

The History of Language Learning and Teaching: Between the Eurocentric Model, Missionary Linguistics and Colonial Linguistics

Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris

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Organisers

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Part of the Saturday conference program (Conférences du samedi de l'école doctorale 268 *Langages et langues*)

After the fall of the Roman Empire and during the early Middle Ages, the Latin language gradually lost its dominant position by becoming a dead language, no longer in common use, but still living as a learned language, especially in the "technical treatises called *ars* in Latin" (Colombat et al., 2010). The most commonly used learning tools were the grammars of Donat (350-360) and Priscien (526-527), considered as the basic textbooks of grammatical teaching in Christian Europe. These tools signalled a new period that Sylvain Auroux calls the "pedagogical mutation of grammar" (Auroux, 1994:82), meaning that grammar had become "a general learning technique applicable to all languages, including mother tongue" (*ibid.*). In 1502, Calepino published his monolingual dictionary, which in 1509 he enriched with a quadrilingual version (Hebrew, Greek, Latin and Italian). These tools still correspond today to the "two pillars of our metalinguistic knowledge: grammar and dictionary" (*ibid.*).

After the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494), the Franciscan, Augustinian and Dominican missionaries, followed in 1540 by the Jesuits, left Europe to evangelize the zones of Spanish and Portuguese influence, carrying with them the first grammar of the Castilian language of Antonio de Nebrija (1492), and the first two grammars of the Portuguese of Oliveira (1536) and Barros, along with the two fundamental tools: Calepino's dictionary and the Latin grammar of Manuel Alvares *De Institutione Grammatica libri tres* (1572). Thus, the Greek-Latin grammar model is used to describe unknown languages, and transcription into an alphabet becomes a method of learning an exotic language.

The linguistic knowledge of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries was complemented by explorers and missionaries. Between 1541 and 1773, "Jesuits compiled 164 dictionaries, 165 grammars, 167 catechisms and 430 texts in 134 languages and 6 dialects" (Klöter, 2007).

The Renaissance of the characteristics of exotic languages is contrasted with the Latin grammar model, considered universal. It is a contrasting description (different from Latin and/or Romance languages). The theory of speech parts serves as a framework for language description. More specifically, missionaries are the protagonists of a proto-linguistic pedagogical form of "symbolic violence" (Errington, 2008), or in other words, the absence of a dialogue between Eurocentric alterity and subjectivity.

It is a short step from evangelization to colonization. There was a second wave of European influence, called by Hobsbawm (1997[1987]) "second colonisation". This second colonisation, carried out with imperial aims from an industrial era, shows a different approach to otherness. Europe has once again embarked on a "civilising mission" through the

implementation of colonial education. Thus, the grammatisation of colonised languages is organised around a twofold theoretical core: Latin and the mother tongue model. The organisation of colonial education introduces the didactic model of the metropolis through the development of pedagogical devices in the colonised countries of the British and French empires.

The establishment of colonial education was organized differently in the British and French traditions. On the British side, subjects are taught in indigenous languages at indigenous schools, while English is taught through the native language at Anglo-English schools.

France invests more actively in the colonies with its assimilation policy. The learning of French and the knowledge of French culture are obligatory: "on the colonial ground, it is the remarkable continuity of this ideological approach [the country's civilizing mission] entirely subsumed under the linguistic approach, French at all costs, which cannot fail to strike minds" (Spaëth, 2001).

These phenomena have their origins in the history of language learning and teaching tools whose two main tools are grammars and dictionaries. They are part of the transmission of metalinguistic knowledge and the relationship between language policies and language teaching. This conference will provide an opportunity to analyse the dissemination and appropriation of teaching and learning methods from the time of the great explorations in Asia, the Americas, Africa and Oceania to the colonial and neo-colonial era.

What is the role of our "vectors of education" in the redefinition of linguistic knowledge? What did this redefinition imply? How did the native language and colonial language coexist? What were the effects of this coexistence in terms of writing, phonetics and the lexicon and syntax of the "grammatised" languages? What have the roles of the grammarian and the lexicographer been in this context? What resources were applied to organizing schools in colonised countries? What methods were adopted? Which form of discipline was used? What traces of these processes are still apparent today? How does the linguistic experience of the Other allow us to better understand our present? To what extent has the intrusion of an outside world upset the conception that natives had of their language?

These questions have profound implications. They allow us to investigate the missionary linguists' role as both prime movers and witnesses in their response to a disparity or otherness which was sometimes recognised and internalised, and sometimes distorted or even denied.

The organisers invite submissions relating principally, but not exclusively, to the following subjects:

- collection of metalinguistic knowledge during the Renaissance;
- description of exotic languages;
- transmission of linguistic models;
- intercultural translation and transmission;
- colonial context and its impact on language teaching and learning;
- didactics and colonialism;
- transmission of pedagogical and didactic models;
- relationship between writing and language policies;
- current research on the history of language teaching in the world;
- epistemology and pedagogical practices;
- epistemology and language practices.

Invited keynote speakers

Joseph Errington (Yale University)

Valérie Spaëth (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris 3)

Otto Zwartjes (Universiteit van Amsterdam et Université Diderot Paris 7)

Scientific committee

Guy Achard-Bayle (Université de Lorraine)
Maria Lucia Aliffi (Université de Palerme)
Émilie Aussant (HTL UMR 7597, CNRS)
Annamaria Bartolotta (Université de Palerme)
Eric Beaumatin (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris 3)
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Jean-Louis Chiss (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris 3)
Simon Coffey (King's College London)
Bernard Colombat (Université Paris-Diderot, Paris 7)
Valérie Delavigne (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris 3)
Oreste Floquet (Université La Sapienza)
Jean-Marie Fournier (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris 3)
Jean-Michel Fortis (CNRS - Université Paris-Diderot Paris 7)
Giorgio Graffi (Université de Vérone)
Anne Grondeux (CNRS - Université Paris-Diderot Paris 7)
Georges Kleiber (Université de Strasbourg)
Jammes Sarah (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris 3)
Odile Leclercq (Université d'Aix-Marseille)
Philippe Monneret (Université Paris-Sorbonne, Paris IV)
Luca Nobile (Université de Bourgogne)
Christian Puech (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris 3)
Valérie Raby (Université Paris-Sorbonne, Paris IV)
Didier Samain (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris 3)
Dan Savatovsky (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris 3)
Chris Sinha (Hunan University)
Olivier Soutet (Université Paris-Sorbonne, Paris IV)
Valérie Spaëth (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris 3)
Sergeï Tchougounnikov (Université de Bourgogne - CNRS-ENS)
Thomas Verjans (Université de Toulouse)

Deadlines

All abstracts can be sent to the following email address: colloquehdl@gmail.com

March, 20th, 2018 (max 500 w.): submission of abstracts

April 15th, 2018: Notification about the approval of the abstracts

May 1st, 2018: Preliminary program on this website

<https://sites.google.com/site/colloquehael/home>

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