instances where 'official' imams dispatched to Europe for the propagation of Islam and Standard Arabic have been implicated in matters relating to extremism, espionage, and drug-

related offenses. These ideological bastions serve as potent gatekeepers for the ruling class, exerting considerable influence over social media platforms due to their global reach and impact.

## 3. Tamazight, the icon of Amazighness or *Tamuzgha*

Tamazight represents the native language family of North Africa, encompassing approximately forty languages and their local varieties, forming a branch within the broader Afroasiatic phylum. Mutual intelligibility is somewhat possible between neighbouring languages or languages of the same type. If not, formal education or prolonged interaction is required to understand and speak the different languages well. Even within the same language, variation can be significant, to the extent that intelligibility between certain local varieties becomes challenging, such as in Tarifit or Rif Tamazight—a language prevalent in the North, Northeast, and Northwest regions of Morocco, characterised by a continuum structure (Lafkioui 2020). In essence, the distribution of the Tamazight languages throughout North Africa resembles a continuum, where distinctions between them are not always clear-cut, as one language transitions into another without distinct boundaries (Lafkioui 2018, Forthcoming).

Tamazight serves as the endogenous term for any language within the Tamazight family. For instance, it represents the language practiced by the Tuaregs of Mali, where the local variant 'Tamajaq' is utilised, as well as the language practiced by the Icawiyen of northeastern Algeria (Aures area), who currently employ the neologism 'Tacawit' or the Arabised term 'Shawiya' for their language. In English, the masculine form 'Amazigh' language is also employed, a calque of the widely used term 'Berber' in academic discourse. The term Berber is typically employed when referring to a specific Tamazight language or the entire language family, as well as when referencing the ethnic origin of individuals and thus their ethnonym or anthroponym. As an ethnonym, the endogenous generic equivalents of Berber are 'Amazigh' (*amaziɣ*, masculine singular) and 'Tamazight' (*tamaziɣt*, feminine singular), with their respective plural forms being 'Imazighen' (*imaziɣen*) and 'Timazighin' (*timaziɣin*). Although the term Berber generally lacks negative connotations in contemporary academic discourse, particularly within the field of linguistics, using 'Tamazight' and 'Amazigh' would be more appropriate for primarily two reasons:

1) There is a concern for scientific and historical accuracy in favour of terms related to 'Amazigh', as they are endonyms derived from the nomen agentis with the *m*-prefix, *m*-zɣ, derived from the root *zɣ (or its allophone *zq),

denoting 'to live', 'to dwell', and similar concepts (Chaker, 1987). This root often appears synchronously in the triconsonantal form *zdɣ. Conversely, 'Berber' is an exonym derived from the Greek 'barbaros' (singular) and its plural 'barbaroi', which the ancient Greeks used to describe non-Greek-speaking peoples. The term was adopted into Latin as 'barbarus' meaning 'non-Roman to the Romans', then into Arabic as 'barbar', to which the connotation of 'savage' was later added over time. It spread in Europe through Spanish as 'bereber' and French as 'berbère', particularly during the 19th century through colonisation campaigns.

2) Out of respect for the native interactants of the languages and cultures under study, who commonly reject the term Berber due to its negative connotations, it is only appropriate to use endonyms in scientific contexts if requested by the native communities, despite certain outdated academic traditions. However, academia tends to exhibit inertia, resulting in a slow transition from the exonym 'Berber' to the endonym 'Tamazight'. Thus, a simultaneous use of both terms is often observed, including in my own practice, despite my efforts since the outset of my career to promote the use of endogenous terms. It is worth noting that until very recently, the adoption of the term Tamazight or its variants was not widely accepted within academic circles, particularly in Europe. Moreover, in North Africa, it was often prohibited and penalised for political reasons, compelling many researchers to resort to exogenous terms such as 'Berber'.

Tamazight encompasses ancient language forms known as Libyan or Numidian, which trace back to the 5th-10th century BCE. These ancient forms gave rise to both ancient and current Tifinagh scripts. Tifinagh serves as the native Amazigh writing system, still employed by the Tuaregs today, predominantly residing in the Sahara and northern Sahel regions, also known as southern Tamazgha. Over several decades, Tifinagh, particularly the Neo-Tifinagh iteration evolved from its original form, has been adopted in the northern regions of Tamazgha, notably in Morocco following the integration of Tamazight into official education in 2003; see e.g. Figure 1 showcasing its official appearance on public road signs in Agadir (Southern Morocco) in 2019.

Despite the gradual adoption of Neo-Tifinagh as a script and Tamazight as a language alongside Standard Arabic in certain official contexts in Morocco and Algeria, the adoption process lacks systematicity and accuracy. Both countries are currently in the process of developing a standard form of Tamazight—with one based on the Tifinagh script and the other on the Latin script—that aims to represent the various Tamazight languages, at least at their nation-state level.

However, these official standardisation efforts face significant opposition, particularly from Tamazight-speaking communities, due to the often-inadequate results and their limited application in society, including in education and administration.

One major concern is the insufficient consideration given to the regional and local entrenchment of the language, which reflect significant demographic, sociocultural, and historical diversity. For example, the linguistic landscape of Taqbaylit, practiced in Kabylia (Northern Algeria; sedentary and Mediterranean, mainly Sunni Muslims), differs from that of Tamzabit (aka Tumẓabt), used by the Mozabites (sedentary Ibāḍī Muslims; Ibāḍism being a branch of Islam, usually placed under Kharijism) in the northern Sahara of Algeria, as well as from Tamahaq, the language of the Tuaregs in the Ahaggar area (Southern Algerian Sahara, Western Libya, and Northern Niger; mainly Sunni Muslims), where they lead a predominantly (pastoral) nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle.

The official institutions tasked with standardising Tamazight—the Haut Commissariat de l'Amazighité (HCA) in Algeria (established in 1995) and the Institut Royal de la Culture Amazighe (IRCAM) in Morocco (established in 2001)—have not only failed in their 'Tamazight project' but also face uncertain futures. Their functions and initiatives are subject to government decisions, which can lead to their dissolution, reduction, or merger. For example, there has been ongoing debate about dissolving or merging IRCAM, despite being not even halfway towards achieving the objectives set when it was founded two decades ago by King Mohammed VI.

It is important to note that the Tamazight project is under significant political pressure to quickly deliver a 'Standard Tamazight'. However, meeting this demand is practically impossible if handled correctly. Any serious standardisation effort should consider the complexity of Tamazight, which comprises several languages, some of which have received little or no study or documentation, some are even at risk of extinction (see Lafkioui Forthcoming). Thus, there is still much work to be done for the success of the Tamazight project, not only academically but also practically, especially in areas such as language education, where expertise is lacking in both quality and quantity.

The implementation of the Tamazight project has stagnated for some time, this is particularly evident in the education sector. For example, in Morocco, despite promises to expand Tamazight education starting from 2003, progress has been slow. It was anticipated that by 2010, Tamazight education would be available at every level, from primary to university, across the country,

including in Arabic-speaking regions. This aligns with Article 5 of the Moroccan Constitution of 2011, revised after significant popular protests earlier that year, which grants Tamazight co-official status alongside Standard Arabic. Yet, the wording of the article is subject to interpretation and debate (see Lafkioui 2013 for details):

> L'arabe demeure la langue officielle de l'état. L'état oeuvre à la protection et au développement de la langue arabe, ainsi qu'à la promotion de son utilisation. De même l'amazighe constitue une langue officielle de l'état, en tant que patrimoine commun à tous les Marocains sans exception.
> 'Arabic remains the official language of the State. The state ensures the protection and development of the Arabic language as well as the promotion of its use. Amazigh is likewise an official language of the State, as a common heritage of all Moroccans without exception.'

However, the current state of education in Morocco falls short of expectations, as Tamazight education is limited to primary grades and suffers from inadequate quality, partly due to a shortage of qualified teaching staff and insufficient pedagogical materials. It is hoped that the Moroccan government, under Prime Minister Aziz Akhannouch, will address these shortcomings and fulfil the promises made in 2003 and reiterated in Organic Law No. 26-16 of 2019. One of the major challenges with the Moroccan constitutional reform is its gradual approach to formalising Tamazight, relying on decisions to be voted on in parliament. This formulation suggests that the official recognition of Tamazight is more symbolic than substantive, as it contends with the significant political influence of proponents of nationalist pan-Arabism. Similar dynamics are observed in Algeria, where Arabisation policies hold sway. Elsewhere in North Africa, Tamazight holds even less weight in current sociopolitical discussions, particularly at an official level.

The current situation reflects how Tamazight and its advocacy have been heavily instrumentalised since its acceptance as a 'national' and subsequently 'official' language in Algeria and Morocco since the 1990s. This instrumentalisation is particularly evident in public education. For example, numerous instances exist of haphazard hiring practices, where teachers are recruited without any knowledge of Tamazight, lacking appropriate training, and demonstrating no interest in teaching it. Another troubling aspect is the low standard of education and research offered in the new Tamazight departments at the universities, with serious ethical issues such as fraud and sexual

harassment being reported. Consequently, some Tamazight scholars prefer to remain in their original departments, such as French or English, rather than joining the Tamazight departments. This situation aligns with the broader trend of educational inflation and erosion in North Africa, with Tamazight bearing a disproportionate burden, possibly the highest.

In fact, a notable decline in the use of Tamazight is observable across North Africa and its diaspora, even in regions with a significant Tamazight-speaking population, such as Southern Morocco where Tashelhit is prevalent. Darija is steadily replacing Tamazight across all social strata, while Standard Arabic is supplanting French and Spanish, particularly among the educated middle class. This trend stems from various deep-seated structural sociopolitical dynamics, foremost among them being Institutional Arabisation (see Section 2).

Despite the official recognition of Tamazight in Morocco in 2011 and in Algeria in 2016, there has been little tangible progress in the Imazighen's struggle for their language and culture rights, both within these countries and elsewhere in North Africa. On the contrary, there is a growing apprehension among Amazigh activists that the official acknowledgment of their language is primarily symbolic. Not only have the promised advancements failed to materialise, but there is also evidence of a hardening and rightward shift in policymaking, mirroring a broader trend observed within its diaspora, particularly in the 'Global North'.

Structurally, North Africa's Tamazight policy presents a complex blend of contradictory measures, leading some critics to believe it is intentionally ambiguous. For instance, since 2024, Morocco has officially recognised *Yennayer* (the Amazigh New Year) as a holiday, yet simultaneously refuses to release unlawfully imprisoned individuals, including numerous Rifian activists like Zefzafi. The Hirak, a grassroots protest movement that emerged in 2010 during the commonly referred to 'Arab Spring', gained momentum following the tragic death of fishmonger Mohcine Fikri in October 2016 in Al Hoceima, located in the Rif area (North Morocco). This event served as a catalyst, amplifying longstanding grievances against social and political oppression within the region. The Hirak has resonated across North Africa and gained significant traction in Algeria since 2019. Present-day North African regimes employ stringent censorship and repression against individuals advocating strongly for Tamazight, particularly when such advocacy aligns with calls for regional independence or greater autonomy, as witnessed in certain activist circles in the Rif region.

Another telling example of the disparity between political decisions and actual implementation in North Africa is the ongoing refusal of Moroccan administrative institutions to register Amazigh first names for newborns. These names are excluded because they are not on the list of officially recognised Arabic and Islamic names, despite the constitutional acknowledgment of Tamazight as the 'common patrimony of all Moroccans without exception' (Article 5 of the Reformed Constitution, as mentioned earlier). Consequently, the National Council of Moroccan Languages and Cultures has failed in its mission 'to protect and promote Arabic, Tamazight, and various Moroccan cultural expressions', thereby undermining the concrete implementation of the Tamazight project on Moroccan territory. Similar incidents are reported elsewhere in North Africa.

As a result, the Imazighen who have not succumbed to the allure of Tamazight's instrumentalisation—commonly referred to as *ḥubza*, a Darija term denoting clientelism—have no option but to continue their struggle for language, cultural, and identity rights through non-governmental networks, as they have done to this day. Despite these challenges, ongoing scientific research, increased and diversified cultural production and dissemination, and the promotion of cultural heritage by numerous non-governmental networks have propelled Tamazight languages and cultures into greater social and political visibility in recent decades (see Section 4).

Note that it was only with the creation of the new nation-states after independence that a 'transnational collective' Amazigh claim began to take shape in North Africa and its diaspora. This pluralist movement was primarily triggered by the exclusion of the Imazighen, despite their significant contribution to achieving independence, from decision-making and institutional power positions in the newly established pan-Arab-Islamic states. The constitutions of these states completely disregarded Tamazight language and culture, proclaiming (Standard) Arabic as the sole official language, thereby denying their rights outright (except for the Tuareg case in Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso, as discussed in Section 2).

It is remarkable that with the establishment of independent nation-states during the 20$^{th}$ century, many Imazighen not only adopted Standard Arabic as their official language—often under sociopolitical pressure—but also embraced an Arab-Islamic identity. Consequently, numerous North Africans now identify as Arabs, despite their Amazigh origin. This is remarkable because in other parts of the Islamic world, the conversion to Islam or the adoption of an Arabic variety

typically has not resulted into the rejection or neglect of native languages and identities (e.g., in Iran, Turkey, Indonesia).

In North Africa, only those who speak Tamazight are commonly regarded as Amazigh. Hence, language equals identity. This underscores why the struggle for increased rights among the Imazighen predominantly revolves around the recognition and preservation of the Tamazight languages. Tamazight holds immense significance as the primary symbol of Amazighness, as it shapes crucial institutional power dynamics. The Imazighen have long recognised the profound link between language, power, and territory, even employing it in their governance, as seen in the establishment of renowned Andalusian dynasties like the Almoravids and Almohads during the 11$^{th}$ to 13$^{th}$ centuries (see e.g., Ghouirgate 2015, Meouak 2006). Both Tamazight and Tifinagh serve as symbolic markers—icons—of the pan-Amazigh collective identity or 'Amazighness' (*amazighité* in French), increasingly referred to as *Tamuzgha* in Tamazight (or variants), formally as well as colloquially.

Yet, significant changes have occurred recently regarding the representation of Tamazight in relation to how Darija is perceived. Remarkably, Darija is no longer solely viewed as the mother tongue of Arabic speakers or Arabs, nor as a language spoken by 'lost' Imazighen, but increasingly as part of the Tamazight heritage. There is a growing emphasis, particularly on social media, on the assertion that Darija should not be labelled simply as an 'Arabic dialect'. Instead, for some, Darija is seen as an integral part of Tamazight, a hybrid language. For others, it is considered distinctively North African, with a significant influence from Tamazight. This recent cognitive shift in the representation of Darija is primarily driven by its significant role in the lives of many North Africans. Two key factors contribute to this shift: firstly, the awareness among Amazigh people of the pivotal transition from Tamazight to Darija, prompting them to seek explanations, especially if they have lost proficiency in Tamazight or never acquired it. Secondly, there is a growing realisation among Darija-speakers of their Amazigh descent, leading some to indirectly claim this heritage. Additionally, for many Darija-speakers, this shift represents an opportunity to capitalise on the Amazigh issue, both institutionally (e.g., in education and administration) and economically (e.g., in business and banking).

Furthermore, within the diaspora, the concept of Amazighness is becoming less closely tied to Tamazight. This trend is particularly noticeable among young individuals who may not be fluent in their heritage language and

who live in superdiverse environments shaped by significant migration-related sociocultural diversity. These young people often express their Amazigh identity through potent symbols, such as adopting names associated with historical figures like Yughurta and Dihiya. However, there is a risk associated with the overuse of such powerful symbols, especially when they are employed out of context. As a matter of fact, this can lead to a dilution of their significance and undermine their effectiveness as a means of asserting Amazigh identity. This phenomenon is not limited to the diaspora but is also observed in North Africa, where various symbols, customs, rituals, and events of Amazigh culture and history are sometimes magnified and turned into folklore, thereby stripped of their content. One example of this is the traditional Amazigh tattoo practice, a phenomenon that is increasingly experiencing sociocultural distortion.

## 4. Conventionalised heteroglossia and globalised identity

Based on over two decades of fieldwork conducted in North Africa and its diaspora, this study delves into the significance of 'conventionalised heteroglossia' (Lafkioui 2019, 2021) in the accommodation, socialisation, and emancipation of multilingual interactants. It particularly highlights the role of multilingualism in minority communities, considering their demographic and political contexts. The concept of 'conventionalised heteroglossia' pertains to multilingual interactions relating to diverse intersubjective voices construed from diverse sociocultural interactional positions within specific, yet dynamic, conventionalised multilingual interactional frameworks. Accordingly, 'conventionalised' refers to the joint management of polyphony within these interactions, contingent upon the nature of their heteroglossia, the framework in which they occur, and the extent to which they have become routinised.

Detailed cases in point can be found in Lafkioui (2019, 2021), which address the phenomenon and dynamics of 'francophonie'. More precisely, the studies examine how the French language contributes to shaping collective identities within francophone communities in Flanders and Brussels, contrasting those with North African heritage with those rooted in Flemish culture. The studies focus on their language usage primarily in informal settings, including artistic expression. In doing so, the studies reveal the emergence of what is termed 'global French' or *le français globalisé*, which represents the emergence and utilisation of French within the context of globalisation, characterised by its hybrid form and content. They also highlight a remarkable form of multilingual codeswitching that involves structurally incongruent languages, which are

genetically or typologically distinct. This emphasises the significance of 'conventionalised heteroglossia' in facilitating such linguistic practices. Furthermore, the studies illustrate how multilingual codeswitching in 'glocal' interactions play a role in challenging and redefining specific sociocultural dynamics, such as the correlation between languages and social as well as ethnocultural identities.

Additionally, due to digital communication, numerous political minorities, such as the Imazighen, have acquired a significant forum for preserving and developing their ancestral languages and cultures. Online platforms like YouTube serve as accessible avenues for learning and community engagement. It should be noted that across North Africa and its diaspora, Tamazight education primarily occurs through non-governmental channels, spanning local associations, family networks, and media outlets such as radio, television, and the Internet.

The rise of digital media is especially significant for the Imazighen as it amplifies their voices and strengthens their Amazighness. This amplification not only aids in the preservation of Tamazight language and culture among its native speakers and supporters but also garners attention from international interest groups, contributing to the enduring legacy of Amazighness. The Internet, serving as a tool of globalisation, empowers interactants of linguistic minorities to leverage their language resources across geographical boundaries, thereby transcending local limitations. It enables them to relocate and utilise these resources within interactive spaces, encompassing both substantial and cognitive dimensions. Therefore, the Tamazight languages which, in North Africa, are generally regarded as 'dialects' of 'minorities' with minor socio-cultural status – except for the recent but precarious change in Morocco, Algeria – can gain in social and cultural power through translocal transfer via the Internet. Paradoxically, Tamazight-interactants aiming to empower their ancestral language through translocal means often resort to utilising functionally dominant languages. They regularly express themselves in languages such as Standard French, Standard European Spanish, Standard Arabic, or their colloquial varieties to further educational, creative, or political purposes relating to Tamazight.

Although digital media offer various avenues to enhance and broaden the semiotic potential of languages and their associated cultures, these platforms also operate as institutions with distinct frameworks and gatekeeping functions (Lafkioui 2008, 2013). This holds true for minority groups, including the

Tamazight minorities and their sociopolitical aspirations. An exemplary instance of such a gatekeeping institutionalised framework can be found in the digital channel known as 'Berbère Télévision', one of the pioneers in its field, dedicated to establishing and promoting language norms and representations through its lectures in Taqbaylit (i.e., Kabyle Tamazight; North Algeria). While these lectures focus on Taqbaylit specifically, the channel, website editors, and the e-lecturer themselves present them as 'Tamazight'. Despite the absence of a unified or standardised Tamazight for the entire Tamazight language family, whether based on the Latin, Arabic, or Tifinagh script, labelling them as Tamazight *tout court* signifies the participants' intention to transmit the Amazigh legacy (language and culture) in a 'modern' social and cultural format imbued with literacy and linguistic uniformity. This objective is evident during the lectures, where the e-teacher consistently employs Taqbaylit neologisms to construct unique meta-linguistic content and educational argumentative structure. Interestingly, while e-tutors commonly use many neologisms in Tamazight, they often reformulate them in French or another pluricentric language such as Spanish, Dutch, or Arabic, for cognitive and interactive purposes, such as memorisation and maintaining attention. In several Taqbaylit recordings on Berbère Télévision with one of the primary tutors, a genuine effort is made to teach solely in Taqbaylit, even when explaining and reformulating numerous neologisms used. Although not the most prevalent practice compared to other online courses, it is not uncommon, particularly in certain activist circles, where it is considered to be the ideal.

Thus, pluricentric multilingual reformulation practices facilitate ongoing verification of how discourse objects, such as language features of Tamazight, are categorised and named, fulfilling meta-communicative functions. Presenting Tamazight as a 'unified' and 'written' language not only meets the widespread demands and pressures for 'modernity', but also enhances it interactively by elevating its social and cultural status, a transformation I have observed over the past two decades.

The choice of a Latin-based orthographic system for many of these e-courses and much of the shared digital content in Tamazight further reinforces this status, as Latin is widely regarded, both in academic circles and among activists, as the most viable and 'modern' option for writing Tamazight languages. However, the Tifinagh writing system remains a significant contender in the Tamazight orthography debate. The Moroccan IRCAM's adoption of Neo-Tifinagh characters for their literacy practices has influenced

the direction of orthographic dynamics of Tamazight languages in North Africa and its diaspora. An illustrative example is depicted in Figure 2, showcasing the instruction of Tamazight in Zwara, Libya, facilitated by a local network. Certain Libyan local networks are transitioning to adopt the Moroccan IRCAM notation instead of the previously utilised Latin-based script. This transition is motivated by the involvement of the IRCAM, which is supplying teachers along with their corresponding teaching curricula and materials, subsequent to the overthrow of Qaddafi's regime. However, it is important to acknowledge that these materials have limitations and mainly concentrate on the Tamazight languages of Morocco.

It is noteworthy that Tamazight languages are predominantly represented through 'non-standardised' Latin-based scripts, occasionally tailored to Tamazight phonetics, whereas Tifinagh or Neo-Tifinagh characters are often portrayed as such. Compared to a decade ago, online participants show much less concern for orthography and increasingly adopt the 'respelling' practice (Shortis 2009) recorded for other online languages, which entails a more flexible, creative, and dynamic writing approach than standard orthographies.

Accordingly, digital communication reframes dominant languages, such as French, away from an asymmetric system where it holds a dominant and normative position, towards a more symmetric system where its sociolinguistic functions are locally negotiated and assessed. This fosters a 'more multi-centered sociolinguistic culture' (Coupland 2009). Although the norms thus created may be informal, unstable, and often characterised by an amateurish or impressionistic quality, they are significant as they emerge from debates in which Tamazight languages are viewed as valuable cultural assets, as cultural capital. Any use of Tamazight, whether formulaic or creative, is highly emblematic of Amazighness and indirectly contributes to the construction of intersubjective spaces that bolster the Amazigh claim. Indeed, the very discourse surrounding Tamazight languages, including conflicts, underscores their importance as cultural assets and icons of Amazighness. Consequently, their acquisition is greatly esteemed and celebrated. While there is room for negotiating Tamazight language and cultural norms and representations, the Amazigh websites, much like offline contexts, serve as gatekeepers, regulating to some extent the language and cultural features, functions, and contextualisation.

Within the context of the Amazigh claim, any language practice observed on these websites—regardless of whether it employs Tamazight—is regarded as

evidence of 'cultural capital' that signals Amazighness, which is inherently shared by all participants in the online interaction, even those who may contest it. Therefore, each Amazigh website operates as a 'framed space' (Goffman, 1981: 230), reflecting an overall pro-Amazigh intersubjective viewpoint and providing a foundational framework for interpreting online discourses. This framework, termed as 'framing discourse à la Amazigh' (Lafkioui 2013), offers a comprehensive template for understanding the online discussions within the context of Amazighness and its aspirations.

## 5. Conclusion

The study highlights that Tamazight primarily defines 'Amazighness', representing the translocal Amazigh group identity, shaped by social, political, and historical factors. Consequently, discussions concerning Amazigh identity often revolve around Tamazight, despite the predominant use of functionally dominant (pluricentric) languages in everyday interactions. Language choice in North Africa is heavily ethnicised, particularly when individuals explicitly express their ethnic and cultural identity. However, there has been a recent shift in the representation of Tamazight, influenced by the changing perception of Darija as part of the Tamazight heritage and interactional repertoire. This shift is primarily driven by the governments' strong instrumentalisation of Tamazight, especially since its official status in Morocco and Algeria. Simultaneously, these regimes continue their Institutional Arabisation efforts, aiming to promote the spread and development of Standard Arabic. Despite the implementation of various domination policies, including religious control, Arabisation has failed to supplant Tamazight as well as Darija with Standard Arabic as intended. This phenomenon, termed 'Darijation' in the study, is a collateral effect of Arabisation, with Tamazight bearing the brunt of its consequences. Consequently, for neoliberal capitalist motives, North African governments heavily instrumentalise both Tamazight and Darija. Furthermore, the research reveals that language not only serves as a medium for performing culture, but also actively shapes culture itself through its performative nature, engaging in 'conventionalised heteroglossia'. Language is integral to both traditional and contemporary cultural activities, constantly being redefined in dialogical and contextual interactions, with linguistic diversity and pluricentricity providing fertile ground for cultural expression and evolution.

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Figure 1. "official" multilingual public road signs in Agadir (S. Morocco)

Figure 2. Learning to write in Neo-Tifinagh in Libya
https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/world/archives/2023/03/30/2003797011-@AFP

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# The Emergence of Non-native Varieties: The case of Mozambican Portuguese

**Abstract**

The prevailing status of European languages as official languages in post-colonial Africa has been a matter of controversy. For some, the maintenance of European languages in a post-colonial situation can lead to elitism and alienation of the most disadvantaged populations. For others, European languages guarantee inter-ethnic and worldwide communication; moreover, these languages undergo a process of transformation, caused by their adaptation to the new socio-cultural contexts of the countries where they are preserved, giving rise to non-native varieties. The paper builds on these assumptions and analyzes the implantation and resulting nativization of Portuguese in Mozambique. It is argued that Portuguese in Mozambique has its own identity, and it is an imperative and requires social commitment to provide the Mozambican variety of Portuguese with appropriate regulatory instruments that normalize its use in all spheres of social life. These instruments will be highlighted.

## 1. Introduction

The approach taken in various publications on the linguistic issue in post-colonial countries, in many cases, was based on ideological and political considerations and assumptions, which led to controversial conclusions.

The attribution of official language status to languages of European origin in African countries has been addressed by various scholars and others, including writers (Ngugi wa Thiongo 1987; Mia Couto 2009; Honwana 2015), politicians (Obote 1967; Ganhão 1979), academics (Rosário 1982, 2015; Myers-Scotton 1993; Lopes 1997; Ngunga 1999; Firmino 2002, 2011; Chimbutane 2015, 2018).

For some, the maintenance of the European languages of the colonizers as official languages in African countries can lead to the exacerbation of elitism, since it is the elites, created by the colonizing powers, who best master

these languages; therefore, social inequality, underdevelopment and alienation of disadvantaged populations are promoted (Ngugi Wa Thiongo 1987; Myers-Scotton 1993; Ngunga 1999).

For others, given that African countries are predominantly characterized by multilingualism and multiethnicity, it is not desirable to dispense of the use of the ex-colonial language, which guarantees inter-ethnic communication and communication with the outside world (Ganhão 1979; Rosário 1982).

The implantation and consequent development of ex-colonial languages in African countries show that they are undergoing significant transformations depending on the social ecology in which they are integrated. In effect, the expansion of their space of use and the social functions attributed to them, whether as symbolic entities or as means of communication, are giving rise, in many cases, to the emergence of "non-native varieties" (Kachru 1982).

In the case of Mozambique, Portuguese was adopted as the only official language, in a context in which it co-exists with more than 20 Bantu languages (BL), the mother tongues of most of the population. As a result of this policy, Portuguese was, for many years, the only language used in official contexts, particularly in education. With its expansion, Portuguese also began to be used in contexts previously reserved for Bantu languages; thus, Portuguese was "appropriated" by Mozambicans (Ganhão 1979), acquiring new social functions, developing typical rhetorical structures and characteristics, a process that shaped its nativization (Machungo & Firmino 2022).

The acquisition of this ontological status requires the development of a linguistic model that is structurally and discursively recognized and accepted by speakers.

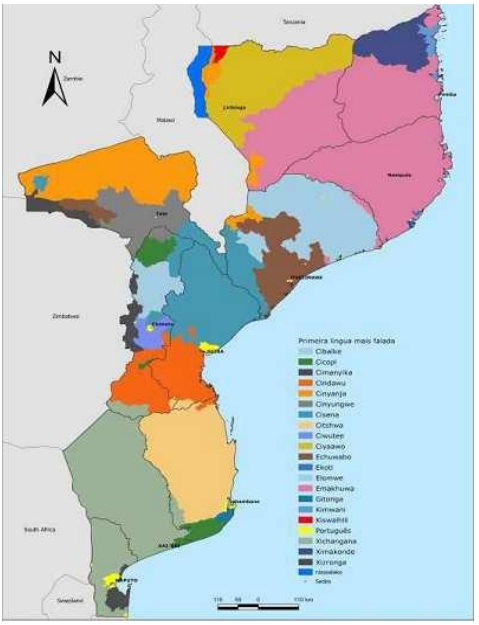
Based on these assumptions, we will analyze the implementation and consequent nativization of Portuguese in Mozambique.

Taking into account that Portuguese is considered a pluricentric language, that is, a language used as official in more than one country, with its norm codified, we intend to show that Portuguese in Mozambique is undergoing a process of codification, has its own identity, making the country a norm-setting center (Muhr 2016).

Several studies describe this variety of Portuguese, from a structural, sociolinguistic, and discursive point of view; the bibliographies section on the website of the Chair of Portuguese as Second and Foreign Language of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the Eduardo Mondlane University, contains a compilation of texts, produced by various authors, on the

Portuguese of Mozambique[1]. In this paper, two important resources in linguistic standardization will be highlighted: The Orthographic Vocabulary of the Portuguese of Mozambique (VOMOLP), an instrument that describes the orthographic vocabulary of Mozambican Portuguese, and the Dictionary of Mozambican Portuguese (DiPoMo), still in process ; DiPoMo aims to provide a linguistic resource, available in electronic and hard copy formats which describes and characterizes the lexicon of Mozambican Portuguese (MP), from a non-contrastive perspective. DiPoMo legitimizes the MP's lexicon and constitutes an important instrument of citizenship.

## 2. Brief history of the Portuguese language in Mozambique




Map 1 Linguistic Map of Mozambique
Source: Ngunga et. al. (2023)

For a better understanding of the linguistic panorama and the role of Portuguese in the Mozambican context, we briefly describe the historical path of the Portuguese language from colonial times to the present day, distinguishing the following phases (Gonçalves & Machungo 2019).

[1] www.catedraportugues.uem.mz.

### 1.1. Colonial Period I (1498 -1960)

The Portuguese presence in Mozambique dates back to 1498, with the first Portuguese settling in coastal areas on the trade route with Asia; It should be noted that until 1752, the territory that is Mozambique today was governed by Portugal through its Vice-Roy in India. After the Berlin Conference (1884/1885) in which the colonizing powers agreed on the principle of effective possession of the territory over which a colonizing power claimed sovereignty, Portugal began to effectively occupy the interior areas of Mozambican territory.

It was in 1930 through the Colonial Act that Portugal restructured its relationship with the Colonies, of which I highlight the "Organization of Indigenous Education of Mozambique" as it is a document that regulates the educational system, dividing it into rudimentary and official with curricula and different objectives. Rudimentary education was oriented towards the training of African populations, acculturated, molded to the principles of the Portuguese regime, and, above all, providing labor to ensure the colonial enterprise (Bavo & Coelho 2022).

Both in official and rudimentary education, largely under the responsibility of religious institutions, the teaching of the Portuguese language was mandatory. Colonial legislation prohibited teaching in local languages, the mother tongues of the majority of the population; these could only be used, according to their needs, by religious institutions, in the teaching of religion (Mazula 1995).

In this context, the African population, particularly those residing in urban areas, to integrate into the colonial socio-economic system had to express themselves in Portuguese. Mastery of this language was the guarantee of acquiring the status of Portuguese citizenship with access to some of the privileges reserved for colonists, in a clear process of "cultural assimilation". This population, the "assimilated" people, were considered Portuguese citizens, belonging to the African middle class, linguistically characterized by speaking at least two languages, one of them being a Bantu language and Portuguese; some spoke also English. This group of assimilated people ended up having a notable social influence as it represented the model of social ascension in society (Firmino 2021).

### 1.2. Colonial Period II (1960- 1975)

The triggering of the national liberation struggle by Mozambican nationalist movements constitutes a decisive milestone in the country's socio-political and cultural history. The struggle aimed not only to liberate Mozambicans from the Portuguese colonial yoke but also envisaged a society free from the prejudices inculcated by colonialism and cultural practices considered "retrograde".

Frelimo (National Liberation Front), was mainly installed in the interior of Tanzania, but also in Kenya, Malawi, and Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), countries where several Bantu languages are spoken, and English and/or Swahili were the official languages. Regarding the language of communication between nationalist militants between them and the local population inside and outside Mozambique, there are scattered but not conclusive reports. As Bastos states, "no evidence or historiographical approaches were found on the use of different languages during the gestation of the liberation struggle in Tanganyika" (Tanzania) (Bastos 2019, p.4).

However, the then president of Frelimo, Eduardo Mondlane, stated in an article presented to the University of California, that "Portuguese remains the lingua franca of the liberated areas but it is taking on a new cultural significance, it has grown the vocabulary of revolution and shed the phraseology of fascism" (Mondlane 1968, p.10).

It can be inferred from this statement that a process of appropriation of the Portuguese language by the populations of the liberated areas was underway; Portuguese was also used in official Frelimo documents, in education, and as an alternative language in mobilizing populations.

In general, it can be said that in the period leading up to national independence, Portuguese was spoken by African elites in cities, areas under the control of the colonial administration and also in liberated areas under the control of Frelimo.

### 1.3. Post-independence Period I (1975 – 1990)

It is in the post-independence period that more explicit elaborations on Mozambique's linguistic policy occur. In fact, in a communication of the 1st National Seminar on Teaching the Portuguese Language, which took place in 1979, we can read:

> "The decision to opt for the Portuguese language as the official language in the R.P.M [Popular Republic of Mozambique] was a thoughtful and considered decision aimed at achieving an objective, the preservation of

> national unity and the integrity of the territory. The history of the appropriation of the Portuguese language as a factor of unity, leveling differences, dates back to the creation of Frelimo in 1962" (Ganhão 1979, p.2, translation by the author).

The National Literacy Campaign, launched a few years after independence, was developed in Portuguese, despite the trainees not knowing the language, with all the methodological and pedagogical consequences that this entailed. The then President of the Republic, Samora Machel, justified this option by reaffirming that literacy was not only aimed at teaching reading and writing, it also aimed for populations to internalize that the Portuguese language was the sediment of national unity (Rosário 2015).

Portuguese is officially declared as the only official language in the country, despite the existing multi-ethnic and multilingual diversity. In fact, the linguistic panorama at the time indicated that the majority of the population spoke a Bantu language as their mother tongue, and the small number of Portuguese speakers, also had a Bantu language as their mother tongue. One of the relevant characteristics about the geographical distribution of the Portuguese language is that it was spoken throughout the national territory, even if mostly confined to urban areas.

The declaration of Portuguese as the official language implied the definition of the standard to be adopted. This is how the then Minister of Education, Graça Machel, announced that the country was adopting the European Portuguese standard, the exogenous standard variety from Portugal.

In the country's development policies, education played a preponderant role, meaning that the number of schools increased significantly in all regions of the country and literacy campaigns intensified, which, as already mentioned, were carried out in Portuguese. Portuguese was, therefore, the only language of teaching, the language of administration, the media and all forms of official communication, despite being a minority language. The hegemony of the Portuguese language resulted in the use of Bantu languages being confined to "lower" domains (Wardhaugh 1987), that is, not being used in public and official domains.

The desire to consolidate the nation-state through the Portuguese language could have triggered a glottophagic effect (Calvet 1974) of Portuguese since there was no language planning that guaranteed and respected the country's linguistic and cultural diversity.

Exonormativity had consequences in the language acquisition process, generating, on the one hand, a greater distance between the written norm and the spoken norm, and on the other, the exposure of speakers to a language that was far from being the standard of reference, the European one.

In effect, most speakers of European Portuguese left the country in the post-independence period; the economic and social policies adopted by the Government at the time required Mozambicans to redouble efforts to ensure the functioning of the country; as a result, the school network expanded and literacy campaigns were launched to quickly train staff who could replace those in the colonial administration.

Throughout this process, the language of instruction was Portuguese, being European Portuguese the language of reference, although few speakers had linguistic proficiency that came close to this variety; the language proficiency depends on the social contexts in which the speakers found themselves inserted. In reality, the language spoken by the different social actors was a variety with its own characteristics in the areas of prosody, morphosyntax and, above all, in the lexical domain (Machungo 2000, 2015, Mendes 2000, Lopes 2002).

It can therefore be stated that the linguistic exposure to which speakers were subject was that of a variety still in formation, a variety that already incorporated many lexical and structural elements derived from linguistic contact with the Bantu languages, in particular. The structural and lexical changes in the Portuguese language referred to by Mondlane became more pronounced over time.

### 1.4 Post-independence Period II (from 1990 onwards)

During this period, a linguistic policy more in line with the country's multilingual and multicultural reality was made explicit, through the new Constitution of the Republic, written in 1990 (and revised in 2004); in this document it is stated that Portuguese maintains its status as an official language and for the first time mention is made of the Bantu languages, stating that the "State values national languages as cultural and educational heritage and promotes their development and increasing use as vehicular languages of our identity" (Constitution of the Republic, 1990, translation by the author). The foundations were then laid for the construction of a country in which linguistic and cultural diversity, instead of constituting "a problem", became an instrument of identity and consolidation of the nation.

## 3. Brief socio-linguistic characterization of Mozambique

In Mozambique, Portuguese coexists with around 20 Mozambican Bantu languages, with Gujarati, Urdu, Arabic, and other languages of Asian origin, in addition to English, which stands out here for its geopolitical importance, given the geographical location of Mozambique - the country shares borders with six countries that have English as their official language. Although there are still no reliable studies, there is evidence that the processes of inter-African migration that have recently developed have brought other languages into the Mozambican linguistic mosaic. Portuguese, being the only official language, enjoys a privileged status to the detriment of the Bantu languages, the mother tongues of the majority of the population.

With the expansion of the school network, substantiated by the fact that Portuguese was, for many years, the only medium of instruction[2], the number of speakers also expanded as well as the contexts of use of Portuguese, which began to be used not only in public domains, but also in informal situations. A pilot study carried out as part of a project by the Chair of Portuguese as a Second and Foreign Language at Eduardo Mondlane University, reports that respondents use Portuguese in formal and informal contexts and the latter, in spaces considered to be reserved for Mozambican languages (Langa 2019). Statistical data reveal that the number of Portuguese speakers has grown in the last 40 years, especially in urban areas, probably because these are areas where a large part of the population with formal education is concentrated. In general, populations in rural areas and those residing in urban areas but with lower social status are monolingual in a Bantu language; the middle class living in cities is bilingual in Bantu languages and Portuguese; the highest social class is either bilingual or monolingual in Portuguese. The table below presents the percentage of speakers of Portuguese (LP) and Bantu languages (LB), as Mother Tongue (L1) and as Second Language (L2) in Mozambique: As illustrated in table (1), the number of Portuguese speakers grew from 24.4 in 1980 to 58.1 in 2017[3]; the number of speakers of Portuguese as L1 grew from 1.2 in 1980 to 16.6 in 2017. Data from the 2007 Census indicate that Portuguese is the second most spoken language in Mozambican families (Chimbutane 2012).

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[2] Although there have been pilot bilingual education programs since 1993, it was only in 2003 that bilingual education was officially introduced in the country.

[3] The last Census made in 2017 shows similar progression, but linguistic statistics is yet to be done.

| Year | LP=L1 | LP=L2 e LB=L1 | LP = L1+L2 | LB=L1 e LP=0 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1980 | 1,2 | 23,2 | 24,4 | 75,6 |
| 1997 | 6,0 | 33,0 | 39,0 | 66,1 |
| 2007 | 10,4 | 39,9 | 50,3 | 49,7 |
| 2017 | 16,6 | 41,5 | 58,1 | 41,9 |

Table 1: Percentage of speakers of Portuguese and Bantu languages
Source: Machungo & Firmino (2022)

These facts indicate that in the approximately 48 years of independence, the government of Mozambique made a large investment in the development of the Portuguese language, although the same cannot be said about the Bantu languages.

Although some changes have been introduced in linguistic policy, attributing more relevant functions to Mozambican Bantu languages, for example, through bilingual teaching, and their use in 'higher' contexts (media, provincial assemblies, among others), there is still work to be done so that the languages present in the Mozambican space live together in harmony.

## 4. Standardization of Mozambican Portuguese - effects on the pluricentricity of the Portuguese language

Mozambican Portuguese (MP) develops in a polylectal continuum in which the acrolectal extreme is the subvariety spoken mainly by the urban population with a high level of education, a subvariety that is closer to the European variety; and at the basilectal extreme, lies the subvariety used by speakers with a low level of education (Gonçalves 2010).

Although there are still no exhaustive studies that allow a characterization of Portuguese in Mozambique, which is already beginning to undergo a process of formation of dialects, many of the publications resulting from research produced in the country give indications that a new variety of Portuguese has emerged.

### 4.1 Features of Mozambique Portuguese

#### 4.1.1 Phonetic-phonological domain

Although it is in these areas that the observed changes are more consistent, few studies allow the data to be generalized; aspects related to the phonetic-phonological behavior of vowels and consonants stand out here. For contrastive purposes, the European Portuguese standard (EP) adopted in the country is used as a reference variety.

| **Adoption of the CV syllabic pattern** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Vowel epenthesis in syllables closed by a consonant** | | |
| Word | MP | EP |
| culpado 'guilty' | [kulu'padu] | [kuɬ'padu] |
| **Vowel insertion in branching attacks** | | |
| Word | MP | EP |
| praia 'beach' | [pa'raya] | ['prajɐ] |

Table 2: Adoption of the CV syllabic pattern

| **Vowel opening in unstressed position** | | |
|---|---|---|
| Word | MP | EP |
| professor 'teacher' | [prɔfɛ'sor] | [pruf'sor] |

Table 3: Vowel opening in unstressed position

| **Nasalization/Denasalization of vowels** | | |
|---|---|---|
| Word | MP | EP |
| tomate 'tomato' | [to'mãti] | [tum'at] |
| Joaquim | [juãk'i] | [jwɐ'kĩ] |

Table 4: Nasalization/Denasalization of vowels

| Consonant devoicing | | |
|---|---|---|
| Word | MP | EP |
| bandeira 'flag' | [pɐ̃'tɛɾa] | [bɐ̃'dɐjɾɐ] |

Table 5: Consonant devoicing

| Inconsistency in the use of simple and multiple vibrant | | |
|---|---|---|
| Word | MP | EP |
| carro 'car' | ['kaɾu ] | ['kaɾu] |
| muro 'wall' | ['muɾu] | ['muɾu] |

Table 6: Use of simple and multiple vibrant

Some of the phonetic realizations described above result from the interference of the phonetic-phonological system of the substrate languages, the Mozambican Bantu languages. Others, such as the insertion of vowels into consonant groups, are phenomena that can be found in other varieties of Portuguese, namely in Brazilian Portuguese (Faraco 2017).

In the process of learning Portuguese, even speakers who do not have a BL as their first language can acquire the linguistic features and prosody of the region in which the learning takes place. The phenomenon also encompasses grammatical, semantic, and discursive structures. For example, when non-BL speakers learn Portuguese in regions where voicing does not occur in stop consonants, they generally reproduce the region's pronunciation that is, they do not realize the voiced stop consonants.

### 4.1.2 Syntactic domain

The main changes in the syntactic domain fundamentally affect,

a) the control of direct and indirect objects,

b) the control of agentive verbal complements and movement,

c) the introducers of subordinate clauses,

d) mechanisms for fitting direct speech,

e) the use of personal pronouns (Gonçalves 2010).

As mentioned by the author, there is not always a direct transfer of properties from the BL grammar to the PE grammar, which is why, it is not always possible to identify equivalent properties in the BL in the syntactic changes that occur in the MP (Gonçalves 2015, 2018). The approach to these

phenomena must be more comprehensive, involving aspects of language acquisition[4].

Some examples:

1. A professora informou *a*o estudante [ *o* estudante]
   'The teacher informed the student'
2. Os filhos obedecem os pais [aos pais]
   'children obey their parents'
3. ele confiou o amigo [no amigo]
   'he trusted his friend'
4. ela chegou atrasada na escola [ à escola]
   'she arrived late at school'
5. a mãe pediu para que fechassem a janela [que fechassem]
   'the mother asked them to close the window'
6. ele disse [que não sei] [que não sabia]
   'he said [that I don't know]'
7. Eu atrasava às aulas [eu chegava atrasado às aulas]
   'I was late to class'

The change in the control of arguments DO [+hum] is often made through the dative form *lhe*, instead of the accusative form *o/a*

8. Eu vi-lhe no supermercado [vi-a/o)
   'I saw her in the supermarket'

There is a fusion in the forms of treatment of the 2nd person

9. A corona-vírus mata. Previna-te! [previne-te/previna-se]
   'corona-virus kills. Prevent!'

### 4.1.3 Lexical domain

The MP lexicon is essentially made up of a) words common to other varieties of Portuguese, b) words created based on the Portuguese lexicon, and c) words originating from Bantu languages or English (Machungo & Firmino 2022).

Examples:

1. Words common to other varieties of Portuguese
   *casa* 'house', *pedra* 'stone', *caderno* 'notebook'
2. Words created based on the Portuguese lexicon,

[4] It should be noted that some of these modified structures also occur in other varieties of Portuguese, so they can be seen as a normal evolution of the language when it develops without the active "surveillance" of the "standard norm".

(a) by word construction processes

- *analista-papagaio* 'parrot-analyst' (television commentator who only reproduces the official discourse)
- *viente* 'immigrant' (the one who immigrates from the south to the northern provinces)

(b) by semantic extension

- *refresco* 'soda' (monetary value requested by traffic police so as not to issue fines to drivers)
- *chapa* 'plate'(means of transportation)

c) Words originating from Bantu or English languages.

- with no adaptation
  *nhamadjiua* 'raptor' [from the Nyungwe language]
  *madjolidjo* 'carrier of goods in the markets' [from the Ndawu language]
- - subjected to derivational processes
  *tindzaveiro* 'the one who spreads rumor' [from the noun *ndzava* "news" – Changana language]
  *nhanhalar* 'to reject' [from *onyanyala* 'to reject' – Makhuwa language]
  *txilar 'relax' [ from to chill 'relax' - English slam]*

There is also a certain group of words that are loans from Portuguese to a Bantu language reintroduced into Portuguese as loanwords: *mabandido* 'bandit'; *mulugador* 'one who rents; tenant' and *xicalamidade* 'calamidade'. The words *bandido* 'bandit', *alugador* 'renter' and *calamidade* 'calamity', when integrated into the Changana language, receive the grammatical marks of this language (class prefixes *ma-; mu-; xi-).* When these words are reimported to Portuguese, these prefixes remain. The morphology of the Bantu language becomes opaque in Portuguese, meaning that these words can once again undergo inflectional processes. For example, *mabandido* can be inflected in the plural resulting in *mabandidos,* although the class prefix *ma-* of the Bantu language contains information relating to number (plural).

### 4.2. The nativization of Portuguese in Mozambique

As mentioned above, the process of nativization of Portuguese in Mozambique comprises of two dimensions: a symbolic dimension, which is characterized by the emergence of new attitudes and social ideologies regarding the use of the language, in other words, colonial language, Portuguese becomes an intrinsic part of the process of building the nation-

state, and the linguistic dimension manifested in the new linguistic forms that occur in the language (Firmino 2002, 2011).

Schneider (2007) argues that in post-colonial countries, nativization, generally preceded by exonormative stabilization, is followed by endonormative stabilization and later by a phase of differentiation. There seems to be no obligation for the process to occur in this way, nor for the aforementioned phases to unfold in this sequence. In the case of Mozambique, there does not seem to have been a period of exonormative stabilization, since, as previously mentioned, the nativization of Portuguese is a process that has been occurring even before the country's liberation from colonial power.

In Mozambique, in their envisaging, speakers recognize that they speak the same language as the one spoken in other geographic spaces, however, they are aware that the Portuguese spoken in the country has its own characteristics and that it is necessary to build its own standardizing reference, an endonormative standardization. As this process is ongoing, through the development of coding instruments such as dictionaries and vocabularies among others, the question arises (Faraco 2023) as to whether Portuguese will not have just one normative center, Portuguese. Faraco states that, as Brazil does not have an autonomous standard, it would not be considered an effective center; it would rather be a quasi-center, in accordance with the theoretical principles of pluricentrism.

The legitimization of the new standard is what consummates differentiation to other models (Schneider 2007). In addition to the lack of coding instruments, Mozambique does not have a government body regulating language policy and planning; linguistic issues are dealt by a non-governmental forum, linguists and other researchers linked or not to public institutions, in particular universities. This situation applies to countries that speak Portuguese as their official language, except Portugal and Brazil.

Baranzini & Moskoff-Janner (2020), in a study carried out on the status of Italian in Switzerland, suggest that countries that have an official language that does not have its own coding could be called norm-setting half centers. In other words, these countries, without having an explicit codification, have implicit coding models obtained through the press, television, and literary texts that can constitute linguistic reference.

In short, the “mandatory” existence of codification of the national variety in reference books, on the one hand ensures knowledge of the uses and linguistic features of a nation, making it a norm center, on the other hand, it

suggests the existence of "hybrid linguistic entities". These entities, which are located in countries where there is no specific coding, do not exhibit the characteristics of the exogenous language but their ontological character is not recognized either. The complexity of this issue suggests a more refined approach to pluricentricity.

### 4.3 Towards the codification of Mozambican Portuguese

As mentioned above, the literature on pluricentrism recommends that the first step in codifying the national variety is the creation of a dictionary (Muhr 2012). In Mozambique, the first steps have already been taken towards codifying its variety.

#### 4.3.1 The Mozambique Portuguese Orthographic Vocabulary (VOMOLP)

The Mozambican Portuguese Orthographic Vocabulary (VOMOLP) is the result of one of the projects of the International Institute of Portuguese Language (IILP), the VOC (Common Orthographic Vocabulary), an instrument that brings together spelling vocabularies from Portuguese-speaking countries on a single platform.

VOMOLP, which is integrated into this platform, aims to provide an orthographic standard for Mozambican Portuguese, therefore integrating all the words that make up the linguistic universe of this variety of Portuguese. VOMOLP contains a frequency lexicon of Mozambican Portuguese, with more than 40,000 nationally attested entries, with formal information on spelling, complete inflection, grammatical class, and syllabic division of all entries.

The words that makeup VOMOLP are attested in reference works in the Portuguese language, as well as in the textual corpus constructed for this purpose, consisting of literary, journalistic, and scientific texts, among others. Words from the Bantu languages had their spelling adapted, following the parameters agreed upon by the *International Body of Consultants* created, to harmonize the establishment of criteria for applying the 1990 Spelling Agreement.

VOMOLP also includes a toponymic vocabulary and will gradually include more specialized lexicon, in particular, the names of plant and animal species that do not exist in other parts of the world where Portuguese is spoken.

VOMOLP will be periodically updated with new forms that occur in the language, in particular, forms registered in the Observatory of Neologisms of

Portuguese in Mozambique[5], after validation, following the criteria already established.

> "Due to the new lexicographic representation it brings to Mozambican Portuguese, through the systematization of the adaptation and spelling criteria of words used daily by Mozambicans but which until now have not found registration and legitimization in dictionary products, VOMOLP is above all an instrument of citizenship which will hopefully lead to the production of new essential resources for the daily lives of Mozambicans" (Machungo 2017, translation by the author).

### 4.3.2. Mozambique Portuguese Dictionary (DiPoMo)

As previously mentioned, Portuguese is the language of instruction in monolingual and bilingual education programs in Mozambique. The language exposure in Portuguese ranges from the standard considered close to Portuguese in Portugal, used mainly in written communication (official documents, educational institutions, written means of communication) to the MP standard used mainly in oral communication (school, radio, television, work). The oral and written productions of Mozambican speakers reflect this alternation in the use of the language.

MP has characteristics that distinguish it from other varieties of Portuguese, so it is necessary to treat it ontologically, and this involves its normalization. The standardization of a language "requires the production of linguistic standardization instruments [...] among the most important of which are grammars, dictionaries, spelling treaties and spelling records" (Duarte 2000: 27, translation by the author).

The lack of regulatory instruments in Mozambique and the need for their construction dictated the ongoing development of the Mozambican Portuguese Dictionary.

The elaboration of (VOMOLP) provided the theoretical and methodological bases that underlie DiPoMo, and the database was fundamental in establishing the DiPoMo nomenclature.

The aim of DiPoMo is to provide, in digital and hard copy format, a large-scale linguistic resource that describes and characterizes the MP lexicon, a natural step towards its codification. Since its conception, an integralist

[5] The Observatory of Mozambican Portuguese Neologisms (ONPM) is based at the Chair of Portuguese as Second and Foreign Language at Eduardo Mondlane University and is coordinated by Inês Machungo. It is a lexical database that contains neologisms that occur in the daily speech of Portuguese-speaking Mozambicans, at the level of the press and other oral and written productions.

perspective was adopted, building a dictionary that describes the MP lexicon as a functional whole, not in a contrastive dimension.

Additionally, DiPoMo will constitute an instrument of citizenship by recognizing the legitimacy of the MP's lexicon. DiPoMo will have multiplicative effects:

- Its use in educational institutions will allow the dissemination and consolidation of the language, internally and externally, facilitating the adoption of policies that favor linguistic pluricentrism;
- Can serve as a basis for the construction of teaching materials suited to the country's linguistic reality;
- Can serve as a basis for creating computational resources.

Developing research on a variety that has not yet been stabilized poses many challenges to researchers and DiPoMo is itself one of the vehicles for this stabilization. Therefore, it is expected that, within three years, a codification instrument will be available that will contribute to establishing the standard in the country.

## 5. Summary

The adoption of Portuguese as the official language in Mozambique was a deliberate decision involving it in a new ideological framework that promoted and adopted Portuguese as an important symbol of national unity (Firmino 2021) and as a language of communication.

The nativization, resulting from this process,overshadowed any form of elitism (Myers-Cotton 1993) that could be associated with this decision; nativization reflects the coexistence and complementarity between the different languages that make up the Mozambican linguistic mosaic in a process of fertilization that mutually enriches them.

In Mozambique, school education is one of the most important means for appropriating and disseminating the language. Thus, the ongoing endonormative standardization process will allow the dissemination and consolidation of linguistic and cultural aspects, through teaching strategies and the development of teaching materials more suited to the socio-cultural reality of learners, guaranteeing endonormative stability. Stabilization will provide the adoption of internal and external policies that can favor pluricentrism.

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# The (de)hegemonisation of Mungaka as a lingua franca of the Western Grassfields in multilingual Cameroon

**Abstract**

The aim of this chapter is to identify and analyse sociolinguistic aspects of the (de)hegemonisation of Mungaka as the lingua franca of the Western Grassfields in multilingual Cameroon. Methodologically, a semi-structured questionnaire and recorded interviews on the vitality and inertia of Mungaka are administered to Mungaka speakers across cohorts of four generations in real and virtual spaces. The recordings are transcribed and analysed with the aid of consultants and computer tools along quantitative and qualitative analyses. Findings (95%) prove that the dominance of Mungaka has diminished over time, mainly across the younger generations, eliciting several aspects of interlanguage. Albeit the inertia, it is more developed than most Grassfields languages, and remains the default language of the Hallelujah Choir of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC) around the world. In conclusion, the hegemony of Mungaka has been diluted by the sociolinguistics of language contact, resulting to the dehegemonisation of Mungaka as the lingua franca of the Western Grassfields in contemporary multilingual Cameroon.

## 1. Introduction: Sociolinguistic background

Cameroon has a unique linguistic density due to its 277 indigenous languages (https://www.silcom.org) and over 200 ethnic groups. The myriad of indigenous languages co-communicate with a significant presence of official foreign languages, like English and French, and derivatives of pluricentricity such as Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE) and Camfranglais. In specific spheres of education, German, Spanish, Italian, and Chinese are incorporated. From a sociolinguistic perspective, Cameroonians who speak both indigenous and foreign languages at home and in the diaspora, elucidate aspects of interlanguage that correlate to social variables such as time, age, gender, space,

religion, education, power, culture, identity, and opportunity. These language dynamics affect the linguistic spread and load of dominant Cameroon indigenous languages such as Mungaka, a Niger-Congo language in the North-Western Grassfields of Cameroon.

> "Geographically, the Grassfields constitutes a dynamic area, covering primarily the Northwest and West regions of Cameroon, considered by many to be the birthplace of the Bantu languages and a primary source of ancient sedentary cultures for Central Africa. Originally colonized by Germany, the fault line between the later British-controlled Southern Cameroons and the French-controlled Cameroun ran through the Grassfields, dividing the Bamenda groups from the Bamiléké and Bamum" (DeLancey, 2019, Abstract).

In spite of this demarcation, the dominance of Mungaka was not limited to the Western high plateau of Cameroon, the Northwest Region; in fact, i stretched to the Western Region, logically, as Mungaka belongs to the Nun languages group. Mungaka, also known as Bali, was once the language of evangelism, education, and wider communication (circa 1905-1940s), of hegemonic status, qualifying it the lingua franca of the Western Grassfields (Fielding, 2009; Titalanga et al., 2021). However, due to the multiplicity of languages, language choices, and allegiances in multilingual Cameroon, the hegemony of Mungaka has dwindled over time (circa 1963 onwards) to a lower status, becoming another Grassfields language, although more developed than most of these languages.

## 2. Literature review: Intricacies leading to the (de)hegemonisation of Mungaka

Missionaries have noted that vernacular languages are strong tools for evangelisation: this case study focuses on this concept, analysing Mungaka. Support staff have been needed as a link between the prospective converts and the colonial administration, and this linguistically diverse population needed other languages than just Mungaka. Simultaneously, linguistic allegiances and sentiments for "an own language" became trendy. Paradoxically, it is the same indigenous African population that pushed for education in the colonial masters' languages, seeing these as languages of opportunity. The intricacies align with Albaugh's (2014: 22) observation that missionaries

> "aimed to save souls and diffuse morality. Administrators needed indigenous auxiliaries to help them control and extract from vast populations. Africans wanted access to jobs through education".

### 2.1 The vitality of Mungaka

The occupation of Cameroon by the Germans in 1884 highlighted the sociolinguistic influence of Bali Nyonga, where Mungaka is spoken, as it became the settlement of the Basel Mission (BM) in the Western Grassfields from 1902 (Titalanga et al., 2021: 349-350). "[...] The German missionaries adopted Mungaka, the Bali Nyonga language as the principal medium of evangelisation. Mungaka was subsequently introduced in formal schooling and soon became a lingua franca in the entire Grassfields" (Fokwang, 2003: 92). The choice to use Mungaka could have been influenced by "language ideology from the perspective of the 'one nation, one language' model of language and identity that developed in Europe in the eighteen century" (Nana, 2016: 169). The vitality of Mungaka is reiterated further as the BM identified the relevance of indigenous languages in their evangelisation mission, and they strived to develop them.

By 1903, Mungaka was almost exclusively the medium of communication in Bali Nyonga, thus influencing the BM to adopt it as its official language in the Western Grassfields. The Bali Vernacular School, was the first school in the entire Western Grassfields to teach in Mungaka, starting in 1903.Over time, the school had heterogeneous populations from different ethnicities of the Grassfields and continued to use Mungaka as the language of education (Titalanga et al., 2021: 356).

The defeat of Germany in World War I (1914-1918) disrupted the BM but its missionaries returned in 1924. This group of missionaries pioneered the first comprehensive written grammar of Mungaka and translated the Old and New Testaments into Mungaka. "Knowledge spread in vernaculars was reinforced in the 1930s and early 1940s, wherein Bible translations, local church regulations, linguistic, ethnographic, and botanical studies, literature, primers, and catechism, all revealed the advancement of written Mungaka" (Titalanga et al., 2021: 356).

Today, Mungaka remains one of the most documented and developed languages of the Western Grassfields. There is continuous development of Mungaka; it has a new alphabet with online courses, with the aim "to provide users with a deeper understanding of the new Mungaka alphabet, its sounds and other basic writing conventions" (Fokwang & Gwaabe 2020).

### 2.2 The inertia of Mungaka

Unfortunately, the dehegemonisation of Mungaka was enabled by the

factors highlighted earlier: the colonial politics, traditional diplomacy, linguistic allegiances, the hegemony of English as the global lingua franca and its vibrant derivative, Pidgin. In this context, hegemony is synonymous to dominance and vitality, while dehegemonisation is synonymous to inertia, subordination, and dwindling status.

Cumulative opposition to Mungaka emerged in the 1940s. According to Keller, during the Second World War, traditional rulers in the Western Grassfields lobbied to oppose the use of Mungaka in their respective fondoms (kingdoms). For instance, the decision of the Bamun fondom to use Bamun and not Mungaka as the language of education:

> "King Njoya of the Bamum ethnicity, himself literate in Mungaka became sceptical about it and started his own school where they used the Bamum script and language, and not Mungaka" (Titalanga et al., 2021: 357-358).

Linguistic allegiances fuelled the lobby as

> "in 1943, a delegation of Meta catechists came asking for their indigenous language to be used by the BM in their Meta communities. This was followed by a complaint from Moghamo chiefs, urging the colonial authorities to prohibit the use of Mungaka in schools in Moghamo regions" (Titalanga et al., 2021: 357-359).

The preference of English as a language of opportunity, and the linguistic spread and load of Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE) nurtured the replacement of Mungaka. CPE asserted itself as the lingua franca of the Western Grassfields, which did not go unnoticed to custodians of missions for evangelisation. Eventually, in 1963, Rev. Thomas Ediage, the District Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC) reported that "it was no longer English language, but Pidgin English which was threatening the survival of Mungaka, especially in the cosmopolitan environment of growing towns and suburbs" (Titalanga et al., 2021: 357-360). This insight was validated at the General Synod, where Pidgin English was acknowledged as a fast-spreading lingua franca in the Western Grassfields, and not Mungaka.

## 3. Resources

By extension, the aim of this chapter is to identify and analyse aspects of Mungaka as a dominant language with a sociolinguistic subordination over time. Hence, the generic guiding question is: what is the extent of the dwindling status of Mungaka? The specific objective comprises identifying and

analysing the sociolinguistic variables< that influence the dwindling status of Mungaka. It is postulated that irrespective of sparse research on pluricentric African languages, the (de)hegemonisation of Mungaka can attest to aspects of pluricentricity in some African languages.

Methodologically, a mixed method of collecting data is used. A semi-structured questionnaire using the online easy-feedback tool and interviews are administered to 46 Mungaka speakers across cohorts of four generations: >30 (or below 30), 30-49, 50-69, and 70+. Primary data is gathered through onsite and online responses to questionnaire and recorded interviews, onsite meetings, e-mail exchanges, and recorded telephone conversations. The semi-structured questionnaire and interview are structured in two sections: Section A highlights the demographic factors and Section B examines the vitality and inertia of Mungaka, wherein the Mungaka equivalents of some loan words collected from the pre-test are used to establish a reading list of words, sentences, and questions. The secondary data has been predominantly obtained from internet sources and radio programmes. The read recordings are transcribed with the aid of consultants and the computer speech tool, audacity. Quantitative and qualitative content analyses are used to analyse the entire data.

## 4. Data analysis and findings

The data is analysed based on information gathered on the research question, developed in the questionnaire and interviews.

### 4.1 Section A, Table 1: Demographic analysis

| **No. of respon-dents** | 46 | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Section A** | Demographic information | | | | | | | | | |
| **A1: Sex** | Male | | Female | | | | | | | |
| | 17 | 36.9% | 29 | 63.1% | | | | | | |
| **A2: Age group** | >30 | | 30-49 | | 50-69 | | 70+ | | | |
| | 12 | 26% | 12 | 26% | 13 | 28.3% | 9 | 19.7% | | |
| | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | | |
| | 2 | 10 | 1 | 11 | 10 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| **A3: First language** | Mungaka | | English | | Pidgin | | Medumba & Mungaka | | French | |
| | 37 | 80.4% | 5 | 10.8% | 2 | 4.3% | 1 | 2.25% | 1 | 2.25% |

| A4: Other languages | English | | Pidgin | | French | | Medumba (here, also Bawok & Bamiléké ) | | Metah, Pinyin, Mankon, Lamnso | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 35 | 76% | 21 | 45.6% | 19 | 41% | 19 | 41% | 6 | 13% |
| **A5: Profession** | Small business Self-employed | | 17 | 38.2% | painting, building, carpentry, welding, tailoring, milling | | | | | |
| | Farming | | 12 | 26% | | | | | | |
| | Studying Apprenticeship | | 9 | 19.5% | schooling, carpentry, tailoring | | | | | |
| | Salaried | | 6 | 13% | nursing, teaching, veterinarian, pastor | | | | | |
| | Retirees/None | | 2 | 4.3% | | | | | | |
| **A6: Present residence** | Bali Nyonga | | Bambili | | | | | | | |
| | 95% | | 5% | | | | | | | |

Section A, Table 1 features the demographic analysis of the target population that currently speaks Mungaka (80.4% as L1 and the rest as another language) across cohorts of four generations to compare the previous and current use of Mungaka. Apart from Mungaka, the array of other indigenous and foreign languages spoken is apparent in the multilingual ecology of Cameroon and the dominance of foreign languages, identified as English (the leading language, used by 76% of respondents), followed by Pidgin and then French.

Mainly, 95% of this population lives in rural Bali Nyonga, homeland to Mungaka, and a total of 64.2% works predominantly in the informal sector as rural farmers, small business owners, and freelancers. Summarily, it is a gender disaggregated (63.1% female and 36.9% male), active tribal population that gives evidence on the vitality and inertia of Mungaka.

## 4.2 Section B, Table 2: The (de)hegemonisation of Mungaka

| Section B1-3 | The vitality and inertia of Mungaka | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hegemony of Mungaka | As language of evangelism in the Western Grassfields | | As language of wider communication in the Western Grassfields | | As language of education in the Western Grassfields | |
| | 4 | 8.7% | 2 | 4.2% | 1 | 2.1% |
| Dehegemonisation of Mungaka | As language of evangelism in the Western Grassfields | | As language of wider communication in the Western Grassfields | | As language of education in the Western Grassfields | |
| | 42 | 91.3 | 44 | 95.7% | 45 | 97.8% |

Section B, Table 2 is a summary of the hegemony and the dehegemonisation of Mungaka, examining the influence of three sociolinguistic variables: Mungaka as a language of evangelism, as a language of wider communication, and as a language of education. An average of 15 ÷ 3 = 5% testify about the vitality of Mungaka as the lingua franca of the Western Grassfields in contemporary multilingual Cameroon. An average of 284.8 ÷ 3 = 94.9% ~ 95% acknowledges the inertia of Mungaka as the lingua franca of the Western Grassfields in contemporary multilingual Cameroon.

Apart from the vitality of Mungaka reported in secondary data sources in 2.1, primary data sources reveal that "in 1912 the Germans decided to close the vernacular school, but the Fon of Bali decided to keep paying the teachers 134 shillings each per month" (46M_50-69_RA, 2023). This act evidences the resilience of a people in the phase of their language transiting from hegemony to inertia. There are also emotionally attached speakers and denialists who think the spread and load of Mungaka is still vibrant and not demonstrating any inertia, declaring that "They are still speaking Mungaka all over right up to the whiteman's country" (29F_70+, translated from Mungaka). There have been attempts to revitalise Mungaka, which have unfortunately been stalled by the ongoing sociopolitical crisis as testified below:

> "The use of Mungaka as a language of evangelization has [is] not reduced. The present Fon of Bali Nyonga built a school for the learning of Mungaka but due to the disturbances of the crisis, the school could not continue. The use of Mungaka as the language of wider communication... has [is] reduced and was revived but due to the crisis it could not be sustained. The use of Mungaka as the language of education has [is] greatly reduced because... due to the crisis those who were teaching the Mungaka have all run away" (22F_70+, translated from Mungaka).

Aside from the inertia or dehegemonisation of Mungaka recounted from secondary data sources in 2.2, primary data sources elicit that "in 1914, the church door at Ntafoang was locked and the key was taken to the Divisional Officer in Bamenda till 1925" (46M_50-69_RA, 2023). It is not certain what the implications are, but such a move is not explicitly favourable to the vitality of Mungaka.

In terms of language of *evangelisation,* the translation of the Bible into other Grassfields languages, English, Pidgin, and French, and linguistic loyalty to an own language by other tribes, enabled the dehegemonisation of Mungaka.

For example:

> "Many tribes have written the Bible in their own languages. So now, they try to communicate in their own languages, their own Bible, their own translation of the Bible. They are using their own languages" (01F_70+, translated from Pidgin).
>
> "Even in churches they don't really read the Bible in Mungaka again. English and French have taken over" (25F_30-49).
>
> "I think people have neglected Mungaka to practice it... It's no more there. In church you can only listen to Mungaka readings. They don't preach in Mungaka" (31F_30-49).

Regarding ist function as language of *wider communication*, paradoxical linguistic loyalty, multilingualism, rural-urban migration and language contact outcomes are the lead factors for the dehegemonisation of Mungaka. A majority of the younger generation, specificallt those below thirty, is unaware of the main issues that led to the hegemony of Mungaka, while others yearn to know their own local languages. For instance:

> "Many people want that they should also know their own languages, ... they're trying to learn their own so that when children go to school they should know their own mother tongue" (06F_30-49).
>
> "Many languages are being used like Lamnso, the Lamnso people have stopped using Mungaka. They are learning but their language. Every tribe is trying to put their language in use" (31F_30-49).
>
> "Every village now is struggling to promote its language" (23M_70+)."

This is a clear example of indigenous allegiance for identity construction, the need "to know their own". Paradoxically, the allegiance to Mungaka restricts its status to that of an ancestral home language for socio-cultural communication:

> "Our parents use Mungaka when communicating with their friends at gatherings like meetings, when they are in their houses, when they have one or two talks, they use Mungaka" (04F_30-49). This restriction contributes to the inertia of Mungaka.

The interlanguage processes of borrowing and code-mixing have furthered the dehegemonisation of Mungaka as "The presence of bilingualism and training of teachers" promotes the spoken use of French and English and has contributed to "wiping away Mungaka" (09F_50-69).

> "Children no longer put in efforts to speak Mungaka. Now they speak

> and mix it with Pidgin... and with grammar learnt from school" (10M_50-69, translated from Pidgin).

The eight-year ongoing violent armed conflict in Anglophone Cameroon has caused a jump in rural-urban migration in quest for safe spaces and greener pasture. With language contact outcomes such as language maintenance, as well as language shift for specific purposes, comes the inertia of Mungaka. For instance:

> "because of rural exodus, and because of the crisis we have now... people are running away. People are afraid to stay in the villages" (34F_>30).

> "There are many migrants now leaving from other regions to the Grassfields, from the Grassfields to other regions..., so with that, the communication with Mungaka has really dropped" (08M_50-69).

As a language of *education*, there has been a phase out of early Mungaka learning programmes and the older generation of Mungaka teachers. There has also been pedagogic non-nonchalance and indolence in language transfer from the older to the younger generation. Finally, there has been the developing hegemony of English that doubles as world lingua franca and one of the official languages of Cameroon, alongside French. These are all enabling factors of the dehegemonisation of Mungaka. For instance:

> "even in Bali itself, the Nangnangpah in Ntafoang where we attended school while growing up is no longer there... It was basic education in Mungaka. After here, they moved on to Keh'fun Nstundab" (01F_70+, translated from Pidgin).

> "Most of those people that taught Mungaka are not still alive" (19M_70+, translated from Pidgin).

> "Since our teacher, Ni Moses of the Fokumlah family died, we no longer have teachers of Mungaka" (29F_70+).

> "Even at home we speak English to the children. We try to teach children French and other different languages that children learn in school" (07F_30-49, translated from Pidgin).

In spite of revitalisation efforts of researchers like Ndangam (2021), Fokwang and Gwaabe (2020), Fokwang (2017), Titanji (2013, 2016); the present Fon of Bali Nyonga, Doh Ganyonga III, and language development units such as Résurrection des Langues Maternelles (RESULAM); the Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy (CABTAL), etc., indigenous people attest that

Mungaka is not taught in schools and has no teachers:

> "They don't study it again in school, we have no teacher to do the studies" (18F_30-49).
>
> "Now schools are everywhere... Most people now speak English and French. Mungaka does not exist again" (33F_70+, translated from Pidgin).
>
> "In our generation... Mungaka was an ancient language... and people will find it difficult to study Mungaka compared to the new languages like English and French or other languages" that have been introduced" (35M_>30).

### 4.3 The diluted hegemony of Mungaka

In an online conversation and email exchanges with one of the research assistants (RA) on the status of Mungaka as the lingua franca of the Western Grassfields, he testifies the diluted hegemony of Mungaka in the following excerpt:

> The Bali Language [Mungaka] was the lingua franca in the Northwest Regions then and the Churches language. Between 1940 to 1953, the Bible had been translated into Mungaka completely with a hymn book. With the coming of the British and France in 1925 things changed to colonial languages. However, it remained the Churches theological language for the Grass field and Douala for the Forest Area (46M_50-69_RA, 2023).

Apart from in Bali Nyonga, homeland to Mungaka, there are only trace elements retained in certain parts of the Grassfields of the hegemony of Mungaka, wherein there is a stabilised usage of lexical borrowings from Mungaka. There are also idiosyncrasies in syntactic usage, spelling, pronunciation, and nativisation of some words such as "*Haleluyah*" and the Hebrew version, "*Hallelujah*" for the English loan "*Alleluia*". These trace elements and idiosyncrasies are testified in the following excerpt.

> The word money which is,"nkap" in Mungaka is used in most of the villages in Mezam. Mungaka is still in forced [enforced] since it is the singing language of the Haleluyah Choir. Some of the best "alongie" music is still being sung all over in Mungaka... "Nyam" for meat is used in many divisions... The word "satan" is still used just as it is in English. There is no word for "kitchen" in Mungaka since it is only called kitchen. "Ngadmu" commonly used for matches is almost being

forgotten for the English name matches (46M_50-69_RA, 2023).

Meanwhile, there is a significant stabilised usage of lexical borrowings by Mungaka from other languages, English, French, and Pidgin. This has facilitated the extinction of some Mungaka words. Thus, irrespective of the aforementioned trace elements, the previous dominance of Mungaka has been diluted by stabilised lexical borrowings as illustrated by a majority of the 45 respondents in Section B, Table 3.

## 4.4 Section B, Table 3: Loan words in Mungaka

| B4: Borrowings from English, French, Pidgin, and replacements in Mungaka | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Mungaka** | **Borrowed from English** | **Mungaka** | **Borrowed from English** |
| nùngêtyét | wonderful | léhnkì | Calabash |
| bé`tí | manage | pèénáh | Kettle |
| kèmtí | economise | káng | plate, pan |
| tóndáp | window | nàáh | Mum |
| **Mungaka** | **Borrowed from English** | **Mungaka** | **Borrowed from English** |
| ndânwànì | school | kàáh | Grandma |
| mbàntí bàmtì | a pair of scissors | fóékép | Spoon |
| ngàdmú/ngwàtmúh | matches | bá | papa, daddy |
| léhnchì | bucket | kěhfòèn | Key |
| vín | zinc | sŏbnyàm | Fork |
| mfán mèkálé | nail | tàng | Ceiling |
| nkàám | get | kwààkòùh | Motor |
| kʉ̀lāŋ | table | ntúmùnyégèh | Football |
| bànkù | bicycle | nkɔ̄ŋ nwà'nì nfə̄ | Pen |
| nkón-ngwànì-njemeuh | pencil | ntèd tū | hair lice |
| Respondents don't know the Mungaka equivalents here. | television, bike, phone, machine, gallon, gate, banana, ball | Respondents don't know the Mungaka equivalents here. | pillow, pin, pump, computer, cupboard, handbag, container, slippers, |
| **Mungaka** | **Borrowed from Pidgin** | **Mungaka** | **Borrowed from Pidgin** |
| múnyàngób | pusi (cat) | bá | pa (papa, daddy, dad) |
| | foks (fork(s)) | | |
| **Borrowed from French** | | **Gloss in English** | |
| tabac, carrefour, gâteaux, beignet, terrain, secour, grand frère, petit frère, petite soeur, grande soeur, rendezvous, savon, villageois, sentiment | | tobacco, crossroads, cakes, doughnut, land(n) or space, rescue, big brother, little brother, little sister, big sister, appointment, soap, villager, feeling | |

### 4.5 Language contact outcomes

Over time, the multilingual and multicultural state of Cameroon has contributed to language contact outcomes such as language shift resulting to borrowing (4.4 Section B, Table 3), replacement, semantic shift, extension, innovation, nativisation, and pronunciation variation that have enabled the dehegemonisation of Mungaka. For example:

> Some words do not exist in Mungaka but imported to give descriptive name and meaning as follows; eupcalyptus is called "foreshi" guard, meaning the forest guard or tree of the forest guard. The word "telephone" has been given the name "tohngam" a descriptive meaning for "story box or container" (46M_50-69_RA, 2023).

The English loans in Mungaka are predominantly pronounced in Pidgin, or some nativised pronunciation of English or French words (Fonyuy 2016), for example "'*blanket*' is called '*planketu*', mango as '*manguli*', pear as '*pia*', onion as '*anushi*'" (46M_50-69_RA, 2023).

### 4.6 Audacity-enabled spectrograms of sample readings in Mugaka

Across the cohorts of four generations, pronunciation varies depending on social variables such as age, education, profession, exposure to other languages, and idiosyncrasies, witnessed in some phonological processes. There is pronunciation variation in vowel length and replacement, tone placement and misplacement, syllable weakening or strengthening in consonant clusters, representing variables that can be used to tease out differences.

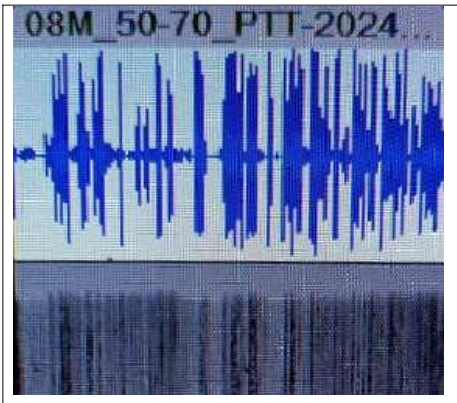


Fig. 1: 08M_50-69 years cohort

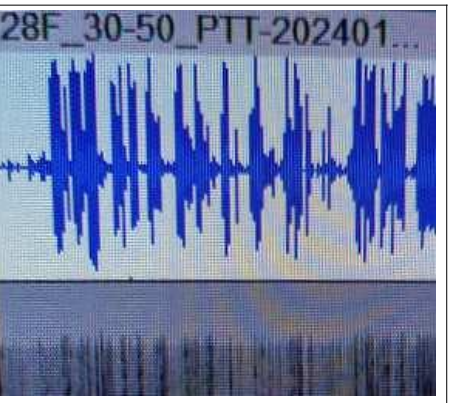


Fig. 2: 28F_30-49 years cohort

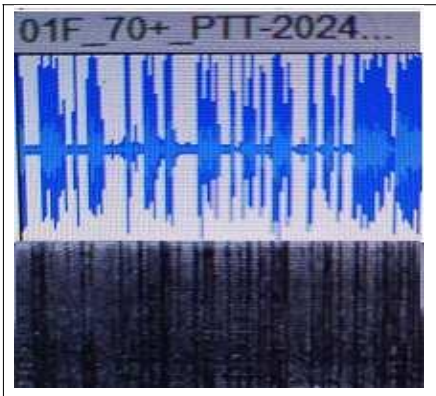


Fig. 3: 01F_70+ years cohort

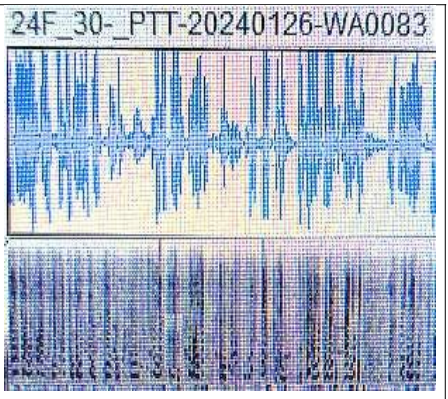


Fig. 4: 24F_>30 years cohort

Using recordings from the preceding list (B5, Table 4) we attempted to characterise cohorts of different speakers to find homogenous clusters of accents that will match age and different patterns of language acquisition (L1, L2 etc), and subsequently analyse the different variables. This ongoing effort has been hampered by the non-availability of sufficient literate speakers of Mungaka across the different generations. From Fig. 1-4, the obvious variation in accent is the personal idiosyncrasy visible in the frequencies and amplitudes over time in the spectrograms. The only shared feature is the consonant clusters visible in the darker lines or frequencies with higher amplitudes. The pale lines are frequencies with lower amplitudes visible when most vowels are realised.

In Fig. 4, the pale areas are recurrent indicating frequencies with lower amplitudes, hesitation, and silent gaps due to the use of less energy. It can be inferred from such speech features that the reader finds it challenging reading and pronouncing Mungaka and the reader is below thirty (>30). This is visibly contrasting to Fig. 3 with the more frequencies of higher amplitude, less hesitation, and less silent gaps, indicating a more fluent reader with an indigenous accent of Mungaka. This reader is above seventy (70+) and her interview responses reveal that she attended the Mungaka vernacular school (Nangnangpah and Ke'hfun ntsudap). In spite of this evidence in speech variation across cohorts of Mungaka speakers, 46 informants are not representative enough to draw a conclusion on the correlation of pronunciation to the age variable that influences the (de)hegemonisation of Mungaka.

## 5. Conclusion

Summarily, as the lingua franca of the Western Grassfields, Mungaka was the language of evangelisation, education, and wider communication.However, other Grassfields tribes spoke Mungaka as a second or other language, resulting in second language varieties of Mungaka. Nonetheless, findings prove the evolution of Mungaka from vitality/hegemony to inertia/dehegemonisation. Only 5% acknowledges the contemporary vitality of Mungaka with evidence from the trace elements of Mungaka in some Grassfields languages, and the revitalisation efforts. Significantly, 95% attests the dehegemonisation of Mungaka as the lingua franca of the Western Grassfields.

Today, the Mungaka language is spoken at home and entrenched in the diaspora is with aspects of interlanguage. There is stabilisation and retention of loan words from English, French, and Pidgin, presented with differing indigenous and foreign accents. There is borrowing from other languages, lexical innovations and semantic extensions, for instance, to incorporate the new communication technology vocabulary into Mungaka. These interlanguage processes underline the versatility of Mungaka with the potential to influence local and diasporic discourses across variables such as age, gender, profession, geographical space, education, power, culture, identity, and opportunity.

In spite of its dehegemonisation as the lingua franca of the Western Grassfields, it remains one of the most documented and developed languages in the Western Grassfields. It has an L2 literacy rate, ranging between 25-50%, present in "Radio programs. Dictionary. Bible: 1961-1970"[1]

Mungaka is the default language of the Hallelujah Choir of the PCC around the world as testified in,

> "The language of the Hallelujah Choir of the PCC is Mungaka. Anywhere that the choir is found in the world, they sing in Mungaka" (45M_50-69_RA).

Thus, over time, the hegemony of Mungaka has been diluted by the sociolinguistics of language contact, resulting to the dehegemonisation of Mungaka as the lingua franca of contemporary multilingual Cameroon.

[1] https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/mhk/

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# Non-dominant varieties of pluricentric languages: Perspectives and views on the Eastern (Harar) Oromic variety

**Abstract**

This paper explores the Oromo language, Afaan Oromoo (endonym), otherwise referred to as Oromic. Oromic is a pluricentric language, with a variety that can be identified as a non-dominant variety, as initiated by Michael Clyne and subsequent extensions (WGNDV Website). The Oromo language is spoken by around 42 million Oromos (amongst others) in Ethiopia, distributed over a vast area from the Sudanese border in the West and across the Somali border in the East, from the Tigray area in northern Ethiopia to the south, across the Kenyan border to the Indian Ocean (Janko 207:89-90; Heine 1981, Map 2, Appendix I). As such, it is spoken mainly in Ethiopia, with a considerable amount of native speakers located in Kenya and Somalia. There is a significant Oromo immigrant population in neighbouring countries such as the Middle East, North America, Europe, and the South Pacific (Jalata, 2011).

## 1. Introduction – The Oromo language (Oromic)

The Oromo language belongs to an Afro-asiatic, east Cushitic branch (Clamons,1995: 389). It is the third native Afro-asiatic language after Arabic and Hausa and the second largest mother tongue in Africa after Hausa (Gragg, 1982 p. viii). It uses a phonetic Roman alphabet-based orthography without diacritics, which was only officially adopted in 1991 (Gamta, 1993). As observed in the Oromo case, the demographic size and geographic spread of a language promotes the existence of language diversity; it is then likely that linguistic dominance and hegemony will subsequently follow.

## 2. Eastern Oromic as a non-dominant variety

It is stated that "[p]luricentric languages are usually marked by an asymmetric relationship between their national varieties", according to Muhr

(2015: 13). The main focus of this work is to indicate such asymmetry through characterizing the Eastern (Harar) Oromic variety as an example of a non-dominant variety. This characteristic is nuanced in the developments throughout the last three decades, which correspond with the adoption of orthography. In contrast, the Western (Mac'c'a) variety is characterized as a currently dominant variety of Oromic in every case of language usage, including media, school curriculum, and official communications.

Primarily, even though these varieties are spoken in the same country, there are certain features that are not shared by the other different varieties that contribute to the peculiarities of Eastern Oromic. Such features are not only linguistic, but also historical, geographical, economic and cultural factors that differentiate the eastern Oromo region from other regions. To contextualise the linguistic peculiarity of Oromo, it is important to discuss the non-linguistic elements that characterize the region.

Firstly, the eastern economy is more monetized, given that the only railway connecting Ethiopia to the neighbouring Djibouti port passes through the biggest city of the Harar Zone, Dirre Dhawa. Furthermore, cash crop agriculture predominates in this region. There is also more openness to the outside world via the northern Samali region. Historically, the region had been under Ottoman Egyptian occupation from 1875 to 1885 (Hassen, 2008: 33-61), during which there was amass conversion to Islam, Arabic language influence and diversification of agriculture. The following section will analyse the linguistic factors while considering this context.

## 3. Linguistic features of Eastern Oromic

The most salient of the linguistic features that distinguish Eastern Oromic is the switch of *ɗ* (the alveolar implosive sound) in the verb root *jeɗ-* 'say' with *ʔ* (a voiceless glottal stop sound)(Owens, 1985, p. 71). Thus *jeɗ-* becomes *jiʔ-* in the Eastern variant. The morpheme (verb root) *jeɗ-* 'say' is one of the most common word roots in the language with its derived and inflected extensions. *jeɗ* also aligns with the majority of idiophones (ideas in sound imitation) in the language. Therefore, whether a speaker or a writer is speaking or writing, this variety can be quickly identified.

Another linguistic feature of Eastern Oromic is the phoneme /x/(a velar voiceless fricative sound), which is close to and in complementary distribution with /k/ (the velar voiceless stop sound). /k/ is only used following a consonant (Owens, 1985, p. 15), even if the consonant is the final segment of the

preceding word. Phonetically, it follows the phonological rule /x/ → [k]/ C(#); read /x/ becomes /k/ if/when it comes after a consonant, even if the consonant is the final segment of the preceding word. Thus, what is read in the Eastern variety as *baxakka:* 'thunder' is read *bakakka:.* Similaryly, in some other varieties, *xaxu:* 'oath' is read *kaku:*; *ol ka: ji'* put up' is *ol ka:ji*, no difference, while *bux* 'pop up' is *buk* in some other varieties.

A further specific feature of Eastern Oromic is the palatalization of the velar stops (Owens, 1985, p. 24), including the ejective /k'/, (a sound similar to /k/ but involves constricted glottis) before the coronal /s/, /t/ or /n/-initial suffixes. Thus, when conjugated for first plural perfect suffixes *-ne*, *da:k-* 'grind becomes *da:jne* 'we ground'; *la:k'-* 'mix' becomes *la:jnʔe* 'we mixed', noticeably not *da:kne* and *la: k'ne* respectively, which is generally the case, especially in the Mc'c'a variety.

Now that we have enumerated examples of the specific features of the eastern variety, we can use these examples to verify their status in the use of Oromic. To achieve this, we will examine literature produced within the last three decades in Oromia, the school curriculum, and the media inside and outside the country.

## 4. The representation of linguistic features of Eastern Oromic in textbooks and in linguistic literature

First, it is important to note that there is no mention of the first phonological feature, earlier identified as /ɗ/ and /ʔ/ switching in *jeɗ-*, even as a rare usage by an Oromo variety in any official document. However, neither speakers nor officials have decided to dismiss this /ɗ / - /ʔ/ switch from use. Similarly, the /k/ /x/ alignment is not mentioned; the few writers who note the existence of the sound /x/ dismiss it as a 'foreign sound' (Galataa, 1996).

As for the assimilation rule of the velars, as mentioned above, in the Eastern variety *da:k-* 'grind' becomes *da:jne/da: nne'* we ground' when the first plural past indicator suffix *–ne* is added, whereas in the Western variety of Mac'c'a it is *da:kne.* This latter version is used in every piece of literature.

Regarding the etymological share of Eastern Oromic, the study carried out by Wondimu Tegegne (2015) shows that "the majority of the words used in the Grade 8 Afan Oromo textbook were taken from the Western Dialect" (p. 362). However, this study is limited as it only examines words, and not sounds. Through analysing language-teaching grammar books, it is revealed that there is not a single book that includes /x/ in the phoneme inventory. Strangely

enough, however, many authors allegedly employ the use of /v/, /p/ and even /s'/, the alveolar fricative ejective, all decidedly foreign sounds, to write 'borrowed words' while categorizing /x/ as a foreign sound that is consistently used by approximately 19% of the Oromo population (Google data).

From the list of observations in the extension of Clyne's original of 1992, which was summarised in Muhr (2012) and Muhr (2016) issued by 10 WGNDV, the condition of 'missing language loyalty of the elites' is apparent. Native Eastern variety speakers and linguists, like Ali et al. (1990), Muhammed (1994), and infamous lexicographer Muudee (1995), exclude /x/ from their consonant inventory, while foreign linguists such as Andrzejewski (1957), Owens (1985), Lloret (1997) include /x/ in their Oromo consonant inventories.

This dominance of the Eastern dialect has extended beyond the Oromia border. Even international media, such as the Voice of America and BBC Oromic Service, only employ individuals from other dialectal backgrounds, resulting in a notable absence of speakers of the Eastern variety. It seems as if corpus planning has been ongoing, despite the fact that there is no official standardization activity that currently exists.

It is proposed that the Mac'c' dialect, especially Wallaga, is the dominating variety. There are factors that facilitated this domination; one such factor is the relatively widespread opportunity for literacy in western Oromia, especially Wallaga. As stated by Gragg (1982), "... a surprisingly high degree of Oromo literacy has existed there since the early decades of this century, owing in large part to the widespread use of Onesimus Nasib's Oromo Bible by protestant and even Orthodox Christians, and the existence of mission-supported elementary education in Oromo" (p. xvi). See also Bulcha (1995: 57).

On the other hand, the Oromo in the East maintained a cautious relationship with the Christian-led government that assumed control following the Egyptian departure (Hassen, 2008: 33-61). They did not welcome missionaries, preferring to adhere to their newly acquired religion. Thus, the literacy gap between the East and the West continued to widen. Therefore, it is unsurprising that all literature produced in the country, including school curricula, media, and publications, is predominantly in the Mac'c'a variety.

However, the current trend in developing the overwhelming linguistic elite shows that standardizing the language is imperative. To do so, all the varieties must firstly be enumerated and recognized. Then, a clear criterion must be established, circulated through the available media, and adopted. This process will end the prevailing hegemony that entails mutual resentment of

the speakers of the eastern and other dominated dialects versus the Mac'c'a variety speakers. This process is for the general benefit of the language community, enabling the move towards minimizing ambivalence and discouragement in researching and developing the language. Moreover, standardization is indispensable for the precision required by digital technology and the necessity of teaching heritage language to the bourgeoning diaspora of children.

## 5. Conclusion

This study has shown that the Oromo language, Oromic, is a pluricentric language with dominant and non-dominant varieties within the same national boundary. The Eastern Oromic variety is shown to have specific features in terms of linguistics, caused by geographical, historical, and economical factors. Its status as a non-dominant variety is demonstrated through linguistic features and its relationship with the other varieties, especially the Western Mac'c'a variety. Finally, it suggests that future standardization of the language will level the current gap and promote the development of the language.

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# The variation in the use of the definite article before anthroponyms in the Portuguese spoken in Luanda-Angola[1]

**Abstract**

This research analyses the variation in the use of definite articles before people's names, also called anthroponyms, in the Portuguese spoken in Luanda, the capital of Angola. The aim is to understand what motivates this variation in use. The study was based on the theoretical methodological premises of Labov's *Variationist Sociolinguistics* (1972), and it was developed based on the hypothesis that the occurrence of the phenomenon would be favoured in a more recent colonization context, such as the case of Angola. Ten sociolinguistic interviews were selected for this sample, recorded in the urban area of the capital of Angola between 2008 and 2013. The results allow us to identify the most relevant factors for using the article, as well as comparing Angolan Portuguese aspects to the same aspects of other varieties, especially those which were formed in contact with African languages.

## 1. Introduction

Brazilian Portuguese (BP) was built under the influence of several different strata, and is the product of great contributions from the different peoples who were in the country in the colonial and imperial period, mainly Africans brought as slaves.

Some researchers (Guy 1981; Lucchesi 1993; Petter 2008; Holm 2011; among others) have demonstrated that certain morphosyntactic features of the Portuguese language, as spoken in Brazil, are the result of many linguistic contacts that occurred during the period of consolidation of the language in Brazil, which distinguishes BP from European Portuguese (EP). Although many researchers understand the importance of linguistic contacts in the formation of linguistic varieties, there are still few sociolinguistic works on the

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Portuguese language in Africa that thoroughly describe the repercussions of these contacts at the linguistic level. Thus, it is necessary to carry out studies on the different ways of speaking Portuguese in regions where the language was and is in constant situations of contact, due to multilingualism. These should consider historical, social and linguistic aspects, aiming to recognize and understand specific linguistic patterns. In this sense, I sought to study the variation in the presence or absence of definite articles before people's names, also called anthroponyms, in the Portuguese spoken in Luanda, the capital of Angola.

In the Portuguese language, the anthroponym, when used referentially to refer to a specific individual in the discursive domain, is considered a semantically complete and defined unit. As a result, the use of a definite article before people's names constitutes a case of grammatical redundancy (Müller & Negrão 1989). However, the variation in the use or non-use of the definite article observed in BP distinguishes it from EP, which categorically marks the article before anthroponyms (Mira Mateus 2003).

BP was in contact with many African languages, especially Bantu languages, during the formation of its popular norm (Bonvini 2008), and many of these languages with which Portuguese had contact, have a high incidence of bare nouns, both in Brazil and Africa, (Lucchesi 2009; Avelar & Galves 2014), i.e., nominals that occur without preceding determiners (Wall 2017). The phenomenon is quite general in creole languages, possibly a trace of morphosyntactic restructuring in the early stages of the history of these languages (Baxter & Lopes 2009), which may explain the possibility of article omission in communities marked by linguistic contact.

The territory now known as Angola was taken over by the Portuguese in the 15th century, a period that coincides with the beginning of Portuguese colonization in Brazil. Since then, the region has suffered from a vast and profitable trade based on human exploitation, through the trafficking of human beings enslaved to America. However, according to Inverno (2009 : 3), unlike in Brazil, the generalization of the Portuguese language in Angola started by the middle of the 20th century, close to the end of the colonisation process, which happened in 1975. Before that, the Portuguese language had been socially and geographically restricted to the Afro-Portuguese elite.

Only from the beginning of the 20th century, more specifically from the middle of the century, Portuguese gradually became the most spoken language in urban areas of Angola. This fact happened essentially due to the increase in

the number of Portuguese settlers, both men and women, the majority of whom referred to settle in coastal urban centers instead of the countryside areas[2].


Map 1: Luanda located in Africa's map
Source: https://www.britannica.com/place/Angola

Despite the imposition of Portuguese as the nation's official colonizing language[3], autochthonous languages persisted and coexist to this day, including Kikongo, Kimbundu and Umbundu, which are Bantu languages.

In this sense, the comparison of morphosyntactic aspects of BP with other varieties of Portuguese, such as Angolan Portuguese (AP), can provide evidence for discussing the importance of contact between Portuguese and Bantu languages in the formation of these varieties. For the research outlined here, I chose to investigate the variation in the use of the definite article in this

[2] The original: Apenas a partir do início do século XX, mais especificamente a partir de meados do século, o português se tornou gradualmente a língua mais falada nas áreas urbanas de Angola. Este facto ficou a dever-se essencialmente ao aumento do número de colonos portugueses, tanto homens como mulheres, a maioria dos quais preferia fixar-se nos centros urbanos costeiros em detrimento das zonas do interior.

[3] There was, in Angola, a political act of establishing Portuguese as the official language. The said act brought social implications, as Portuguese became the only language that should be used in public administration and teaching. Learning Portuguese was mandatory for people who sought to rise socially (Mingas 2000).

context, aiming to understand what motivates these variations, and subsequently compare the results achieved with other studies that have extensively investigated the phenomenon, focusing on the Brazilian variety.

## 2. Materials

This study was based on the Labovian theoretical-methodological model, also known as the Theory of Variation and Linguistic Change, in the terms of Weinreich, Labov and Herzog (1968) and Labov (1972). This model was adopted because it is theoretically coherent and methodologically effective for describing a speech community from a variation perspective, its main thesis being that language is a heterogeneous and social reality, and this heterogeneity is functional.

According to Tarallo (1997), variationist theory is a theoretical-methodological model that assumes linguistic "chaos" as an object of study. In other words, the approach seeks to visualize the regularity and systematicity in the coexistence of linguistic variants in everyday communication, by correlating existing variations in individuals' speech with factors of a social and linguistic nature. Therefore, for this stage of the present study, ten sociolinguistic interviews of the DID type (dialogue between informant and documenter) were chosen. These were recorded in the urban area of the city of Luanda, capital of Angola, in the years 2008 and 2013, and are part of the project "In search of the roots of Brazilian Portuguese: morphosyntactic studies" (originally, "Em busca das raízes do português brasileiro: estudos morfossintáticos")[4].

For the empirical study, I started by collecting data from the sociolinguistic interviews which constitute the *corpus* of this research. The subsequent step involved coding the occurrences of the phenomenon in question. Through the assigned coding, the statistical program provided quantitative results of the correlation between the linguistic variable and the established extralinguistic variables. In this way, the collected data enabled quantitative treatment of the data through the Goldvarb X Program to be given (Sankoff, Tagliamonte & Smith 2005). The qualitative and quantitative analysis of the variable phenomenon in question was guided by the defined linguistic and extralinguistic factors, as they allowed the exploration of explanations for

[4] The project is coordinated by Professor Dr. Silvana Silva de Farias Araújo from the Center for Portuguese Studies of the State University of Feira de Santana (NELP/UEFS). To carry out the interviews, a submission was made to the Ethics Committee for Research with Human Beings (CEP/UEFS). The number in favor of its implementation is 140,511.

the difference between the presence and absence of the article investigated in specific contexts.

## 3. Results and discussion

After carrying out the previously described steps, in a total set of 59 occurrences of people's names, and a global percentage of application of the defined article in the face of an anthroponym above 50% (35 out of the 59 occurrences in total), it is interesting to note that the results are not so conclusive at this initial stage. In terms of distribution, there seems to be a certain balance between the presence (59%, 35 occurrences) and absence (41%, 24 occurrences) of articles. Although the amount of data collected is not significant enough to make more assertive statements, I seek to describe, in the different possible linguistic contexts, the guidelines regarding the use or omission of the article in relation to a proper name.

| | Occurrences/ Total | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **Absence of article** | 24/59 | 40.7% |
| **Use of article** | 35/59 | 59.3% |

TABLE 1: General distribution of variation in the use of the definite article before anthroponyms in Portuguese spoken in Luanda

Callou and Silva (1997) observed a significant increase in the use of articles with people's names in both Portugal and Brazil, with non-use being greater in Brazil than in Portugal. Subsequently, the authors drew attention to the low production of the article in the region of oldest colonization, which would reveal a case of linguistic conservatism[5]. According to the authors, "the older the colonization, the lower the percentage of use of the article" (Callou & Silva, 1997:22). Considering the socio-historical context of Angola and its relatively recent liberation from Portuguese colonization (the second half of the 20$^{th}$ century), it is possible to understand the greater use of the definite

[5] Diachronically, the overview of variation in the use of the article with anthroponyms observed in EP studies presents results that demonstrate a high frequency of use of the article in contemporary times, but they also show a historical change (Castro 2006). Costa (2002) carried out an analysis of the morphosyntactic factors that favored the presence or absence of the definite article before anthroponyms, in which she registered only two instances of occurrence of an article accompanying more than 1,400 anthroponyms in Portuguese texts between the 13th and 16th centuries. These two occurrences have only been identified in texts from the late archaic period. This finding suggests that the combination of the article with anthroponyms was not an integral part of the grammar of Old Portuguese (between 14th and 16th centuties). Magalhães (2011) reinforces that the variation in the use of the article with anthroponyms became increasingly rare over the centuries, until, in the 19th century, the use of the article became practically categorical in EP.

article in relation to the anthroponyms in Luanda, which corroborates Callou and Silva's hypothesis about this variable phenomenon in other former Portuguese colonies. Regarding the aspects of the variable phenomenon in focus in Luanda, I used quantitative data treatment through the Goldvarb X software to identify which factors were most significant for the configuration of the dependent variable presence or absence of a definite article before people's names through the selection of some linguistic variables: *syntactic position of the anthroponym in the sentence* and *presence/absence of preposition before the article.*

### 3.1 Linguistic Variables

Previous sociolinguistic studies have highlighted the relevance of checking the syntactic position of the anthroponym in the sentence, to better understand the variation studied. Therefore, this syntactic position of the anthroponym was considered to verify the position in the sentence with the highest occurrence of the article. From the 14$^{th}$ century onwards, the use of the definite article became widespread in the Portuguese language, initially in relation to a name that served as a subject. Furthermore, some functions (adjuncts, genitives, and indirect objects) would always be preceded by a preposition, which in turn would favor the presence of the article (Callou & Silva 1997). Regarding the use of the definite article, the anthroponym performing the role of the subject presented the highest percentage of occurrence (84%), inferring greater use of the article in this context. The following examples illustrate what was said. Please note that the defined articles in Portuguese are "a" (feminine/singular), "o" (masculine/singular), "as" (feminine/plural) and "os" (masculine/plural).

(1) *A Rosa* disse "então gostaste da minha prima" e ele disse "sim". (A. E. R., Age group I, A)[6]

(2) ) Pela segunda vez aconteceu, é daí onde que *o Luiz*, graças a Deus, depois do tratamento, ficou bom. (A. O. G., Age group II, B)[7]

(3) *O Geraldo*, sim, jogou, jogou, joga no Brasil, mas não é, não é, não é no Flamengo. (A., Age group III, B)[8]

On the other hand, the anthroponym that performs the function of

[6] Translation: *The* Rosa, then, said: „did you like my cousin?" and he said „yes".

[7] Translation: It happened for the second time, that's when *the* Luiz, thank God, after the treatment, got well.

[8] Translation: *The* Geraldo, yeah, played... played... plays in Brazil, but it's not, it's not in Flamengo.

appositive (22%) or predicative (20%) tends to exhibit less use of the definite article, as per (4) and (5), respectively:

(4) Agora tava lá aquele outro... o... professor... é... da... da Universidade Católica, *Ø Justino de Andrade*, que depois saiu e veio agora o outro. (A., Age group III, B)[9]

(5) Eu disse: Sou a neta dele, sou... minha mãe é *Ø Florinda Guerra*. (T. M. N., Age group, B)[10]

The explained results align with studies by Silva (1996), who states that the absence of an article in appositives is significant, justified by the high specification nature of this class. Likewise, Braga (2012:47) argues that in structures such as predicates, "the article can be deleted, [...], since they are not arguments but predicates".

Another closely observed factor is the presence or absence of a preposition accompanying the anthroponym. Callou and Silva (1997) found strong conditioning on the presence of articles in the face of prepositions that contract with them[11]. For Amaral (2003), the item did not favor any of the dependent variables, whereas Campos Júnior's (2011) research enabled him to verify that the cases in which articles are preceded by a preposition with which they can be contracted, are not categorical in the studied speech community. Santos (2012) revealed in his research that the preposition favored the presence of the article before an anthroponym. Given this, I sought to verify the conditioning of prepositioned contexts for the use of the article in Luanda. Out of the total number of contexts of anthroponyms preceded by a preposition, 57% were preceded by an article and in 43% of the occurrences, the article was absent. Furthermore, the presence of a preposition with which the article can be contracted (*de*, *a*, *em*) proved to be a considerably active factor, as represented by (9), (10), and (11) respectively. The occurrence of prepositions "*para*" and "*em*" before a proper name was not found in the analyzed *corpus*.

(9) Tem aí a novela *da Beth* feia, não sei que agora já parou ou não. (D. C., Age group I, A)[12]

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[9] Translation: Now that other one was there.... the professor from the Catholic University, Justino de Andrade, who, then, left, and now the other came.

[10] Translation: I said: I'm his granddaughter, I'm... My mother is Florinda Guerra.

[11] In Portuguese, it is possible to contract some prepositions with the articles, due to the articles' vowel nature. Thus, instead of "de a" or "de o" the contracted forms are used: "da" or "do", respectively.

[12] Translation: There is the soap opera of *the* Beth, The Ugly. I don't know if at this point it's stopped airing or not.

(10) Fiquei, assim, a rir. A Ivania falou *à tia Teresa*, lhe disse... (J. M., Age group I, A)[13]

(11) Minha mãe me entrega numa senhora, *na Dona Maria Júlia.* (D. J. T., Age group III, A)[14]

Hence, I could observe that in Luanda the occurrence of a preposition seems to favor the presence of an article, as in (09), (10), and (11), as opposed to cases such as (12), which appear in fewer numbers:

(12) O último capítulo [...] que teve o encontro *com Ø Victor Manuel*, acho que foi isso. (A., Age group III, C)[15]

### 3.2 Social Variables

Social, or extralinguistic, factors are external in nature to the linguistic structure, but equally important in linguistic studies. It is necessary to consider that the selection of social factors must be adapted to the objective of the investigation. In this study, among the set of variables external to language, the most comprehensive and recurrent social categories in variationist studies were considered: *age group* and *education*. Furthermore, the variable *mother tongue* (Portuguese or African languages) was considered, as it is relevant for delimiting the realization of the phenomenon and its specific contexts. Although I did not have a more significant amount of data to make more consistent deductions, the behavior of the age group shows signs of a stable variation process, as the graph below indicates:

These results shown in Graph (1) allow for some inferences, for instance, although the intermediate range presented an index close to neutrality, the group of younger speakers uses the article more, compared to the group of older speakers. Despite this, it is not possible to define whether we are, in fact, dealing with a case of regular age-related change (Labov 1994). If this hypothesis is confirmed in subsequent studies, it would be possible to conclude that Luanda is on the way to categorizing the definite article before anthroponyms in the spoken language, especially since a usage rate greater than 50% (precisely 73%) was registered in the speech of younger people.

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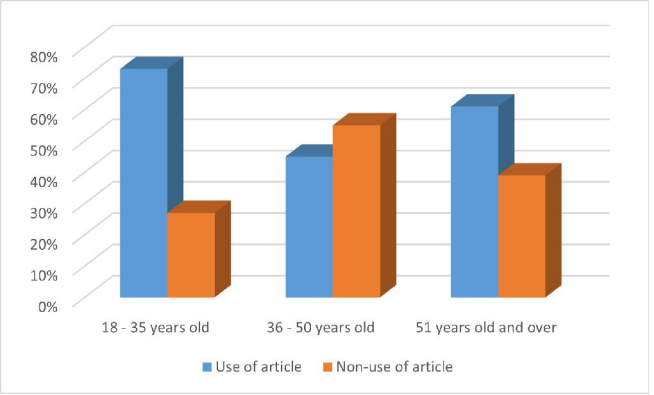
[13] Translation: I was like that, laughing. The Ivania said to *the* Tia Teresa and told her...

[14] Translation: My mother delivers me at a lady's, at *the* Dona Maria Júlia.

[15] Translation: The last chapter [...], which showed the encounter with Victor Manuel, I think that's it.




GRAPH 1 – Variation in the use of the definite article before anthroponyms in Luanda – Angola, according to the age group of the speakers

The analysis of the variable related to the level of education was based on studies by Silva (1996), who defended that there was a significant relationship between the level of education and the use of articles along with possessive pronouns (which is also a possibility in Portuguese language), where the higher the level of education, the greater the use of article. Although the phenomenon under study is different, I decided to verify the hypothesis based on the same assumption. The results found that, in Luanda, the frequency of article usage before people's names is higher (62%) in the speech of individuals with low education, contrasting with Silva's (1996) results, where it represented 50% among those with access to higher education.

Since Angola is a multilingual country, where three large distinct linguistic families coexist, it was important to observe the native language variable to analyze the results regarding bilingual speakers of Portuguese and national languages. It was noted that the article was used more frequently among speakers with Portuguese as their native language (69%), although the frequency among native speakers of African languages was well balanced (48%).

## 4. Conclusion

The results of this research propose a reflection on morphosyntactic aspects of an African variant of the Portuguese language: the Portuguese spoken in Luanda. Based on the theoretical-methodological framework of the Theory of Linguistic Variation and Change (Weinreich, Labov and Herzog 1968), I investigated the variation in the absence and presence of the definite article before anthroponyms in the speech of Luanda residents, Angola. Based on oral

interviews carried out in Luanda, I sought to verify which groups of factors were acting on this variable phenomenon, as this variation can be better understood through the correlation of linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

The objective of observing whether the syntactic function of the noun phrase in which the anthroponym is found in the sentence would be relevant in terms of the use of the article was achieved, with the subject position being the most favorable for its occurrence. Furthermore, the main question of whether the definite article occurs before people's names in Angolan Portuguese and whether it is more often present than absent could be analyzed using statistical data.

In the work of Lima and Moraes (2019), the results of speech data from the capitals of Brazil's Northern Region were compared to Salvador, Recife, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Porto Alegre. It was found that, in the context of article usage before a person's own name, the North aligns itself with the speech of the Southeast and South, while distancing itself from the speech of the Northeast. The author's hypothesis is based on Callou and Silva (1997), regarding the leadership in the use of the definite article before people's names in cities of more recent colonization. Our results showed that Luanda is characterized by using the definite article with people's names, with occurrences reaching almost 60%, similar to the North and Southeast regions of Brazil (Lima & Moraes 2019). This fact corroborates the main hypothesis of this work, which is the fact that the phenomenon occurs mainly in places of more recent Portuguese colonization, as postulated by Callou and Silva (1997).

Finally, studying and comparing other varieties of Portuguese language that have been in contact with African languages is essential to better understand the dynamics of variation and change of this phenomenon. Additionally, it presents evidence of the effects of linguistic contact that occurred during the socio-historical formation on the constitution of Portuguese spoken varieties in former Portuguese colonies. By acknowledging the effects of linguistic contact on the formation of Portuguese spoken varieties in former colonies, we gain deeper insights into the pluricentric nature of the language and its evolving identities across different geographical and cultural contexts.

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# Attitudes toward German and English within the Namibian German speaking community: A first approach

**Abstract**

This paper explores language attitudes toward German and English in Namibia in relation to nationality. With approximately 25,000 German speakers, Namibian German is considered a minority language exhibiting strong language contact, with influences mostly coming from English and Afrikaans. Despite being one of Namibia's 13 national languages, English is the sole official language. The study delves into the historical context of Namibia's colonial period under German rule and subsequent language policy shifts, leading to German regaining national language status in 1990. The research focuses on the language attitudes towards German and English, employing a questionnaire to explore the affective attitudes and feelings of belonging within the German-speaking community. The analysis is conducted according to the "Attitudes Towards Languages" (AToL) Scale, revealing how the German language serves as an identifying factor within the complex linguistic landscape of Namibia, shaped by historical, sociolinguistic, and cultural factors, as well as its link with belonging.

## 1. German as pluricentric language in Namibia

According to the conception of German as a pluricentric language[1], that is a language classified as a national or regional language in more than one country, resulting in the development of specific standard linguistic differences (Clyne 1992; Ammon 2016; Dollinger 2019), German has three different kinds of linguistic centres. "The centres where German is an official language are divided in "Vollzentren" ("full centres"), that are Germany,

[1] See the ongoing debate in the German Studies context revolving around the pluricentric vs. pluriareal paradigm (Elspaß et al. 2017; Auer 2021) and the role of a One Standard German Axiom (Dollinger 2019; Muhr 2024), which asserts the existence of a single standard German variety while marginalizing regional and non-standard varieties.

Austria, Switzerland , "Halbzentren" ("half centres") that are Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, East Belgium, and South Tyrol. In these countries, German is an official language, but in other countries there are also "Viertelzentren" ("quarter centres"), as observed in Namibia, Romania and several Mennonite settlements in North and South American countries (Ammon 2016). A "Viertelzentrum" is defined as a centre where German is not the official language of the region yet a specific standard German variety has developed. Here, the standard linguistic variety of the German language is recognised as a minority[2] language, or non-dominant variety (Muhr & Thomas 2020), but exists without official codification. The acceptance of the standard forms of this variety relies on the acceptance within the community[3] for public usage, such as in educational settings, written materials including academic literature, and local media like newspapers. The following section illustrates how German has evolved in Namibia over the decades, leading to its present-day status.

## 2. Historical context and status of German in Namibia

The historical roots of German presence in Namibia can be traced back to the emigration waves starting from the colonial period. Missionary societies, particularly the Rhenish Mission Society, played a crucial role in Germany's early engagement with Africa during the 19th century, especially in the diffusion of the German language within local communities. Initially focused on southern African territories, the Rhenish Mission expanded its activities to Namibia by 1842 (Wallace 2011).

The Berlin Conference of 1884/1885 marked the beginning of the colonial Scramble for Africa, leading to Germany claiming colonies in West and East Africa. Established in 1884, the territory of present-day Namibia was known at the time as "Deutsch-Südwestafrika" ("German South-West Africa"), which was eventually chosen as a settlement colony for Germans, distinct from more exclusively resource-exploitation colonies in "Deutsch-Ostafrika" ("German East Africa"), corresponding to present-day mainland Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi; the western territories in Togo and Cameroon (Gründer 2023;

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[2] By "minority language", the reference here is specifically to the smaller proportion of speakers of a variety compared to the dominant variety. See the debate on the power implications of the use of minority and majority language in Buschfeld et al. (2023) and Clyne (1992), among others.

[3] See the concept of pluricentric linguistic justice developed by Oakes (2021) which provides a structured approach for assessing ethical issues linked to linguistic diversity in pluricentric contexts, necessary above all in minority language contexts where disparities in population size may lead to asymmetrical power dynamics among speakers of various national standards.

Kellermeier-Rehbein 2016). During this era the official language was German, which was also introduced as language of instruction in schools (Zappen-Thomson 2022).

After the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 and the subsequent signing of the Treaty of Versailles following Germany's defeat in World War I, Germany lost its sovereignty over all the colonies which were placed under the supervision of one of the winning nations (Förster et al. 2004). In 1919, Namibia then fell under the South African mandate, undergoing a further period of imposed domination. During this mandate, German was officially declassified and substituted by English and Afrikaans (Zappen-Thomson 2002). Later, as South Africa implemented apartheid policies within its own borders, these measures were subsequently extended to Namibia, fuelling heightened resistance and an intense pursuit for independence. A 1966 plebiscite sanctioned the incorporation into South Africa, but growing support for SWAPO (South West Africa People's Organization) in the 1970s paved the way for Namibian independence, achieved in 1990. With this independence, the new chosen official language became English[4] (Stell 2021), with German as one of the thirteen "national" languages of the country, alongside the Bantu languages Oshiwambo (Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga), Otjiherero, Rumanyo, Rukwangali, Setswana, Silozi, Thimbukushu; the Khoisan languages Khoekhoegowab and Ju|'hoansi; and the Indo-European Afrikaans, which still serves as a lingua franca today (Fourie 2014; Stell & Groenewald 2016). According to the educational policies implemented after 1990, "national" languages are "languages spoken in Namibia as mother tongues by Namibian citizens" (MBESC 2003: 7).

This intertwined multilingual background has been brought forward to the present-day configuration of Namibia's linguistic setting, where five different language families belonging mostly to Bantu languages and Khoisan languages coexist (Eberhard et al. 2023). L1 English speakers make up nearly 3% of the total population, 50% speak Oshiwambo as an L1, 11% Khoekhoegowab,

[4] English was considered the language of freedom, characterized by neutrality in intercommunity communication (Geingob 1995; Pütz 2004). The English language was chosen according to different criteria enlisted in the document *Toward a Language Policy for Namibia. English as the Official Language: Perspectives and Strategies* (UNIN 1981), which included acceptability, familiarity, feasibility, neutrality, science and technology, Pan Africanism, wider communication and United Nations. The consideration of German as an official language was hindered by its association with the colonial period and the relatively low number of native speakers. Even Afrikaans did not meet certain criteria, yet its colonial connotations played a predominant role in its exclusion as an official language, despite its widespread usage among speakers.

10% Afrikaans, and 9% for both Kavango and Otjiherero[5] respectively, while the German-speaking population comprises approximately 25,000 speakers (Zimmer 2019), which amounts to 1%. The German-speaking community is concentrated mainly in the central regions Khomas, Otjozondjupa, Erongo, as well as notably in the capital city of Windhoek, plus Omaruru and Otjiwarongo.

## 3. German in Namibia

The German-speaking community in Namibia has, since the implementation of the "deliberate settlement policy" (Deumert 2009: 356) during the colonial period and the subsequent increase in the German population, developed a distinct variety of German. This is characterized by specific structural, morpho-syntactical and phonological variations which mostly see the incorporation of linguistic features from Afrikaans, English, Oshiwambo, Khoekhoegowab, and Otjiherero (Kellermeier-Rehbein 2018; Kroll-Tjingaete 2018; Shah & Zimmer 2023; Schlettwein 2018; Zimmer 2019).

There are many adopted terms to denote this linguistic variety: "Namdeutsch" ("Nam-German") has however been identified as a "more neutral all-encompassing term used by speakers" (Shah & Zimmer 2023). Other terms found in literature (Kellermeier-Rehbein 2016) are "Namibisches Deutsch" ("Namibian German") or "Namibia-Deutsch" ("Namibia-German"), and "Namlish". The latter, originally referring to English spoken in Namibia, has evolved to describe German in Namibia and underline its strong influence from the English language (Buschfeld & Schröder 2019). These terms surfaced in opposition to the colonial term "Südwesterdeutsch", which was widely used in the 1990s but has now almost completely fallen out of use due to its association with the colonial period and the name under which Namibia was previously known. This shift in terminology indeed reflects a conscious effort to disassociate the speech community from colonial connotations and embrace a more culturally sensitive and inclusive linguistic form (Kellermeier-Rehbein 2016).

Namibian German has diversified into various registers, with "Nam-Släng"[6] denoting the informal register prevalent among younger speakers

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[5] https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/namibia/ [acc. 25.01.2024].

[6] This term originates from the vocabulary created by Namibian German Kwaito musician EES (Sell 2011), encompassing colloquial and youth language variations. Primarily observed in spoken communication, Nam-Släng is characterized by its incorporation of English and Afrikaans words, along with features typical of spoken language such as contractions, ellipses, and syntactic discontinuities (Shah & Zappen-Thomson 2018).

(Kellermeier-Rehbein 2018). On a sociolectal level, the contact variety known as "*Kiche Duits*"[7] or "*Küchendeutsch*" ("Kitchen-German") emerged in the early 20th century during the colonial era for interethnic communication between locals and German-speaking colonizers, particularly in kitchen settings.

German benefits from considerable usage within various contexts in Namibia, extending beyond private spheres to encompass public domains. It receives institutional support through the education system[8], both in public schools and private ones such as the Deutsche Höhere Privatschule (German Higher Private School), as well as from cultural institutions like the Goethe-Institut Namibia, religious and private organisations such as the German-speaking Evangelical Lutheran Church (GELC), plus the Deutsch Namibische Gesellschaft (DNG: German-Namibian association) and the radio station Hitradio Namibia. Additionally, German is prevalent in the tourism sector, media channels such as Allgemeine Zeitung Namibia and Hitradio Namibia, and everyday life through place names, commercial signage, and cultural events like Oktoberfest and Carnival ("Küska") (Zappen-Thomson 2002).

## 4. Language attitudes and belonging

Traditionally, language serves two fundamental purposes: facilitating communication for interaction and providing a framework for understanding reality through reference (Geeraerts 2003). However, its significance extends beyond these functions to encompass the nuanced realm of identity expression and construction and belonging to a specific speech community (Canagarajah & Silberstein 2012). Within multilingual contexts, language emerges as a powerful tool for identification, enabling individuals to negotiate and share their identities through social interactions and in discourse (Bucholtz & Hall 2010). Here linguistic identity displays a fluidity that necessitates continuous negotiation between assimilation and accommodation (Hu 2003). This is particularly evident in the case of minority languages, such as German in Namibia, which hold emotional significance, fostering a sense of belonging within the speech community (Riehl 2000).

Furthermore "a pluricentric perspective develops quite naturally as an

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[7] Speakers comes from diverse language backgrounds, predominantly Otjiherero and Khoekhoegowab speakers, and this variety is marked by lexical and morphological simplifications due to its utilitarian nature (Deumert 2009).

[8] German is offered both as German as a mother language (Deutsch als Muttersprache - DaM) in 14 schools and German as a foreign language (Deutsch als Fremdsprache - DaF) in 52 schools and three universities (Shah & Zimmer 2023; Zappen-Thomson 2022).

effect of the intricate connection of language and identity" (Dollinger 2019: 6). When considering the relationship between language and identity, a perspective that recognizes and understands the diversity of linguistic varieties within a given language reflects the fluidity of linguistic identities. The formation of linguistic identity is influenced by various factors, including proficiency in language, social affiliations, and attitudes toward language and its speakers (Kresić 2006; Kaikkonen 2009), as well as the embedding of the speech community within national constructs (Bortone 2021; Edwards 2009).

## 5. Methods and analysis

To comprehensively explore attitudes toward German and English within Namibia's multilingual society, a written questionnaire (WQ) was utilized in this study. This preliminary research constitutes a central component of a larger research endeavour, with the WQ designed according to the guidelines presented in Kircher and Zipp (2022), with closed and open-ended questions and rating scales to elicit language attitudes (Garrett 2010). The sociolinguistic WQ allows simple, direct, and rapid distribution to many respondents, particularly when conducted online or via email, therefore suitable for the objective of this study. Recent research has highlighted the increasing support for the utilization of written questionnaires in linguistic studies (Bailey, Wikle & Tillery 1997; Dollinger 2015; Kircher & Zipp 2022) as they offer valuable insights into linguistic behaviour, suggesting that they may provide more reliable measures than previously assumed, particularly for socially stigmatized variables. A practical advantage of this method is that participation is not bound by spatial or temporal constraints, and it serves as an effective means to mitigate social desirability bias (Chambers 1998; Corbetta 2015). Moreover, employing a semi-structured WQ with open-ended questions grants respondents total freedom of expression, highlighting their perspectives using their own mental categories and language.

The WQ[9] was divided into three core sections: the first section focused on demographic information, emphasizing the respondents' language competences and their relationship with German and English. The subsequent sections delved into contrasting attitudes towards German and English. The WQ was distributed online, with the sample of respondents foremost including mother tongue German speakers who are active within the following Facebook

[9] Due to space constraints, an excerpt of the questionnaire is available as Appendix (A) to this paper for consultation here: ttps://www.academia.edu/116509212/Appendix_A_Questionnaire.

groups: Deutsche/Deutschsprachige mit Bezug zu Namibia and Deutsche in Namibia/Deutschsprachige Freunde Namibias. Data was also collected through contacts established with the assistance of various organisations including the Embassy of Germany in Namibia, Hitradio Namibia, the University of Namibia, and other German institutions such as the Goethe-Institut.

This initial approach gathered 33 responses. An examination of the demographic composition of the collected data indicates a representation of German speakers aged between 35 and 65, with the majority (69%) identifying as female. The occupational distribution falls into self-employment, farming, or retirement, with a smaller subset representing the educational sector. The participants' linguistic profile shows that together with German as mother tongue, English, Afrikaans, Oshiwambo, and Otjiherero are identified also as further mother tongues.

This study draws upon the concept of language attitudes, which refers to any emotional, cognitive, or behavioural indicators of evaluative responses towards various language varieties and the individuals who use them (Albury 2020; Dragojevic et al. 2021; Garrett 2010). To investigate the contrastive language attitudes towards German and English, the methodology integrates the Attitudes Towards Language scale (AToL)[10] by Schoel et al. (2013) which comprises a collection of structured inquiries, with predetermined responses, aimed at evaluating different facets of languages across three paradigms: value, sound, and structure. The first focuses on assessing a language's perceived worth by considering its emotional aspect, the second on aspects related to its phonetics, and the third on grammatical composition. Each dimension is assessed using semantic differentials (Osgood 1957) and a numeric scale ranging from one to five, reflecting a spectrum from positive to negative.

The semantic differentials used in the survey are: (1) for the value's factor, unpleasant–pleasant, inelegant–elegant, ugly–beautiful, clumsy–graceful, abhorrent–appealing, integrating the cognitive differentials useless-useful and worthless-valuable; (2) for structure, illogical–logical, unsystematic–systematic, vague–precise, ambiguous–unambiguous, unstructured–structured; (3) for sound, harsh–soft, angular–round, raspy–smooth, choppy–fluent, abrupt–flowing. Respondents were asked to choose a value within a five-point verbal Likert scale (strongly agree-strongly disagree). Table 1 shows an

[10] See Adler (2021) for the usage of AToL in the German linguistic area.

example of the question (see question nr. 8 and 11) about explicit language attitudes towards the German, the same was asked for English:

| Wie würden Sie die deutsche Sprache beschreiben? Deutsch ist: | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Stimme völlig zu** | **Stimme zu** | **Stimme weder zu / nicht zu** | **Stimme nicht zu** | **Stimme überhaupt nicht zu** |
| Angenehm | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Fein | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Schön | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Table 1 Question from the questionnaire eliciting language attitudes (here, an excerpt of items, see the list in English above)

To elicit more attitudes towards English as the sole official language of Namibia, respondents were asked to indicate if they would have chosen this language to represent the independent Namibia (see question nr. 13). Furthermore, to understand the positioning of the community, respondents were asked to identify themselves in relation to the belonging to multilingual Namibia (see question nr. 15). The selected items for the multiple-choice questions are drawn from existing literature on the German-speaking community in Namibia (see Schmidt-Lauber 1998; Leugner 2023; Radke, 2023; Walther 2022). However, to gather individuals' self-perceptions, a space for additional comments was provided.

## 6. Results

To calculate the average of the values linked to the different items, a value of 5 was given to the Likert value "Stimme völlig zu" ("Strongly agree") and a value of 1 to "Stimme überhaupt nicht zu" ("Strongly disagree"). The results are presented in Figure 1 where the x-axis represents the items of AToL listed above and y-axis represents the calculated average of the values of the Likert Scala. The diagram shows the comparison of these values between German and English.

Notably, participants exhibited a favourable emotional attitude toward German, albeit with discernible disparities in attitudes toward English. German was characterized as being more structured than English and as possessing a distinctive sound, often described as harsher and raspier in contrast to English, which is perceived as more elegant. This affective resonance within the German language significantly contributes to the overall positive inclination towards this language.

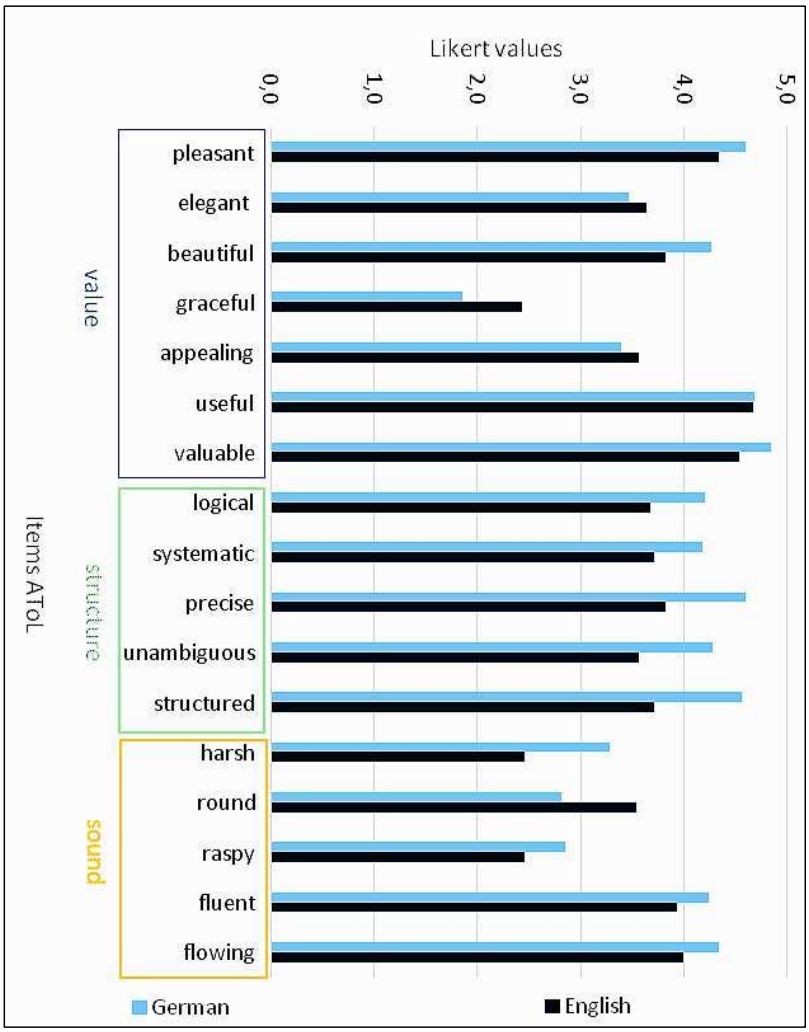


Figure 1 Results of the analysis of the values attributed to the Likert scala associated to AToL

To discern attitudes towards English as the prospective official language of Namibia, respondents were also asked to identify their inclination towards the preferred official language for Namibia (see Figure 2).

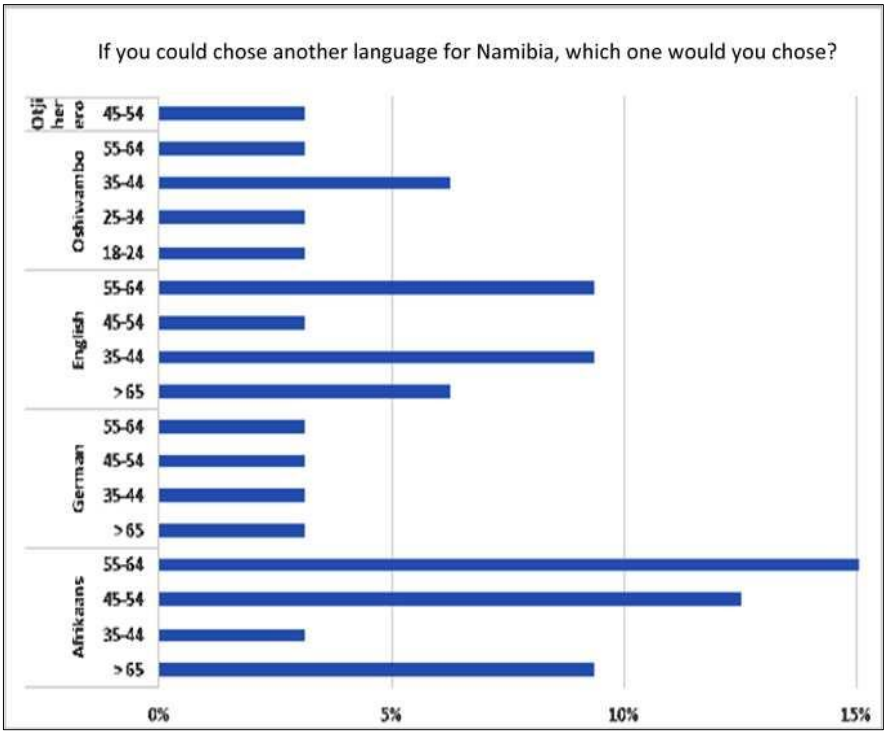


Figure 2: Preference rates of the possible alternative official language of Namibia divided by age.

Overall, the major language choice was Afrikaans, followed by English, Oshiwambo, German, and Otjiherero. A generational parallel emerges, with the younger generation favouring English and local languages such as Oshiwambo and Otjiherero due to the global reach of English. Conversely, the older generation seems to exhibit a preference for Afrikaans, alongside English and German. In the comments section left open, respondents detailed that Afrikaans is favoured for its status as a lingua franca facilitating communication among German-speaking communities and other speech communities in Namibia. The consideration of German as an official language stems from its cultural significance, however despite this it is not considered suitable as the official language of Namibia due to its low percentage of

speakers. Additionally, younger respondents seem to advocate for Oshiwambo as the new official language, citing its representation of the majority population and the perceived power inherent in vernacular languages.

As for self-identification, respondents were asked to identify themselves as belonging to a country paradigm (see Figure 3).

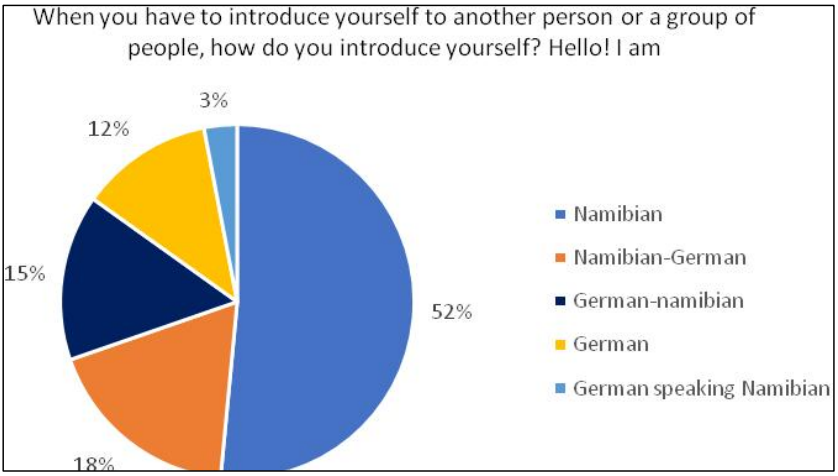


Figure 3: Percentages revealing the self-identification of the German speech community

The results show that the German-speaking segment identifies itself as Namibian (52%), with approximately 18% of respondents identifying as Namibian-German and 15% as German-Namibian, advocating the Namibian multilingual paradigm which highlights the fluidity of the belonging paradigm. The further identifications listed were German-speaking Namibian or German who lives in Namibia.

## 7. Conclusion

Participants of this preliminary survey exhibited a positive affective attitude towards the German language, reflecting a profound emotional connection and attachment to its linguistic features. Many participants characterized German as having a distinct sound, often described as harsher and raspier compared to English. This quality stood out as a defining feature, significantly contributing to the overall preference for the German language. German was also associated with cultural elements and personal experiences, further deepening respondents' emotional attachment. The emotional

resonance of German, combined with its perceived linguistic distinctiveness, played a pivotal role in shaping the observed preference for the language.

In terms of cognitive evaluation, findings unveiled a similarity of attitudes between German and English, with both languages being equally evaluated in terms of structure regarding their cognitive factors. Respondents demonstrated a balanced cognitive attitude towards both German and English, potentially pointing out participants' acknowledgment of the inherent value and utility of both languages within their linguistic repertoire.

An interesting generational divide in language preferences appeared. The older generation seemed to display a distinct inclination towards Afrikaans as the preferred national language, citing its deep-rooted historical significance and cultural heritage in Namibia's sociolinguistic context. However, for many, Afrikaans symbolized a link to the country's colonial past. In contrast, the younger generation expressed a clear preference for English or local languages, emphasizing global connectivity and cultural diversity in an increasingly interconnected world. English, for these participants, represented a gateway to international opportunities, facilitating communication and engagement on a global scale. Additionally, the younger generation emphasized the importance of preserving and promoting local languages as integral components of Namibia's rich cultural heritage.

The identification as Namibian or Namibian-German not only signifies a profound affiliation with Namibia but also emphasizes the significance of one's mother tongue within the fluid linguistic framework of multilingualism. Furthermore, being a member of a minority group highlights the crucial role language plays in shaping collective identities, exemplifying the fluid interaction between language, belonging, and identity in shaping individuals' transcultural selves within a multilingual society.

The limitations of this study, such as the relatively small sample size, warrant discussion regarding the generalization of the findings. It is important to acknowledge these limitations and interpret the findings within the context of the study's constraints. My future research with larger and more diverse samples will help to validate and extend the findings of this study.

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# African students at the French Department of the University of Szeged, Hungary: An unlikely encounter of varieties and cultures

**Abstract**

This paper focuses on the experiences of African students and their instructors at the French Department of the University of Szeged in Hungary, from a linguistic anthropological perspective. The study is based on twelve semi-structured interviews, six with African students and six with their instructors. The findings suggest a general tolerance towards non-standard varieties of French at the level of pronunciation, while, on the other hand, a rather normative attitude can be observed when assessing written production. While the students seem to recognize the importance of European standard French (français hexagonal) in an academic context, they embrace their own non-dominant variety in everyday situations, and believe that the concept of French should not be limited to a single, high variety. These opinions reinforce the trends reported in international research, underlining the gap between official regulations and everyday reality.

## 1. Introduction

The "French Studies" bachelor's program and the "French Language, Literature and Civilization" master's program at the University of Szeged, Hungary welcome a relatively large number of foreign students, the majority of whom are Africans. These African students come on the one hand from North African countries such as Algeria and Morocco, and on the other from sub-Saharan countries, especially the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Guinea and Togo. From the outset, the instructors have experienced that these African students speak French more fluently than most Hungarian students, but the varieties of French they speak are different from the standard French

used by the instructors. This raises the problem of the contrast between a monocentric and a pluricentric view of the different non-standard varieties of French. In Hungary, as in France, the teaching of French is officially based on a monocentric view: students are expected to acquire linguistic skills that reflect standard French, especially in the areas of grammar and vocabulary, and to a lesser extent pronunciation. On the other hand, instructors at the Department of French Studies at the University of Szeged have to cope with a multitude of non-dominant varieties used by African students.

The aim of this contribution is to examine the lived experiences of African students and their instructors in the Department of French Studies at the University of Szeged, from an anthropological linguistics perspective. The investigations are based on a set of semi-structured interviews with African students and their instructors. Our aim is to investigate the participants' perceptions of the cultural and linguistic differences between African students and their instructors, as well as the communication and educational difficulties they face throughout the training courses. Furthermore, we also investigate participants' attitudes to variation in French in general, illustrating the relevance of considering linguistic variation in the case of pluricentric languages in the classroom.

The article is organized as follows. After a brief description of the status of the French language in Africa in Section 2, Section 3 raises some issues relating to the role played by French in the political life and educational system of French-speaking African countries. Section 4 is devoted to the methodology of our investigations, carried out within the framework of Schreier's Qualitative Content Analysis (2013). Finally, Section 5 presents and evaluates the results of the investigations.

## 2. French-speaking Africa

To understand the situation and the linguistic background of these African students, we need to briefly summarize the history of the French-speaking world in Africa, and give a general overview of the current situation.

French presence in Africa dates back to the 17th century. Two French-speaking countries, France and Belgium, took part in the division of Africa among the countries of Western Europe. A process of decolonization began in 1945, and by 1960 all French and Belgian colonies had regained their independence. These countries are located in two major geopolitical regions:

Northern and sub-Saharan Africa. To this day, these former colonies share a common history of diplomacy and education.

According to the Observatoire de la Langue Française (OIF 2022) estimates, there are 321 million French speakers in the world; 255 million use French on a daily basis, of whom 14.6% live in the north of the African continent, and 47.4% in sub-Saharan Africa. The number of French speakers in Africa is gradually increasing, especially in the sub-Saharan zone. The average age of the French-speaking population in these regions is very low: most of these speakers are only 15-24 years old.

All French speakers are bi- or multilingual, but the majority speak French as a second language only. Contact with other languages and other factors have led to the diversification of the varieties of French spoken in Africa, as well as the emergence of mixed or hybrid languages, such as Francarabe in the north of the continent, Franlof in Senegal, Fransango in the Central African Republic and Camfranglais in Cameroon (Queféllec 2007).

French has an official or co-official status in 21 African countries. In some countries, notably the four former French colonies and protectorates in North-Africa, it lost official language status after the end of colonial rule, and functions as the language of education, with varying statuses: foreign language, second language or "privileged language" (Haidar et al. 2016: 60). In other countries, such as Mali, the loss of official language status is more recent, linked to regime changes in recent years. All in all, French is used in one way or another in 36 African countries (OIF 2022). According to OLF surveys, it is used primarily in a professional context, and to a lesser extent at home.

## 3. The social and political challenges of French in Africa

Despite the steady expansion of French in Africa in recent decades, sentiment towards the language remains generally ambiguous: it is considered both the language of subjugation and that of enormous prestige. Colonial history, which is an inseparable part of modern African culture and politics, has left an essentially negative mark on the perception of French, which remains, in a contradictory way, the key to social and professional advancement (Tumbwe 2012; N'Zapali-Te-Komongo 2019). However, this paradoxical situation cannot be traced back to a single cause: it is the product of a policy that promotes monocentric practices at all levels of daily life.

### 3.1 French and vernacular languages in education

To begin with, we can see that there is no real balance between French and vernacular languages in education (Akissi Boutin & Gadet 2012). In fact, the use of the vernacular in schools is often frowned upon and even sanctioned in some cases. A recent seminal study (N'Zapali-Te-Komongo 2019) reports the results of a survey conducted in the Central African Republic, where French is co-official with Sangö, an indigenous language spoken by 98% of the population. Despite the fact that each of the two languages is used in the social as well as the professional sphere, the Central African government still wants to keep them separate, with important consequences for educational decision-making.

The results of N'Zapali-Te-Komongo's research reflect the political attitude: educators forbid the use of Sangö in class, and they tend to speak sophisticated, high-level French, whereas most high-school students have no access to this register of the language. As a result, young people are often reluctant to converse in French, for fear of making "mistakes" in syntax and pronunciation. At the same time, non-standard accents and grammatical errors are rejected, and high-school students speaking French with a strong accent are often subject to bullying. In a recent nationwide report, the same author concludes that essentially monolingual teaching in the Central African Republic hinders students' academic progress, which will generate problems on the job market too (N'Zapali-Te-Komongo 2022).

The situation outlined above is not confined to a single country. We can see that the monocentric trend in education in French-speaking Africa is a general phenomenon that has repercussions on all areas of daily life, despite the strong tropicalization of French in these regions (Quéfellec 2007). For example, in Algeria, where compulsory schooling was introduced in 1962, standard varieties of French and Arabic predominate all levels of education, and school curricula largely ignore the existence of local varieties and creoles, so typical throughout French-speaking Africa (Abbes-Kara 2010). Even in higher education, the regional accents of French are often the subject of disapproval.

Similarly, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the promotion of French to official language status in 1961 pushed the more than 220 vernaculars into an inferior position (Tumbwe 2012). The codification of French as an official language is therefore proving to be counter-productive: while this political decision originally had a unifying purpose, the people of the DRC continue to

regard French as a "foreign" language that is difficult to learn, and speakers with a standard accent are often described in pejorative terms. However, French continues to be a primary tool for professional success and a part of everyday life (ibid.).

### 3.2 French in Africa: a pluricentric language pushed towards monocentrism?

Inherent to definitions of pluricentricity (see Pöll 2005: 19, quoted by Kembeu 2023: 6; Muhr 2016: 16) is the idea of the possibility of several main centres of linguistic standardization, with multiple varieties of the same language at different levels of standardization. In contrast, the monocentric perspective is limited to a single variety of the language, which it recognizes as the norm and which is therefore elevated to the level of the standard, representing the dominant variety (Muhr 2012). This preference for the exogenous standard is transferred, through the transmission of social values with the language, to colonized countries, where sub-standard usage also becomes rejected and despised, despite the fact that the vast majority speak a local variety (Muhr 2012).

## 4. Methodology and participants

Our investigations were conducted from a linguistic ethnographic perspective. The data come from twelve interviews conducted online and face-to-face with six instructors and six African students. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed using a qualitative data analysis software called MAXQDA. For data analysis Margrit Schreier's method of Qualitative Content Analysis was adopted, which "proceeds by assigning successive parts of the material into categories derived from a coding frame." (Schreier 2013: 170)

The initial phase of the analysis was characterized by an inductive, data-driven approach. The results were organized into four distinct codes, comprising a total of 26 sub-codes, with a total of 75 coded segments.

Then, in the deductive, concept-focused phase, the identified results were classified according to the four codes delineated in the inductive phase, encompassing a range of 26 sub-codes.

Throughout this phase, 376 segments were coded. As far as our coding framework is concerned, the "parent codes" are as follows: students' nationality and language background, linguistic differences, relationships and attitudes, and training. In this study, we will deal with the first three codes.

We conducted interviews with six instructors and six foreign students from the French Studies Department of the University of Szeged. Five of the instructors had Hungarian as their first language, while one instructor's first language was French.

As for their areas of specialization, two instructors were linguists, two were specialized in literature, one was a professor of didactics and one was a French language instructor. All interviews with the instructors took place face-to-face. The language of five interviews was Hungarian, and one was conducted in English.

As for the students interviewed, two came from Algeria, one from Cameroon, one from the Democratic Republic of Congo, one from Mali and one from Togo. The gender distribution of the students interviewed was even: three men and three women.

Five students were pursuing bachelor's degrees, while one was enrolled in the master's program. All student interviews were conducted online. The language of the interviews was French.

## 5. Data analysis

### 5.1 Nationality and language background

The respondents' comments confirm the general observation that the role of French in Africa varies considerably from country to country. For example, one of the Algerian students and the student from the Democratic Republic of Congo use French as their first language (L1). It should be noted, however, that the students interviewed sometimes confuse concepts such as *first language*, *second language* or *official language*. In their answers, they also mention all the other languages they speak.

> Congolese student: Well, I'd say that French in the Democratic Republic of Congo is the official language first of all, and for me it's my mother tongue, too. But for the vernacular, there's a dialect we use in Congo, Lingala, but it's close, because Lingala integrates French vocabulary into its vocabulary. But French is the official language and the mother tongue.[1]

> Algerian student 1: I'd say it's more like a mother tongue, because I'm bilingual, even trilingual. I speak the Algerian dialect, a variety of Arabic. I also speak academic Arabic, and I also speak Berber, which is

[1] The original French and Hungarian interview excerpts have been translated into English by the authors.

one of Algeria's official languages.

In Algeria, French tends to be acquired either at home or at school, the situation varying from family to family. The other Algerian student says she learned French at school, and considers Kabyle her first language: "In fact, my mother tongue is Kabyle". Nevertheless, for both Algerian students, the French language continues to be widely used among friends and in educational establishments.

> Interviewer: And in what situations do you use French?
>
> Algerian student 1: To talk to my parents for example, to study, to read books, newspapers... I'd say in everyday life.
>
> Algerian student 2: I speak French in my private life, at school, with my friends, and I use French a lot, a lot. And also with friends who are here in Szeged.

The Cameroonian student points out that French is the language of education and communication in her country, and is learned at school.

> Cameroonian student: In our country, French is a language of communication that the state uses to communicate, and also a language of education, because... at school we study in French, but we have our dialects, which are our mother tongues, in quotation marks, because these are the languages we speak before learning French at school.

According to the Togolese student, French is mainly acquired through schooling in his country, and is widely used in administrative contexts, as well as in everyday conversations.

> Togolese student: So, the French language is used at school everywhere, because we actually study in French. And within the country, the French language is also used as a lingua franca because we have many dialects that we use in the country, and if someone doesn't understand the dialect spoken by the others, they are obliged to communicate in a common language, which is French. That's it, and as far as administration is concerned [...] it's all done in French.

## 5.2 Linguistic differences

This code covers sub-codes such as differences in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, pragmatic differences, corrections and misunderstandings, errors and linguistic norms.

The easiest differences for participants to grasp are the pronunciation ones, although their perceptions of these differences are quite diverse and they may not necessarily be able to explain what those differences are. They do agree, however, that they are not discriminated against on the basis of the way they sound during their studies.

Students from the North of Africa noted no difference between their pronunciation and that of Hungarian or French instructors, but did find that Hungarian students had a noticeable foreign accent when speaking French. Sub-Saharan students, on the other hand, mostly confirm the existence of such differences, but do not evaluate them in the same way. The Cameroonian student sees her country's accent as different from that of Hungarian instructors. In her view, this difference stems from the "difficulty" Cameroonians have in pronouncing certain sound combinations. The same Cameroonian student also believes that Hungarian-accented French pronunciation is very similar to the Cameroonian accent.

> Cameroonian student: [...] So the word in French is "aéroport", but most of us in Cameroon say "a-réo-port" [...] Since vowels are those types of sounds that are difficult to pronounce together, they add consonants to make pronunciation easier.

> Cameroonian student: [...] the Cameroonian accent is not too far from the accent used by Hungarians to speak French. On the other hand, when it comes to the French themselves, there are a few difficulties because the turns of phrase are not the same, the accent is a little different, but a Cameroonian and a Hungarian get on very well when they speak French.

On the other hand, the Togolese student seems to regard his own pronunciation as neutral, and claims to have had difficulty understanding Hungarian-accented French.

> Togolese student: [...] So there's a bit of difficulty in articulating words. But that's with my Hungarian classmates. As for the instructors, at first I had a bit of difficulty, but it only took me a month or two to get used to their way of speaking.

Instructors are more aware of pronunciation differences, and admit to having initially encountered comprehension problems when communicating with students from sub-Saharan Africa.

> Instructor 2: The pronunciation of sub-Saharan students is very different from what we teach and from what the French produce. So it took us a while to get used to it...

As these difficulties are overcome over time, some instructors are even able to identify students' country of origin on the basis of their pronunciation. What is more, new subjects have been introduced into the undergraduate curriculum to make students – Hungarian and foreign ones alike – more aware of the regional varieties of French. Part of the syllabus of that course is devoted to French spoken in sub-Saharan Africa.

> Instructor 1: And in the first semester, when we study pronunciation, we really see that the students [...] say, “well, it's true, we really do speak like that”. It's true, we don't pronounce the "r" at the end of the word. And indeed, we pronounce an "i" instead of a "u".

It should be noted, however, that these pronunciation specificities are not perceived by the instructors as imperfections requiring correction, but are seen as perfectly legitimate varieties of French, even though some instructors handle them by way of principled exposure to the dominant standard, as exemplified by the following quote.

> Instructor 4: [...] For me, the fact that they speak with an accent is not a problem. I understand them better and better and I don't correct them, but try to show through my own pronunciation what the standard language is.

As for morphological and syntactic differences, these are often perceived by students as manifestations of a lack of knowledge, of a poor command of French on their part. The student quoted below does not identify specific African French constructions, but characterizes her own variety as “bad French”.

> Interviewer: What about grammar?
>
> Cameroonian student: Yes, at the level of grammar [...] I would rather talk about conjugation. Speaking French doesn't mean knowing how to conjugate verbs in all tenses [...] before I came to Szeged, I didn't

> always know when to use the sequence of tenses, even though I spoke French, so that's why it's important to study the language in depth.

The Malian student confesses to having felt a certain shock when he realized that the rules of French learned at school in Africa are sometimes opposed to those taught at European universities. By way of example, he mentions the morphological peculiarity concerning the grammatical number of the noun *ciseaux*. According to him, the norm disseminated by the African education system imposes the use of the singular to designate a pair of scissors.

> Malian student: [...] I just have one word... *le ciseau*, for example, [...] we say *le ciseau, un ciseau*, no problem with that. But still, it's a pair, for us [...] According to the explanations I received at school, in all the establishments I had gone to in Africa we always say *le ciseau*, but according to the explanation I received here, it's different, *les ciseaux.*

Most of the students interviewed said that it was during their university studies in Hungary that they became aware of the differences between spoken and written French. Even though they use French on a daily basis, it was a spoken French and a colloquial register that they used in every situation before. Despite the fact that French was the language of education in their country of origin, their university studies in Hungary were their first opportunity to be confronted with a hitherto little-known variety: written French and the rules for drafting written texts in accordance with the norm in metropolitan France.

> Algerian student 1: I learned a lot because the register is different... from spoken to written, it's really different.

The Algerian student's statement accurately reflects the opinion of the instructors. While they do not perceive any morphological or syntactic specificities in the oral production of African students, they do find that their written texts contain a very large number of oral features, which they consider to be a violation of the rules of French. This is the exact opposite of the pattern observed in the case of the Hungarian students, who frequently outperform their African peers (especially the Sub-Saharan ones) in terms of language awareness, but when it comes to colloquial fluency, they perform significantly more weakly, which can be regarded as an interesting result of the hugely different modes of language acquisition in the two populations of students. In the case of the African students, the high frequency of spelling and grammatical errors found in written production is attributed by some

instructors to an absence of grammatical awareness, which they explain with the long tradition of orality which is characteristic of these African countries.

> Instructor 5: [...] What's really interesting is that compared to the Hungarian students, they speak much better, but their written results are much worse.
>
> Interviewer: I see. And why do you think that is?
>
> Instructor 5: I think they have a fundamentally oral culture. So for them, orality plays a more important role in education than it does for us.

However, despite the general tendency of students to accept corrections or criticism from their instructors, there is sometimes occasional hesitation, especially at the start of their studies. This occasional refusal to recognize the authority of a non-native instructor in matters of French grammar or vocabulary seems to be particularly common among sub-Saharan students, and can be related to questions of the ownership of the French language. As illustrated by the excerpt below, some sub-Saharan students tend to include themselves in the imagined community of what might be referred to as the owners of the French language, whereas they tend to exclude Hungarians from it.

> Congolese student (talking about other students from French-speaking countries): They think they're already better with the language, and sometimes they don't try hard enough to understand. They think, well, the Hungarians teach us... but they've learned a language that's ours.

Furthermore, some students also refer to pragmatic differences they have encountered during intercultural exchanges, which they see as potential sources of misunderstanding. A particularly interesting case concerns the Togolese student's account of greeting issues and the connotations attached to them:

> Togolese student: In Togo, in our language I can't say ça va to someone I owe respect. For us, [...] it's as if you were disrespecting the person. [...] when you ask me or someone who grew up in Togo Ça va?, they might think you're being rude to them, whereas in France, as in Hungary, Ça va? is a way of greeting the person.

### 5.3 Relationships and attitudes

In our analysis, the "relationships and attitudes" code includes a sub-

code called "linguistic prescriptivism". We were interested to find out about the participants' opinion on the existence of a prescriptivist-monocentric attitude in the French-speaking world.

Implicitly, all informants confirm the existence of such an attitude, which they strongly approve of in written language, but they claim freedom and pluricentric variation in oral production. For one of the Algerian students, the model to follow for written texts is the Parisian norm, embodied by the Académie Française:

> Algerian student 1: For me, French has to keep its purity [...] as the Académie Française wants, [...] to speak, yes, there's a diversity of pronunciation, words etc., but to write it, I'm a purist.

Another student goes as far as questioning his own mastery of the French language, which he also considers his first language. According to his account, his way of speaking appears as a devalued, stigmatized variety.

> Malian student: [...] me personally, I'm starting to see that I haven't mastered French. Speaking French is different from really mastering it. The fact that we speak French every day doesn't mean I understand French. The French we speak to each other is really colloquial French, just street French.

This can probably be regarded as an indirect case of linguistic discrimination being at work, with the participant falling victim to what Muhr (2012:39) terms as "linguistic schizophrenia," downgrading their own variety as compared to the exogenous norm. At the same time, the above quote also serves to illustrate the observation that has been made earlier about the program raising awareness of the distinction between oral vs. written language use.

The instructors sometimes deepen this already quite serious problem by employing what Lippi-Green (2012) calls the economy argument of linguistic discrimination, when they refer to material advantages that speakers of the dominant standard enjoy at the cost of non-dominant speakers, as exemplified in the extract below.

> Instructor 5: I quite regularly give them the example that they want to get into a well-paying company and then they have to submit their CV, they have to write a cover letter, which obviously has its own form in French, as well as content, and if they make gross mistakes in writing, unfortunately, compared to the norm, then this can have direct

> consequences. So they simply won't be hired, or they'll be hired for a much lower position, for less pay, and then I can see that they're starting to get it.

Yet, most of the participants interviewed fervently embrace spoken language, in the name of diversity.

> Cameroonian student: I'm in favor of diversity in the use of the French language. I'm also in favor of there being a standard, but I'm not one hundred percent in favor of this standard being respected in its entirety, because if the standard is respected in its entirety, there will be people who feel they've been wronged.

> Togolese student: For me, I'm in favor of recognizing the diversity of the French language. I'm not totally in favor of the rules, because as far as standard French is concerned, we can still apply it to the written word, in the writing of books, so that we can keep this beauty of the language, keep this correct structure of the language in writing. But as far as spoken French is concerned, there should be diversity, freedom of expression... in every community this freedom... there should be no discrimination of the language spoken, in fact.

So, while the existence of varieties and the pluricentric character of the French language seem to be recognized by African students for oral communication, there is a particularly strict monocentric attitude, oriented towards the norm of metropolitan France, towards written production.

## 4. Conclusion

The main aim of our study has been to reveal the perceptions and experiences of African students and their instructors regarding the linguistic diversity of French at the Department of French Studies at the University of Szeged, Hungary. To achieve this goal, we conducted a series of interviews. On the theoretical side, we adopted a pluricentric perspective, as opposed to a monocentric or normativist attitude to French. By way of conclusion, we would like to highlight the following findings:

1. Firstly, we have found that instructors tolerate and accept non-standard varieties of French at the level of pronunciation.
2. On the other hand, they adopt a rather normative attitude when assessing written production, in which case the European French standard continues to be the essential milestone of linguistic competence.
3. Although this reflects a fundamentally monocentric view, with standard

French from metropolitan France at the centre, it should nevertheless be pointed out that instructors within the department have generally become much more open towards varieties of French that deviate more or less from the hexagonal standard of French over the years, which may indicate a positive shift towards a pluricentric attitude.

4. What is more, they have a deeper knowledge of the diversity of the French language than ever before.
5. As far as African students are concerned, the interviews revealed two main characteristics: on the one hand, sub-Saharan and North-African students face different challenges in their studies, which can partly be explained by cultural differences.
6. On the other hand, the students surveyed seem to be aware of the normativism that dominates the teaching of French at all levels of education. While they recognize the importance of a solid knowledge of European standard French for academic and professional advancement, they are quick to add that, in an everyday context, their regional variety is equally important, and that the concept of the French language should not be limited to a single, high variety. These opinions reinforce the trends reported in international research, which, as we have seen, underline the gap between official regulations and everyday reality.

Finally, let it be mentioned in conclusion that we hope the findings of the present investigation will serve as a diagnostic basis for the future evolution of the studied programs in an inclusive direction, perfecting them in such a way that fosters a larger and larger degree of openness towards the incorporation of pluricentric standards into (language) education.

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# Dative Shift in Varieties of Portuguese: Drift or Contact?

**Abstract**

The Dative shift is observed in Brazilian Portuguese (BP), Mozambican Portuguese (MP), and São Tomean Portuguese (STP). It comprises the alternation between a prepositional dative construction (PDC) and a double object construction (DOC) as complements of a ditransitive verb. DOCs are not detected in the Portuguese spoken in Portugal; however, we brought evidence of their presence in Old Portuguese, a prefigured feature of the Contemporary varieties of Portuguese. The data showed that BP, MP, and STP converge by presenting the same structural possibilities of expressing the recipient. DOCs are detected among university speakers in different regional varieties of BP, so they can't be attributed to the contact, due to slavery, with Bantu languages, whose grammars contain DOC. Since BP is also characterized as a dominant variety of pluricentric Portuguese, we argue that specific linguistic features are not enough to establish the degree of submission to the original linguistic norms.

## 1. Introduction

This paper focuses on the dative alternation (Dative Shift) observed in *Brazilian Portuguese* (BP), *Mozambican Portuguese* (MP) and *São Tomean Portuguese* (STP). The comparison of the constructions observed in BP and the African varieties yields important evidence regarding the origin of the patterns in transplanted varieties. The observed patterns are divergent from contemporary European Portuguese (EP); therefore, it is important to investigate if the new pattern is an outcome related to: a) an internal drift, since certain features may be prefigured in synchrony (Middle Portuguese, for instance); or b) the result of contact with the native languages encountered in the new settlement, or from later contact with another new language. This is the case of the contact that took place between the Portuguese with Bantu languages in Brazil, due to the

intense slave flow from Africa that started at the beginning of the 16th Century, in 1538, and originated from several trading posts located on the West Coast of Africa by the Portuguese (Mussa, 1991:138; Gomes, 2019).

The main issue is whether the dative shift observed in BP, MP and STP is the result of drift or contact. This distinction is important since the varieties of a pluricentric language have been approached in terms of the mutual relationship between the original language (Dominant Variety) and the ones developed in other countries. It takes into account the dominance of the former over the others, the extent to which their grammatical features are convergent or divergent, and the importance of the process of standardization and codification of the transplanted languages (Clyne, 1992). We argue that the distinction between dominant and non-dominant varieties of a pluricentric language cannot be treated as a dichotomy, since linguistic patterns are dynamic, not static, in a way that the resulting transplanted language may exhibit both conservative and innovative features concerning the original language (Duarte, Gomes and Paiva, 2022). As observed in several Germanic languages, dative alternation is described as follows: the alternation between expressing the internal arguments of a ditransitive verb as an NP and a prepositional dative construction (PDC), or as a double object construction (DOC), respectively (Larson, 1988):

(1) Mary gave the book ***to John*** (PDC);
(2) Mary gave ***John*** the book (DOC).

The construction in (2) is characterized by the occurrence of two NPs, since the preposition is obligatorily missing, and the recipient/beneficiary argument is adjacent to the verb. According to Larson (1988), Romance languages don't exhibit dative shift.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (3) | A | Maria | deu | um livro | ***ao*** | ***João*** | |
| | Det | Mary | gave | a book | to.Det | John | |
| (4) | A | Maria | deu | ***ao*** | ***João*** | um | livro |
| | Det | Mary | gave | to.Det | John | a | book |
| (5) | A | Maria | ***deu-lhe*** | | um | livro | |
| | Det | Mary | gave | ***him***.CL | a | book | |

In fact, it is well-documented that the indirect complement of a ditransitive verb is expressed by a prepositional phrase (PP) nonadjacent to the verb, as in (3), or adjacent to the verb, as in (4), or with a clitic pronoun as in (5), specifically to convey dative case.

The comparison relies on data from varieties of pluricentric Portuguese. These have been characterized by a symmetric or an asymmetric relationship with the Portuguese spoken in Portugal, also referred to as European Portuguese (EP). BP has been characterized as a dominant variety (DV) of pluricentric Portuguese (cf. Duarte; Gomes; Paiva, 2016: 61), which corresponds to a symmetric relationship with EP. Meanwhile, MP and STP have been classified as non-dominant varieties (Mendes, 2016: 86), which corresponds to an asymmetric relationship with EP and BP. We will show that, despite different historical and linguistic contexts during and after the colonial period, BP, MP and STP, concerning EP, are partially convergent. This is because the four languages express dative using a PDC, but differ in relation to the dative shift, since they present the DOC.

## 2. Materials

Our analysis is based on data from oral modality collected from different corpora, as described below.

1. *Brazilian Portuguese*: Censo 1980, with 64 speakers from Rio de Janeiro City, and Censo 2000, with 32 speakers distributed according to: age (15-25; 26-49; 50+), schooling (elementary school I, elementary school II, high school) and gender.
2. *Mozambican Portuguese*: Projeto PPOM (Panorama do Português Oral de Maputo), 40 speakers from Maputo, from elementary school to pre-college.
3. *Mozambican and Brazilian Portuguese*: Projeto COMPARAPORT[1]: 18 speakers born in Rio de Janeiro and 18 in Maputo, stratified according to: age (18-35 / 36-55 / 56-75), school level (Elementary School, High School, and College Graduation) and gender. 1/3 of the Mozambican sample is composed of native MP speakers.
4. *São Tomé and Principe Portuguese*: 17 interviews that belong to the sample VARPOR (Variedades Africanas do Português) – Center of Linguistics of the University of Lisbon, with the same social stratification as the MP sample. STP is the first language of the majority of the population that also speak Forro Creole.

In the following section, we present a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data extracted from these samples.

[1] Available at: www.corporaport.letras.ufrj.br.

## 3. Results

The data collected from the MP corpora showed that the dative argument can be expressed by a prepositional phrase nonadjacent (6) or adjacent (7) to the verb, and by a dative clitic (8), as in EP. It was also observed that the recipient/beneficiary dative argument can be expressed by a double object construction (9) and by a non-canonical DOC (10). The example in (10) is a non-canonical DOC, since the recipient/beneficiary dative argument is nonadjacent to the verb, differing from the DOCs observed in other languages, such as Germanic languages, exemplified in (1) and (2).

(6)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Se for | uma senhora | grávida | eu tenho | que | ceder | ***lugar*** | ***a*** | ***ela*** | (PPOM) |
| If it.is | a lady | pregnant | I have | to | give | ***seat*** | ***to*** | ***her*** | |

(7)

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pede | ***cobrador*** | o | meu telefone | que | tirate | (COMPARAPORT) | |
| Ask | ***to.Det collector*** | the | my phone | that | took.2PS | (from me) | |
| | **the collector** | the | the phone | | | (from me) | |

(8)

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| se | eufor mais novo | tenho | que | ***lhe*** ceder | lugar | (PPOM) |
| if | I am younger | have.1PS | to | ***him***.give | seat | |
| if | I were younger | I have | to | give him | the seat | |

(9)

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Entrega | senhor | uma | cerveja | (VAPOR) |
| Give | ***mister*** | ***a*** | ***beer*** | |
| Give | the mister | a | beer | |

(10)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| se for | um | velo, | tenho | que | ceder | lugar | o | velho | (PPOM) |
| If it's | an | old.man | have.1PS | to | give | seat | Det | old.man | |
| If it is | an | old man, | I have | to | give | the seat | to the | old man. | |

STP exhibits the same structural patterns observed in MP data. The dative complement can be expressed by a non-adjacent prepositional phrase (11), as adjacent to the verb (12), with a dative clitic as in EP (13), as a DOC (14), and as a non-canonical DOC (15).

(11)

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| vender bilhetes | ***a*** | ***toda*** | ***a*** | ***população*** | (VARPOR) |
| sell tickets | ***to*** | ***all*** | ***the*** | ***population*** | |
| to sell tickets | to | all | the | population | |

(12)

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| dar | ***a meu filho*** | tudo | o que | se calhar | não | tive | (VARPOR) |
| give | ***to my son*** | everything | that | maybe | not | had.1PS | |
| to give | my son | everything | that | I did | not | have | |

(13)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Eu pedi-***lhe*** | explicação | (VARPOR) |
| I asked ***him.CL*** | explanation | |
| I asked him | an explanation | |

(14)

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| de vez em quando [...] | tinha | que | dar | as | pessoas | ***voador*** | (VARPOR) |
| Once in a while [...] | had.1PP | to | give | the | people | ***voador*** (fish) | |
| Once in a while | we had | to | give | the | people | some fish. | |

(15)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| as | pessoas | trabal ham | mas | não | tem comida | para | dar | ***os*** | (VARPOR) |
| Det | people | work | but | not | have food | to | give | ***the children*** | |
| The | people | work | but | do not | have food | to | give | their children | |

Finally, as for the dative argument of ditransitive verbs, BP exhibits the same structural pattern observed in MP and STP data: prepositional phrase nonadjacent (16) or adjacent to the verb (17), a dative clitic as in EP (18), a DOC (19), and a non-canonical DOC (20).

(16)

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| o cara | vem | ao | Brazil [...] | pra | dar um presente | ***pro*** | ***Papa*** | (CENSO 1980) |
| the guy | comes | to.Det | Brazil | to | give a present | ***to.Det*** | ***Pope*** | |
| The guy | comes | to | Brazil | to | give a present | to the | ***Pope.*** | |

(17)

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| dar | a essa pessoas o | direito | à | propriedade | (COMPARAPORT) | |
| give | ***to these people the*** | right | to | property | | |
| to give | these people | the right | to | the property | | |

(18)

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| O professor | deu-***lhe*** | zero | (COMPARAPORT) | |
| The teacher | gave ***him.CL*** | a zero | | |
| The teacher | gave him | a zero. | | |

(19)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pede ***seu pai*** | a mesada | (CENSO 1980) | |
| Ask ***your dad*** | the allowance | | |
| Ask your dad | for the allowance | | |

| (20) | Pede | ***o seu*** Aurino | pede | un comprovante | ***ele*** | (CENSO 1980) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Ask | Det.Mr.Aurino | ask | a receipt | ***he.NOM*** | |
| | Ask | Mr. Aurino, | ask | for a receipt | to him. | |

The data collected in MP COMPARAPORT and VARPOR samples was considered for the comparison of the distribution of the prepositional dative construction, clitic and DOC in spontaneously spoken MP, STP, and BP. The results are shown, respectively, in Table 1, 2, and 3.

| Dative construction | Number of tokens | % of occurrence in the sample |
|---|---|---|
| PDC | 58 | 70 |
| DOC | 7 | 8 |
| Clitic | 17 | 21 |

Table 1: Distribution of dative construction to express the recipient in MP

| Dative construction | Number of tokens | % of occurrence in the sample |
|---|---|---|
| PDC | 30 | 55 |
| DOC | 9 | 16 |
| Clitic | 16 | 29 |

Table 2: Distribution of dative construction to express the recipient in STP

| Dative construction | Number of tokens | % of occurrence in the sample |
|---|---|---|
| PDC | 37 | 92 |
| DOC | 2 | 5 |
| Clitic | 1 | 3 |

Table 3: Distribution of dative construction to express the recipient in BP

As the tables show, the PDC is the main construction in the three varieties of Portuguese, especially in the variety of BP spoken in Rio de Janeiro. The DOC and clitic variants are used to varying degrees in each context. In sum, these results show that MP, STP and BP, similarly to EP, mainly make use of PDC to express a dative argument of a ditransitive verb; however, contrary to EP, they exhibit double object construction (DOC). The three varieties also differ from Germanic languages, since the recipient/dative argument can be ex-

pressed by a NP non-adjacent to the verb (see non-canonical DOCs). Furthermore, although the three varieties converge towards the loss of the dative clitic, BP is more advanced in this process.

Finally, we must address the main issue of this paper: is the DOC the result of drift or contact? For some authors, it is the result of the contact with Bantu languages. According to P. Gonçalves (1996: 38-45), MP makes extensive use of DOC, along with dative passives (*Os filhos são escondidos a verdade* (*pelos pais*) – The children are hidden the truth (by the parents), both triggered by the L1 (a Bantu language) transfer together with an ambiguous EP input related to the use of the preposition (Gonçalves, 2002: 336). In P. Gonçalves (2002), following Duarte (1987), the author claims that as, in EP, the Recipient argument of a ditransitive verb can be cliticized (*Dina deu um livro ao João / Dina deu-**lhe** um livro* – Dina gave a book to-the John / Dina gave him a book), for L2 acquisition of Portuguese by L1 Bantu speakers, the EP data suggested that the indirect object argument can be realized as a nominal – the clitic *lhe*, therefore the preposition is not necessary.

As for DOC in STP, R. Gonçalves (2017) identified the use of DOC mainly, but not exclusively, with core-dative verbs, which only have a caused possession meaning, following Happaport-Hovav and Levin´s (2008) classification of core dative verbs (*dar* 'give', *emprestar* 'lend', *oferecer* 'offer' or *mostrar* 'show'). She observed that individuals with ten or more years of schooling also produced DOC. The author attributes the use of DOC to the contact between this African variety with the dominant Portuguese-related creole (Santomean), characterized by the categorical use of DOCs to express recipients, although STP does not exhibit dative passive or other types of syntactic passives. Nonetheless, STP converges with EP, the target variety, mainly using a PDC introduced by a functional preposition. However, there is an overgeneralization of the preposition **para** instead of **a**, although 15 out of 47 speakers from the STP sample only produced PDC (and not DOC or the clitic *lhe*) introduced by preposition **a.** This overgeneralization, according to the author, is related to an ambiguous EP input regarding the preposition **a**, which is explained by R. Gonçalves. According to her, EP exhibits two homonymous prepositions **a**: (i) a preposition **a** that introduces the Recipient of both core and non-core dative verbs, and (ii) a preposition **a** that alternates with **para,** introducing the goal of non-core dative verbs (see also Torres Morais, 2007). For the author, the use of the preposition **para** to introduce arguments of core dative verbs may be the result of a reinterpretation of EP input: **para** was reanalyzed as a preposition

that also codes an abstract meaning such as preposition **a**. Therefore, considering the two sources of ambiguous EP input, the use of **lhe** to express the recipient and the two different uses of preposition **a**, R. Gonçalves concludes that Universal Grammar is also acting together with language contact in respect to the dative variation found in the STP. R. Gonçalves, Duarte and Hagemeijer (2022) deepen this hypothesis by comparing data from Angolan Portuguese, MP and STP to explain the distribution of the different variants in the expression of the dative argument. They claim that the presence of DOCs in African varieties of Portuguese is "the result of language contact in L2 settings of the acquisition of Portuguese" (p. 31).

With respect to BP, according to Lucchesi (2012) and Avelar and Galves (2014), the DOC entered popular Brazilian grammar in the process of the acquisition of Portuguese as a second language by Africans, through the transfer of syntactic properties from their native (mainly Bantu) languages, to the emerging Portuguese varieties in Brazil. Lucchesi (2009: 367) argues that DOC, although available in many popular varieties of BP, is not grammatically correct for an educated urban speaker. For Barros and Calindro (2023), as in Lucchesi (op. cit.) and Avelar and Galves (op. cit.), based on data collected from Afro-Brazilian communities situated far from urban centers, DOC is an innovation of Afro-Brazilian Portuguese (ABP), a variety that emerged as a second language in the acquisition of Portuguese by Africans during the colonial period. Its origin in ABP can be understood in a model according to which

> "Feature Economy and Feature/Input Generalization [...] constitute a major factor in L2 learning in contact scenarios" (p. 102).

The construction was then established and expanded beyond the original core structures, in the process of transmission of ABP as L1.

Now we provide evidence that points to the possibility of DOC as a prefigured feature that seems not to have developed in Contemporary European Portuguese, but may have developed in the transplanted Portuguese to the colonies, at least in the case of Brazilian Portuguese. The following excerpts come from Old Portuguese, 14th and 15th centuries, respectively in Vasconcelos (1970: 42) and Livro dos Conselhos de El-Rey D. Duarte (1423-1438/1982, p. 53, p. 75):

(21) E o caualleyro (...) **preguntou [Ø] todollos reys e [Ø] todollos primçepes e *a* todollos hommens** de todallas terras como poderia leixar aquell castello a seu salvo.

'And the knight ..... ***asked [Ø] all the kings and [Ø] all the princes and to all***

***the men*** of all the lands how (he) could leave that castle with safety.'

(22) ...e daqui avante em cada mês **ele va requerer [Ø] todolos oficiães** em presença de seus escriuães que lhe deçlarem se reçeberão mais algua cousa ou he fecta alguma despesa da que aviam.

'And from now on each month ***he will require [Ø] all the officials*** in the presence of their scriveners that they declare if they will receive anything else or have done any expense that they had to do...'

(23) ... que uyse muytos livros que **ensynaroom [Ø] os reis** e prinçipes que grandes deuem ser...
'... that see many books that ...taught...***[Ø] the kings*** and princes that great (they) should be...'

This data is important as a register of the expression of the recipient of a dative argument, adjacent to the verb expressed by a NP in Old Portuguese, although these verbs do not belong to the give-type (core datives) subclass proposed in Rappaport-Hovav and Levin (2008). The behaviour of English ditransitive verbs has been used to sustain syntactic models that seek to explain this alternation in many languages. More recently, Bresnan et al. (2007: 11) provided evidence that English dative verbs have "more syntactic flexibility than we thought, occurring more freely in alternative constructions". They found web data that expands the limits of the syntactic and semantic constraints usually referred to in the literature, as in (24) and (25):

(24) This story is designed to ***give the creeps to people who hate spiders***, but is not true.)

(25) Design? Well, unless you take pride in ***giving a headache to your visitors*** with a flashing background? no.

Examples (24) and (25) are idioms that challenge the meaning-to-structure mapping hypothesis, according to which events that involve a change of state are only coded by a DOC (Gropen et al., 1989). The authors also provided evidence that the verb meaning alone is not enough to predict the alternation between DOC and PDC. Analyzing data from spoken and written corpora, they concluded that the same model works for spoken and written English: dative alternation is constrained by discourse accessibility and animacy of the recipient, along with syntactic and semantic properties, such as the length difference between the theme, the recipient, and the verb class. These constraints function as a tendency, not as a categorical restriction for each construction (PDC and DOC). Thus, these results show that a deeper comprehension of dative al-

ternation in many languages may profit from analysis that expands the knowledge of the phenomenon based on spontaneous use.

Examples of DOC in Old Portuguese appeared more than once. But, even if it occurred once in a representative corpus of the period, it could be considered significant evidence. More recently, studies on Historical Linguistics and Corpus Linguistics have highlighted the importance of words and constructions that occur once in a context or text (from Greek, Hapax Legomena). According to Hilpert (2017), Hapax Legomena can be considered a starting point for the development of new structures/constructions. Until now, there is no record of the occurrence of DOC in Classical Portuguese (CP). There are, at least, two possible explanations for this fact: either, there is no such construction in CP, or its low frequency in the language (as appears to be the case in the precedent period) makes it difficult to identify this type of data. All the studies about dative alternation in contemporary EP confirm that the only two possibilities of expressing the recipient are the PDC and the clitic 'lhe'. Since the data from Old Portuguese indicates the occurrence of dative recipients expressed by a NP, it is plausible to suppose that this was a characteristic of the Portuguese transplanted to the colonies that has not evolved in Modern EP. Therefore, the effect of linguistic contact, according to each colony's history, could be considered not as a trigger of DOCs in transplanted Portuguese, but as a factor that may have contributed to its development in the Portuguese spoken in the different settlements. And as for Lucchesi's (2009: 367) view regarding the marginality of the phenomenon in BP, restricted to popular Brazilian Portuguese and ungrammatical in standard BP spoken in urban centers, we provided evidence that the DOC, in BP, even though with a low token frequency, is produced in urban varieties. Our data comes from urban Rio de Janeiro, but in other regions, such as Minas Gerais, it is usual and unnoticed by "educated" speakers. DOC is subject to diatopic variation. As it is more frequent in Minas Gerais than in Rio de Janeiro, it can be analyzed as a regional phenomenon, just like the absence of the reflexive pronouns paradigm in Minas Gerais (Assis, 1988; Rocha, 1999; Lima, 2006). Hence, it can't be equated as a non-urban, low-class feature of BP. Interestingly, in R. Gonçalves (2017: 30) data from STP, DOCs were also produced by speakers with higher levels of education. Whilst 21 out of 47 speakers only produced PDCs, 8 of these had a level of education between the 1st and the 9th grades. Gomes (2003) also registered, in the variety spoken in Rio de Janeiro, two occurrences of DOC in a sample only with university speakers (NURC Sample 1970), and the prevalence of the preposition 'para' **to** introduce PDC above

80% among High School and Elementary School speakers (Censo 2000). From COMPARAPORT corpora, example (15), and the following (26) from STP, (27) from MP, and (28) from BP (Gomes, 2003), are examples of DOCs produced by college speakers:

(26) respondi **ele** em nosso português, (...) eu respondi **ele**
answered he.Nom in our Portuguese (...) I answered he.Nom
*'I answered him in our Portuguese (...) I answered him'*

(27) o próprio encarregado... no lugar de pedir **o professor** a dar
the very person-in.charge instead of ask the teacher to give
mais assistência ensinando os alunos....
more assistance teaching the pupils
*'The very person in charge, instead of asking the teacher to give more assistance to the pupils.....'*

(28) (Napoleão) ele permite **os países** que estavam no seu domínio...
(Napoleon) he allows the countries that were in.the his domain
*'he allows the countries that were under his domains....'*

Hence, considering all the previously outlined evidence, it is possible to conclude that DOC is not rooted, at least for BP, in a popular variety that evolved from the contact of L2 acquiring Portuguese by L1 Bantu speakers in rural settings, but then from a structural possibility of the transplanted Portuguese to the colonies, which might have expanded in the new colony since the 16$^{th}$ century.

## 4. Conclusion

Returning to the issue addressed in the title of this paper: is the dative shift observed in MP, STP e BP the result of a drift or is it the result of the contact with Bantu languages? In this paper, we brought evidence that DOC was already a structural possibility in Old Portuguese, thus, in relation to contemporary Portuguese languages, a prefigured feature in a certain synchrony. It is then possible that it was a characteristic of the Portuguese transplanted to the colonies, that have not evolved in Modern EP. As observed in different corpora, we also brought evidence that DOCs are not restricted to speakers with low educational level, or restricted to afro-descendent speakers, as in BP. DOC may not even be produced by low educational level speakers. R. Gonçalves (2017) found speakers in STP, from 1$^{st}$ to 9$^{th}$ grade, that only produced PDCs, whilst speakers with ten or more years of schooling produced DOCs along with PDCs.

The COMPARAPORT data includes college speakers, so DOC is not restricted to speakers with low educational level. Gomes (2003) also found DOC in NURC Sample from Rio de Janeiro, with university speakers. Therefore, DOC cannot be considered ungrammatical for an educated, urban, Brazilian Portuguese-speaker. DOC may be stigmatized in some varieties and contexts of use, meaning that Lucchesi's statement needs to be verified for BP. However, the effect of the contact between the transplanted Portuguese and Bantu speakers can be taken into consideration, not as a trigger of DOCs, but as a factor that may have enhanced its development in the Portuguese spoken in different settlements.

The comparison outlined in this paper shows that the evolved patterns in each of the new varieties (MP, STP and BP) follow the same trends, when considering the syntactic strategies to express the IO of a ditransitive verb, including the non-canonical DOC. These trends are opposite in the sense that they are conservative in relation to EP, when related to the prepositioned dative construction, and innovative due to the presence of the DOC and the loss of dative clitic. Although BP is characterized as having a symmetric relationship with EP regarding the dative shift, it is completely aligned with MP and STP as both languages are characterized as Non-Dominant Varieties of Pluricentric Portuguese. Therefore, if specific linguistic features are not enough to establish the degree of submission of the new varieties to the older or original linguistic norms, what criteria would support the classification of MP and STP as NDVs and BP as DV in relation to EP? It seems that the criteria that establish the distinction between Pluricentric Languages as Dominant and Non-Dominant Varieties are external, more related to "the historical relationship among the nations, and based on a static, rather than a dynamic, concept of linguistic norm." (Duarte, Gomes, Paiva, 2022: 169).

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# A study of pharyngeal variants in Hebrew: social stratification and stylistic variation

**Abstract**

This work analyses the behaviour of native Hebrew speakers based on two sociolinguistic variables: *ayn* and *het*. Gafter (2016) notes that the realisation of these variables is conditioned by the ethnic group to which speakers belong to, and by the social context in which speakers are taking part. Speakers of three distinct ethnic groups (Ashkenazi, non-Yemenite Mizrahi, Yemenite Mizrahi) read two texts containing occurrences of the variables: a blessing and a newspaper report. Results showed that only Yemenite Mizrahis produced pharyngeals in reading both texts, but in an inverse distribution: this group realised a much higher percentage of pharyngeals in reading the blessing than in reading the newspaper report. These results suggest that ethnic origin and stylistic variation play an important role for the realisation of pharyngeal variants for both variables.

## 1. Introduction – Modern Hebrew as a pluricentric language

Nevot (2013, p. 294) suggests that Hebrew is a pluricentric language, given that it meets essential criteria to consider a language as such: (a) linguistic distance, since there are significant differences in the way speakers use Hebrew according to the ethnic group to which they belong; (b) official status in – at least – two nations as a state or co-state language, because, due to the very history of the Jewish people, Hebrew is spoken in different territories; (c) acceptance of pluricentricity, as the different varieties of Hebrew spoken by different ethnic and social groups are fully accepted as part of their national identity; and (d) finally, because Hebrew was very important for maintaining the identity of the Jewish people during the diaspora.

Taking the hypothesis that Hebrew is a pluricentric language, and that a better understanding of the relationship among different varieties of pluricentric languages depends on specific sociohistorical contexts (Labov,

2007), this work analyses the behaviour of native Hebrew speakers based on two sociolinguistic variables: the ayn variable, which can be produced as a voiced pharyngeal fricative [ʕ] and a glottal stop [ʔ],and the het variable, which can be produced as a voiceless pharyngeal fricative [ħ] and voiceless velar fricative [x]. According to Henkin (2019, p. 52),

> "[t]he three major historical factions of diaspora Jewry are, roughly, in conventional nomenclature, Ashkenazi (European), Sephardi 'Spanish' (mostly Balkan), and Mizrahi 'Eastern' (Middle East and North Africa)":

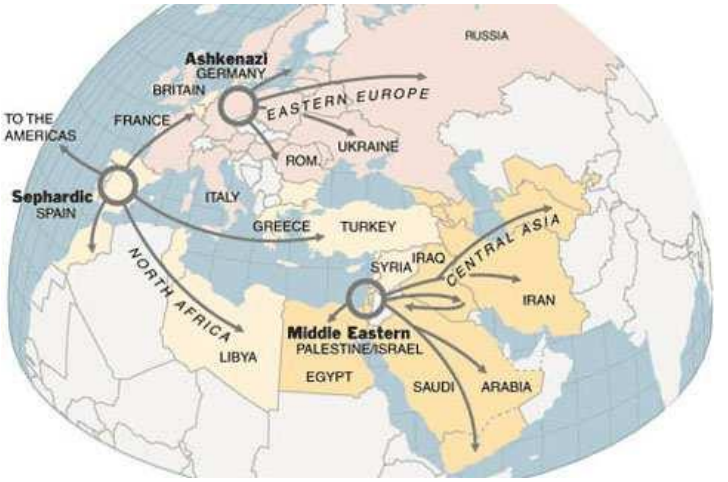


Figure01: Map of Jewish Ethnic Origins
Source: https://scalar.usc.edu/hc/iranian-jews-in-los-angeles/media/jewsdna-map4771.jpg (Accessed on March 20, 2024)

Henkin (2019, p. 51) also points out that "[t]he Ashkenazis, mostly from Eastern Europe, constituted between 80–88% of the Jewish population in Palestine in 1948", and "[t]hey were thus dominant in establishing current usage and formal language policies and in influencing further linguistic developments". In this sense, Gafter (2016, 34) argues that "[w]hile the demographics of Israel rapidly changed to become more Mizrahi, the political establishment and cultural and economic elite remained thoroughly Ashkenazi". Thus, according to Gafter (2016, p. 35), "Ashkenazis are described as 'just Israelis', the unmarked category. Mizrahis, on the other hand, are portrayed in a stereotypically Orientalist way (Said 1978): uneducated, vulgar, and violent, but also warm and hospitable". Henkin (2019, p. 54) also sustains that "this rather heterogeneous group [Mizrahis] was discursively represented

as poverty-stricken and uneducated, although many of the immigrants were in fact far from this stereotype". Henkin (2019) further observes that Mizrahis were slow to acquire the new standard of Modern Hebrew dictated by the Ashkenazis, who were seen as representatives of a foreign culture and quite hostile to mother tongues. This delay, in turn, has its roots in the residential and social isolation of Mizrahis, combined with minimal mobility and engagement in low-status professions. Gafter (2016) sustains that this binary distinction into these two categories Mizrahi and Ashkenazi "remains extremely socially salient in Israeli discourse".

## 2. Pharyngeals in Hebrew

Gafter (2016) notes that the realisation of the *ayn* and the *het* variables is conditioned by the ethnic group to which speakers belong, as well as by the social context in which speakers are taking part. Regarding these social and stylistic conditionings, there are different social values attributed to the variants of both variables, which are, in turn, closely related not only to the revitalisation of Hebrew, but also to the ethnic origin of the speakers and the social stratification resulting from this origin. Given the fact that Jews from Europe (Ashkenazi) are part of the most prestigious social group, and they were most responsible for the revitalisation of Hebrew, their speech is, consequently, more socially prestigious. On the other hand, Jews from the Middle East (Mizrahi) constitute the less socially prestigious group of Israeli society, and their speech is also less prestigious.

Since the pharyngeal variant of the *ayn* and the *het* variables is associated with Mizrahi speaking, its realisation tends to be stigmatised, thus avoided by some social (and ethnic) prestigious groups, and in some interactional contexts. However, in religious contexts, there is another factor that has connection to the realisation of this variable: purism. Despite being stigmatised, the pharyngeal variant is associated with the historical origins of Hebrew and, therefore, with a purer and more conservative way of speaking. Therefore, the pharyngeal variant seems to sound more appropriate for religious contexts, as Hebrew has always been spoken in this context (Bible, prayers, blessings), even during several centuries when Jewish people did not use Hebrew for their day-to-day communication. To study the realisation of the pharyngeal variant in Hebrew, Gafter conducted a study on these two variables of Hebrew that are the focus of this work: *ayn* and *het*. For his research, Gafter employed two methodologies:

1. the realisation of sociolinguistic interviews in two specific locations within the Tel Aviv area: the city of Tel Aviv itself, and the town of Rosh Ha'ayin;
2. and, to investigate reading styles, following the sociolinguistic interview, Gafter requested each interviewee to read a list of words containing the particular linguistic features he was focused on.

Results showed that Ashkenazi speakers did not produce any pharyngeal in either sociolinguistic interview or word list. Regarding the two groups of Mizrahi speakers, there were differences between them: Mizrahi from Tel Aviv produced pharyngeals at a much lower percentage than Mizrahi from Rosh Ha'ayin, as we can see in the following table:

| | | *ayn* % [ʕ] (Apl) | *het* % [ħ] (Apl) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mizrahis (Tel Aviv) | interview | 12,34 (179/1450) | 17,72 (257/1450) |
| | list of words | 37,98 (33/87) | 17,24 (15/87) |
| Mizrahis (Rosh Ha'ayin) | interview | 62,78 (722/1150) | 70,87 (815/1150) |
| | list of words | 79,71 (55/69) | 66,67 (46/69) |

Table 01. Distribution of the variants: ayn and het (adapted from Gafter, 2016)

Gafter attributed this difference between these two groups of Mizrahi speakers to that fact that Rosh Ha'ayin is a very homogeneous community, and his Rosh Ha'ayin' sample was constituted only by Yemeni speakers. According to the author, Yemenites "see the pharyngeals as correct, eloquent, and most importantly, an authentic part of their Yemenite identity – and they see their familiarity with certain reading styles as a way of expressing their identity" (p. 50).

Building on Gafter's work, we aimed to observe whether speakers from different ethnic groups would behave differently when reading two texts of different genres, one being liturgical, and the other non-liturgical. If ethnic origin and interaction context influence the realisation of both variables (*ayn* and *het*), there would certainly be differences in the reading of the texts. Furthermore, analysing these potential differences in behaviour among the ethnic groups observed in this work could contribute to a better understanding

not only of the linguistic and social dynamics of Modern Hebrew, but also of the interaction between social and stylistic conditionings.

## 3. Materials

To observe the behaviour of different groups of Hebrew speakers, participants from three different ethnic groups were recruited to read two texts, one non-religious (a news report), and the other religious (a blessing). The groups included 10 Ashkenazi speakers, 10 non-Yemeni Mizrahi speakers, and a third group consisting of Yemeni Mizrahi speakers. Participants of the three ethnic groups were randomly recruited in the streets and were directly approached. The audio recordings were made in Tel Aviv (central region of Israel) – encompassing both the city of Tel Aviv and the city of Rosh Haayn – and in Beer Sheva (southern region of Israel):


FIGURE 02. Map of Israel: cities of Tel Aviv (central) and Beer Sheva (south)
Source: https://www.worldatlas.com/maps/israel (Accessed on March 20, 2024)

After speakers were approached and the general purposes of the research were explained, they were asked only a few general questions. As the hypotheses for this study focused on the ethnic origin of the speaker, little social information was requested from the participants, so they were not selected based on social variables typically analyzed in sociolinguistic studies (age, level of education, social class). After the initial explanations about the research, participants were instructed to read two texts: a blessing (a liturgical text) and a news report (a non-liturgical text). The aim of this reading was to verify:

(1) if there would be different behaviours among the speakers from the different ethnic groups concerning the two variables; and

(2) if there would be any influence of the context - religious or non-religious - in the realisation of the two phonetic forms?

We were aware that this methodology might impose limitations on what we intended to observe. Schilling (2013, p. 105) poses that a reading passage may be perceived as a face-threatening task and can create a great degree of awkwardness for interviewees whose literacy level is not very high. Gafter (2016, p. 41) attempted to avoid using reading passages as it could cause "possible discomfort among some speakers". Faced with these challenges, we tried to mitigate them by selecting two small and noncomplex texts. Besides, opted for a very current news report (on the pandemic) and a well-known blessing for the religious text:

Text 01. Blessing: *Ha-Mapil*

לְאִישׁוֹן בַּת־עָיִן. יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה אֱ-לֹהַי וֵא-לֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי שֶׁתַּשְׁכִּיבֵנִי לְשָׁלוֹם, וְתַעֲמִידֵנִי לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים וּלְשָׁלוֹם, וְתֵן חֶלְקִי בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ, וְתַרְגִּילֵנִי לִדְבַר מִצְוָה, וְאַל־תַּרְגִּילֵנִי לִדְבַר עֲבֵרָה, וְאַל־תְּבִיאֵנִי לִידֵי חֵטְא. וְלֹא לִידֵי נִסָּיוֹן וְלֹא לִידֵי בְזָיוֹן, וְיִשְׁלוֹט בִּי יֵצֶר הַטּוֹב וְאַל־יִשְׁלוֹט בִּי יֵצֶר הָרָע. וְתַצִּילֵנִי מִיֵּצֶר הָרָע וּמֵחוֹלָאִים רָעִים, וְאַל־יַבְהִילוּנִי חֲלוֹמוֹת רָעִים וְהִרְהוּרִים רָעִים, וּתְהֵא מִטָּתִי שְׁלֵמָה לְפָנֶיךָ, וְהָאֵר עֵינַי פֶּן אִישַׁן הַמָּוֶת. (בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה) הַמֵּאִיר לָעוֹלָם כֻּלּוֹ בִּכְבוֹד

[Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who causes sleep to fall upon my eyes and slumber upon my eyelids. May it be Your will, Lord my God, and God of my fathers, to lay me down to sleep in peace and to let me rise up again in peace. May You grant me life that is good and peace that is perfect, and may You direct my footsteps toward Your commandments, and do not bring me into the hands of sin, transgression, iniquity, temptation, scorn, and disgrace. May the good inclination have dominion over me and let not the evil inclination have dominion over me. Save me from the evil inclination and from

evil and harmful sickness. And let me not be confounded by bad dreams and evil thoughts, and may my bed be complete before You, and enlighten my eyes lest I sleep the sleep of death. Blessed are You, who illuminates the entire world with His glory.]

Text 02: News report

Source: https://www.ynet.co.il/news/article/B1FveT211v,
(Accessed on March 20, 2024)

יותר מ-100 אלף מתו מקורונה בברזיל: "המוות נעשה נורמלי" 905 חולים נוספים מתו בברזיל, ומניין המתים כעת הוא הגבוה בעולם מלבד ארה"ב. הנשיא ממשיך לזלזל במגפה, והמומחים מזהירים מהיעדר תוכנית וחוסר תיאום בין המחוזות: "המסר של הממשלה הוא 'תידבק בקורונה שלך, ואם זה רציני - יש טיפול נמרץ'" מניין המתים מקורונה בברזיל חצה הלילה )בין שבת לראשון( את רף ה-100 אלף, לאחר ש-905 חולים נוספים מתו מהמחלה. קצב התמותה בברזיל מדאיג במיוחד, שכן לנגיף לקח שלושה חודשים כדי לגרום למותם של 50 אלף בני אדם – ורק 50 יום כדי לגרום למותם של 50 אלף נוספים. קרובי המתים ברחבי המדינה זועמים על האדישות "'אלה לא רק מספרים - מדובר בבני אדם

[More than 100,000 have died from COVID-19 in Brazil: 'Death has become normal'. An additional 905 patients have died in Brazil, and the death toll is now the highest in the world after the United States. The president continues to downplay the pandemic, and experts warn against the lack of a plan and coordination between regions: The government's message is “deal with your own coronavirus, and if it's serious - there's intensive care.” The number of COVID-19 deaths in Brazil crossed the threshold of 100,000 overnight (between Saturday and Sunday) after an additional 905 patients died from the disease. The rate of mortality in Brazil is particularly concerning, as it took the virus three months to cause the deaths of 50,000 people, and only 50 days to cause the deaths of an additional 50,000. Relatives of the deceased across the country express anger at the indifference: “These are not just numbers - these are human beings.]

Our hypothesis was based on the conflict between linguistic “purism” and the interplay of ethnic identity and social evaluation of language variants:

1. in a religious context, we expected participants from different groups to read the texts in different ways.
2. Mizrahi speakers would make more use of pharyngeals when reading the blessing, especially Yemeni Mizrahis, since they are more attached to the purism of the language in traditional contexts of interaction such as religious ones.
3. Mizrahi speakers would be less expected to use pharyngeal variants when reading a non-liturgical text, especially non-Yemeni Mizrahis, since they

are more aware of the stigma associated with pharyngeal variants in Modern Hebrew.

4. Ashkenazi speakers would be expected to have a very similar behaviour when reading the two texts (absence of a pharyngeal variant), since they historically do not produce pharyngeal variants in their speech.

## 5. Analysis

The results show different behaviours among the groups based on their ethnic origin. As expected, Ashkenazi speakers did not produce any pharyngeal variant in either context. The absence of pharyngeal variants by Ashkenazi speakers is probably related to the fact that, in those countries where these Jews came from (Germany and some other European countries), pharyngeal consonants are not part of the language system.

Regarding the behaviour of non-Yemeni Mizrahis speakers, and considering Gafter's results (2016), we expected these speakers to produce pharyngeal variants at least when reading the blessing. However, as Ashkenazi speakers, non-Yemeni Mizrahi speakers did not produce any pharyngeal variant. In this sense, the greater degree of monitoring in the reading texts in our research, associated with low adherence to ethnic identity, could have been decisive to explaining the behaviour of this group. Moreover, as reported by Gafter (2016) and some other recent studies, since pharyngeals are not associated with prestigious speech, Mizrahi speakers, especially the younger ones, almost do not use any pharyngeals in their day-to-day interactions.

A further interesting question arises from the fact that non-Yemenite Mizrahis do not produce pharyngeals: it is possible that the religiosity level plays an important role in the behaviour of Mizrahi speakers that are openly non-religious. In this research, all the non-Yemeni Mizrahi speakers have declared that they were not religious, thus having read both texts the same way. So, in future studies, openly religious Mizrahis can be investigated to establish a comparison between those who are openly religious and those who are not religious. As the ethnic origin associated with religious affiliation seems to be the trigger for the realisation of pharyngeal variants, this comparison can be particularly interesting. Unlike the other two groups, Yemeni Mizrahi speakers performed the pharyngeal variant in both contexts for both variables: In Figure 02, when reading the non-liturgical text, 13.24% of speakers produced pharyngeals and 86.76% did not produce pharyngeal consonants for the *het* variable. On the other hand, when reading the liturgical text, 61.11% of the

speakers produced pharyngeals, while 38,89% of the speakers do not produce them.

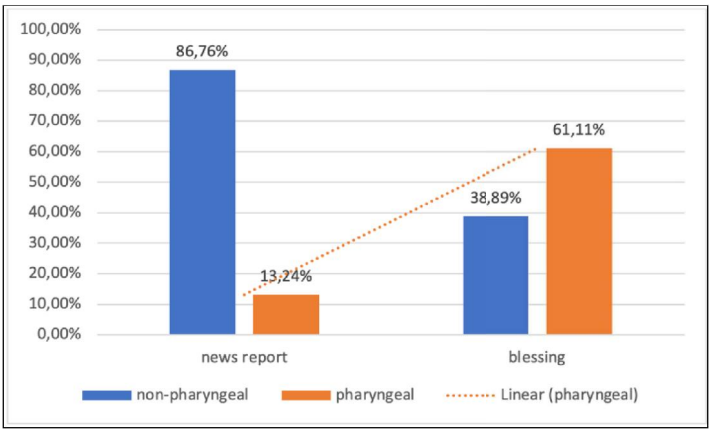


Figure 02. Results – *het* variable

Something similar happened with the *ayn* variant as well. The results can be seen in the following figure:

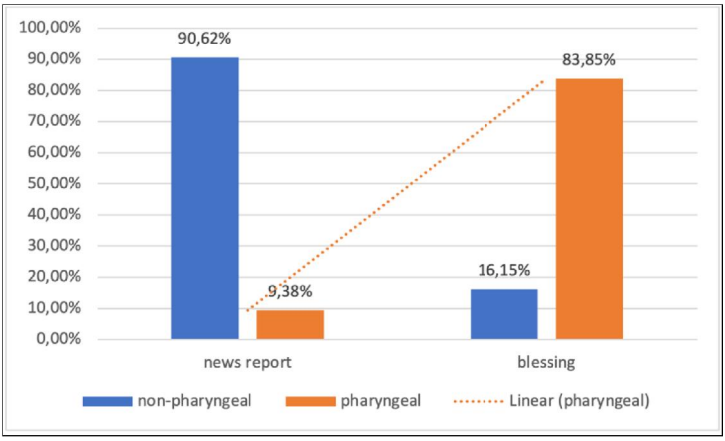


Figure 03. Results – ayn variable

As we can see in figure 03, when reading the non-liturgical text, 9.38% of speakers produced pharyngeals and 90.63% did not produce pharyngeal consonants for the ayn variable. On the other hand, when reading the liturgical text, 83.85% of the speakers produced pharyngeals, while 16.15% of the

speakers did not produce them.

Combining the results of both variables, it is possible to observe a consistent pattern in the distribution of pharyngeal variants in both readings, namely, an inverse distribution of both variables (het and ayn): when reading the news report, Yemenite speakers produced pharyngeal variants at much lower percentages than when reading the blessing. Moreover, it is still interesting to observe that Yemeni speakers realised even more pharyngeals for the ayn variable when reading the blessing; this variable is less stigmatised than the other one, according to Gafter, and thus it is more sensitive to the stylistic variation. On the other hand, Yemeni speakers produced the pharyngeal variant for the het variable at a lower percentage than they did for the ayn variable. This difference may be attributed to the higher stigma associated with the pharyngeal variant of the het variable, making it more sensitive to social stratification. Considering the results together, we can observe that the ethnic origin seems to serve as an important conditioning factor for the realisation of pharyngeal consonants for both variables. In other words, the distribution of the variants across different ethnic groups reinforces the idea that the Jewish origin seems to influence the behaviour of speakers belonging to this ethnic group. Furthermore, for the group where the realisation of the pharyngeal variant is observed, it is possible to note that the stylistic variation seems to play an important role, since the speakers' behaviour differ according to the genre of the texts, with the highest percentages of realisation of the pharyngeal variant found in the liturgical text.

## 6. Conclusion

The results for the three social groups point to a complex sociolinguistic dynamic that is reflected in the social stratification of the variable, a stratification that is related to the speaker's ethnic origin. As expected, Ashkenazi speakers did not produce any pharyngeal variant for both variables. These speakers belong to the group with higher social prestige, and pharyngeal realisations historically do not form part of the language systems in the countries these speakers are originally from. As bearers of prestige values who do not use pharyngeal variants, the use of these variants becomes socially stigmatized, as reported in various previous studies.

Pharyngeal variants were expected from speakers of both Mizrahi groups for the two variables. However, the non-Yemenite Mizrahi group did not

produce any pharyngeal variants in either of the two texts for either of the two variables. On the other hand, the Yemenite Mizrahi group produced pharyngeal variants in both texts and for both variables. In this sense, the difference between the subgroups of the less prestigious ethnic group (non-Yemeni and Yemeni Mizrahis) reveals another facet of the complex sociolinguistic dynamics: the subgroup closer to Ashkenazi, and thus more distant from Middle Eastern Jewish traditions, behaves in the Ashkenazi manner, avoiding the realisation of pharyngeal (stigmatised) variant in both analysed contexts (news report and blessing).

The subgroup of Yemenites, more identified with religious traditions - thus, with a "purism" of the language that goes back to the origins of the language - not only performs pharyngeal variant in both analysed contexts but also shows sensitivity to stylistic variation: these speakers performed pharyngeal variants when reading the news report and increased the occurrences of this variant when reading the blessing.

The difference observed between the two variables for the Yemeni speakers suggests that, as the pharyngeal variant of the het variable seems to be more stigmatised, it was less realised when reading the news report, which may indicate that Yemenis avoid the use of pharyngeals in non-religious contexts. On the other hand, as the pharyngeal variant of the ayn variable seems to be less stigmatised than the pharyngeal variant of the het variable, Yemenis produced it often more when reading the news report. This difference between the variables may reveal that, despite both being socially stratified, the ayn variable appears to be more sensitive to stylistic variation. There seems to be a more pronounced difference in the use of pharyngeals depending on context (religious or non-religious) with respect to the ayn variable.

The dynamic of contemporary Hebrew, considering the characteristics of the three ethnic groups, reflects the developmental process of the different varieties in contact with the languages of the countries the different groups came from. Thus, different structural and social patterns of variation developed - and are still developing - from the values and social meanings built around the linguistic forms that are adopted by speakers of different social groups and in different contexts of interaction. Future research could be conducted to further explore the relationships observed in this study. Beyond the issue of ethnic origin and degree of religiosity, other relationships could also be incorporated through sampling speech stratified by social variables typically included in sociolinguistic studies (age, social class, level of

education). Future research could also incorporate not only more speakers, but also speakers from different ethnic backgrounds and originating from different regions of Israel.

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# The menu as an object of study in the Acadian city of Dieppe, N.B. (Canada)

**Abstract**

This exploratory study examines language variation in restaurant menus in the Acadian city of Dieppe, New Brunswick (Canada), with a focus on French varieties and language planning. The research investigates the presence of both North American French1 and Standard French terms within Dieppe's Acadian sociolinguistic context, which is influenced by historical and demographic factors. The corpus consists of 31 bilingual menus, categorized into two groups: local establishments and national/international establishments. The findings highlight errors, anglicisms, and the prevalence of North American French terms. The discussion underscores the impact of ownership diversity on linguistic practices. In conclusion, the menus in Dieppe predominantly reflect a North American French influence, demonstrating the intricate interplay of linguistic factors shaped by regional preferences and culinary practices.

## 1. Introduction

This paper contributes to a broader research endeavour examining the standard register of New Brunswick's Acadian community, with a particular emphasis on language planning (Gauvin, 2021). The focus of this study is the analysis of language used in restaurant menus within Dieppe, to determine which varieties of French are prevalent. Given that cuisine is deeply rooted in culture, it is reasonable to expect that restaurateurs would use local, or more broadly, North American terminology, to describe the dishes featured in their menus. Before unveiling our findings, we will begin by presenting the sociolinguistic context of the Acadian community of Dieppe.[2] Following this, we will discuss the corpus and methodology used in our study.

[1] *North American French* is the preferred term to refer both Quebec and Acadian French varieties, as the term *Canadian French* historically referred only to Quebec French (Poirier, 1988, under *canadien, enne*), prior to the creation of the province of the same name.

[2] To avoid confusion with Dieppe, France, the Canadian city's website provides historical information stating, "The first Acadians settled on the land now known as Dieppe in 1730. In 1910, the area known as French Village was renamed Leger's Corner, and later became the

## 2. Context: Navigating Linguistic Crossroads

The area under examination is Acadia, alongside Quebec and Louisiana Acadia stands as one of the three historic French settlements in North America.[3] Positioned to the East of Quebec, Acadia is not only smaller in terms of size and population, but it also encompasses three Canadian provinces: New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia.[4] Unlike conventional states or territories, Acadia lacks a formal singular state territory. For these reasons and others, Acadia and Quebec have experienced distinct historical, political, cultural, and linguistic trajectories.

To understand the linguistic dynamics at play in Dieppe and more broadly in New Brunswick, it is essential to acknowledge the historical dominance of English rooted in British rule.[5] This dominance has relegated Acadian French to a non-dominant position, often influenced by English with an undertone of contempt (Gauvin, 2022).

The intricate linguistic landscape reflects a demographic imbalance, where 64.8% are native English speakers and 32.4% are native French speakers, shaping language practices across public spaces, services, media, and daily interactions (Statistics Canada, 2021).

Despite approximately 71% of Francophones being bilingual, a sociolinguistic inferiority complex often leads them to converge towards English, particularly in the workplace (LeBlanc, 2008 and 2009). French is spontaneously used only in the presence of other Francophones.

A local vernacular, called Chiac, can also be heard in southeastern New Brunswick. This unique French variety has emerged, blending English elements

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Village of Dieppe in 1946. The name, Dieppe, was chosen to honour the memory of the 913 Canadians who died in combat on the beaches of Dieppe, France, on August 19, 1942, during WW2 [*sic*]. The Village of Dieppe became the Town of Dieppe on January 1, 1952. It then achieved city status on January 1, 2003." (https://www.dieppe.ca/en/explorer-et-samuser/histoire-et-patrimoine.aspx#)

[3] For more information on the historical establishment of French and English colonies in Canada, see Boudreau and Gauvin (2017) as well as Dubois (2005).

[4] The province of New Brunswick has 775,610 residents, Nova Scotia, 969,383 and Prince Edward Island, 154,331, the sum of which – 1,899,324 – is well below Quebec's total population of 8,501,833 residents as of the 2021 Canadian Census. In Quebec, 82.1% of residents have French as their first official language; that number is 33.9% in New Brunswick, 2.8% in both Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island (Statistics Canada, 2024).

[5] The British rule over the Acadians is notably characterized by the Great Expulsion (1755-1764) during the French and Indian War. Following the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, the Acadians, French-speaking Catholic settlers, faced tensions with British authorities over allegiance issues. The forced deportation of thousands of Acadians during the Great Expulsion had a profound impact on their history and contributed to the dispersion of Acadian populations, marking a significant and tragic chapter in their experience under British rule. See Marsh (2015) for more information.

into a distinct linguistic matrix with archaic features (Boudreau, 2011). Although initially stigmatized, gained acceptance in public spheres, especially in the arts, as seen with artists like Lisa LeBlanc proudly showcasing it. Despite its popularity, Chiac is still considered inappropriate for formal contexts, reflecting concerns over anglicization within the dominant standard language ideology. While challenging linguistic norms and symbolizing identity for French speakers in Acadia, Chiac thus faces resistance on account of it being considered a potential threat to the purity of the French language.

Furthermore, just as in Quebec, where anglicisms have long been the focal point of a prescriptive linguistic tradition evident in the popularity of corrective works,[6] the idea that North American French varieties require refinement is not a recent development. This perspective finds support in various linguistic analyses addressing language quality since the nineteenth century (Bouchard, 2002 [1998]; Remysen, 2009). Acadian French is also subject to this scrutiny, with opinions in the press providing additional evidence (Boudreau, 2021). French Canadians, Quebecers, and Acadians alike, have been made aware that their mother tongue is considered deficient by many.

As for Dieppe, it is in the south-eastern region of New Brunswick, in a linguistically diverse setting where English predominates. Sharing borders with Riverview, where 85% of the population speaks English, and Moncton, the country's first officially bilingual city with less than a third of its residents speaking French (Statistics Canada, 2021), Dieppe stands at an interesting intersection of linguistic influences.

Despite the dominance of English in government, business, and commerce in New Brunswick, a significant portion of Dieppe's population identifies as francophone. According to the latest Canadian census, Dieppe, with over 27,000 residents, has 64% declaring French as their mother tongue, and 80% reporting predominant French usage at home (Statistics Canada, 2021).

The choice to focus on Dieppe is rooted in its proximity to Moncton, celebrated for its cultural diversity, vibrant arts scene, and numerous events and festivals. While Moncton has made efforts to promote bilingualism,[7] Dieppe

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[6] The *Multidictionnaire de la langue française*, with seven editions since 1988, the latest being published in 2021, stands as a prominent example. Other notable works encompass *Le Colpron's Dictionnaire des anglicismes*, which has seen four editions since 1970, alongside a pocket edition, and *Le français au bureau* by the OQLF, with seven editions since 1970. Produced in Quebec, these works are not only prevalent in Acadian classrooms, but are also employed by professionals in language-related disciplines in New Brunswick.

[7] On August 6, 2002, the City of Moncton became Canada's first officially bilingual City. It is still, to this day, the only bilingual city within Canada.

stands out due to its friendliness towards the francophone community. In 2000, Dieppe officially declared itself a "francophone municipality offering bilingual services" (City of Dieppe, 2005: 1). A decade later, By-Law Z-22 mandated the use of both French and English on all new outdoor signs, giving priority to French over English.

These policies align with the broader language planning trend in New Brunswick, emphasizing linguistic equality with the English-speaking community by focusing on language status through legislation. To date, provincial governmental agencies have not conducted any studies or inquiries regarding languages as codes. In contrast, jurisdictions like Quebec have established specialized institutions, such as the "Office québécois de la langue française" (OQLF), that primarily engage in the development of various terminologies. In the absence of such institutional support, residents and businesses in Dieppe are left to navigate language usage independently.

Governmental entities' apparent disinterest in addressing this issue raises questions about the meaning of French: does it refer to Standard Parisian French, Standard Quebec French, or oral Acadian French usage? Which normative center do Acadians follow? Is it the long-standing Parisian model, primarily accessible through schools, or the Quebec-centric model increasingly accessible through television, cultural events, and resources like the online dictionary Usito?

Historically, Acadians have adhered to a standardized language ideology that emphasized the French-centered norm, which was instilled through schools and public discourse. This norm was primarily based on Parisian French and was regarded as the dominant and sole acceptable way to use language.

However, in recent years, there has been a noticeable shift in linguistic practices influenced by a Quebec-centric model, which has gained traction among Acadian communities. This model finds expression through various channels, including the emergence of the Quebec-based dictionary Usito.

As Acadians increasingly draw inspiration from this alternative linguistic paradigm, there has been a diversification of linguistic references, with Acadians now consulting works from both Paris and Montreal. This shift is further evident in professional settings, where tools like "Antidote," a correction software from Montreal's Druide informatique, are widely used, reinforcing terminology recommendations by the OQLF. This evolution underscores the dynamic interplay between linguistic influences, identity, and standardization within

Acadian linguistic practices. This study aims to explore these changes by examining the linguistic features of menus in Dieppe's restaurants.

## 3. Corpus

Dieppe hosts a variety of restaurants that offer a range of dining options. The city provides Canadian and regional specialties, as well as international choices. Cuisine-based establishments include Italian, Chinese, Mexican, Indian, and Thai options, while other types of restaurants include steakhouses and pizzerias. Most restaurants in Dieppe maintain a relaxed atmosphere, with a significant presence of fast-food establishments. Coffee shops and family-friendly dining are prevalent, contributing to the city's dining landscape. Notably, Dieppe lacks gourmet restaurants of the type classified by the Michelin Guide, and similar observations extend to aspects like price range and geographical distribution within the city.

The decision to focus on menus is driven by their inherent characteristics: crafted for public consumption, they emphasize designation (conducive to lexical analysis), and they reveal the languages and their varieties employed in the formal register. For the purposes of this paper, a menu is broadly defined as anything publicly accessible or displayed in the restaurant itself or online, encompassing paper menus and overhead electronic billboard-type displays.

1. After excluding unilingual English menus (40% of restaurants have English-only menus), the corpus used in this study comprises 31 bilingual menus collected from 51 dining establishments during the winter of 2023.
2. Although the city boasts approximately 60 restaurants, some are different locations of the same chain, which were treated as one entity. To ensure comprehensive coverage, we collected menus from all 51 establishments.
3. Among the surveyed restaurants, 20 were identified as local establishments, while 31 were either national chains or international franchises.
4. Of the local establishments, only 7 offered bilingual menus (representing 35% of restaurants in that category), with the majority presenting menus exclusively in English.
5. Notably, 10 of these local establishments offering unilingual menus feature Asian-inspired cuisine. This observation is noteworthy, as these restaurants are typically owned by newcomers to Canada who may not be bilingual in English and French (Fasold, 1991: 180). In contrast, a significant number of

both national and international restaurants demonstrated a commitment to linguistic diversity.

6. 24 of the 31 national and international restaurants surveyed offered bilingual menus (representing 77% of restaurants in that category).
7. The final count for our corpus is 31 bilingual menus, excluding the unilingual English ones. None are exclusively French.

## 4. Methodology

This study is inspired by the work of the Franqus ("Français québécois: usage standard") group in Quebec, the founders of the online dictionary *Usito*, recognized as the first North American dictionary dedicated to Standard Quebec French practices. The group's efforts have played a significant role in developing a normative center for lexicography focused on Quebec, while also incorporating other North American French usages.

Our research methodology is further informed by Bisson's (2001) comprehensive classification grid, which incorporates typological markers sourced from reference works sanctioned by the OQLF, covering typological, orthographical, grammatical, morphological, syntactic, sociolinguistic, and lexical markers specific to Standard Quebec French. Bisson, a member of the Franqus group, validates these markers using approved French reference works.

As it relates to our study, we've incorporated methodological insights from the Franqus group and drawn inspiration from Bisson's framework while customizing our approach to suit our research objectives. We will notably focus on lexical, orthographical, and grammatical markers, which provide useful information into the linguistic traits present in our corpus.

## 5. Language description

As we move forward, it is important to first characterize the linguistic data obtained from the menus, to understand the diverse nature of the establishments under examination. To streamline our analytical approach, we have grouped the menus into two categories: local restaurants and national/international franchises. This grouping serves as a foundational framework, providing a structured lens through which we can explore linguistic nuances.

Exploring the specifics of this classification reveals that the approach hinges on the breadth of the establishments, considering factors like size and

ownership structure.[8] For example, local restaurants, typically smaller and independently owned, often operate with a limited budget for resources like menu translations.

In contrast, national and international franchises, backed by substantial financial resources and standardized operations, may be more inclined to invest in bilingual menus, especially in regions where bilingualism is widespread. Furthermore, these larger chains tend to present menus with a more polished appearance, featuring high-quality printing, professional food photography, design, and the involvement of qualified translators.

This contrasts with local restaurants, which often lack access to such resources. Thereby, they offer a more accurate reflection of the actual linguistic practices in Dieppe, as they haven't undergone the filtering process of translators, who typically favor Standard French, otherwise known as

> "International French, a French devoid of any trace of regional specificity, and above all, devoid of any trace of dominance by English" (Dubois and LeBlanc, 2014: 119).

## 6. Orthographical and grammatical errors

Bisson's grid addresses orthographical and grammatical errors. While these errors are not components of the Standard Quebec French, which the author primarily focuses on, they are prevalent in the linguistic landscape analyzed by Bisson. Despite their divergence from standard norms, they are informative of language use in Quebec.

In our corpus, a similar observation can be made regarding errors, with an apparent concentration in local menus. For instance, a restaurant offering Middle Eastern and North African dishes has two very visible misspellings in the website header guiding the reader to different categories, here *acceuil* (proper form: *accueil*) and *apropos* (*à propos*). Another local restaurant, offering French-inspired dishes (with an emphasis on crêpes) omits some agreements: "Déjeuners et brunch, servi toute la journée" ("Déjeuners et brunch, serviS toute la journée"). It is worth noting that these instances are not isolated, and numerous similar examples can be found throughout our corpus, highlighting a broader trend in errors within local menus.

[8] While factors like location, target clientele, and restaurant types (whether drive-thrus or sit-in establishments) were considered, they didn't appear to significantly impact language use.

## 7. Anglicisms

In the context of a French minority environment, the prevalence and influence of English in menu terminology stand out as noteworthy phenomena, particularly when considering the coexistence of Chiac with Standard French. The pervasive influence of English is not a mere linguistic phenomenon, but a reflection of a complex sociocultural interplay, where Chiac serves as an additional layer of linguistic diversity.

The prevalence of loan translations like *ailes de poulet* "chicken wings," *sandwich chaud* "hot chicken sandwich," and *crème sure* "sour cream" exemplifies this linguistic influence in local menus. Conversely, some menu items incorporate loanwords directly from English.

Examples include names like *Shirley Temple,* "a non-alcoholic cocktail or mocktail that is often enjoyed by children and non-drinkers, consisting of soda mixed with grenadine syrup" or *brownie* "a rectangular baked chocolate dessert," highlighting the dynamic interplay between the two languages in shaping culinary language.

The integration of certain English terms into the French language presents a challenge for local restaurateurs. An illustrative example is the term *wrap*, commonly used in English to refer to "a dish made by enclosing a filling within a flatbread or tortilla, then rolled to form a convenient and portable package." This term has been adopted into European French as a loanword and is widely accepted. In Canada, *wrap*, though sometimes found, is often translated to *roulé* to uphold linguistic purity, and avoid anglicisms.

Aligned with the ideology of Standard French, some restaurateurs seek to avoid the use of *wrap*, with results varying among individuals. While some opt for a direct translation, using *roulé*, others resort to more ambiguous terms such as *rouleau*. In this case, the use of the term *rouleau* in place of *wrap* introduces ambiguity, as it is commonly associated with *rouleaux de printemps* ("spring rolls"), a completely different dish. The motivation behind these linguistic choices remains unclear—whether stemming from a lack of knowledge or resources, or a strict adherence to Standard French ideology—and raises intriguing questions about the factors influencing these adaptations.

It is also noteworthy to observe that some local menus alternate between North American French words and Standard French words, even though the latter are translated from English. The presence of both *croustilles* and *chips* on local and national menus reflects the intricate dynamics of linguistic choices in places like Quebec.

While *chips*, originally an English term, has been widely adopted in French-speaking European countries to refer to *fried potato snacks* (also used is *pomme chips*), *croustilles* is the proposed term by official Quebec regulators[9] aimed at mitigating the encroachment of English words into the French lexicon. The coexistence of these terms on menus, without a clear preference for one over the other, could indicate uncertainty, specifically regarding which standard to follow: the traditional Standard French model or the emerging Quebec-centric model.

## 8. North American French

As expected, some menus feature North American dishes, many of which have become staples due to their traditional roots or more recent popularity among consumers.[10] Examples in local and national, and to some extent, some international menus, include *fèves au lard* (baked beans with salted pork) and *cretons*, a type of pork spread. The term *poutine* needs no translation and describes a beloved Canadian comfort food—a dish comprising French fries topped with cheese curds and smothered in gravy. Another notable Canadian culinary term is *peameal bacon canadien* ("peameal Canadian bacon"), referring to a bacon variety made from boneless pork loin, meticulously trimmed, and then wet-cured.[11] Another well-known Canadian dish, this time rooted in Middle Eastern cuisine, is the donair (a variation on the gyro). This popular dish, particularly associated with the Atlantic provinces, is made distinctive using a sweet garlic sauce. It is called *donair* in both English and French.

In addition to the linguistic variations observed in our corpus, a noteworthy feature is the alternation between Standard French and North American French terms within the same menus. A compelling illustration of this linguistic dynamic is evident in the use of both *pommes de terre* and *patate* (a local pub offers "Fruits de mer. Servi [*sic*] avec votre choix de frites, *patate* au four, purée de *pommes de terre*, riz ou rondelles d'oignon et salade de chou"; "Seafood. Served with your choice of fries, baked potato, mashed potatoes, rice, or onion rings, and coleslaw").

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9 See the *Grand dictionnaire terminologique*, produced by the OQLF, at: https://vitrinelinguistique.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca.

10 Interestingly, no menu described uniquely Acadian dishes within the city, as Acadian-based restaurants are mostly found in Moncton.

11 The outer coating, historically made with yellow peas but more commonly with cornmeal, gives it a distinctive texture. It is typically served sliced and can be cooked in various ways, such as frying or grilling. Peameal bacon is a popular breakfast item in Canada, and is often used in sandwiches, including the iconic "peameal bacon sandwich," where the bacon is typically served on a bun.

While *pomme de terre* denotes the potato and can be found in written French in Canada, the term *patate* finds common usage in everyday language among both Acadians and Quebecers (and in some colloquial usages in European French).

Collocations such as *patates frites* "French fries," *patates pilées* "mashed potatoes," and *salade de patates* "potato salad" exemplify the versatile application of *patate* and can help explain its continued use in French Canada. *Patate douce* is commonly used to designate the sweet potato, a distinct vegetable.

Similarly, the linguistic alternation is evident in pairs such as *crème glacée* and *glace* ("ice cream"). Within this context, *crème glacée* is predominantly employed in North American French across language registers, while *glace* is almost exclusively encountered in European varieties.

This usage disparity suggests a divergence in language preferences between North American and European French. Notably, the term *glace* is nearly absent from linguistic usage in North America, indicating what might be considered a maladaptation in the menus resulting from a strictly translation-oriented approach to language, adding a layer of complexity to our analysis.

Within this linguistic amalgamation, adaptations to North American practices become apparent.

For instance, a well-known international establishment deliberately incorporates terms like *déjeuner* and *petit déjeuner* ("breakfast")[12] in its menu, based on the country it is serving. Dieppe's location uses *déjeuner* for *breakfast*, whereas the restaurants in French-speaking Belgium and Switzerland make use of *petit déjeuner* and *petit déj* respectively. These adaptations to North American practices highlight the dynamic nature of language usage within the culinary domain.

## 9. Discussion

The contextualization of Dieppe within the broader Acadian sociolinguistic landscape emphasizes the unique challenges and opportunities faced by this francophone community, situated in a predominantly anglophone region. The corpus analysis of 31 bilingual menus from local and national/international establishments provides insights into the linguistic choices made by restaurateurs in Dieppe. Local menus, often marked by limited resources, exhibit no-

[12] See the *Trésor de la langue française au Quebec* website for an explanation of the 18th century shift in meal designations in France (https://www.tlfq.org/saviez-vous-que/dejeuner-diner-souper).

ticeable orthographical and grammatical errors, highlighting the linguistic challenges faced by community-driven businesses. This linguistic variation is not merely a reflection of regional idiosyncrasies, but also underscores the practical constraints these local establishments encounter. The influence of English is palpable, manifesting in anglicisms and loan translations, showcasing a delicate balance between linguistic purity and practical adaptability.

The linguistic alternation observed within menus, where both French and North American French terms coexist, suggests a dynamic adaptation to diverse language preferences. This linguistic fluidity is particularly evident in the choice of terms like *patate* alongside *pomme de terre* and *crème glacée* in conjunction with *glace*. The alternation reflects the bilingual and bicultural reality of Dieppe, navigating between traditional French language norms and the evolving linguistic landscape shaped by North American influences.

The impact of ownership diversity on linguistic practices emerges as a key theme in the discussion. Local establishments, often independently owned with limited resources, exhibit linguistic traits that might be considered closer to the everyday language spoken by the community. In contrast, national and international franchises, backed by substantial resources, display a more polished linguistic presentation, demonstrating a commitment to linguistic diversity and standardization.

The absence of unilingual French menus, juxtaposed with the prevalence of unilingual English menus, prompts a reflection on the role of language in reinforcing or challenging social identities within this bilingual city. The complexity deepens when considering the diversity in ownership and management. The study uncovers instances where restaurants managed by individuals with diverse ethnic backgrounds, particularly those offering Asian-inspired cuisines, may opt for unilingual English menus. This diversification of linguistic practices emphasizes the challenges faced by Acadian French, positioning it as a lesser-known and non-dominant variety in this intricate linguistic environment.

The linguistic dynamics within Dieppe's culinary scene reveal a rich tapestry of language decisions. The presence of North American French in menus not only reflects a blend of traditional and popular dishes rooted in the region's culinary heritage, but also adds a layer of complexity to the restaurateurs' decision-making process. The observed linguistic alternation between Standard French and North American terms within the same menus highlights the chal-

lenges and uncertainties faced by restaurateurs, caught in a delicate balancing act between linguistic influences and normative considerations.

## 10. Conclusion

Our analysis of restaurant menus in Dieppe, New Brunswick, provides valuable insights into the prevailing French linguistic landscape shaped by historical, demographic, and sociolinguistic factors. While additional statistical examinations are needed for a definitive identification of the dominant linguistic standard, our initial exploration strongly suggests a notable inclination towards North American usage.

This linguistic alignment is evident through the incorporation of numerous anglicisms, direct translations of English terms, and adjustments to meet North American culinary preferences. Our findings contribute to understanding the language planning challenges confronting Francophone communities in linguistic minority settings.

This study prompts further investigation into the normative centers guiding linguistic choices in the region. Moreover, future research opportunities could involve a deeper exploration of the evolving language dynamics in public spaces, services, and media within the Acadian linguistic landscape. Additionally, conducting interviews with restaurant owners and managers could provide valuable insights into their perceptions of language concerns and the city's efforts in language regulation.

This avenue of inquiry would offer a more holistic understanding of the interplay between linguistic practices and the perspectives of key stakeholders in Dieppe's culinary scene.

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# A Conversation Analytic Study of Interview Sequences from Selected Bengali Films

**Abstract**

This paper attempts to explore how the standardized structure of sequence organization in job interviews as a form of institutional interaction exhibits social hierarchy between the institutional representatives and the non-affiliated participants. The study is based on cinematic representations of job interviews in three Bengali films: 'Pratidwandi' ('The Adversary', directed by Satyajit Ray, 1970), 'Jana Aranya' ('The Middleman', directed by Satyajit Ray, 1975), and 'Interview' (directed by Mrinal Sen, 1971). The filmed sequences have been regarded as social-realist representations, interspersed with creative accentuations that serve to foreground possibilities of divergence from the institutionally enforced standard. Additionally, cases of norm-abidance and divergence have been analysed in order to investigate and breakdown the role of the institutionally restricted interactional order in the establishment, the sustenance and any potential contestation of the asymmetrical relation between the interviewer and the interviewee.

## 1. Introduction – Institutional interaction

"Institutional Interaction" (cf. Drew & Heritage, 1992) is a distinctive subset of social interaction whose sequential order and outcome are determined by the participants' orientation to the context as well as to the specific task being executed through the interaction. The institutional character of such interaction is further shaped by the implementation of a specialised turn-taking mechanism which functions by "pre-allocating turn-types" (cf. Atkinson & Drew, 1979) to the participants, according to their relative status and pre-defined roles in the interaction.

Functionally, this means that 'turn-types' in institutional talk are largely restricted to questions and answers (QA) and that each type is normatively

'allocated' to respective participant categories. Job Interviews, for instance, are observed to proceed through recurrent chains of Q-A exchanges, where the interviewer holds the right to frame questions on desired topics and the interviewee's speech is restricted to the production of relevant responses.

The interviewer(s) also thereby acts as "turn-mediators" as it is by asking question that he initiates a stretch of interaction and allocates the next turn to the interviewee, thus determining the range of topics, the turn-order and the trajectory of interaction.

## 2. Primary Data

The study analyses job interview sequences from the Bengali films *Pratidwandi* ('The Adversary', dir. Satyajit Ray, 1970), *Jana Aranya* ('The Middleman', dir. Satyajit Ray, 1975) and *Interview* (dir. Mrinal Sen, 1971). Significantly, all the excerpts depict unsuccessful job interviews. In the two films by Ray, the protagonists go through multiple interviews but displease the interviewers on account of non-conformative responses.

The case of the interviewee in Mrinal Sen's film, however, presents an exception: the interviewee is personally acquainted with a member of the interviewing panel. The 'uncle' recommends him for a sales job at a Scottish company, and assures him of success, on the condition that he appears 'smartly' dressed up in western formal attire for the occasion. Incidentally, he too fails to get selected for the position.

## 3. Objectives

The primary objective of our study is to analyse the standardised structure of the job interview as reflected in the interaction between the participants occupying asymmetrical power positions. Using Conversation Analysis as the primary theoretical framework, it aims to comparatively study the manifestations of normative adherence as well as diversions of enforced conventions, along with their implications in the interactive process and outcome.

## 4. Theoretical Framework

We shall adopt Conversation Analysis (henceforth abbreviated as CA) as the primary theoretical tool for the study. CA was conceptualised by Harvey Sacks (1974) along with his early collaborators Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson. It was primarily a method to describe the sequential order of 'talk-in-

interaction' (Schegloff, 1987) as it occurred in course of daily lives and to reason for its normative implementation by the participants as a fundamental tool for managing social lives and relationships. CA studies argue that the organisational features of conversation and/or 'talk-in-interaction' display orientation towards relevant social context by actively building an interpretation of the same within the sequence itself. Each turn of talk produced by a participant therefore serves as the context for the next turn to be produced by another participant, and each succeeding turn incorporates an understanding and interpretation of the previous turn. The cumulative process leads to structured execution of a social action.

The sequential distribution of talk through turn-taking mechanism has been explored in the pioneering work of Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson who argued that the "speech-exchange systems" are constrained by "the particular form of turn-taking system that operates on it" (1974, p.696). Its universal features include normative preference for, a. the convention of one-speaker speaking at a time, and, b. recurrent change in speakership.

The orderliness and economy affected through turn-taking is best explicated in the implementation of 'adjacency pairs'. According to Schegloff,

> "... adjacency pairs consist of sequences which properly have the following features: 1. two utterance length, 2. adjacent positioning of component utterances, 3. different speakers producing each utterance." (1973, p.295).

The adjacency pair sequences further exhibit "relatedness" (ibid, p.295-296) and "close order sequential implicativeness" (ibid, p.296) brought about by its basic rule of operation:

> "given the recognizable production of the first part [i.e., first of the two utterances], on its first possible completion its speaker should stop and a next speaker should start and produce a second pair from the pair type of which the first is recognizably a member..." (ibid, p. 296).

The Q-A exchanges constituting job interview sequences can serve to illustrate the point: in this case the interviewer is normatively assigned the task of asking 'question', that is initiating the first pair part, while the interviewee is expected to produce relevant 'answer' in the immediately following turn, thus completing the pair type. Moreover, the first pair status of the utterance carrying the question is sequentially implicative, as it always precedes second and also imposes limitations (especially regarding utterance range and pair type) on the selection of the second pair part. The occurrence of

the answer and its status as the second pair part is therefore dependent on the occurrence and sequential position of the first pair part, a co-relation that has been termed as "conditional relevance" (Schegloff, 1968, p.1082).

Apart from Q-A pairs, the sequentially implicative relation between adjacently placed formulation-account pair is particularly relevant to our study. According to Heritage and Watson (1979), formulation is implemented to articulate the speaker's understanding of a previous turn and in that it makes explicit the underlying process of interpretation affecting the turn-by-turn progress of social interaction. Formulation, much like the QA pair, contributes to sequential close ordering, as it is normatively paired by 'receptions' which is specifically oriented to confirming or disconfirming the proposed interpretation. Although both confirmation and disconfirmation are relevant and possible, the former is organisationally preferred as it displays the recipient's alignment with the interpretation or perspective established through formulation in the preceding turn.

The production of disconfirmation, on the other hand, is regarded as a non-aligning move and may also be socially untoward as well as face-threatening in certain circumstances. Hence, it calls for 'account' or explanation for non-aligning member. According to Scotts and Lyman (1968), "accounts are statements made to explain untoward behaviour and bridge the gap between actions and expectations" (p.46). While production and acknowledgement of an account serve to restore equilibrium, failure to produce an account invites "either overt or covert pursuits...or sanctions." (Heritage, 1988, p.135, 1998).

In course of our present study, we will analyse the various ways in which formulation-reception-account chains are implemented by the respective participant categories.

It is observed that the interviewers use interrogatively framed formulations to sequentially implicate desired responses and sanction against inadequate or unsatisfactory accounts. While the interviewee's co-operation on the matter shows his alignment and positive orientation to the task at hand, his failure to produce the solicited information signals his divergence from the normative order, often leading to disruption and an abrupt end in interaction.

## 5. Analysis of the Turn-Taking System

This section attempts a close investigation of the sequential pattern of excerpts selected from the interview sequences portrayed in the three films.

The chosen sections have been phonetically transcribed following the conventions of IPA (International Phonetic Association). The relevant prosodic, gestural and intonational details have also been documented with the aid of the transcript symbols compiled by Gail Jefferson (2004).This section is further subdivided into two parts, focusing on instances of norm-abidance and divergence respectively.

## 6. Norm-Abidance

This part of the analysis focuses on the interviewee's co-operative engagement with the contextually imposed turn-taking mechanism. By complying with institutionally prescribed norms, the interviewee in each case also accomplishes significant face-work: the display of alignment simultaneously exhibits acknowledgement of the interviewer's superior role and serves to project the aspiring candidate's law-abiding character, a desirable trait in a potential employee.

Before moving on to discuss the sequential aspects however, we shall briefly consider the visually recognisable elements of the "non-conversational ecological arrangement" (Atkinson, 1979, p.105) which is mobilised within the represented social context to influence norm-abiding behaviour. To begin with, a specific room is allocated within the institution where the interviewers are already seated and the interviewee can enter only when summoned by the interviewers. This standardised practice, while projecting the interviewers' control over the space and the concerned event as affiliated members of the institution, underscores the interviewee's subordinate status as the non-affiliated other who aspires for the reward of employment that only the interviewers can grant him. The two categories of participants are seated face-to-face at opposite ends of the table, and this uneven placement sets up a visual contrast between the collective front constituted by the interviewers (who are unified by their shared status and the common task of evaluating the interviewee) and the solitary presence of the interviewee. The following part of the analysis endeavours to show how this spatial arrangement facilitates the exercise of social dominance by one party over the other.

## 6.1 Excerpt A: *Pratidwandi*

P1: Interviewer; I: Interviewee

1 P1: ↑kʌm ɪn: ↑ ((waits 5.0 seconds for the interviewee to reach his designated spot at the table))

2 ((indicates the seat by extending his palm)) tek jɔ:r sɪt ˈpli:z =

3 I: =↓>θæŋkjʊ<↓

4 P1: jɔ:r ˈneɪm /pli:z?

5 I : ʃid.ˈdʰarto ˌtʃoʊdhuri_

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6 P1: ((checking documents on his table)) (5.0)>kʊd jʊ< ʃeʊ ʌs jɔ:r ˈpeɪ.pəz /pli:z?

7 I: ((ready to pull out the rubberband holding his papers. Looks at the speaker, waiting for him to complete his instruction))

8 (1.0) jessɛ:r ((simultaneously begins to unfurl the said papers))

The selected opening sequence utilises the discussed physical arrangement in the enactment of hierarchy between the two participant categories. The interviewee steps inside the room following the cue offered by the interviewer seated at the center of the panel (identified as P1 in the transcript).

The initial utterance (line 1) simultaneously functions as the ritual greeting and instructs the candidate regarding expected behaviour. Similarly, lines 2 and 4 are terminated with the standard request marker "please" but as instructions (for the candidate to occupy his designated seat, speak his name and produce required documents) with a strong preference for the recipient to follow. The interviewee, by responding in the expected manner, displays his orientation towards the contextually assigned task and responsibilities.

The normative structure of the interaction emerges from this preliminary exchange: a member of the interviewing panel is empowered to initiate turns for uttering first pair parts like instructions, summons and questions and allocate turn to the interviewee. The interviewee's contribution is constrained to the production of relevant second pair parts (in the form of articulated response and/or physical action) within the allocated turn, following which the next turn automatically reverts back to the interviewer(s).

## 6.2 Excerpt B: *Interview*

R: Ranjit, the interviewee (addressed by the interviewers as Mr. Mullick),

P1: Interviewer, seated at the centre of the panel; P2, P3,P4,P5: other members of the panel; U: Ranjit's Uncle, also on the panel; Px: Unidentified voice from the panel

1 R: ((stands at the door to the designated room, tugs at his punjabi and presses down his hair; then pushes the door, looks Inside and enters slowly))

2 U: ((has stood up from his seat and is about to hand over a document to P1; looks at R and stops in the middle of his action.))

3 ((Other members follow the direction of his gaze and keeps staring in silence))

4 P1: ((lifts his eyebrows and his spectacles, exchanges glance with P5 on his left, then goes back to stare at R))

5 P5: ((exchanges a look with P1, shrugs, then continues to stare at R))

6 ((The camera enacts the interviewers' gaze and 'discovers' R, clad in dhuti-punjabi, standing with folded palms and a smile on his face))

7 U: ((finally sits down. His eyebrows are knitted. He picks up his pen and exchanges brief glance with P2 on his right))

8 R: (20.0) ↑ gʊd ˈʌftrn ↓ ((walks forward to his allotted seat))

The narrative structure of the film *Interview* sets up the interview sequence as the climactic event where the interviewee is mandated to wear European formal attire in order to achieve success. However, the protagonist-interviewee goes through a series of misadventures in search of suitable clothing and is finally compelled to appear for the interview in ethnic attire comprising of dhuti-punjabi. The opening section of the interview registers the interviewers' reaction to this inadvertent breach in dressing code.

The interviewee's ethnicised appearance draws expressions of shock and disapproval from the panel of interviewers (lines 2-7), themselves identically dressed in black and white formal suits and seated together on one side of the table. Only a combination of non-verbal gestures are employed to reach consensus amongst the panel members and to communicate their impression to the candidate.

In absence of verbalised expression from the interviewers, any possible account or clarification from the candidate's end loses its status as a 'mentionable'[1]. This one-sided establishment of an interpretation that offers no scope for the recipient to argue his case appears to be a hegemonic act that imposes a narrow definition of "smartness" whereby a candidate failing to meet the parameters of the same is readily marked as a social misfit. Although the remaining interaction is apparently devoid of any further glitches or disruption, the derogatory perception collectively held by the interviewers ultimately influences their decision to reject this particular candidate.

[1] Mentionable: an utterance deemed appropriate and sequentially relevant. The context for an utterance is provided by the contents of the preceding turn, to which the said utterance also bears its relevance. Since the interviewers have not asked the reason for his divergence in dressing, the interviewee cannot produce the same without also appearing to speak inappropriately out of turn. (Schegloff & Sacks 1973 p.78)

The interviewee initially waits for the panel to verbally address him and then responds to their non-verbal communication with a greeting (line 8) inflected with a smile and slightly raised terminal intonation. Without being spoken to, he cannot verbally account for his act of sartorial divergence; therefore he offers the token of greeting in an attempt to retrieve his social image, as it is more likely to elicit an acknowledgement or response. Although the interviewee here appears to breach the assigned participant role (that normatively bars him from self-selecting to initiate turn), his choice of a verbal token that ritually invites participation together with the adoption of a cordial tone shows his orientation towards the normative distribution that empowers his interlocutors to judge and formulate, and obligates him to present himself in a desirable manner under all circumstances.

## 7. Divergence

John Heritage (1998) prescribes detailed analysis of the apparent divergences from normative expectations as an effective method of describing the distinctive turn- design at work as well as its implications for the institutional interaction. From the point of view of power dynamics, it can be argued that the juxtaposition between normative abidance on one hand and disruption followed by the attempts at re-assertion on the other serve to expose the ways in which inherently asymmetrical identities are defined and contested in course of the interaction.

### 7.1 Excerpt C: *Pratidwandi*

P2, P3: Interviewers; I:Interviewee
1 P2:= >wɛn dɪ.djʊ< ˈgræ.dʒʊ.et_
2 I:ə:b (.) nʌɪntɪn sɪkstɪ sɪks.=
3 P3:= ↑n jʊ həv bi:n ˈaɪdl ɛvə /si:ns:↑
4 I:/ neʊ sɜ:,
5aɪ (.) wʌz ət ðə ˈmɛdɪkəl ˈkɒlɪdʒ ↓fə tu: jɪəz↓.
6 P3:↑wɒt wə jʊ ˈdu:.iŋ ˈðeə?↑
7 I: stʌ.ˈdi:ŋ /sɜ:.
8 P3:((inclines head to one side, adopts quizzical expression)) əʊnli fə tu:
jɪɜ:z!
9 I: (1.0) jesɜ:_
10 P3: (2.0) /wɑt meɪd ju:,
11 (1.0) /gɪv ʌp ˈmɛdsɪn,
12 dɪ.djʊ sʌdenli ˈlu:z ˈintrɪst ɪn ˈmɛdsɪn?
13 I: neʊ sɜ:r,
14 a:ɪ (.) lɒst maɪ ˈfa:ðe.
15 P3: aɪ si:.

Lines 3-9 in the given excerpt lie at the interface between normative orientation and divergence. The interviewee participates in the close ordering process by producing the conditionally implicated second pair parts and yet manages to withhold desired information, thereby marking his non-alignment with the dominant framework.

The member (P3) of the interviewing panel bases his formulation (line 3) on the information elicited through the query made by the previous interviewer. The raised terminal intonation together with the application of the adjective "idle" communicates the speaker's negative opinion of the recipient, the interviewee.

Structurally, the utterance serves as the first pair part which then sequentially implicates a confirmation or disconfirmation as the fitting second pair part, to be produced by the interviewee. In the given context moreover, idleness is not a desirable trait: therefore, the interviewee is also normatively expected to account for himself and salvage his social image which has been threatened by the allegation of being "idle". He disagrees with the formulation and accounts for the same (lines 4-5) by referring to his studies at the medical college "for two years".

Such deployment of formulation and its constraining effect on the interviewee's response can be instanced as a case of projection of the interviewer's elevated position as a turn-mediating and turn-initiating speaker. The subsequent turns, however reveal the inadequacy of the interviewee's account.

The problem lies in the interviewee's declared duration of medical study: "for two years", as it further implies that he has not completed his medical training. It must also be observed that, contrary to normative expectation, the interviewee does not voluntarily provide the reason for his curtailed duration of study within the same turn-at-speech (lines 4-5). This omission is clearly an act of divergence as the interviewee thus violates his role-specific responsibility to articulate fitting responses that aspire to meet the interviewer's expectation.

The interviewer does not explicitly identify the problem in the immediately succeeding turn, but issues an invitation (line 6) for the interviewee to initiate repair or supply additional details. The interviewee's response (line 7), in spite of technically functioning as a relevant second pair part, shows that he has refused to both repair his previous statement and recognise the need for further explanation. The interviewer (P3) continues his

pursuit for clarification with another follow-up question (line 8). He directly quotes the problematic section in the interviewee's account, viz., "for two years" and adds the qualifier "only" to underscore the need for repair and further explanation. In response, the interviewee maintains his stance by curtly re-affirming his previous account (line 9) without additional details.

These two QA exchanges (lines 6-7 and lines 8-9) exemplify situations where adjacency pairs fail to elicit desired information in spite of adhering to the criteria of conditional relevance as well as normative participant roles. The pursuit for clarification continues as the interviewer now constructs his turn to incorporate two questions on the same subject: while the first one (lines 10-11) directly inquires the reason for leaving medical studies unfinished, the second one (line 12) suggests a candidate response to the first question and seeks the recipient's confirmation.

Sequentially, the interviewer's turn functions as the first pair part and limits the scope of the succeeding turn (which has been normatively allotted to the interviewee) to the production of an explanation for the unfinished course of study. The interviewee, thus cornered, finally reveals (lines 13-14) the tragic circumstances (his father's demise) under which he was forced to give up on his studies. It may also be observed here that through his reluctance to share this piece of interactionally relevant personal information, the interviewee consciously forgoes the opportunity to represent himself in a manner that would have potentially gained the sympathy of his interviewers and saved him from their negative opinions. Since favourable self-representation is most likely to induce positive interview outcome for the job aspirant, his discernible lack of interest to do so also amounts to his refusal to acknowledge the superiority of the interviewers and their institutionally bestowed power to decide his fate through the interview process.

The following sequence from the same film is also marked by significant display of divergence.

## 7.2 Excerpt D: *Pratidwandi*

P1, P3: Interviewers; I:Interviewee
1 P1: /wʰɒt ʊd jʊ rɪ.ˈgɑːrd,
2 æz ðə meʊst aʊt. /stʰæn.dɪŋ,
3 ənd sɪgˈnɪfɪkent ɪˈvɛnt əv ðə lɑːst dɪ. /keɪd?
4 I: (10.0) ðə (1.0) wʌr ɪn vjɛt.ˈnaːm sɜːr .
5 P1: (2.0) mɔːr sɪgˈnɪfɪkənt ðən ðə ˈlændɪŋ əv ðə /muːn?=
6 I: = aɪ ˈθɪŋk səʊ sɜːr.

((long silence (7.0) ensues. P1feels strained to maintain equilibrium, breaks eye contact with the interviewee. The other panellists look disturbed and embarrassed))

7 P3: kəd jʊ tɛl əs ˈwʰaɪ jʊ θɪŋk /səʊː?
8 I: bɪˈkəz ðə mʊn lændɪŋ -
9 (3.0) jʊ siː
10 (1.0) wɪ- wi wɜːnt enˈtaɪəli ʌnprɪ.ˈpeəd fə ðə muːn lændɪŋ_
11 wɪ- wɪ- wi njʊ ɪt həd tə kʌm sʌmtaɪm,
12 wi njuː əˈbaʊt ðe speɪs flaɪts,
13 ðə greɪt (.) əd.ˈvɑːn.sɪz ɪn speɪs tɛk.ˈnɒlədʒi,
14 seʊ wi njuː ɪt həd tə /hæ.\pən!
15 (2.0) aɪm nɒt seɪŋ ɪt wɒznt ə-
16 ə rɪ.ˈmɑːrkəbl ə.ˈtʃiːvmənt,
17 bət ɪt wɒznt ʌnprɪˈdɪktəbl!
18 ðə fækt ðæt ðeɪ ˈdɪd lænd ɒn ðə ˈmuːn. =
19 P1: = dːjʊ θɪŋk ðə wɔːr ɪn vjɛt.ˈnɑːm wʌz ʌn.ˈpredɪktəbəl?
20 I: (1.0) nɒt ðə wɔːr ɪt./sɛlf,
21 bət (1.0) wʰɒt ɪt həz rɪ /vɪːld,
22 ə.ˈbaʊt ðə vjɛtnəː.ˈmiːz /piː\pl!
23 əˈbaʊt ðeər (.) ɪksˈtrɔːrdnriː ˈpaʊər əv rɪ.|zɪstəns,
24 ɔːrdnrɪ piːpl,
25 ˈpɛ.zənts,
26 nː ˈnəʊ wʌn njuː ðeɪ həd ɪt ˈɪn ðəm,
27 ↓ aɪ min↓,
28 ðɪs ɪznt ə mætər əv tɛk.ˈnɒ.ləˈdʒiː,
29 ɪts dʒʌst ˈpleɪn ˈhjuːmən /kʌ.\rɪdʒ!
30 ənd ɪt (.) teɪks jɔːr brɛθ əˈweɪ.
((P1 leans back in his chair and stares at the interviewee in silence))
31 P1: (4.0) ɑːr jʊ e kɒmjʊ./niːːst?
32 I: aɪ- ((smiles))
33 aɪ dəʊnt θɪŋk wʌn həz tʊ ˈbiː wʌn ɪn ɔːdə tʊ ədmaɪə vjɛt.ˈnaːm sɜː
34 P1: (7.0) ðæt dʌznt aːnsə maɪ kwɛstʃen.
35 haʊɛvər,
36 jʊ meɪ /gəʊ naʊ. ((rings bell to summon the next interviewee))

The interviewer (P1) initiates turn to ask a question (lines 1-3) that is ostensibly designed to probe the interviewee's knowledge about contemporary geo-political affairs. It is structurally open-ended as it selects the theme but allows the respondent to choose from a wide pool of data. However, the interviewee's response would not only reflect his knowledge about current affairs but also simultaneously reveal his ideological stance that is bound to influence the interviewers' decision regarding his suitability as a candidate employee. Here one needs to briefly consider the broader socio-political and

temporal frame within which the interview sequence is located in order to fully appreciate the implications of this particular exchange (lines 1-34).

The film *Pratidwandi* portrays an educated young man's (the interviewee of the selected sequence) struggle to find employment in a socio-politically restive West Bengal of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The era was marked by growing enthusiasm for Leftist political movements among the youth of West Bengal, and also by large scale protests in West Bengal against the atrocities of the protracted Vietnam War (1955-1975). Youth oriented to Leftist politics were however regarded as radicals and therefore held at a distance by the more conservative populace, government institutions and other establishments. Now since protests against the Vietnam War in West Bengal were also chiefly mobilised by the Left, any person voicing his empathy for the war ridden 'Vietnamese people' (line 22) was likely to be regarded with similar apprehension.

The long pause of 10.0 seconds taken by the interviewee to weigh his decision (line 4) shows that he is aware of his stakes and the possible outcomes. By electing 'the war in Vietnam' (line 4) as the "the most significant and outstanding event of the last decade" (lines 2-3) he clearly defies normative expectation for a relatively, neutral apolitical response and registers his non-alignment with the dominant perceptions and ideologies. The response is met with a slight nod and a follow-up question which signals the interrogator's displeasure and prompts the interviewer to justify his controversial choice.

This time the interviewer restricts the open-ended character of his previous question by quoting an alternative choice that the interviewee has just foregone: a more neutral response like "the landing on the moon" would have effectively displayed the interviewee's awareness about current affairs as well as his alignment with normative expectations. The interviewee responds by re-affirming his unsafe choice (line 6), and when he is subsequently allocated a turn to justify his preference for "war in Vietnam", he puts up an eloquent defense (lines 8-18, 20-30) to argue his point.

His elaborate response occupies the floor of conversation for an inordinate length of time, thereby disrupting the closely–ordered and task-oriented structure of the interaction. His speech, characterised by increased pace and frequent tonal variation, resembles impassionate oratory. More significantly, emphasis on terms like 'resistance', 'human courage', together with the terminating utterance that describes the event of common people fighting professional armed forces as a breath-taking phenomenon, reveals his

personal ideological preferences and indicates that he has mentally shifted away from the institutional context and the normative pattern of interaction. When the interviewee finally stops speaking, the interviewers do not immediately utilise the transition relevance place to initiate the next turn. Instead, their silence marks a significant pause in the interaction and signals their collective disapproval.

The discernible silence is followed by a query about the interviewee's political leanings (line 31). It is both a question and an evaluation drawn on the basis of the interviewee's speech on the historical significance of the Vietnam War. This interactional move, constituting of meaningful silence and formulation, obliquely critiques the interviewee's explicit act of non-alignment, and thereby asserts the interviewer's superior position as well as restores the institutional context of the interaction. The interviewee chooses not to comply and instead responds with a comment (line 32-33) on the question itself: his remark critiques the interrogator's understanding of 'communism' and 'communist' on which the question is based.

Structurally, his utterance begins with a false start followed by a smile and the opinionated response. These features indicate the interviewee's awareness about the normative demand for a confirmation or disconfirmation at this juncture, and his deliberate choice to defy the same. His response also looks back to the topic of the previous exchange and continues the thread of justification for "admiring Vietnam". Significantly, his response addresses the primary cause of the interviewer's query about his political affiliation while simultaneously defying the structural demand for conditional relevance. The lack of relevance is immediately called out by the interviewer (line 4). His utterance, a formulation spoken with a final falling intonation, aims to reprimand the interviewee's divergence and assert the norm which obliges the interviewee to provide a fitting, relevant second pair part to the interviewer's question. It is followed up with an instruction for the candidate to leave.

The ending of the sequence is executed single-handedly by the interviewer as his terminal utterance does provide the recipient with a transitional relevance place to voice his acknowledgement. This interactional move can also be interpreted as a bid to recognise and re-assert institutionally established hierarchy followed by the temporary disruption caused by the interviewee.

## 7.3 Excerpt E: *Jana Aranya*

P1: First panelist (in order of speaking); PX : First speaker among the panelists whose identity is unknown; PY: Second speaker among the panelists whose identity is unknown; I:interviewee.

1 P1: ˈwɒt ɪz ðɪ weɪt ɒv ðə ˈmuːn.
2 ((P1 leans back in his seat))
3 I: ((keeps staring at the speaker but does not offer any response))
4 P1: (3.0) ↑ˈwɒt ɪz ðɪ weɪt ɒv ðə ˈmuːn↑?
5 I: ˈtʃãder o↑dʒoːn↑?
Weight of the moon
6 P1: ((nods his head as an affirmative gesture))
7 P1: wɑt ɪz ðɪ weɪt ɒv ðə ˈmuːn.
8 I: (2.0) er ʃɔŋ↑ge↑ː,
With this
9 (1.0) ˈtʃakrir ki ʃɔmpɔrko.
how is the job related
10 Px: ↑ðætsˈ ˈnɔt fə jʊ tə ˈdʒʌdʒ jʌŋ ˈmæːn,
11 Py: tomake dʒa dʒiggeʃ kɔra ɦotʃ↑tʃeː↑,
What you are being asked
12 dʒodi dʒaːno;
If you know
13 tahole uttor dao.
Then give the answer
14 I: ((stares at the panel of interviewers; then lowers his head, lifts
15 his spectacles,rubs his eyes with fingers))
16 I: (6.0) ˈdʒani na. ((speaks without establishing eye contact))
I don’t know.
17 P: (1.0) jʊ meɪ ↑gəʊ↑ naʊ. ((throws his documents on the table))
18 I: ((looks up startled.gathers his documents, binds them with rubber band while keeping his gaze fixed at the panel))

In the chosen excerpt from the film *Jana Aranya*, the interviewee diverges from the assigned participant role when, instead of answering the interviewer’s question about “the weight of the moon”, he chooses to utilise the allotted turn to retort back with a question. This move is non-conformative on multiple grounds:

1. The interviewee breaks the expected sequential arrangement of QA adjacency pair by not providing the relevant second pair part to the interviewer’s question.
2. He switches to his mother tongue Bengali and thereby defies the formal convention of speaking in English at interviews.

The interviewee’s question functions meta-communicatively to express his negative opinion that the question “What is the weight of the moon?” has no pertinence to the job on offer. Sequentially, his utterance functions as a

formulation that articulates the speaker's interpretation of a previous turn and implicates the occurrence of a justification in the succeeding turn allocated to the interviewers. The preferred and conditionally relevant second pair part in this case would either be an account in defense of the question articulated by the interviewer or a self-repair to modify the same. Thus the interviewee not only shifts to a different linguistic code, but also appears to have shifted to a diametrically opposite position, one that potentially empowers him to impose his definition of the situation and regulate the speech of the interviewers.

The interviewing panel's intervention checks this subversive possibility. Instead of following up on this cue for repair or account-giving, a representative voice from the team of interviewers chooses to reprimand this aberrance. The interviewee is accordingly reminded that he is not in a position to judge the efficacy of an interviewer's question. It is followed up with another voice from the panel that instructs the interviewee to respond appropriately if he happens to know the answer to the question. This sanction explicitly serves to re-instate the team of interviewers to their institutionally empowered role in the interaction. However, their partial shift to Bengali in lines 11-13 requires closer observation. We may observe that the reprimand (line 10) as well as the final instruction to leave (line 17) are uttered in English, the linguistic code conventionally chosen for conducting interviews, whereas the advice to respond appropriately is offered in Bengali.

Remarkably, this shift in linguistic code shows accommodation towards the interviewee's previous shift to Bengali. This alternation between the two linguistic codes communicates the interviewers' intended actions and serve to express the corresponding stances they choose to adopt with respect to the interviewee.

Lines 10 and 17 emphatically serve to remind the interviewee about the interviewers' superior status and their decisive role in the ongoing interaction. Lines 11-13 on the other hand aim for the interviewee's better comprehension and are therefore uttered in the linguistic code previously chosen by the interviewee himself. Thus reprimanded and instructed to produce a contextually and socially fitting response, the interviewee admits his defeat. His turn consists of a long pause (6.0 seconds) which he spends staring at the panel and then gradually lowering his gaze, lifting his spectacles and hiding his eyes in his hand in a gesture of final surrender. Significantly, his final utterance is also in Bengali (line 16), but the accompanying gesture in this case projects his sense of surrender rather than the previous stance of confrontation.

The study of all the above sequences clearly reveals that English, apart from being the conventional choice of linguistic code for conducting interviews, is also the preferred language of power and social hierarchy.

## 8. Relation between Divergence and Ending Sequence

It may also be observed that in the last two instances that we have discussed, the interviewee's divergence is not only confronted with explicit sanction but also interpreted as the primary cause of complete disruption in the communication channel leading to the ending of the sequence.

In each of the two excerpts D and E, the interviewer's decision to end the interaction follows closely upon the sequence constituting the interviewee's divergence and the interviewer's critique of the same. Additionally, in each case, the final utterance is accompanied by an explicit non-verbal gesture (Excerpt D- line 36; Excerpt E- line 17), that underscores the interviewer's disapproval.

The non-conformative gestures on part of the respective interviewees are thus held responsible for the single-handed, abrupt ending executed by the interviewer. The point can be further argued by comparing the endings of excerpts D and E with that of the sequence from the Interview, where the interaction progresses without marked divergence, and reaches a socially amicable ending:

### 8.1 Excerpt F: *Interview*

R: Ranjit, the interviewee (addressed as Mr. Mullick by the interviewers) ;P1: Interviewer, seated at the centre of the panel; Px: Unidentified voice from the panel

1 Px: whɒt (0.2) ɪs ðe bɪgest iːvent ɒf ðˈdei?
2 R: tʊdeɪ?
3 Px:↓jeːs,
4 ðæts rʌi- ↓
  That's right
5 R:((smiles)) mʌɪ (.) ɪntərvɪuːz.
6  ((The panelists burst into spontaneous laughter))
7 P1: ((stands up and shakes R's hand))/wɛł,
8  ˈθæŋkjʊ ˈmistə ˈmʌłɪk.
9  ˈθæŋkjʊ ˈverɪ ˈmʌtʃ.
10  wə ˈwil,
11  kəˈmjʊːnɪˌkeɪt tʊ jʊ.
12  ˈθæŋkjʊ. ((both R and P1 continues to smile while this speech is uttered))

The exchange (lines 1-6) preceding the terminating speech (7-12) is characterised by a situation where a conventionally non-normative response produced by the interviewee is not marked as divergence by the superior participants but rather met with approval. In line 5, the interviewee jokingly elects his interview as 'biggest event' (line 1) of the day, and the panellists show their appreciation for the witty remark by bursting into spontaneous laughter. While the joke is not a normatively expected response, it gains legitimisation through the panelists' explicit display of approval.

The effect of social harmony is maintained in the ending sequence as the interviewer stands up to signal the end of interaction, engages the interviewee in a cordial handshake and offers the promise of future correspondence. Although the interviewee is unable to respond verbally, such an ending caters to his positive face want and his harmonious participation in the process is marked by the hand shake and the smile.

However, the fact that the interviewer unilaterally executes the ending in all three cases without providing any turn to the interviewee to verbally respond to his proposition, indicates the specialised character of this category of interaction. Such a pattern runs contrary to the normative practice applicable for spontaneous and ordinary conversation.

According to Schegloff (1973), the endings of ordinary conversations are collaboratively structured by the co-participants through the implementation of an adjacency pair that allows the recipient to offer acknowledgement or consent to the proposition for ending a discourse.

We may further deduce from our analyses that this exceptional manner of endingdisplays the rigidity of the institutionally enforced norms shaping the social hierarchy as well as the sequential order of job interview.

## 9. Conclusion

The paper has attempted to analyse the organisational structure of institutional interaction, more specifically the job interview. It has been observed that the asymmetries in distribution of conversational rights engendered through the specialised turn-taking mechanism leads to a hierarchical relationship between the two participant categories. The above discussion also demonstrates that the management and negotiation of contextually relevant social power function as significant catalysts and are inextricably related to the normative structure of the interaction.

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## 10. Appendix: Glossary of Transcript Symbols

| Serial No. | Symbols | Uses |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | [<br>[ | Overlapping talk: Left square brackets indicate the onset of two overlapping utterances. |
| 2. | ]<br>] | Overlapping talk: Right square brackets indicate the end of two overlapping utterances. |
| 3. | = | Latching: Equal signs, one placed at the end of one line and the other placed at the beginning of the next indicate lack of pause or gap between two turns. |
| 4. | (.) | A dot in prentheses indicates a micro-pause, ordinarily silence less than 0.2 seconds. |
| 5. | (0.0) | Numbers in parenthses represent time elapsed in silence. It is measured in seconds. For example, (1.5) would indicate a gap of 1.5 seconds. |
| 6. | . | Indicates gradually rising intonation |
| 7. | ? | Indicates terminally raised intonation |
| 8. | _ | Underscore indicates levelled intonation |
| 9. | ! | Indicates animated intonation, often rise-fall. |
| 10. | - | A hyphen after a word or part of a word indicates a hesitation or cut-off mid-flow. |
| 11. | : | Colon indicates prolongation of the preceding sound. The more colons, the longer the streching. |
| 12. | > < | Talk delivered at a faster rate than surrounding talk is transcribed within angles brackets pointing outwards.<br>>> << indicates much faster talk. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 13. | ↑ ↑ | Indicates a notably higher shift in pitch for the text between the upward arrows. |
| 14. | ↓ ↓ | Indicates a notably lower shift in pitch for the text between the downward arrows. |
| 15. | h | Indicates audible out-breath. Multiple h indicates longer length of out-breath. |
| 16. | .h | Indicates audible inbreath. Multiple .hindicates longer in-breath. |
| 17. | (( )) | Text within double parentheses represent additional comments on non-verbal beahviour or descriptions of any other activity related to the ongoing interaction. |

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# Language making and language (re)naming: The case of the Moldovan language

**Abstract**

The article analyses the measures and goals of language planning and language policies taken by the Russian Empire and subsequently by the Soviet Union concerning the language spoken in the Republic of Moldova, which lasted almost two centuries.
Special emphasis is given to the naming of the language spoken in Moldova. As can be shown in many other cases, the naming of a language is an important tool of language planning and language policy.
In the wake of the political developments at the end of the 20th century, and the independence of the Republic of Moldova in 1991, these language planning and language policy measures finally came to an end. Due to the resilience of the Moldovan language, the experiment of creating/the attempt to create a language separate from Romanian must be considered a failure.

## 1. Introduction

Deliberate and planned developments of a language are frequently used instruments to achieve political goals. In these processes, the name of the language plays an important role.

A good example are the two languages, Urdu and Hindi. Modern Urdu is a cultural product created artificially by a movement of linguistic reform in the cities of North India towards the end of the eighteenth century. It became a Muslim identity marker. Modern Hindi was just as artificial a construction as modern Urdu and became the identity marker of Hindus (Rahman, 2021:391).

In this article, I shall discuss the case of language policy and planning regarding the language spoken in the Republic of Moldova, which was exposed to language policy measures in various contexts for practically two centuries. The name of this language has always played an important role in this process.

In the first two sections I will present a brief outline of the country of Moldova, its history, as well as the linguistic situation. This general description

is based on the article Edelmann, Gerhard (2022): The Status of the Moldovan language. In: Muhr, Rudolf / Edelmann, Gerhard / Ghosh, Aditi / De Ridder, Reglindis (eds.): Pluricentric languages in different theoretical and educational contexts. Graz: PCL-Press.

This brief introduction is followed by a detailed discussion of the language policy measures taken in the Tsarist period and during the time when the country was part of the Soviet Union. The last sections deal with the naming of the language spoken in Moldova.

## 2. Moldova - The Republic of Moldova

Since August 1991, the Republic of Moldova (Republica Moldova) has been an independent and sovereign State. The capital of Moldova is Chișinău. On the North, East and South Moldova has borders with Ukraine, and on the West, it is separated from Romania by the Prut River. The country has a population of 2,566,000 (2023 est.) and a total area of 33,843 sq km. About three-fourths of Moldova's population consists of ethnic Moldovans. There are smaller populations of Ukrainians, Russians, Gagauz, Roma, and Bulgarians. There are two regions with a special status:

1. *Unitatea Teritorială Autonomă Găgăuzia* (Autonomous Territorial Unit Gagauzia) and
2. *Unitățile administrativ-teritoriale din stînga Nistrului* (Territorial administrative units from the left part of Nistru river, generically known as Transnistria) (Encyclopedia Britannica (2023)[1].

### 2.1 History

The present-day states of Romania and Moldova were formed in the course of history from a number of historical regions. The most important ones were the autonomous Principalities of Wallachia, Moldova and Transylvania, which, in the wake of the collapse of the Hungarian kingdom, became vassals of the Ottoman Empire (Murgescu, 2006:223).

After the Peace Treaty of Bucharest, which ended the Russian-Turkish War of 1806–1812, the eastern half of the principality was annexed by the Russian Empire, which called this region Bessarabia. It remained part of the Russian Empire until 1918 (Giurescu, 2000:248).

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[1] https:// www.britannica.com/place/Moldova

In the wake of the chaos brought about by the Russian Revolution, in December 1917, the Moldovan Democratic Republic (Republica Democratică Moldovenească) was proclaimed, which was unified with Romania (Lindenbauer, 2006:174). So, Greater Romania, România Mare, the expanded nation-state uniting the majority of Romanians, came into being (Edelmann, 2022:59).

In 1924, the Soviet Union created a Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (MASSR) on the territory east of the Dniester River, within the Ukrainian SSR. After the collapse of the western European front in the Second World War, in 1940, Romania was compelled to cede its territories between the Prut and Dniester rivers to the Soviet Union. Under Stalin, the landlocked Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic (MSSR) was created out of the central rump of eastern Moldova and a narrow part of the MASSR (Transnistria). The weakening and eventual collapse of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union led to the declaration of independence in 1990 and the creation of the independent Republic of Moldova in 1991 (Edelmann, 2022: 60).

## 2.2 The Moldovan language

### 2.2.1 Romanian

Romanian is a part of the Eastern Romance sub-branch of Romance languages and, like the other Romance languages, developed between the fifth and seventh/eighth century, however, it underwent a specific development that gave this language a special position among the neo-Latin languages (Arvinte; 2010:288).

### 2.2.2 Differences between Moldovan and the Romanian spoken in Romania

Heitmann (2011:508) points out that the spoken (colloquial) Moldovan is a regional variety of Romanian, which is as common in a large part of Romania (the territory of the former Principality of Moldova) as in the territories of the Republic of Moldova. Coseriu speaks of the so-called Moldavian language because there is no such language that differs from Romanian or the Dacoromanian dialect. In Coseriu's opinion, it is the result of a very specific ethnocentric cultural policy that has no right to exist (Coseriu 1999: 205). According to Gabinskij (2002: 134), there are differences between Moldovan and Romanian spoken in Romania regarding the pronunciation of some phonemes and some grammatical features. The most striking differences exist in the lexicon.

### 2.2.3 Codification of Moldovan

The Institutul de Filologie Română "Bogdan Petriceicu-Hasdeu", which is incorporated in the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, is a public institute entrusted with the tasks of fundamental and applied research in the fields of linguistics, literature, folklore and terminology. Point 2.4 of the Statutes reads:

> *Obiectivele principale ale Institutului sunt*: 1) *studierea şi descrierea limbii române în Republica Moldova* (The main objectives of the Institute are: 1) Study and description of the Romanian language in the Republic of Moldova).

The linguist Stati published a Moldovan-Romanian dictionary (Dicționar moldovenesc-românesc), which contains 19,000 entries of expressions of the language spoken in Moldova with an explanation in Romanian. The dictionary assumes the existence of two different languages; in the introduction, Stati speaks of *două limbi naționale: moldovenească şi românească* (two national languages: Moldovan and Romanian) (Stati, 2003:12).

### 2.2.4 Bilingualism

An important factor in assessing the language spoken in Moldova is the existing bilingualism. Officially, the expression *bilingvismul armonios* (harmonic bilingualism) was often mentioned, but according to Bojoga (2013:77), in practice, Moldovan was pushed out of the public space by Russian, it had the role of a *cenuşăreasă* (Cinderella). Gabinskij (2002:138) states that in the cities (except Transnistria) Moldovan and Russian are heard approximately in a 50:50 ratio, although Moldovan is gaining in importance as an official and everyday language.

### 2.2.5 Pluricentricity

Edelmann (2022:70) considers Moldovan as a variety of the pluricentric Romanian language due to Moldova's sociolinguistic situation.

### 2.2.6 Language planning

Moldavian is a good example of a language that, for a long time was the object of a language policy aimed at creating a language of its own, with the corresponding language planning measures. In the following, I will give an overview of the individual language planning and language policy measures

taken in the course of almost two centuries, as well as the discussions about the naming of the language spoken in Moldova.

## 3. Language policy in the tsarist period (1812–1918)

According to Bojoga (2013:177), language planning with the aim to create an independent Moldovan language began already in the tsarist period.

At the beginning of this period, in which 95% of the population only understood their mother tongue, which was on the level of a colloquial language of peasant illiterates (Heitmann, 2011:513), there was a neutral or functional bilingualism (Bojoga, 2013:177). Besides Romanian, the Russian language began to play a certain role in administration, education, and religious services.

By the end of the first half of the 19th century, the Romanian language was increasingly pushed back and banned from the administrative and judicial spheres. Romanian still was present in education, but only as a subsidiary subject. Bojoga calls this type of bilingualism, with a clear predominance of the Russian language, partial diglossic bilingualism (Bojoga, 2013:180).

The period between 1843 and 1871, is characterised as assimilation bilingualism. In the first years of this period, Romanian still was a subject of instruction in schools, but at the end, it was officially forbidden in schools (Bojoga, 2013:180).

By the end of the 19th century, this form of bilingualism gave way to official monolingualism. Russian was now the only language permitted in practically all areas of public life, while Romanian was relegated to the colloquial and family spheres. Even the church was affected: In 1872, Archbishop Pavel ordered that all documents of the church had to be written in Russian (Bojoga, 2013:180).

At the beginning of the 20$^{th}$ century, the awakening national consciousness fought for political liberation and the defence of its own language. The first newspapers and magazines were published in Romanian. However, the state labelled this language as Moldovan, which was said to be different from Romanian. This theory of the existence of two different languages was politically motivated because the Russian side feared that Bessarabia could break away from the Russian Empire and unite with Romania (Bojoga, 2013:181).

## 4. Language policy in the MASSR (1924–1940)

In section 2, I pointed out that after the Russian Revolution, Moldova was integrated into the Romanian state, and the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (MASSR) was created within the Ukrainian SSR.

Heitmann (2011: 513-515) explains that language policy in the MASSR took different approaches over time, some of which contradicted each other. In the first years (1924–1928), linguistic separatism was still low, and the Romanian language was used as a basis for cultural work. But soon this tendency, which could be called Romanophile, came under attack.

From 1928 to 1932, the language policy attempted to radically differentiate the Moldovan language from Romanian. The linguist L.A. Madan tried to reconstruct the written language on the basis of the autochthonous dialect. In addition, the Cyrillic script was to be reintroduced. This movement with the purpose of distancing the Moldavian language from Romanian is known as Madanism. However, there followed a countermovement in the sense of a rapprochement with the Romanian language.

But in the course of the great purge carried out by Stalin in 1936–1938 both the madanist and the Latinizing-Romanian language policies were judged as bourgeois-local or Romanian-infected nationalism and thus banned (Heitmann, 2011:514).

## 5. Soviet language planning in general

The Soviet language policy is a very complex process, which went through various phases. At the beginning of the Soviet power, Lenin declared that all nationalities should be treated absolutely equally and that the rights of minorities should include freedom and equality of language (Grenoble, 2003:35).

Under Stalin, the language policy of the Soviet Union changed drastically. In 1938, the study of Russian in schools was declared compulsory by decree. At the same time, a growing campaign to switch to the Cyrillic alphabet began. All in all, one can recognise a deliberate tendency towards Russification in the measures taken in the field of language policy (Grenoble, 2003:54).

After the Second World War, this trend of the Soviet language policy continued and became stronger. While national languages had previously been the focus of language planning, the goal of establishing Russian as the language of the Soviet Union was formulated from the mid-1950s onwards. The trend intensified in the following years. Russian was introduced as a compulsory sub-

ject in education, while teaching in the national languages was reduced (Grenoble, 2013:57). The Russification process intensified further under Brezhnev in the 1970s. The glorification of Russian strongly resembled the tsarist russification campaign in the last years of the regime (Kreindler, 1989:52).

It is interesting to note that even with glasnost and perestroika, no real change occurred because the central government in Moscow paid little attention to language and nationality policies (Grenoble, 2013:63).

## 6. Language Policy in Moldova in the Soviet Period (1940–1991)

After the creation of the MSSR, the MASSR language policy from the late-1930s was extended to the entire MSSR. The language of higher education, the urban elite, and of social mobility in general was Russian. Thus, a situation of strict diglossia was created with Russian serving high functions, and local languages, such as Moldovan, were functionally limited to the home and other informal settings (Ciccel, 2006:578-579).

The Soviet government started a campaign to create a Moldovan ethnic identity, with a Moldovan language, distinct from the Romanian language, as a central point of this identity (Grenoble, 2003:90). This movement was politically and ideologically motivated aiming at distinguishing the country from the bourgeois Romania.

The standardization and codification of this language in the years between 1939 and 1945 were the work of the philologist I. D. Cobanu, whose descriptions of grammar and the orthography of the Moldovan language remained the standard for school teaching until the end of the Stalin era. As in the time of Madanism, the written language was dialectalised again, on the basis of the Chişinău variety of Moldovan, which created a considerable distance to Romanian. This applied in particular to phonetics and vocabulary (Heitmann, 2011:514).

In the years 1950 to 1951 there was a course correction. At the conference organized in December 1951 by the Linguistic Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, Soviet linguists stated that the Moldovan language was a Romance language whose characteristics were not the Slavic elements, but the Romance grammatical structure and lexicological fund from Latin (Bojoga, 2013:36). However, this change of course was no more than a brief episode. The official position of Soviet language policy was that Moldovan was a different language from Romanian (Grenoble, 2003:91).

The strict language policy was already softened in the final years of the Soviet regime and came to an end with the country's independence. How can we judge the Soviet language policy? Haarmann (2013:235-236), who wrote an article under the descriptive title "Moldovan – Rise and Fall of a Standard Language", offers a good summary stating that the standard Moldovan language is a child of the 20th century. The main focus of Soviet language planning was to create a clear linguistic distance between the Moldovan population in the Soviet state and the population in the neighbouring state of Romania. One might consider this as an interesting experiment. But it turned out to be an artificial product, which was abandoned by parliamentary resolution in Chi°inău in the autumn of 1989.

## 7. The importance of the name of a language

The name of a language plays an important role in the context of language policy measures. There are a number of examples in which the name of the language even leads to conflicts.

In his article "Conflict between Valencian and Catalan: Is Valencian a language of its own or a variety of Catalan?", Edelmann (2020) presents the controversies surrounding the question of whether the language spoken in the Valencian community alongside Spanish should be called Catalan or Valencian. There are even used other expressions in order to avoid mentioning the name of the Catalan language, such as *llengua nostra* (our language), *lengua cooficial distinta del castellano* (co-official language other than Spanish) and *lengua autonómica* (language of the Autonomous Community) (Moranta, 2015:134).

Another example for the importance of the naming is the term *Unterrichtssprache* (language of instruction) for German introduced in 1946 in the school reports in Austria, with which the Ministers of Education Fischer and later Hurdes wanted to avoid any reference to German, perhaps also in order not to stand in the way of a possible special peace treaty with Austria after the Second World War. However, this designation was soon withdrawn (Dollinger, 2011: 412). In the following, I will discuss the role of the name of the language spoken in Moldova in the context of language policy.

## 8. The official name of the language spoken in Moldova

The situation regarding the official name of the state language in the independent Republic of Moldova was somewhat complicated because the Declaration of independence of 1991, speaks of "Romanian" as the state language:

*.....decretarea limbii române ca limbă de stat și reintroducerea alfabetului latin .....* (declaring Romanian as the state language and reintroducing the Latin alphabet...)[2], whereas the Constitution of Moldova, which was adopted in 1994, originally stated in its article 13: *Limba de stat a Republicii Moldova este limba moldovenească, funcţionînd pe baza grafiei latine* (The national language of the Republic of Moldova is Moldovan, and its writing is based on the Latin alphabet). However, later article 13 (1) has been changed into: (1) *Limba de stat a Republicii Moldova este limba română*[3]. Now, both documents use the same designation.

It is noteworthy to mention that the Official Website of the Republic of Moldova calls the languages in which it can be accessed, RO (Romanian), EN (English) und RU (Russian). There is no mention of Moldovan. In section 3.I mentioned already that the Statutes of the *Institutul de Filologie Română "Bogdan Petriceicu-Hasdeu"* speak of the Romanian language in the Republic of Moldova. It can therefore be clearly stated that the current official name of the language spoken in Moldova is Romanian.

## 9. The name Moldovan language is an instrument of politics

In the past, the name Moldovan language was used as an instrument to pursue political ends.

I mentioned that already in the tsarist period, attempts were made to pursue political goals through the naming of the language. Later, the MASSR tried to design a new language with an own name according to class principles. In this sense, Moldovan should be the language of the Moldovan working class, while Romanian would be the language of the class enemy spoken in the salons of the Bucharest bourgeoisie (Bojoga, 2013:17).

The doctrine of the Moldovan language was also used to emphasize the statehood of the Republic of Moldova. Communist President Voronin declared in 2007 that the Moldovan language, the history of Moldova, the anthem and the coat of arms were necessary as state attributes to ensure the country's independence (Bojoga, 2013:67). Needless to say, that such an argument is not valid when one considers how many states in the world share their language with other states without their independence being called into question.

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[2] Declaration of Independence ot the Republic of Moldova

[3] Constitution of Moldova

## 10. Creating a Moldovan identity by the name Moldavan language

The above-mentioned dictionary of Stati is an eloquent example of the attempt to create a separate identity from Romania by using the term Moldovan language. The dictionary assumes the existence of two different languages; in the introduction, Stati speaks of două limbi naţionale: moldovenească şi românească (two national languages: Moldovan and Romanian). It is clearly stated that the purpose of this dictionary is political; it is intended to underline Moldova's statehood. I quote a characteristic sentence from the introduction to the dictionary as an example of the ideological content of the work (Stati, 2003:6):

> Prin promovarea noţiunii de "limba moldovenească" se urmăreşte: renunţarea categorică la statalitatea românească a Republicii Moldova. Deci dezicerea, renunţarea de lingvonimul limba moldovenească înseamnă dezicere, renunţarea de Statul Moldovenesc, acceptarea statalităţii româneşti.
> [By promoting the notion of "Moldovan language" it is intended to categorically renounce the Romanian statehood of the Republic of Moldova. So, to disclaim, to renounce the Moldovan language means disclaiming and renouncing the Moldovan State and accepting the Romanian statehood.]

## 11. Avoiding the name

Bojoga points out that in official use it was often avoided to mention the name of the language, and other names were used. In this context, the author quotes the expressions *limba de stat* (language of the State), *limba noastră* (our language), *limba oficială* (the official language), *limba de instruire* (language of instruction), *limba neamului* (language of the people), limba strămoşească (the ancestral language) and others (Bojoga, 2013:63). We also find this approach in other countries, as shown above with the example of Valencian.

## 12. Conclusion

The almost two centuries of language planning and language policy measures concerning the language spoken in the Republic of Moldova, taken by the Russian Empire and subsequently by the Soviet Union, show a variety of approaches aimed at distancing the country from neighbouring Romania for ideological or political reasons. The name of the language, i.e. whether the lan-

guage spoken in Moldova should be called Moldovan or Romanian, played an important role in this process.

However, the language spoken in Moldova proved to be surprisingly resilient. The experiment of creating a separate language must be considered a failure. The language that is officially called "Romanian" in the country is a variety of the pluricentric language Romanian.

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# Beyond Standardization? The 2022 DIN Spelling Reform in Germany: Navigating Fascist Legacy and Pluricentric Realities in Germany and Austria

## Abstract

The influence of NS ideology on the German language has a long history yet has only recently been discussed in more major venues. (Hutton, 1999). The continuing preoccupation with this topic is another sign of the will of the German society to continue to deal with and clarify its National Socialist past in a sustained and critical manner, not only in the historical and social spheres, but also in the linguistic sphere. This article will discuss and interpret the problem of National Socialist influences in the German language and possible solutions using the example of the reform of the official spelling table according to the official German DIN standard in 2022. It shows to what extent still today - consciously or unconsciously - expressions and symbols of an inhumane ideology such as National Socialism can influence our choice of words or way of thinking and the efforts of a confrontation with and solution of this problem. Furthermore, there is also the question and to what extent this negative influence should be taken into account when teaching German as a pluricentric foreign language (DaF: Deutsch als Fremdsprache / German as a Foreign Language) in third countries such as South Korea, for example, in order to avoid unintentional linguistic and cultural misunderstandings, actions or misinterpretations in the target countries by their users.

## 1. Introduction

"Political language - and with variations this is true of all political parties, from Conservatives to Anarchists - is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind." George Orwell (Cf. Orwell, 1946)

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The German language underwent major changes in usage, word formation, and style during the Third Reich (1933-1945) (Klemperer LTI, Maas (1984), Pfalzgraf (2019), Dollinger (2023)).The Nazi government introduced new words or gave new meanings to old words to achieve its inhumane goals and to disguise or justify many of its oppressive and inhumane measures, including those of persecution and genocide. A well-known example here is the word '*Reichskristallnacht*' as a euphemistic term for the '*Reichsprogromnacht*' ('*Night of Broken Glass*'): A term for violent acts against Jews that were committed primarily in the night of 9–10 November 1938) in November 1938. The results of these linguistic manipulations were so characteristic of the Hitler era that the German of that period is referred to as "*Nazi German*" (Nazideutsch)[3]" both in everyday usage and in the linguistic literature on German. It is only since the 1960s that the question of the public treatment of linguistic expressions which have been considered as "loaded" with the Nazi ideology has received broader attention in the Federal Republic of Germany (Brunssen, 2010).

Some obvious features of the German language associated with National Socialism were eliminated after the collapse of the Third Reich, and their use was socially outlawed, for example "*gesundes Volksempfinden*" (engl.: '*common sense*')". However, some others have survived their elimination from usage to the present day and are still present in language teaching. Furthermore, due to a resurgence of far-right extremist ideas in Germany and Austria since the early 1990s, terms used by Nazis have been revived and neologisms have been created and are increasingly used in these political spectrums. Examples are as '*Lügenpresse*' (Press of lies), '*Identitäre*'[4] or words with hybrid meanings like '*Querdenker*'[5].

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[3] Walter Trier. Nazi-German in 22 lessons – Nazi-Deutsch in 22 Lektionen.

[4] According to the German Office for the Protection of the Constitution, the "Identitarian Movement" originated in France. It wants to preserve local, regional and European identities, which it sees threatened by the migration movement, especially of Muslims. In its view, a conspiracy of media and political elites is behind this development. In Germany, it was active from 2012, initially on the Internet, and later with concrete actions. Today, the "Identitäre Bewegung Deutschland e.V."(IBD) has about 575 supporters nationwide. With various forms of action, it appeals primarily to a younger target group. (Landesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2023).

[5] It is often viewed negatively because lateral thinking has something of a disruptive effect on normal operations, even something of sabotage. The terms "lateral thinker" and "ricochet" are not far off. The term is evaluated positively because new thinking can often only come about by freeing oneself from routines and, in case of doubt, beginning to think at cross-purposes to the prevailing basic convictions. Then the term can even take on something heroic (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, 2007).

How much this influence still has an effect until today will be illustrated in this paper by the example of the official German spelling table in Germany and Austria. The following questions arose in this context: What traces of the Nazi system remained until recently, despite a reformation of the spelling board after the collapse of the Third Reich, and what dangers can they still pose? What is the realistic impact of these confrontations and reforms on the teaching of DaF in third countries such as South Korea?

In order to determine how this *"language of the inhuman"* was included and later removed in German reference works, standards and norms, examples of past and present terms, proverbs and sayings in pre- and post-Nazi dictionaries, various literature sources and media articles were selected, analyzed and presented in this paper.

The present article investigates vestiges of characteristic elements and features of National Socialist language use in the official German spelling tables made by the Nazis. The table was in use in Germany until May 2022. The article offers possible solutions and thoughts on a sustained engagement with this conflictual topic.

## 2. Unintended use of National Socialist-incriminated symbols and terms in the German language

In dealing with this topic, it became apparent that some elements that have their roots in the National Socialist past are still used in some parts of German society and linguistic culture. In the media, one often hears and reads about celebrities in public life and politics in Germany and Austria who used historically charged terms knowingly or unknowingly to advertise their image.

In September 2021 and most recently in December 2023, the German AfD party politician Björn Höcke allegedly used the slogan *'Everything for Germany'* (Alles für Deutschland)' during an election campaign. He now has to stand trial, but the former history teacher denies that he knew it was a banned slogan[6].

Another famous example is the multiple scandals surrounding the former German news anchor Eva Hermann, who frequently caused public outrage in the German media by statements relativising National Socialism by speaking of a *"gelenkten Presse"* (a press in line) and glorifying the Nazi regime as *"builders of the motorway"*[7] etc. The effects of politically and historically charged language

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[6] https://www.zdf.de/nachrichten/politik/deutschland/hoecke-prozess-nazi-parolen-vokabular-verbotene-begriffe-100.html

[7] ZDF-Talkshow of Johannes B. Kerner, 9 Oct. 2007.

on a society are, potentially speaking, always topical and more dangerous than one might think, especially if, for example, the meaning of a Nazi linguistic rhetoric is not completely understood. This is not only true in German-speaking and -cultural spaces.

There is a danger that teachers and learners of German from third countries, such as South Korea, who are not deeply familiar with the recent German history of National Socialism, may take on this diction and unintentionally commit a linguistic or cultural faux pas. Avoiding this is certainly not an easy task and, in terms of effort, a rather secondary goal of DaF instruction. However, raising awareness of this issue should be of important relevance in current times of resurgent nationalism and racism worldwide and its rising violence.

The consequences of careless use of historically loaded symbols, language, vocabulary, proverbs, and euphemisms, such as those used by the Nazis, can be seen in a number of examples from recent years that have caused a stir in the public and global media. For example, EURONEWS and other global news channels reported extensively on this following scandal: Shortly before the opening of the Tokyo 2021 Summer Olympics, a creative director famous in Japan was sacked by the organizing committee. He is said to have used the phrase *"Let's play Holocaust"* in a Japanese comedy show in 1998 to mock the murder of Jews by the Nazis[8]. NBC News reported that a Connecticut teenager was arrested after he allegedly gained access to a school's database and changed a yearbook caption to an Adolf Hitler quote and altered another one to include the name of a Boston Marathon bomber[9].

In some Asian countries, Nazi paraphernalia can be seen quite often and can even be purchased, e.g. via online mail order companies. In Indonesia, according to the German news magazine 'FOCUS', there should have been a Hitler café in the city of Bandung in 2015.

“Most Indonesians don't realize what the Holocaust meant” says historian Asvi Warman Adam of the Indonesian Institute of Science, blaming the education system: "Criticism of the Nazis and fascism is hardly heard in Indonesia, Adolf Hitler's 'Mein Kampf' has been translated into Indonesian and

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[8] https://www.euronews.com/2021/07/22/olympic-opening-ceremony-director-fired-for-holocaust-joke

[9] https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/student-arrested-over-hitler-quote-boston-marathon-bomber-reference-yearbook-n1274485

is often sold out."[10] Other correspondents also confirm that while the history of World War II is taught in Asian countries, the lessons usually focus only on the region and not on what happened in Europe, and that there are no Jewish organizations in Asian cities that would normally raise awareness of the Holocaust. Image 1 was taken in a hallway of a Korean university and shows an advertising poster of the local ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corps). It seemed irritating to native speakers of German.


Image 1: Future leader? (Own photo)

It is difficult to understand why a mixture of Korean and German terms and exclamation marks was used on this poster. Is it perhaps due to clichés that would be associated with the German language and history connected to militarism, discipline, strength, and so forth? The very word "Führer" on this poster would almost certainly shock the majority of native German language users with appropriate historical education and awareness with an unpleasant feeling.

This assumption was confirmed by a direct survey of some native German speakers living in Korea. The reason here is obviously an involuntary linking of the German term 'Führer' used in the poster with the history of National Socialism in Germany. In contrast, German speakers from third countries such as South Korea without historical background knowledge would probably not feel any particular emotional stirring or historical connection to the Nazi regime, except for the linguistic meaning of this term. The word "*Führer*" for example, translated into English, would have been "*leader*" and denotes a leading, influential, and preceding person. With an English wording, the poster

[10] Focus Online (2015). Indonesier betreibt Hitler-Café – Kellner in SS-Uniform: (translated from German: Den meisten Indonesiern sei nicht klar, was der Holocaust bedeute, sagt der Historiker Asvi Warman Adam vom indonesischen Institut für Wissenschaften und macht dafür das Bildungssystem verantwortlich. „Kritik an den Nazis und am Faschismus ist in Indonesien kaum zu hören, Hitlers Mein Kampf wurde ins Indonesische übersetzt und ist oft ausverkauft.“)

would not have created negative associations among native German speakers and would have been considered emotionally neutral. Further noticeable on this poster are also the many exclamation points. The Nazis certainly did not invent the use of exclamation points. Historically, however, it is proven that there was an excessive use of exclamation points in written and striking Nazi propaganda. According to Manfred Engel, exclamation marks contain an "*Anschreifunktion*" or a "yelling-at-someone" function. They have a similar function in many commercial advertisements or also, for example, in the tweets of politicians such as former US president Donald Trump (Engel, 2021). But how can someone recognize national socialist elements in the German language? What are their typical characteristics?

## 3. Some elements and features of the National Socialist use of language

For a total of 12 years (1933-1945), the National Socialist ideology changed the German language according to their iedology. From 1938-1945, due to the geographical and political connection (Anschluss), Austria was also affected by Nazi language use. The leaders of the National Socialists knew too well how the written and spoken language could be used as an instrument to exercise political power and influence the population. Adolf Hitler and his Reich propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels were considered particularly skilled rhetoricians of their time who knew how to cast a sinister spell over the masses. For their own purposes, the German language during the Third Reich underwent drastic changes in terms of everyday language usage, word formation and style.

A notable example of this is the saying "*Jedem das Seine*" (To each his own) (Latin: Suum cuique), which is still often used in conversation in German-speaking society today. It originated in ancient philosophical moral and political theories and encompasses concepts of justice and equity. Here, the focus is particularly on distributive justice and the principle of distribution. For example, through a just distribution of goods, each citizen of a community should receive what he or she deserves. However, this principle, which is plausible in itself, is evaluated differently by many. To this day, the slogan is unmistakably linked to the entrance gate of the former Buchenwald concentration camp (KZ), where the slogan was displayed and was a cynical distortion of the original meaning.

A prisoner and former Bauhaus employee named Franz Ehrlich, who was imprisoned in the Buchenwald concentration camp at the time, had to design the inscription "*Jedem das Seine*" ("To each his own") (Knipphals, 2018). In this concentration camp near Weimar, more than 56,000 people were killed or perished from 1937 to 1945 due to the unparalleled horror of the prison conditions. Many users are also unaware of the connection between the slogan "*Arbeit macht frei*" ("Work makes you free") and the Buchenwald concentration camp where this inscription was on the entrance gate.

According to German author and journalist Matthias Heine in his book "*Verbrannte Wörter*", the Nazis themselves left no doubt that they wanted to create a new variety of the German language. From 1933 onward, high school students were taught not only the Nazi ideology but also the "correct use of terminology." The basis was provided by dictionaries written by Nazi functionaries, such as Carl Haensel's and Richard Strahl's "*Political ABC of the New Reich*" or the "*Pocket Book of National Socialism*" by Hans Wagner.

The infamous Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels himself formulated the state goal as early as March of 1933: "The people should begin to think uniformly, to react uniformly." (Heine, 2019). Already in the following editions, important German dictionaries such as the Duden, Brockhaus, or Meyer were *'gleichgeschaltet*', which means that they were brought into line in the sense of the Nazi ideology. National Socialist-influenced vocabulary, new designations, new institutions and titles of the Nazi hierarchy (e.g., *Blockwart*, *Obersturmbannführer*, etc.), and numerous compounds of Nazi racial science (e.g., *Rassenhygiene*, *Erbpflege*, etc.) were steadily added.

After the war and the surrender and dissolution of the Third Reich, these editions were completely removed from libraries and destroyed by the Allies as Nazi literature. The 13$^{th}$ edition of the Duden of 1947 appeared so quickly after the collapse of the regime because education for democracy was not considered possible with a dictionary that was still peppered with poisoned expressions (Heine, 2019).

The denazification of the German language was a primary goal in both German states (West-Germany, East-Germany) after the second World-War with very different political systems at the time. A much respected basic work for this purpose is the more than 700-page reference work by Cornelia Schmitz-Berning entitled "*Vocabulary of National Socialism*" which appeared in the 1990s. In this work, the roots of Nazi word usage are explained in great detail. These were said to be found primarily in anti-Semitic agitation since the mid-19th

century (Heine, 2019). According to Heine (2019), researchers identified several typical elements of the NS regime's way of speaking and divided them into four different types. These elements make it quite easy for laypersons to identify Nazi-Socialist elements in German speech:

1. The first type are often new word formations (neologisms) such as "*Sippenhaftung*" (clan liability) or "*Kulturschaffende*"(culture creators). The infamous ballistic missile V1/V2, developed by the Nazis shortly before the surrender, was called a "*Vergeltungswaffe*" or "retaliatory weapon".
2. In the second type, words were deliberately subjected to a change of meaning. Examples of this are the linguistic term "*Arier*" (Aryan), which was changed to a racial designation under the Nazis. The adjective '*fanatical*', in turn, had its connotation changed to a positive term.
3. The third type consists of high-value words that had a special ideological significance for the Nazis, such as '*Volk*' (people, nation), '*Rasse*' (race, breed), '*Blut und Boden*' (blood and ground), and so on.
4. The fourth type comprises expressions from other political and social groups that were adopted by the Nazis for their own purposes. Examples include terms such as '*Wandervogel*', '- *socialist*', '*Pimpf*', or '*Führer*' (Heine, 2019). A modern example of this adoption can be found in the meaning of the abbreviation of the German far-right party NPD (Founded in 1964), It calls itself the '*National Democratic Party of Germany*', knowing full well that the use of the word 'National Socialist' would have resulted in an immediate ban and criminal consequences.

## 4. The German spelling table (phonetic alphabet) from the National Socialist time to the present

This chapter deals with the changing history of the German spelling table, which can serve as an example of long-lasting National Socialist influences on German language practices with effects up to the present day, and how pragmatic reforms can be implemented.

What was the purpose and function of the German spelling table in the beginning? The first national German spelling table was introduced in 1890 due to the spread of the telephone network within the German Empire. For technical reasons, people often found it difficult to understand each other. By a fixed standardization it should serve as an unmistakable dictation aid. Initially, numbers were used for the corresponding letters (A = 1, B = 2, C = 3, D = 4, etc.). The name Maier for example was then spelled accordingly 13, 1, 9, 5, 18.

In 1903, instead of numbers, fixed first names were used for the individual letters, which was much easier from a memo technical point of view. This practice has remained in the German speaking countries until today. Mostly German first names are used, like for example A like ( = ) *Anton* or B like ( = ) *Berta* were used. But there are also geographical names: N = *Nordpol* (North Pole) and emotional terms like Ä (A-umlaut) = *Ärger* or names of occupations Ö (O – umlaut) = *Ökonom* (economist).

In 1934, shortly after the National Socialists came to power, a drastic change was made to the German spelling table in response to a written complaint received and in line with National Socialist ideology[11]. The decisive reason for this is said to have been that the earlier form of the spelling table from the Weimar Republic included, among others, biblical/Jewish first names such as *Jacob* for J or *Samuel* for S (Schwender, 1997).

The originally used letter-name combinations of biblical or Jewish origin were replaced by the Nazis with traditional names of Germanic origin, a geographical term or a technical term. For example, they changed the following letter-word combinations in their reform: D = (like) *David* => (to) *Dora*, J = *Jacob* => *Jot*, N = *Nathan* => Nordpol (north pole), S = *Samuel* => *Siegfried*, Z = *Zacharias* => *Zeppelin*.

Even when naming their children, the Nazis made sure to use German names, since in their opinion, depending on someone's name, they were the most visible sign of his or her origin (Heine, 2020). Also of interest is a detailed comparison of the reformed composition of the official German and Austrian spelling tables after the collapse of the Third Reich. These give some idea of how these two countries dealt with the darkest chapter of their history in their standard dictionaries and in their social, linguistic and cultural policies.

### 4.1. Reforms of the German spelling table after WWII in Germany

The reasons for the reforms of the official German spelling table after WWII were manifold. One must consider that after the end of the Nazi period, a high value was placed on revision and denazification, even in the linguistic field. The first such reform took place in 1948. Among other things, '*Kurfürst*' (engl. Prince Elector) and a number of other terms were '*Kaufmann*' (engl. Merchant) and '*Öse*' (engl. Eyelet) by '*Ökonom*' (engl. Economist) were also replaced. However, the 'denazification' was limited to just two letters: '*Siegfried*'

[11] https://www.schwender.in-berlin.de/buchstabiertafel.html

became '*Samuel*' again, and '*Zeppelin*' was replaced on the spelling list by '*Zacharias*'.[12]

Until the summer of 2022, the following spelling table (table 1) (German standard DIN 5009) was used and taught in the Federal Republic of Germany and this was also the case in DaF-lessons in third countries.

| Letter | The German Spelling table DIN 5009 until 2022 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | Anton | J | Julius | Sch | Schule |
| Ä | Ärger | K | Kaufmann | ß | Eszett |
| B | Berta | L | Ludwig | T | Theodor |
| C | Cäsar | M | Martha | U | Ulrich |
| Ch | Charlotte | N | Nordpol | Ü | Übermut |
| D | Dora | O | Otto | V | Viktor |
| E | Emil | Ö | Ökonom | W | Wilhelm |
| F | Friedrich | P | Paula | X | Xanthippe |
| G | Gustav | Q | Quelle | Y | Ypsilon |
| H | Heinrich | R | Richard | Z | Zacharias |
| I | Ida | S | Samuel | | |

Table 1: German spelling table DIN 5009 until 2022[13]

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[12] Öffentliche Sicherheit 11-12/06, p.49

[13] https://www.buchstabieralphabet.org/

[14] Öffentliche Sicherheit 11-12/06, p.49

Michael Blume, the anti-Semitism commissioner of the state of Baden-Württemberg, initiated the last spelling reform in Germany in 2019. He was bothered by the fact that the spelling table at the time still contained relics from the Nazi era.[15] The German Institute for Standardisation (DIN), which administers the spelling alphabet as DIN 5009, set up an expert commission in 2020 which proposed that German place names should replace the first names known throughout the language. Therefore, in view of these undesirable NS legacy, the final version of the reformed spelling table was published on May 13, 2022. It replaced the 1996 amended version DIN5009:

| The new German Spelling table DIN 5009 of 2022 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | Aachen | K | Köln | T | Tübingen |
| Ä | Umlaut Aachen | L | Leipzig | U | Unna |
| B | Berlin | M | München | Ü | Umlaut Unna |
| C | Chemnitz | N | Nürnberg | V | Völklingen |
| Ch | / | O | Offenbach | W | Wuppertal |
| D | Düsseldorf | Ö | Umlaut Offenbach | X | Xanten |
| E | Essen | P | Potsdam | Y | Ypsilon |
| F | Frankfurt | Q | Quickborn | Z | Zwickau |
| G | Goslar | R | Rostock | | |
| H | Hamburg | S | Salzwedel | | |
| I | Ingelheim | Sch | / | | |
| J | Jena | ß | Eszett | | |

Table 2: Revised German spelling table DIN 5009 (since 2022) [16]

Further reasons for the reform are certainly also the changes within the German society. From the point of view of the DIN standardizers, the table with the previous first names did not sufficiently reflect the cultural diversity of the population.[17] Blume explained: "We cannot undo the painful history of the

[15] StN.DE (2021): Reform der Buchstabiertafel. Buchstabiert wird bald mit Städtenamen. Translated from German: Ausgelöst hat die Reform Michael Blume, Baden-Württembergs Antisemitismusbeauftragter. Ihn stört, dass in der aktuellen Tafel noch immer Relikte aus der Zeit der Nationalsozialisten stecken.

[16] https://www.buchstabieralphabet.org/

[17] StN.DE (2021). Reform der Buchstabiertafel: Buchstabiert wird bald mit Städtenamen (Translated from German: In Frage kommen Städte, die klar unterscheidbar sind und die Vielfalt des Landes abbilden. Hintergrund für die Städtenamen ist auch die Veränderung der gesellschaftlichen Realität: Eine Buchstabiertafel mit den bisherigen Vornamen, spiegelt aus Sicht der DIN-Normer die kulturelle Diversität der Bevölkerung in Deutschland nicht ausreichend wider.)

spelling board for some of its terms. With this representation, however, we want to heal the interventions from the Nazi era, at least symbolically."[18]

Kathrin Kunkel-Razum, the head of Duden's editorial department, expects the old and new boards to be used in parallel in Germany for a while, despite the reform in 2022. At some point, an international tablet could also become established: "For the moment, however, the hurdles for this still seem very high, since the international tablet is based on the English alphabet and has so far been used primarily in international radio traffic in the military and in seafaring.[19] Blume also remarks that moreover, not all languages have the same letters. "Ä wie Ärger" is typically German - as has been the case with the standardization of spelling for around 130 years." He does not rule out the possibility that in the future people will simply use words from everyday life when spelling their mail addresses, and that the official blackboard will thus be changed for the last time. He said "that's precisely why it's important that the Nazis don't have the last word on that." [20]

## 4.2 Reforms of the Austrian spelling table after WWII

In Austria, the spelling alphabet was standardised by ÖNORM A 1081 from 1985 and 2010. For most letters, the Austrian spelling alphabet was the same as the German spelling alphabet according to DIN 5009, but there are some letters that differed from the German spelling table. For example, the Austrian spelling table uses the name *Konrad* for the letter K (instead of *Kaufmann*), *Österreich* (Austria) for 'Ö' (instead of Ökonom), *Xaver* (instead of Xanthippe) and the German '*Eszett*' is called '*scharfes S*' ('sharp S'). According to the Austrian Standards Institute, which is responsible for Austrian standards, ÖNORM A 1081 has been withdrawn in 2017 without replacement as there was no consensus reached in the commission.[21]

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[18] Blume, M. in Bilanitsch, K. (2021). Statt Nazi-Tafel: Künftig soll mit Städtenamen buchstabiert werden: Translated from German: „Wir können die in Teilen schmerzhafte Historie der Buchstabiertafel nicht ungeschehen machen. Mit dieser Darstellung wollen wir die Eingriffe aus der NS-Zeit aber zumindest symbolisch heilen."

[19] Kupke, S. & Roth. G. (2021). "A wie Anton" und "N wie Nordpol" haben ausgedient: Buchstabieren wird reformiert: (Translated from German: Kunkel-Razum erwartet, dass die alte und neue Tafel eine Zeit lang parallel verwendet werden. Irgendwann könnte sich auch eine internationale Tafel etablieren: "Für den Moment scheinen die Hürden dafür jedoch noch sehr hoch zu sein, fußt die internationale Tafel doch auf dem englischen Alphabet und ist bisher überwiegend im internationalen Funkverkehr beim Militär und in der Seefahrt im Einsatz.")

[20] Neue Buchstabiertafel (2021). W wie Wiesbaden: So buchstabieren Sie demnächst richtig

[21] https://austria-forum.org/af/Wissenssammlungen/Essays/Vermischtes/Buchstabieralphabet: "There is no longer a responsible technical committee, as a broad letter to stakeholders did not

In practice, ÖNORM A 1081 is still used.

| Letter | Spelling table ÖNORM A 1081 until 2019[22] | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | Anton | L | Ludwig | U | Ulrich |
| Ä | Ärger | M | Martha | Ü | Übel |
| B | Berta | N | Nordpol | V | Viktor |
| C | Cäsar | O | Otto | W | Wilhelm |
| D | Dora | Ö | Österreich | X | Xaver |
| E | Emil | P | Paula | Y | Ypsilon |
| F | Friedrich | Q | Quelle | Z | Zürich [23] |
| G | Gustav | R | Richard | | |
| H | Heinrich | S | Siegfried | | |
| I | Ida | Sch | Schule | | |
| J | Julius | ß | scharfes s | | |
| K | Konrad | T | Theodor | | |

Table 3: Austrian Spelling table ÖNORM A 1081 of 2010 [24]

The Austrian standard (ÖNORM A1081) still contains five letter-word combinations from the Nazi era in its version of 2010, while the West German version (DIN5009) contained only three of them before the reformation in 2022. Not one of the five biblical names has been revived in Austria, and even the Nazi 'evil (übel)' has survived, unlike in DIN 5009. Numerous newspaper articles and letters to the editor, both in Germany and in Austria, have denounced this symbolic but deep-rooted adoption and retention of the Nazi era and called for a cautious reform of the spelling alphabet.

However, the German solution, which employs German city names, is wholly unacceptable to Austria and represents a monocentric approach. This is because a significant proportion of the Austrian population is unaware of the city names in question and has no motivation to learn them.

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result in any feedback. If there is renewed interest in this area, it is possible to apply to the A.S.I. for a workshop to develop an ON-rule"...The black comfort stain on the Austrian waistcoat remains. (The consensus was not reached on the question of using gender related terms in written language.)

[22] Abweichend von der Ö-Norm sind die Bezeichnungen *Christine*, *Johann*, *Norbert* und *Zeppelin* gebräuchlich.

[23] https://austria-forum.org/af/Wissenssammlungen/Essays/Vermischtes/Buchstabieralphabet

[24] https://www.buchstabieralphabet.org/

## 5. Conclusion

Does it now also have to be an aim in German language teaching to recognize all German words and expressions including nouns, verbs, adjectives etc. burdened by the Nazi era, such as '*Mädel*' (little young girl), '*vergasen*' (to kill someone with toxic gas) or '*asozial*' (antisocial), and to sanction their use? Such change is unrealistic, because who would suspect a connection to National Socialism behind the word '*Eintopf*' which is a common German word for a stew or soup?[25] In the long term, however, it is advisable to remedy this problem, also in an international context, through conscious and sustained language teaching. When someone uses a real or alleged Nazi word, political debates are quickly directed onto linguistic terrain. (Heine, 2019)

The circumstances are quite complicated, as often (German) expressions are wrongly suspected of having a Nazi background. In the case of other quite everyday- and apolitical words, on the other hand, their origins in the Nazi era have long since been forgotten. (Heine, 2019). In a self-critical review of my personal use of language in the period before I started working on this topic, I realized how often I myself unconsciously used vocabulary burdened with National Socialism in everyday German. For German language teachers and learners in the field of German as a Foreign Language (DaF) and as a pluricentric language, it will probably become a realistic to teach and learn a new German spelling table in language classes.

As an important and still influential pluricentric language, the politically correct use of the German language has become a significant political issue in the target countries. For example, the issue of correct use of gender-appropriate language (gendering) has also become a constant topic of discussion in current German educational policy, society, and media, with many advocates and opponents. Grotesque seeming (or nevertheless justified?) is also for example the noncommittal recommendation on the change of so far traditional German and Austrian food names because of the suspicion of a racist discrimination: '*Negerkuss*' => '*Schokokuss*', '*Zigeunerschnitzel*' => '*Schnitzel nach Balkan Art*', '*Zigeunersosse*' => '*Balkansosse*', 'Mohr im Hemd' (Austria) => 'Schokohupf mit Schlag'.[26]

"Politically correct" terms for ethnic groups were also introduced in German language usage some time ago: '*Eskimo*' => '*Inuit*', '*Neger*' => '*Schwarze*' /

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[25] https://uwe-spiekermann.com/2018/05/14/ist-eintopf-ein-nazi-wort/

[26] Feka, A. (2012). Wiens Lokale kreieren neue Namen. In: Die Presse am 20.3.2012.

'*SchwarzafrikanerIn*' / '*Farbiger*' etc. In the German medical language '*Mongolismus*' used to be a common term for a genetic hereditary disease. This was changed to "*Trisomy-21*".

The reformed Federal German spelling alphabet from 2022 offers, apart from a politically correct expression, additional advantages in several respects, mnemonic and memo-technically speaking, when used in German teaching and DaF lessons in the future. The letter-city combinations used here are identical to most official German single-syllable license plates, such as M = München or H = Hannover. City names do not arouse any political or historical controversy, are gender-neutral and can also serve German learners from abroad, for example, as a comprehension aid and memory aid in learning the German alphabet and in German regional studies.

> "By switching to city names, it is possible to keep the German spelling table up to date in the long term, because city names naturally do not change as quickly as trends in first names."[27]

Even if older people won't like it anymore - the language expert is convinced that young people and immigrants are more likely to associate with K for Köln (Cologne) than with the German male prename (K for) Konrad.[28]

The use of the DIN 5009 standard and the spelling board is voluntary. The spelling board is aimed in particular at users in business and administration.[29]

According to research by DIN, other European countries have already had good experience with the use of city names in their national spelling tables. Ultimately, it should not just be about creating a wanted list for some language police.

The point is to teach the basics of any appropriate expression: Sensitivity, knowledge of style levels, and a sense of appropriateness. To consider many of the points raised here in this paper would certainly exceed the limit of what is feasible. But nevertheless, it is not unimportant to provide historical awareness

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[27] Kathrin Kunkel-Razum, head of the Duden editorial team.

[28] Neue Buchstabiertafel (2021). W wie Wiesbaden: So buchstabieren Sie demnächst richtig. Translated from German: "Durch die Umstellung auf Städtenamen gelingt es, die Buchstabiertafel auf lange Sicht aktuell zu halten, denn Städtenamen ändern sich natürlich nicht so schnell wie Trends bei Vornamen", sagt Kathrin Kunkel-Razum, die Leiterin der Duden-Redaktion. Auch wenn Ältere sich nicht mehr damit anfreunden werden - die Sprachexpertin ist überzeugt, dass junge Leute und Zuwanderer eher etwas mit K wie Köln als mit Konrad anfangen können."

[29] DIN (2022). Von Aachen bis Zwickau. Translated from German: Die Anwendung der Norm DIN 5009 und der Buchstabiertafel ist freiwillig. Die Buchstabiertafel richtet sich insbesondere an Nutzer*innen in Wirtschaft und Verwaltung.

and contextualization in contemporary German language teaching and usage. Nowadays it has become an important subject again, which needs continuous and objective discussion and, if necessary, reform. And this is not only in the German language area. Ultimately, this probably also applies in the linguistic field in the sense of high-quality teaching and learning and also in the sense of a historically conscious use of the German language in the DaF area.

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