

The Interdisciplinary Linguistics Program (ILP) at the University of Winnipeg (UW)

Loss and revival in Tariana: a case study in an endangered language of Brazil and the value of language preservation

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Tariana is a minority Arawakan language spoken in the border region of Colombia and Brazil (Aikhenvald 2003a:125). Historically, it was a hierarchical dialect continuum where-by relative prestige of the dialect one spoke was a property of the rank held by their particular Tariana sub tribe (128). The only surviving dialects of Tariana today are spoken by two sub tribes of the lowest ranking group, the Wamiarikune, whose speakers reside primarily in the two settlements of Santa Rosa and Periquitos along the upper Vaupes River, a tributary of the Rio Negro (129). Despite their threatened status, (speakers total less than 100, ~15 in Santa Rosa, ~60 in Periquitos, others in Iaurate), differences both structural and, more importantly, sociolinguistic exist between them (126). This paper will examine the threats to Tariana’s vitality, the reasons for its critically endangered status, and the response both from within the community and without to address this. Ultimately I will explore how language preservation efforts affected Tariana, and critically reflect on the value of this type of work.

Tariana Then and Now

Tariana ideology fosters multilingualism as a cultural norm with their institution of linguistic exogamy (Aikhenvald 2003a:127). This is the view that those who speak one’s own language are like siblings, so to marry someone of the same mother tongue is akin to incest. A common Tariana phrase expresses this ideology – “my brothers are those who share a language with me...we do not marry our sisters” (2013:197). Children raised in Tariana households therefore learn at least two languages growing up, and often many more than this – Tariana, mother’s language, grandmother’s language, Portuguese, Tucano, etc. (127). Among the Tariana, language is inextricable from identity and the prestige encoded in the dialect spoken means outside influence on the language whether by accent, borrowing or other contact phenomena is seen as a contamination and strictly not tolerated (129). This ideology of linguistic purism dictates that in order to consider oneself a speaker of Tariana (and by extension a Tariana person) one must speak the dialect perfectly – mistakes are

ridiculed, loans are spurned (129). Furthermore, speaking or amalgamating with the dialect of a lower ranking sub tribe is rejected by those of higher-ranking groups. This sentiment is expressed by such common phrases as “*na-sawāya na-sape* - ‘they borrow they speak’” (127) and “*nepitaneta-mia-na, pa-sape-ri sede*” - ‘they only name (things), they have no talk’” (129). Despite the intense association of language and identity, the Tariana would rather not speak their language than speak it ‘improperly’. This tradition, despite being a cultural feature that invests great value and import into the language, is perhaps paradoxically one of the factors most contributive to the language’s critically endangered status. Recognizing this may help to illustrate that, while threats to a language’s vitality are most conspicuously from factors external, internal factors of ideology and self-identity in a changing world play a significant role as well.

The more conspicuous of the reasons for Tariana’s endangerment to which I am referring are the Catholic Salesian missions of the 1920’s. The Salesians, an Italian catholic charity organization and mission, in their mandate to educate and spread the word of Catholicism the world over established and were administering hospitals, schools and churches in the Vaupes region by the 1920’s (Marsh 1912; Aikhenvald 2003a:127). They imposed Western-style structures and policies of civilization as a response to their perception of the Tariana lifestyle as paganistic – multilingualism a key feature of this paganism (128). The forced relocation of people by way of settlement amalgamation, residential style schooling for children and work placement programs for adults, as well as the replacement of traditional longhouses with nuclear family homes were critical factors resulting in drastically reduced exposure to the father’s language (128). Tucano, for its numerical majority status in the region, was chosen as a lingua franca and spread under the conditions imposed by the missions to the great detriment of Tariana (128). Stable multilingualism, over a relatively short period of time, was replaced by bilingualism and eventually

Interdisciplinary Linguistic Program Faculty:

The ILP is anchored at the Department of Anthropology; the core of the Linguistic Faculty resides at that Department, as well as in English, Modern Languages and Classics:

ILP Faculty:

George Fulford (Program Coordinator) is an Anthropological linguist, specializing in Cree and Algonquian languages. He is especially interested in problems related to grammaticalization, language origins, and semiotics and structuralism.

Jane Cahill resides in the department of Classics. She teaches courses in Latin and Greek, as well as *Greek and Latin in Today's English* and *The Classical Roots of Medical Terminology*.

Amy Desroches (Psychology) uses cognitive and brain imagining methods to examine reading and language development. In particular, her work focuses on the role of phonology in learning to read, and the impact that reading development has on spoken language processing.

Zbigniew Izydorczyk teaches at the Department of English. His areas of special interest include Old and Middle English, history of English, history of Latin, and palaeography.

Kristin Lovrien-Meuwese (Modern Languages) is interested in language learning in general and second language acquisition in particular, but has most recently worked on a sociolinguistic study of German in Manitoba.

Jorge Machín-Lucas (Modern Languages) is a specialist in XXth and XXIst Century Spanish Literature, and teaches courses in Spanish Normative Grammar and History of the Spanish Language.

Karen Malcolm (English) has used Communication Linguistics (a development of Halliday's System Functional Grammar) and its descriptive framework, phasal analysis, to analyze and explore a great variety of texts: spoken and written, literary and non-literary.

Liliane Rodriguez (Modern Languages) teaches Linguistics, Comparative Stylistics and Translation. Her main research is in Lexicometry, Geolinguistics and Bilingualism. She is the author of several books and of many articles in Linguistics and Translation Studies.

Ivan Roksandic (Anthropology) teaches *Languages of the World*, *Morphology* and *Indo-European Linguistics*. His main research interests are language typology and indigenous languages of South America. His current project focuses on the indigenous toponymy in the Caribbean.

In addition, several courses included in the ILP curriculum are taught at other Departments: Developmental Studies (**Janet Simpson**); Rhetoric (**Tracy Whalen**). Other UW faculty members associated with the ILP include **Linda Dietrick** (Modern Languages), **Jeffrey Newmark** (Religion and Culture), as well as no less than two Deans: **Glenn Moulaison**, the Dean of Arts, teaches *History of the French Language*, whereas **James Currie**, the Dean of Science, works on mathematical models of language.

Students

Admissions: Students interested in majoring in Linguistics should contact the Coordinator of the ILP.

Award: The Angela Mattiaci Memorial Scholarship in Interdisciplinary Linguistics is awarded every October to a student majoring in linguistics with a distinguished performance in ILP courses. For more information visit our website at:

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Colloquium: Every year in April, after the exam period, the Annual Student Colloquium is held, offering to students an opportunity to present the results of their research to the audience of their colleagues.

In 2015/16, the XVII Annual Student Colloquium in Linguistics took place on Friday, April 22nd, from 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM, in room 3D01, on main campus.



Spring 2016		
LING 2003 / ANTH 2403 / ENGL 2802 Syntax	Tu-Th (May) 10-02 PM	K. Malcolm
Fall/Winter 2016/2017		
LING 1001 Introduction to Linguistics	MWF 01:30-01:20 PM	TBA
Fall 2016		
LING 2002 /ANTH 2402 /ENGL 2805 Morphology	MWF 01:30-02:20 PM	I. Roksandic
LING 2004 /ANTH 2405 /ENGL 2806 Semantics	Tu-Th 02:30-03:45 PM	G. Fulford
CLAS 2850 The Classical Roots of Medical Terminology	MW 02:30-03:45 PM	T. Sukava
CRS 2252 Conflict and Communication	W 06-09 PM	C. H. Morris
LING 3102 / 4102 / ANTH 3406 / 4406 Indo-European Linguistics and Mythology	MWF 11:30-12:20	I. Roksandic
LING 3103 /ANTH 3408 Sociolinguistics	MWH 10:30-11:20 AM	TBA
LING 3105 /DEV 3300 Speech and Language Disorders in Children	Th 05:30-08:30 PM	J. Simpson
LING 3302 /FREN 3204 French Morphology and Syntax	MW 04:00-05:15 PM	L. Rodriguez
LING 3303 /FREN 3202 Géolinguistique Française	Fri 02:30-05:15 PM	L. Rodriguez
LING 3505 /SPAN 3301 History of the Spanish Language	MW 04:00-05:15 PM	J. Machín-Lucas
Winter 2017		
LING 2001 /ANTH 2401 /ENGL 2803 Phonetics and Phonology	Tu-Th 02:30-03:45 PM	TBA
LING 2101 /ANTH 2406 /ENGL 2804 Language and Culture	W 06-09 PM	K. Malcolm
LING 2103 /ANTH 2400 Method and Theory in Linguistic Anthropology	Tu-Th 10:00-11:15AM	G. Fulford
LING 2103 /ANTH 2404 Languages of the World	MWF 01:30-02:20 PM	I. Roksandic
CRS 2252 Conflict and Communication	Th 06-09 PM PM	J. Hyde
PSYC 2620 Psycholinguistics	Tu-Th 11 :30-12 :45	A. Desroches
LING 3001 /ANTH 3405 /ENGL 3800 Textual Analysis	Tu-Th 10:00-11:15 AM	K. Malcolm
LING 3104 /4104 Indigenous Languages of South America	MWF 11:30-12:20	I. Roksandic
LING 3301 /FREN 3301 History of the French Language	MWF 01:30-02:20 PM	G. Moulaison
RHET 3139 Rhetorics of Visual Representations	TuTh 02:30-03:45 PM	T. Whalen
PSYC 3480 Interpersonal Communication	M 06-09 PM	W. Josephson
LING 4002 Contemporary Linguistic Theory	TuTh 01:00-02:15 PM	K. Malcolm
LING 4302 /FREN 4112 Syntax of Modern French	MW 04:00-05:15 PM	L. Rodriguez

enforced monolingualism with the dominance of Tucano and Portuguese (128).

The forced abandonment of Tariana, aggravated by their ideology of purism, achieved a momentum of language loss from which it has not been able to recover. The dialects of the Wamiarikune have survived due to some relative concessions made on their part, recognizing perhaps that “linguistic compromise is a better avenue for survival than intractable purism” (Dorian 1994:492).

While Wamiarikune Tariana has permitted some Tucano loans and perhaps maintained a degree of relevance because of it, the ideology of purity still permeates that linguistic community. Speakers of Santa Rosa, the more conservative of the dialect communities, rejected the Tucano and Portuguese loans the more progressive Periquitos would accept (Aikhenvald 2013:210). Speakers in Santa Rosa aged and dwindled, lamenting the contamination inflicted on the language, while Periquitos criticized the refusal for Santa Rosa to adapt. Today, slightly more than a decade after Aikhenvald’s initial research, what approaches a begrudging acceptance to the incorporation of foreign influence into the language as well as dialect mixing between Santa Rosa and Periquitos exists (210). A recognition among the Tariana that full knowledge of their language is becoming less and less accessible to them inspired a desire to reclaim it through focused support and revitalization projects (199).

Revitalization Efforts

Beginning in 1999, a focused Tariana language revitalization project began with Alexandra Aikhenvald and her team at the helm. This involved a highly successful language workshop open to all ethnic Tariana, the publication of a comprehensive grammar in 2003, and the implementation of Tariana in the curriculum at all levels of grade school (132-136).

Ten to fifteen years on from the implementation of a focused and systematic approach to language revitalization is ample time to observe its effects and make preliminary conclusions on the project’s future potential. It is nearly long enough to see a generational shift – a crucial factor in the issue of language vitality – which makes this case study an interesting one for the field of endangered language support (UNESCO 2003:7). It may seem

intuitive to suggest that language support and systematic education policies along with documentation practices go hand in hand, but this is not necessarily the best approach to revitalization of endangered languages. In fact, goals of language *revitalization* and language *preservation* can not only be entirely different pursuits, but pursuits often at odds with one another.



Sasha Aikhenvald in the field
<http://www.aikhenvaldlinguistics.com/index.php/gallery/brazil-photos>

In the case of Tariana we have seen those working toward revitalization of the language approach it from the most effective angles: the problem of hierarchy and prestige, the problem of documentation and written word, and the problem of systematic education. Success in each aim has reinforced the others – orthography and documentation enhanced the prestige of the dialect in the region, as did its incorporation into the curriculum, which itself was aided by publications of grammars, dictionaries and the written Tariana word. Despite these successes, a decade on fewer and fewer Tariana children are learning the language, the total number of speakers is dwindling, there is virtually no unified speech community in either Iauarete or Santa Rosa and that of Periquitos is shrinking (Aikhenvald 2013:206). While the language has perhaps averted total extinction, the nature of its existence has shifted from primarily spoken to primarily written. Ultimate authority on the language has moved from speakers to dictionaries, grammars, and other static documentations. The responsibility to maintain Tariana has been relegated from the home to the schools, and with that the burden of blame for its continued loss as a naturally spoken entity shifts almost entirely to the educators (211). Jovino Brito, a Tariana language maintenance activist

from Santa Rosa, expressed the sentiment succinctly and in ironic prophecy when, upon completion of the language and literacy workshop, he said, “now that our language is taught at school, we won’t lose it” (203).

Where the project has succeeded in some areas, it has failed in other more crucial conditions for language vitality.

As Dixon (1989) writes, there is one essential “prerequisite for a language to survive: the attitude of its speakers” (32). Languages can survive without writing systems, grammars, dictionaries or documentation of any kind. Languages are not living things no matter the connotations such terms as ‘language death’, ‘extinction’, ‘murder’, and ‘suicide’ may entail, or the metaphors of evolution and growth may imply. They are “artefacts, not species” (Sallabank 2010:60) and the belief that they can exist outside of human communities or for that matter, human minds is a fallacy (60). Languages require use by humans to be sustained. Suggesting that a language must be written to be considered strong and competitive in a multilingual environment follows the same fallacious ideological Western principles suggesting an oral historical tradition is less valid than a concretized, documented past. In the case of Tariana, instead of reinforcing the language, documentation and education programs only led it further from the home. As Mulhauser suggests, language preservation as the pursuit to keep creative, productive discourse alive is more about developing healthy “linguistic ecologies” (38). This ecological development is the more abstract notion of preserving or creating an environment, like a biological ecology, that is adaptive to circumstances, encouraging of linguistic diversity, dynamic and altogether attitudinal in nature (38). This approach sees languages less as individual entities in need of targeted preservation efforts, than as constituents of a greater linguistic ‘biome’, where each part plays its role in sustaining the whole.

Revitalization of language for common use is a critical field with far reaching implications – preservation of traditional indigenous knowledge, cultural, linguistic and even biological diversity, and the effective sustainability of a people and way of living, to name only a few. However it is also an endeavour dependent entirely on the people in question and their attitudes

toward their language, and can be considered an altogether separate pursuit from *Preservation*. Preservation for posterity seeks to document languages for the sake of their indefinite existence in frozen form, arguably primarily for the purposes of linguistic science. It is only through the collection and documentation of the diverse manners in which language has developed and humans have devised to communicate that a greater understanding of the nature of language can be achieved (Newman 1998:12).

Tariana is a language that has suffered in vitality due both to factors external and internal; a colonial history saw the suppression of Tariana culture effectively eliminate the language, and a cultural ideology of linguistic purity intensified the momentum of language loss. Efforts to reclaim and revive Tariana centered on documentation and integration into the curriculum has effectively frozen the language out of the home and natural creative speech, and preserved it for posterity as an important *symbolic* but not *dynamically functional* expression of identity. This case study illustrates that issues concerning the endangerment of languages are multi-faceted, complex, and without standard approaches for success. The aims of language revitalization and aims of language documentation must balance with the needs and desires of communities and the needs and desires of linguistic scientists, the two of which may not necessarily be cooperative endeavours.

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Phasal Analysis: Decoding the Marketing of a Beer Can

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"Cultural studies" is a new field currently exploding with interdisciplinary research. As an interdisciplinary field in its own right, linguistics is plastic enough to analyse the meaning behind and importance of cultural artifacts. In looking at Western consumption culture, a linguist trained in phasal analysis is able to examine how product design can encode messages that reveal the product's target audience.

In brief, phasal analysis is a theory that attempts to discover how and why people engage with linguistic constructs by analysing the realizatory code and the planes of experience. By looking closely at how the Fort Garry Brewing Company [FGB] designed their Portage and Main India

Pale Ale [PMIPA] can, a targeted audience of Winnipeg-based, working class male consumers becomes evident. This can be shown by looking specifically at the graphological, lexical, and semological components of the realizatory code.

The Winnipeg-based microbrewery, FGB released the 471mL PMIPA can design with the second batch of the brew in September of 2013 ("Fort Garry Portage...", 2013). The can's design is graphologically dense, featuring a blueprint-style street map of downtown Winnipeg as a background. A black and white photograph of a streetcar with two men standing in front of it acts as a focal point on the front-face of the can. The focal point on the back is a white rectangular textbox

designed to look like a ticket.

The participants on the front have small, saturated facial features due to the photo being a full-body long-shot from Winnipeg's streetcar era. Despite this, both men can still be seen to employ a demand gaze. The mix of a demand gaze and a public distance is interesting, and may imply that the subjective attitude of the participants on the can are to be read as socially detached, but still interested in the decoder. The use of the photograph as a focal image instates a blue-collar image, complementary to the blueprint background.

The textbox cues the decoder to read for essential information because of its rectangular shape. According to Kress and van Leeuwen, rectangles in Western cultural

usage “are the elements of the mechanical technological order,” and are seen as shapes that hold truthful information (2006, p.54).

A lexical analysis consists of organising the text into thematic groups. The largest group found was of Winnipeg street names. Many of the major sets included infrastructure words and words pertaining to Canadian history and geography, all of which is surprising to find on a beer can.

Semiology can be used to assess the purpose of the text by tracking the mental, action, and relational processes. Inside of the text box there are no mental process words, meaning that the text is not monologue or dialogue. The text contains seven action words, providing a very thin narrative voice. That voice is infantilised by the 24 relational processes on the can, directing the decoder to read for information and description. The text aims to market the PMIPA by informing the decoder about its qualities.

Interestingly, the word “talk” is used as a noun in the phrase “sure to be the talk of the night” (Fort Garry Brewing, 2013 “Portage and Main India Pale Ale”). This sentence encodes status by using conversation about the decoder as a reward for drinking the PMIPA. Malcolm suggests that associating prestige and consumption of the beer implies a male target audience (Personal communication April 1, 2015).

In closing, FGB markets the PMIPA to a male, working class audience from Winnipeg. The PMIPA can features blue-collar imagery with male participants from Winnipeg in the foreground and a blueprint roadmap of Winnipeg’s business hub in the background. In the lexis there is a large collection of words relating to urban infrastructure with the largest cluster being Winnipeg street names. The semantic choice of the encoder to use “talk” as a social prestige marker also contributes to the masculinisation of the product. While this is not a full phasal analysis by any

means, it is still able to decode geographical and social identities that are being targeted as markets. Phasal analysis is an example of the power of linguistic research in interdisciplinary contexts.

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Afrikaans

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When they think of Afrikaans, many people assume it is a dialect of Dutch or even a slang form of it. The truth about this language is very different. To understand the long road to language recognition, we must comprehend Afrikaans’ phonetics, morphology, sociolinguistics and its overall effect on South Africa.

We must go back to the beginning. The Portuguese explorer Bartholomew Diaz sails from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean in 1487 opening up a maritime link between Europe and Asia. This revolutionizes trade. In 1652, the Dutch administrator Jan van Riebeeck founds Cape Town. This settlement serves as a supply station for ships doing the long transoceanic trips. The largest and arguably the most important outposts are in what is now Indonesia. In the Cape, the Dutch not only enslave the local African population but also bring in foreign slaves, in particular from Java and Sumatra. Linguistically, the local African groups of Khoisan and Khoikhoi speak Khoisan languages. The Asian popula-

tion speaks the Austronesian language of Malay.

Phonetics and Morphology

Afrikaans is a daughter language of Dutch, not a dialect. Notably, Afrikaans is a creole, a mix of two or more languages. According to Mesthrie, 90-95 per cent of the present day Afrikaans vocabulary is ultimately of Dutch origin (214). While lexically there are few differences between Afrikaans and Dutch, they are significantly different in terms of phonology and morphology.

In diminutive forms, Afrikaans uses <tjie> where Dutch uses <tje>. Regarding the Dutch consonants <z> and <s>, Afrikaans merged them to the single phoneme <s>; the same thing happened with <v> and <w> merging into <v>, and with <ch> and <g> merging into <g>. Instead of <sch>, Afrikaans uses <sk>. When Dutch uses <cht> and <st>, Afrikaans utilizes <g> and <s>. Circumflex use varies. At the end of Dutch words, the <g> is removed and a circumflex goes on top of the preceding vowel. Also, the circumflex is limited in Dutch to French influences on words with vowels <e>, <o> and <u>, whereas Afrikaans uses it more freely.

Afrikaans simplifies. At word ends, Afrikaans drops the <n> in <en>. <lj>

becomes <y>. <K> replaces <c>. <Tie> and <cie> merge to become <sie> much like <ou>, <ouw>, <au> and <auw> turn into <ou>. <Tion> becomes <sion>.

Afrikaans merged the voiced <v> with the voiceless <f> at the start of words. Also, <w> and <v>, both voiced, become <v>.

Afrikaans has no grammatical gender. Dutch does. In the present perfect, Afrikaans removes the contrast between the verbs (to be) and (to have). Afrikaans has a double negative while Dutch has not. In Afrikaans, when inflections on adjectives occur before the noun, the inflection depends entirely on word order, whereas in Dutch grammatical gender plays a role. “Is” is used instead of “werd” in the past tense of passive voice. Lastly, regarding verbs, Afrikaans removed the pluperfect and perfect tense in the inflectional forms of nearly all verbs. Depending on the situation, imperfect and present tenses are used instead. Personal pronouns in plural in Afrikaans do not distinguish between subject and object forms. Usually, the identical form is used for both the present and infinitive tenses. Verbs do are not inflected for the category of person in Afrikaans.

Sociolinguistics

Like most pidgins, Afrikaans has economic roots. In the Dutch Cape Colony, the Europeans enslaved the African population for field labour while Asians were brought in for house duties. Arends, Smith and Musyken state that "one vital difference of creoles from pidgins is that pidgins do not have native speakers, while creoles do" (Arends, Smith, Musyken 3). In other words, Afrikaans became a creole after one generation.

Nicole Devarenne explains Afrikaans "as having been 'strongly influenced (mainly lexically) by indigenous African languages (Khoisan, Bantu),' as well as by 'Malayo-Portuguese Creole, French, German, and English'" (Devarenne 108). She goes on to quote Bell who confirms the influence sustained by several Afrikaans structural features. Such features include, but are not limited to, "the periphrastic progressive...reduction in verb morphology...changes in VP (verb phrase) structure, the object marker "vir", reduplication, changes in the pronominal and negative concord" (Devarenne 108).

The word "maskie" comes from Creole Portuguese as a result of the Asian slave influx (Devarenne 110). "Assegai", "gogga", and "karos" are Khoisan words while "kraal" is Portuguese. "Piesang" is Malay, while "chana/china" and "fundu" are Zulu words (Touch Africa Safaris).

The very people who helped create the language identified themselves as "Afrikaners" which simply means "Africans". However, these were not the European descent populations we currently associate the word with today. Afrikaners referred to the mixed populations of Africans, Asians and European born on the continent. It was not until the latter half of the nineteenth century the European descent population adopted this label. The mixed groups were referred to as "Coloureds" as this point.

When the British annexed the Colony in 1806 and later declared the slave trade illegal, many Afrikaners, frustrated with their new colonial masters, left and forged new nations deeper into the interior of the continent. In 1877, the

British annexed Transvaal, an Afrikaner republic. With the refusal to pay an illegal tax, the Afrikaners went to war with the British in 1880. The end result was an Afrikaner victory and the British recognition of the South African Republic (Transvaal) and Orange Free State in 1881. The better known war is the Second Boer War or South African War. This conflict was fought between the British Empire and this time, the Orange Free State and the South African Republic. It started in 1899 and ended in 1902 with the British victorious. For the Afrikaners, the humiliation of defeat was exasperated by painful memories of the "Scorched Earth" policies and the world's first concentration camps. Nationalism dramatically increased amongst the Afrikaner population.

Through government mandate, Afrikaans finally gained official status as a language in 1925. Furthermore, some say a language is a dialect with an army and navy (Hitchings 20). South Africa had both in 1925. In 1948, the Nationalist Party won the election and Apartheid became law. With Afrikaner minority rule, Afrikaans strengthened its language dominance. One of the major battles in the anti-Apartheid struggle happened in 1976 when a school board in Soweto was dismissed for not implementing Afrikaans as a language of instruction. Afrikaans was never popular among the African population, especially since 1955 when the 50-50 basis of Afrikaans and English as education languages were made law. There were simply too few Black teachers qualified to teach in Afrikaans. Non-Afrikaner people and a minority of Coloureds considered Afrikaans a language of oppression, particularly among populations of sub-Saharan African descent.

Following South Africa's first democratic election in 1994, Afrikaans retained official language status, alongside ten other official languages. Nelson Mandela's party, the African National Congress, desegregated the country. Despite its official status and continual use, Afrikaans becomes less and less the preferred language of South African households. English and African languages such as Zulu and Xhosa are more

and more preferential (City Press).

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On the Origins of the Spanish Language

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The Spanish language and Romance languages developed from Archaic Latin (which existed until the II century BC). More specifically, they derived from Vulgar Latin, the spoken version of that language, even though Archaic, Classical and more stylized forms of Latin, used in oratory, rhetoric and literature, were very important for the formation of Romance languages and literatures. Some historians of the Spanish language consider that Vulgar Latin is a degeneration of the Classical idiom, but that is only a hypothesis.

There have been three main modes of linguistic influence:

1.- Substratum: influence of the native language, the dominated one, over the controlling language. For example, the Basque language was a linguistic substratum which had an influence on Spanish.

2.- Superstratum: influence of the controlling language over the native and dominated one. For instance, the Spanish language over Basque.

3.- Adstratum: influence between languages that coexist and which end up being neighbours. For example, the interconnections between Spanish and French.

Other influences:

Iberian and Basque: In prehistoric times, the Iberians were the first inhabitants of the Iberian Peninsula and in what is today France. Subsequently, they moved to the Pyrenees. It is commonly accepted that the Basques, who live in Northern Spain close to the border with France, descend from them. The Basques call their country Euskadi and their own language Euskera. Their origin is mysterious; it is commonly regarded that they come from the Caucasian mountains (from Georgia, formerly a Soviet Union Republic). Other theories maintain that the Basques might have come from Albania or from Northern Africa (from the area where Berber languages are spoken), but there is not sound evidence that confirms any of those theories. We know that their language is not Indoeuropean.

Celts and Celtiberians: The first Celtic presence can be dated to 1100 BC, to the Early Iron Age. Later, the Celts joined the Iberians in the Central Plateau of the Iberian Peninsula. In 237 BC the Carthaginians arrived. They did not settle down in the region and there are not enough remainders of their history, architecture, culture and lifestyle. The Carthaginians were expelled by the Romans during the Second Punic War that raged between 218 and 201 BC throughout the Iberian Peninsula, Italy, Carthage (North Africa) and the Mediterranean. The Romans also called them Celts.

Vandals, Alans, Suevi and Visigoths: Those populations migrated from Central Europe as a result of the pressure from Asian nomads. In 409 AD Vandals moved into the Iberian Peninsula and settled down in its southern regions, while the Alans – nomadic IndoIranian tribes – did the same in the center-south and Suevi in the northwest. In 429 AD the Visigoths arrived and established political dominance. They adopted Roman culture and Hispanic Latin. In that period of time the Latin language started its decadence and fragmentation. Visigoths were the most powerful group in the Iberian Peninsula until 711 AD (in what is today Spain) and until 712 AD (in what is today Portugal).

Moors and Castilians:

From 711 to 1492 AD the Moors were the predominant culture in Spain. They came from the former Mauritania, namely from Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. They conquered the Iberian Peninsula through military expansion from 711 to 718 AD. In 1147 AD they were finally defeated in what is today Portugal by the Christians, the descendants of the Visigoths. In 1492 AD they were also defeated in the southern Spain, in the mythical kingdom and city of Granada. During their rule, Arabic language displaced Romance Christian dialects like Asturian and Mozarab spoken in Al-Andalus (the Kingdom of the Moors, an Arabic name which can be translated as “Land of Vandals”).

It goes without saying that all the mentioned ethnic groups and cultures left numerous loanwords in modern Spanish and influenced its structure.

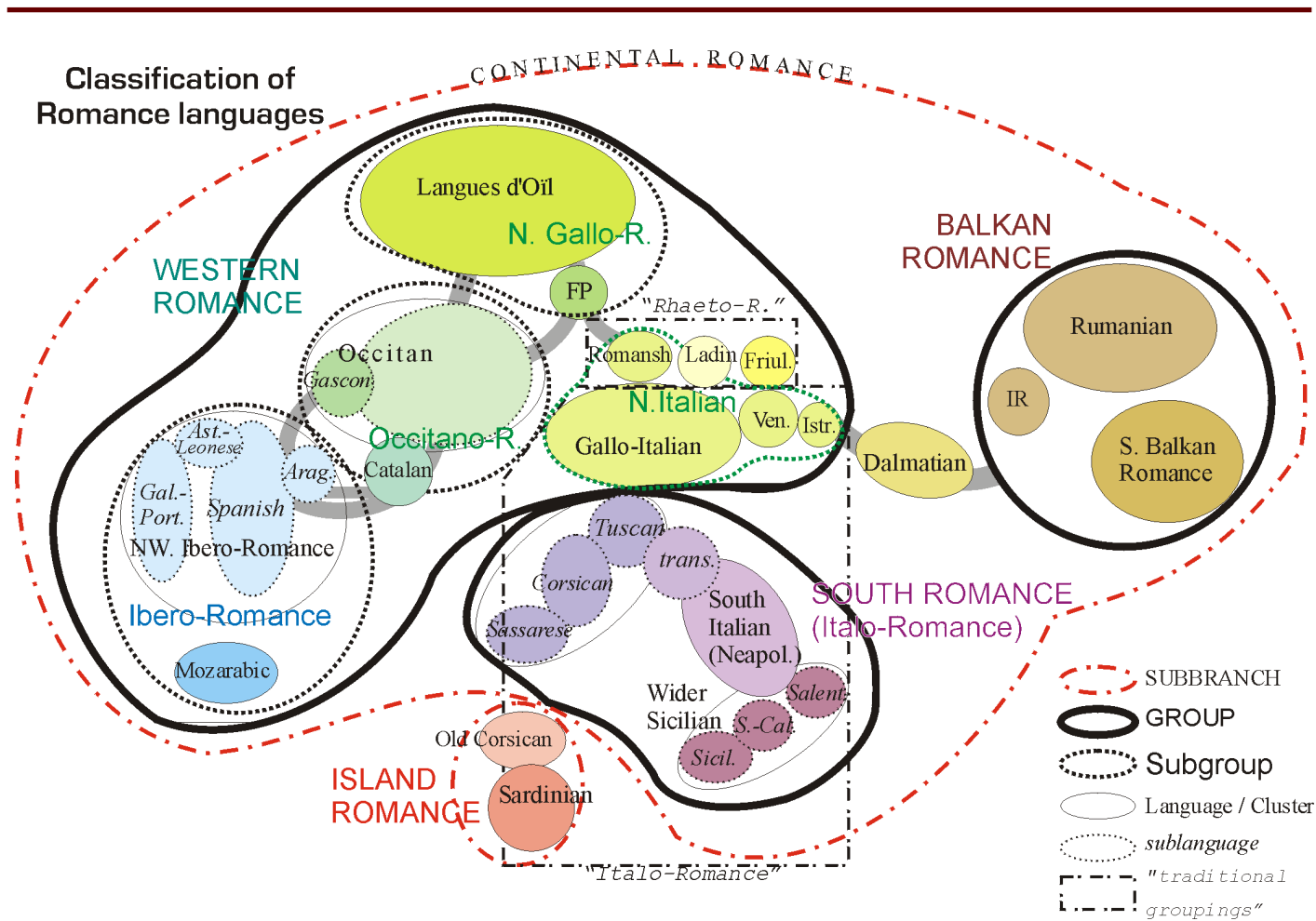


Chart of Romance languages based on structural and comparative criteria not on socio-functional ones. Based on the chart published in "Koryakov Y.B. Atlas of Romance languages. Moscow, 2001".

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classification_of_Romance_languages

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