Lexical innovation and terminological advice in Breton and French: The role of online spaces

Merryn Davies-Deacon 12 March 2021

Lexical innovation and terminological advice

- · Terminological advice: top-down
- · Lexical innovation: bottom-up?
- · Online spaces: a leveller?

Lexical innovation and terminological advice

- · Terminological advice: top-down
- · Lexical innovation: bottom-up?
- Online spaces: a leveller?
- Researchers e.g. Lenihan 2013 have argued that social media are not truly "bottom-up"; "pseudo-participation" (Fuchs 2014:55)

Context: French (in France)

- Strong history of language planning
- Académie française: a "mythical foe" (Estival and Pennycook 2011:338)
- Legislative body: Délégation générale à la langue française et aux langues de France



Context: Breton



- History of (non-official) lexicography and attention paid to terminology
- Paradoxical status (both ideologically and linguistically): influenced by French, but consciously separated from it

Lexical purism

- "Xenophobic purism" (Walsh 2014:425, after Thomas 1991)
- Protecting a language from perceived corruption by removing aspects thought to be a result of foreign influence



Purism in minoritised languages

- "a common challenge for language revitalization and language revival is to limit the restrictive role which puristic attitudes are likely to play in the communities in question" (Dorian 1994:481)
- Conflict between purism/regularity and "authenticity" in other minoritised languages:
 - Irish: "Dublin Irish" versus Gaeltacht Irish (O'Rourke and Walsh 2015): iconic vocabulary e.g. *fón* versus *guthán* (Lenihan 2013:360–363)
 - Cornish: Kernewek Kemmyn (regularised spelling and purist lexicon) versus Unified Cornish (based on attestations in medieval texts) (Davies-Deacon 2020:69)

Purism in Breton

- Dates back to the 19th century: "Le Gonidec tourna résolument le dos aux habitudes de ses devanciers et décida d'expulser de la langue bretonne tous les mots d'origine française" (Morvannou 2004:par. 16)
- · Early 20th century: political dimensions
- Later 20th century: Strollad an deskadurezh eilderezh "had the primary function of engaging in vast neological activity, resulting in a dictionary ... whose every page is filled with neologisms that have never entered general usage" (Rottet 2014:224)
- Accusations of excessively purist "néo-breton" from the 1990s onwards (Jones 1995)

The state of purism in Breton in the 2010s

- · Different attitudes in written publications:
 - Bremañ (long-established magazine): more conservative form of "néo-breton"
 - Ya! (newer newspaper): more inclusive, use of "international" terminology
 - Brud Nevez: different focus, more use of traditional vocabulary including French borrowings
- (Anti-purist?) lexical innovation (through borrowing) in social media contexts:
 - · French borrowings: teleferik (officially advised fungarr)
 - French/international borrowings: seksist, reptilianed (officially advised revelour, stlejviled)
 - · International borrowings: organek, TV (French bio, télé)

Consequences

- A plurality of practices: "the tendency to treat linguistic minorities as homogenous blocks fails to unpick the real picture, since speakers of a minority language are as varied and diverse as any majority language group of speakers" (Hornsby 2019:72)
- Conflict between top-down recommendations and bottom-up usage? What is the "top" in these contexts, and have their recommendations changed in favour of what is happening at the "bottom"?

La DGLFLF/FranceTerme

- "chargée d'animer et de coordonner la politique linguistique du Gouvernement et d'orienter son évolution dans un sens favorable au maintien de la cohésion sociale et à la prise en compte de la diversité de notre société"
- FranceTerme: "Près de 8 500 termes pour nommer en français les réalités nouvelles et les innovations scientifiques et techniques"²

¹https://www.culture.gouv.fr/Sites-thematiques/Langue-francaise-et-langues-de-France/ La-DGLFLF/Qui-sommes-nous

²http://www.culture.fr/franceterme







La DGLFLF/FranceTerme

- Focus on "French" terms: "Vous pouvez le dire en français"; French and English in opposition
- Example: *mot-dièse*:



"Bravo au journaliste qui, d'une écriture résolue, l'a choisi, ce mot-# ... ce terme chantant."

³https://www.lemonde.fr/blog/correcteurs/2021/02/27/mot-diese-champagne

OPAB/TermOfis

- Ofis publik ar brezhoneg: language planning body for Breton
- Kuzul skiantel responsible for linguistic decisions

Reizhskrivañ			
Kraf studiet	Diviz	Deiziad an diviz	
Anv kêr-benn Aljeria	Skrivañ Aljer gant un r dibenn ha neket Alje. Aljerad hag Aljeriz o vezañ anv annezidi kêr hag Aljerian, Aljerianed anv annezidi ar vro	27/02/2013	
moulañ pe moullañ	Degemer ar skrivad moullañ gant 2 II. Lakaat 2 II en holl c'herioù deveret ivez (moullerez, moulladenn, mouller)	27/02/2013	
skouer pe skwer	Derc'hel d'ar skrivad skouer gant -ou-	14/11/2012	
Skrivañ an eur	Derc'hel d'ar rannadur hengounel etre daou benn-devezh 12 eurvezh, adalek 1 eur vintin betek kreisteiz hag adalek 1 eur goude merenn betek hanternoz. Chom hep merkañ an eur war 24 eurvezh ha neuze chom hep skrivañ traoù evel "da 18e"	14/11/2012	
berradur evit skrivañ an eur	Mar bez ezhomm da resisaat hag-eñ e reer anv eus a-raok pe goude kreisteiz e vo graet gant ar berradur a.m. evit a-raok merenn ha g.m. evit goude merenn. Gallout a reer chom	26/06/2013	

OPAB/TermOfis

- TermOfis: database of over 76000 officially recommended terms
- · Departure from earlier methods: "Pour les médiathèques, par exemple, on avait constitué un groupe de travail, une dizaine de personnes qui travaillaient un peu partout dans des médiathèques en Bretagne et qui étaient locuteurs, donc des personnes qui à la fois parlent la langue et aussi connaissent le domaine réellement ... c'est important de dire ça, parce que souvent dans le passé le travail de terminologie a été fait par des personnes qui pouvaient être très compétentes en langue bretonne, mais qui en fait ne connaissaient pas le domaine réellement" (Interview with *OPAB* representative, 30/8/2018)

TermOfis

- Still broadly conforms to "néo-breton"/purist characteristics, but a move towards more use of "international" terms
- "On s'est dit, « Bon, il faut prendre la réalité en compte. … Nous on préconisait armerzh, et certainement on s'aperçoit que non, c'est pas le terme vraiment utilisé, tout le mode utilise ekonomiezh, prenons la réalité en compte ; maintenant, à partir de maintenant, on va utiliser ekonomiezh. » Donc on n'est pas resté sur une position dogmatique" (Interview with OPAB representative, 30/8/2018)

Crowdsourcing

- "crowdsourcing could … be used in lexicography to great effect – not as a final or main phase of dictionary creation, but as a method to filter and process data before its implementation in actual dictionary creation by lexicographers" (Čibej, Fišer, and Kosem 2015:71)
- Collins Dictionaries: "any user may propose a word along with a definition, with the intent that these be added to the dictionary. This feature aims to make users of the site feel personally involved in the dictionary-creation process and also taps into the public as a source for drawing attention to recently coined words" (Brookes, O'Neill, and Davies-Deacon 2021:308)



Crowdsourcing

· OPAB:

- Heavier use of crowdsourcing
- Different aims and outcomes
- Regular emails



Crowdsourcing

"On a voulu un petit peu casser l'idée que la terminologie serait une affaire uniquement de spécialistes qui décideraient entre eux et puis que les locuteurs n'auraient rien à dire ... donc on apporte deux ou trois termes par mois, alors on pose d'abord la question, on demande aux gens, ... « Comment on pourrait dire ça? » ... Donc on laisse venir les propositions, et puis ensuite on passe à un vote en ligne pour essayer de mesurer un petit peu comment tel ou tel terme est reçu" (Interview with OPAB representative, 30/8/2018)













Saviad ekonomikel krouet gant kelc'hiadoù prantadoù "mont en-dro" ha prantadoù "chom a-sav" berr hag a bep eil.

Sontadeg:

TERMENOÙ KINNIGET	NIVER A VOTOÙ	DREGANTAD
fonn-difonn	1 vot	5 %
harz ha kae	2 vot	10 %
harzañ-loc'hañ	9 vot	47 %
krog-digrog	3 vot	15 %
paouez-ha-mont	4 vot	21 %





Crowdsourcing: Issues

- "Il y a 27, 30 personnes, et en plus ils ne répondent pas chaque fois, donc ça va être 5, 6, 7 pour tel ou tel terme ... c'est bien dommage. ... Là comme dans d'autres domaines [les gens] sont consommateurs finalement, ils demandent des solutions" (Interview with OPAB representative, 30/8/2018)
- · Wikipedia problem: is it representative?4
- · Wider questions about online linguistic communities:
 - Is language in social media representative of anything but language in social media?
 - · Does that matter?

⁴https://diff.wikimedia.org/2012/04/27/nine-out-of-ten-wikipedians-continue-to-be-men/

Future directions

- Systematic study of the terms proposed: how purist are they?
- How do these recommendations conflict with usage? Is there any convergence?
- Do crowdsourced terms become official recommendations? Do they enter usage?
- · What can and should be the role of online platforms?

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