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Morphologies in Contact

STUF STUDIA TYPO LOGICA

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PART VI: AFRICA

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Swinging back the pendulum: French morphology and de-Italianization in Piedmontese

Abstract

The article discusses the role of French morphology in Piedmontese, an endangered Romance language of Northwest Italy, with a focus on the present attempts at language revitalization and expansion. The traditional patterns of di- and multiglossia in the area was disrupted by the advent of the Italian nation-state in the second half of the 19th century, leading in the second half of the 20th century to substantial Italian monolingualism. After sketching the historical role of French, the article discusses the limited productivity of the French agent affix *-eur* before reviewing the contemporary attempts to expand Piedmontese into a full-fledged Ausbau language: here Gallicization of the vocabulary and the use of French derivational morhemes play a big role as means to mark distance from Italian.

1. Ausbauization[1]

Ausbauization is defined here simply as the technical means whereby an Ausbau language is made. The latter, to repeat Kloss's original definition, is a language which has 'deliberately been reshaped so as to become a vehicle of variegated literary expression' (Kloss 1967: 30). In other words, it is a language because "it has been made" such. The basic ideological drive behind this process is the desire to make oneself (one's language) as distinct as possible, and therefore as different as possible from competing varieties. I proposed in Tosco (2008) that Ausbauization is composed of three different steps: orthographic choices, variety choise, and corpus planning; only the latter will be dealt with here. Kloss (1967: 33) stressed the role of written language and especially of non-narrative prose in this process.

We will be dealing with Piedmontese, a West Romance minority language[2] traditionally spoken in a situation of diglossia, and nowadays endangered by the encroachment

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[1] I thank Francesco Rubat Borel, Nicola Duberti and Riccardo Regis for their precious help in suggesting many of the words in this section and their comments on an earlier version of this article.

[2] I do not delve here in the complex problem of the political "acknowledgement" and "protection" of Piedmontese – an issue still evolving and subject to different judgements and decisions at the European, Italian, and Piedmontese (regional) level. As is often the case, the European and the regional level tend to adopt a more liberal stance than the national political bodies.

of a dominant, "national" language. In such a case, the Ausbauization process involves a rejection of the traditional diglossia and an attempt to appropriate all, or at least most, of the "high" domains – in a way, of the culture of the dominant language. In order to express the domains of the other without accepting the language of the dominating language, the minority language will have to resort to its native vocabulary. The amount of purism involved in this process will be a function of at least two, independent factors: 1. the distance (genetic, typological and in terms of mutual comprehension) between the dominating and the minority languages; and 2. the level of endangerment of the minority language. If this level is high and the distance between the languages is relatively low, purism will be inescapable. Ausbauization will involve salvaging obsolete vocabulary and creating new words through native means. What is shared by the dominating and the minority language will have to be shunned as much as possible. The use of a foreign, neighboring language is part and parcel of the same mechanism, and what is found in Piedmontese is not different in nature from, e.g., a few lexical choices made by Oromo in Ethiopia. For example, in order to say 'book', the choice was available between borrowing Arabic *kitâb* or Amharic *mäṣhaf*: the former was obviously associated with Islam and therefore more likely to be known to the Eastern Oromos of Islamic faith. But the latter was not only associated with Christian Orthodoxy: it was also the word of the dominating language – Amharic. While both *kitaaba* and *macaafa* (/matʃʼaːfa/) are used nowadays in written Oromo, it is interesting that *kitaaba* is more and more used, even well beyond the Eastern, Islamic part of the Oromo world: both words ultimately go back to a foreign language – but the foreigner the better, in a way. Ultimately, even international words can be shunned by minority languages – if the dominating language happens to use it. Oromo provides again an interesting example: 'politics' has been preempted by Amharic in the form *polätika* (from Italian *politica*), and Oromo has adopted the Arabic word *siyâsa* under the form *siyaasaa*, rather than, as had been suggested, *polotikaa*.

If the dominating and the minority languages happen to be fairly similar (and even more similar in their written than in their spoken form), as is the case of Italian and Piedmontese, the necessity to distance oneself is all the more stronger, and the availability of a neighboring foreign language becomes an attractive possibility. In the case of Italian, Piedmontese and French – three fairly similar languages, with many shared roots and affixes – the game can be played at the morphological level, with the minority language choosing, when possible, derivational affixes which, although used in the dominating language too, happen not to be in use for that particular root. To anticipate an example from below, while Italian has *lancio* and French has *lancement* for 'launching' (all from the same Latin root, by the way), "Ausbauized" Piedmontese chooses *lanciament*.

In general, the more endangered the language, the less will foreign influence be tolerated in Ausbauization. Obviously, influence from the dominating language will be the foremost target of rejection. While the excesses of purism are certainly found also in

relatively powerful and healthy languages, it is often the case for severely endangered languages to revert to extreme Ausbauization. Again, Piedmontese is not an exception, as will be seen below.

2. Traditional di- and multiglossia in the Western Alps

Piedmont, a region situated in the northwestern corner of Italy, traditionally displayed a very rich linguistic picture, where different Romance varieties met.

On the territory (the horizontal level), the picture involved the presence of Piedmontese in the central part of the area; Occitan, Franco-Provençal in the mountain valleys on the western part, a Germanic variety (Walser) spoken in a few mountain villages of the Rose Mountain glacier, and different varieties on the fringes of the territory to the East (mainly Lombard) and South (Ligurian). A possibly incomplete list includes the following languages (ISO codes in brackets):
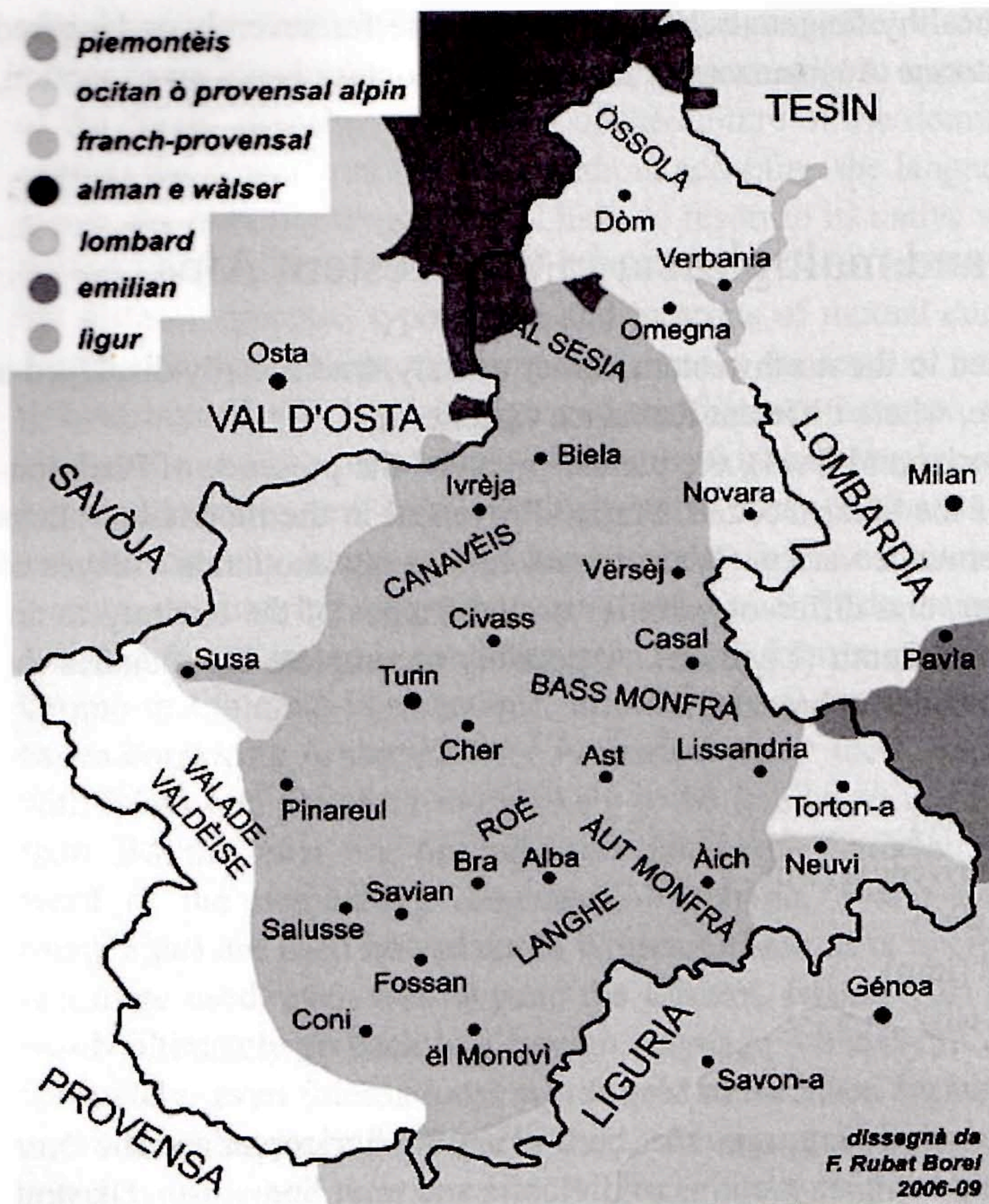
Piedmontese (pms)

- Occitan (pvr)
- Franco-Provençal (frp)
- Walser (wae)
- Lombard (lmo)
- Ligurian (lij)

The location of these languages is shown in Map 1:

As in any diglossic situation, languages met both along the horizontal and the "vertical" plane – with resulting complex patterns of diglossia and multilingualism. Diastratically (on the vertical level), the picture was dominated by two literary language: Italian (ita) and French (fra). These were the target of diglossia and bi-/ multilingualism. Italian was the official language of the "Italian" parts of the Duchy of Savoy since Duke Emmanuel Philibert (1528–1580) moved the capital of the Duchy from Chambéry to Turin. Italian was used by the Church and in schools, and was the "default" written language, but it was rarely a spoken language, certainly not a native one. French was widely used at court (alongside Piedmontese) and among the bourgeoisie, and was the language of commerce with the parts of the Duchy across the Alps (i.e., Savoy and France).

In written domains, Italian tended to be used for belletristic literature (poetry and drama), French for "serious" prose. As a result of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars (as detailed below, Piedmont was invaded in 1796 and definitely annexed to the French Empire in 1802), the tide tilted definitely in favor of Italian, but the eminent role of French lasted at least until the first half of the 19th century, as witnessed by the great number of French loans in Piedmontese dating from this period.

Map 1: The languages of Piedmont and neighbouring areas (© F. Rubat Borel, 2006–
   2009)

To make matters more complicated and interesting, Piedmontese evolved over the cen-
turies as a koiné extensively used by speakers of different local dialects in belletristic
literature and, to a limited extent, "high prose." This koiné was modeled after the dialect
of the capital, Turin, and was widely used as an interdialectal medium, especially in the
commerce, the bureaucracy, and the army. The orthography was remarkably uniform,
but it was never completely stabilized; most of all, it continued to reflect different
waves of Gallicization (involving, e.g., the use of <ou> for /u/) and Italianization. The
koiné was always more an oral than a written medium: it was widely in use not only in
the Piedmontese-speaking parts of Piedmont, but all over the "Italian" parts of the
Duchy of Savoy, and maybe even more in the Alpine areas (where still Occitan and
Franco-Provençal were the native languages) than in the East of the Piedmontese-
speaking domain, which were under the influence of external centers of attraction (such
as Milan and Genoa).

The interplay of the different contact patterns may be graphically shown as follows:
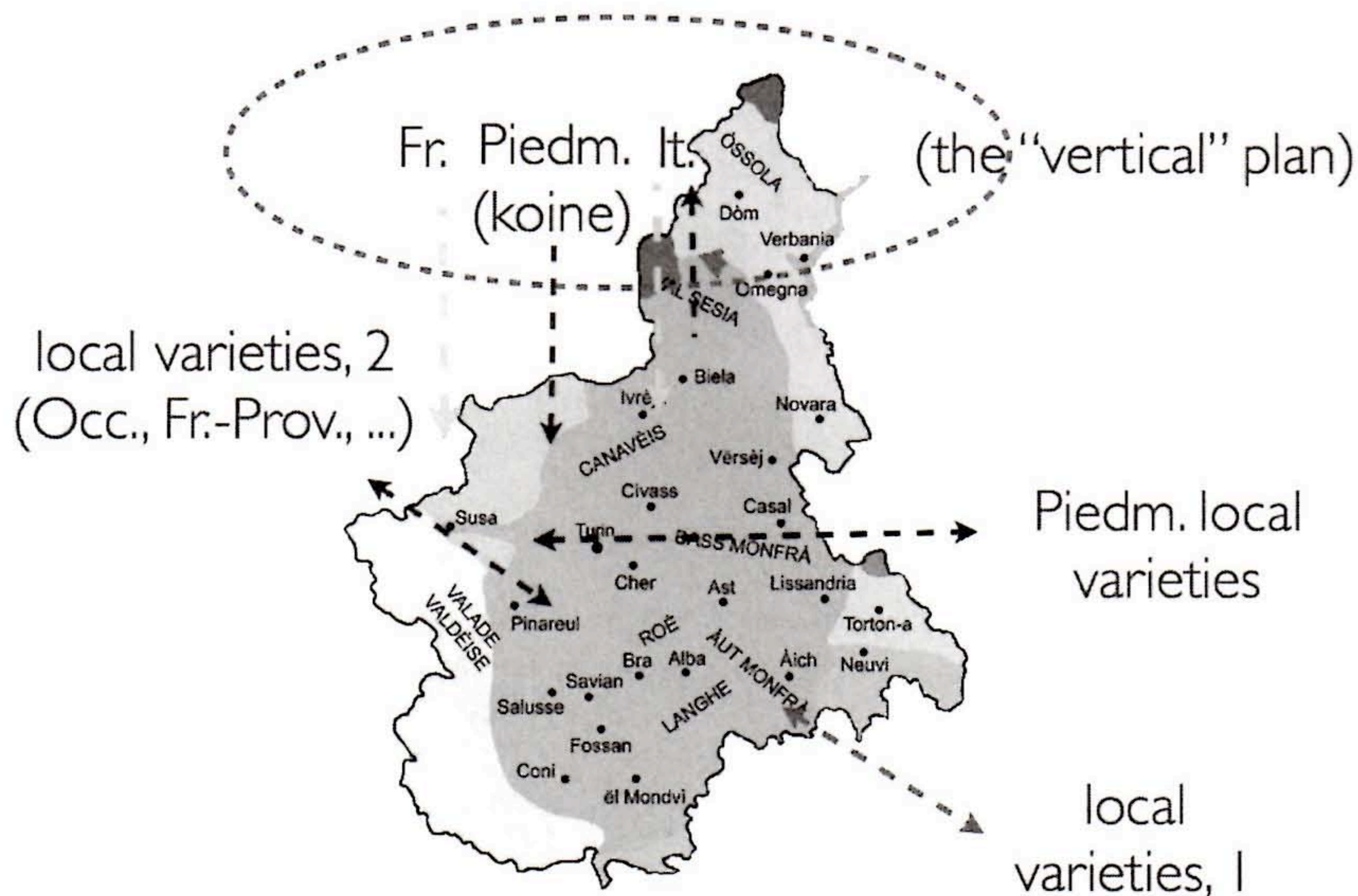
Map 2: A graphical representation of traditional diglossia in Piedmont

The formation of a national state in the second half of the 19th century (with the establishment of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861) brought about, there as elsewhere, a drastic linguistic impoverishment. The gradual erosion of linguistic diversity, accelerated in the second half of the 20th century, brought about the following picture:

• Italian became the only high variety;

• knowledge of "Piedmontese" (i.e, the koiné) became less and less useful and therefore common, with the koiné itself increasingly perceived as "the dialect of Turin" (while in Turin itself Piedmontese has largely disappeared nowadays);

• knowledge of the local variety persisted and still, to a certain extent, continues today;

• French simply became a foreign language.

Map 3 shows the much simpler contact pattern in contemporary Piedmont:

It.

↑

ÒSSOLA

Dòm

Verbania

AL SESIA

Omegna

• Biela

Ivrèja

Novara

CANAVÈIS

Vërsèj •

Civass

Casal

Susa

Turin

BASS MONFRÀ

Cher   Ast   Lissandria

VALADE
VALDÈISE

Pinareul

ROÉ

Torton-a

AUT MONFRÀ

Bra Alba   Àich   Neuvi

Savian

LANGHE

Salusse

Fossan

Coni •

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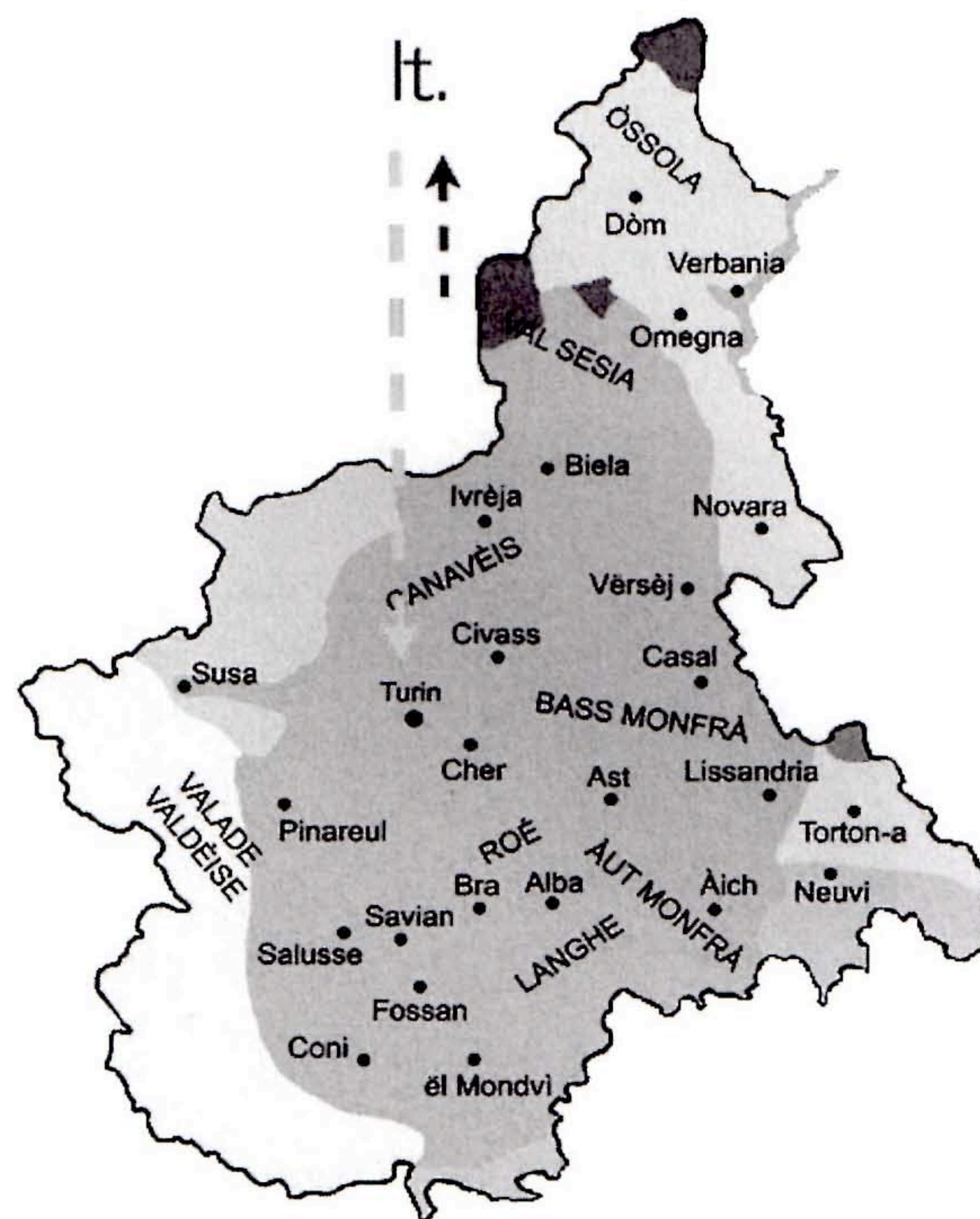
Map 3: Contemporary language contact in Piedmont

3. French and French morphology in Piedmontese

While Piedmontese shares with the neighboring varieties a great number of isoglosses, its greatest originality lies in its lexical stock, which teems with hundreds, or maybe thousands of items borrowed from French at different historical periods, as well as other words not found in the Italian cultural area.

A great many French loans date from before the 17th century, as witnessed by their phonological form. The easiest case is provided by words ending in consonants, such as -*s* and -*t*, which were dropped in spoken French already in the 14th century but were retained in Piedmontese. A few examples at random are: *pòis* (/pojz/), 'peas, petit pois', Fr. *pois* (/pwa/); *taboret* (/tabuˈræt/) 'stool', Fr. *tabouret* (/tabuʀe/), in French with the

present meaning from the 16th century; *bonet* (/bu'næt/) 'cap, bonnet', Fr. *bonnet* (/bone/).

Others came much later, and well into the 19th century, such as *tornavis* 'screwdriver', from Fr. *tournevis* (17th century), or *tirabosson* 'corkscrew', from Fr. *tire-bouchon* (18th century), or still *blaghé* 'to boast', from Fr. *blaguer* 'to joke', to be discussed later on.

Morphological evidence of contact is as usual much more difficult to detect, also because all the varieties are genetically close.

The best example of a (moderately) productive French morpheme in Piedmontese is probably provided by the agentive affix *-eur* (its Feminine allomorph *-euse* is never borrowed, except in a single lexicalised case to be discussed below). French *-eur* is borrowed as such in Piedmontese in both its written and spoken form (*-eur*, /œr/). From the semantics and the etymological dictionaries of French it becomes apparent that all the French words in *-eur* borrowed in Piedmontese are modern, dating from perhaps the 18th century onwards. In general, the number of these loans is limited; furthermore, a few of such loans, while found in Piedmontese dictionaries, are definitely marginal and obsolete:

- *danseur* (/daŋ'sœr/) 'dancer' (French *danseur*). The word is scarcely in use: the usual verb for 'to dance' is *balé* (/ba'le/), and *balarin* (/bala'riŋ/) is 'dancer'.
- *decroteur* (/dekru'tœr/) 'shoeshiner' (French *décrotteur*). The word, although recorded in dictionaries, does not seem to be in use.
- *sapeur* (/sa'pœr/) 'sapper' (French *sapeur*), probably loaned in the sense of a member of the military corps of the Engineers. Here the verbal base is the same in both French and Piedmontese: *sap-* 'to sap'. For 'sapper', Piedmontese dictionaries report also *sapador* (/sapa'dur/), apparently a loan from It. *zappatore* through Northern Italian dialects (as evidenced by the voicing of /t/ to /d/).

Older loans or French-based formations largely replaced nowadays in casual speech by Italian loans are:

- *antrapreneur* (/aŋtrapre'nœr/) 'entrepreneur' from Fr. *entrepreneur* – a more Italianized Piedmontese would probably have here *imprenditor* or the slightly more Piedmontesized form *amprendidor* (from Italian *imprenditore*); further, *antreprèisa* 'enterprise' (cf. Fr. *entreprise*) instead of *amprèisa* 'entreprise' (cf. It. *impresa*).
- *amnistreur* (/amni'strœr/) 'property manager' – largely ousted nowadays by the Italian loan *aministrador* (/aministra'dur/; from Italian *amministratore*). French has *syndic* in this meaning (and *administrateur* for a company or the like, but no **administeur*).

This is not the case of

- *blagheur* (/bla'gœr/) 'braggart', closely resembling French *blagueur* 'joker, prankster' except for its semantics. The semantic opposition 'to joke'/'to brag' is found also in the verb (Fr. *blaguer* vs. Piedm. *blaghé*). According to the etymological

dictionary of the *Centre National de Ressources Textuelles et Lexicales* (CNRTL; http://www.cnrtl.fr/etymologie/blague) French *blague* is apparently a loan from Dutch *balg* 'sheath; animal skin'), first reported in French in 1721 with the meaning 'tobacco pouch'. The value 'lie; boast; joke' is first reported in 1809, apparently derived from the idea of something 'inflated, swollen' (as a tobacco pouch, which may look like full of air). From the same period (first attested in 1808) are the verb *blaguer* and the derivate *blagueur*. The current French meaning ('joke') is secondary, while the Piedmontese value better reflects the original meaning of French *blague* as 'boast'. Still, *blagheur* was directly borrowed from French *blagueur* and retained a part of its original meaning. It must therefore have come to Piedmont quite early in the 19th century (the root is unknown in Italian).

Different is the case of words where the affix was added to a native root, or where the loan underwent reanalysis and the native root was inserted for the French one. One such case is

- *saldeur* (/sal'dœr/) 'welder': French has *soudeur* from the verb *souder* 'to weld'. In Piedmontese the affix is added to the native root *sald-*, homophonous in Italian, which has *saldatore* for 'welder'.

Although not denoting a human agent, the following two are very similar cases; they are both words in everyday use in Piedmontese:

- *conteur* (/kuŋ'tœr/) 'meter' (as in 'gas m., electricity m.'), from French *compteur*. As in *saldeur*, the affix has been added here to the native stem *cont-* (facilitated in this case by the absence of a cluster /mpt/ in Piedmontese).[3] The same root is

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[3] Of course, as remarked by an anonymous reviewer, Franch *compter* is an etymological restoration from Latin, and both the stems *cont-* and *compt-* (as well as *comt-*) go back to Latin *computare*. The *Dictionnaire historique de l'orthographe française* (1995: 1175) comments on the frequent case of 'mots de même origine qui, par une spécialisation sémantique, ont été ressentis comme différents. L'existence de variantes graphiques, courantes aux XVIᵉ–XVIIᵉ s., offrait la possibilité de renforcer la distinction de sens par une distinction visuelle [...] Les partisans de l'ancienne orthographe défendaient tellement ce principe qu'ils allaient souvent à l'encontre du critère étymologique. Ainsi Estienne retient *compte* et *conte*, tout en sachant qu'ils remontent au même mot latin.'
According to the *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française* (1992: 462), *compter* is first attested in 1348 and started to become frequent during the 15th century. The former orthography was *cunter* (1080) and later *conter* (1172–1175). The derived noun *compteur* itself had a previous orthography as *conteor* (1213), but is of course much later in its modern meaning, which 'désigne surtout un instrument servant à compter, à mesurer, d'abord en horlogerie (1752), puis en astronomie (1832; crée par M. Breguet en 1819) et, de nos jours, dans diverses domaines techniques et scientifiques, entrant notamment (XXᵉ s.) *compteur à gaz*, *compteur électrique*'.
The etymological spelling does not impinge of course upon the pronunciation of *compteur* (/kõtœːʀ/). Even assuming that Piedmontese *conteur* is a borrowing from *written* French, its modern meaning makes a direct, old borrowing with an ancient orthography unlikely.

found in Italian, yielding *contatore* (from which the loan *contador* /kuŋta'dur/ in Piedmontese).

- *assenseur* (/aseŋ'sœr/) 'lift, elevator', a loan from Fr. *ascenseur*. An Italianized form **assensor* (from It. *ascensore*) does not exist.

Full productivity of the affix *-eur* is found in

- *dissegneur* (/disse'ɲœr/) 'designer', from *dissegn* 'drawing'. French has *dessinateur*, not **dessineur*. Likewise, Italian has *disegnatore*.

A French loan in *-eur* has been retained in Piedmontese with a special semantic value in the case of

- *travajeur* (/trava'jœr/) (French *travailleur* 'worker') alongside native *travajor* (/trava'jur/) 'worker', with the specialized adjectival meaning 'hard-working'. The Feminine is regularly made with the affix *-a*: *travajeura* (/trava'jœra/). Again, the semantic specialization is a Piedmontese innovation.

Nevertheless, the *-eur* affix has not made its way in present-day, Ausbauized Piedmontese. The following are a couple of exceptions:

- *decideur* (/detʃi'dœr/) 'decider'; cf. It. *decisore* vs. Fr. *décideur*; again, the Piedmontese verb *decide* (/de'tʃide/) is used as a base rather than French.
- *fornisseur* (/furni'sœr/) 'provider'; cf. It. *fornitore* (and the more Italianized Piedmontese *fornidor*) vs. Fr. *fournisseur*

As to *-euse*, the Feminine allomorph of *-eur*, is apparently only found in the loan

- *bitumeus* (and its nativized variant *bitumeusa*) (/bity'mœz(a)/) 'concrete mixer'. The source is French *bitumeuse*, which actually means 'road paver'.

The analysis of French words in *-eur* in Piedmontese reveals that all stages of lexical borrowing are attested: unanalyzed or barely analyzed loans (as in *bitumeus(a)*, *decroteur*, etc.), to analyzed and adapted loans (as *saldeur*, *conteur*), to autonomous formations (*dissegneur*). The loans may introduce new concepts (such as *assenseur*) or carve themselves a new semantic niche in a space already occupied by a native word (as *travajeur* alongside *travajor*). Apart from possibly *decideur* and *fornisseur*, they belong or belonged to a vital stage of the language. The picture changes radically with the Ausbauized language of today.[4]

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[4] The different productivity of the derivational affixes *-or*, *-ador*, *-ator* are discussed in Ricca (2006).

4. The pendulum in motion: the Italianization of Piedmontese

It is probably safe to consider the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars as the single most important turning point in Piedmontese political, and therefore linguistic, history. Napoleon first invaded Piedmont (and Italy) in 1796, and a Piedmontese Republic (actually a French puppet-state) was declared in September 1798. The Savoy royal family was shortly reinstated to power by the Austrian and Russian anti-French coalition in June 1799. One year later, a new Italian campaign by Napoleon led to the French victory and the proclamation, in June 1800, of the Subalpine Republic. Just two years later, in September 1802, Piedmont was definitely annexed to France. Independence was regained only in 1815. A strong anti-French attitude became dominant. Whatever the linguistic results of this new climate in the Italianization of language (and they were probably limited), they were obviously reinforced in the second half of the 19th century with the unification of Italy (1861).

Popular literature in Piedmontese of the late 19th century bears all the marks of an increasing Italianization of Piedmontese. Faced with the mounting nationalism of the newly-formed Italian state, but backed by a still robust speaking community, journalists and novelists in Piedmontese freely accept the ideological new realities and reflect it in their language. Perhaps reflecting the increasing Italianization of the language of the regional capital, Turin, their texts literally teem with unadapted or barely disguised Italian words and constructions.

Apart from unconstrained lexical borrowing from Italian, strong morphological and syntactic Italianization is likewise evident. A few random examples include the extensive use of the superlative adjectival affix *-issim* from Italian *-issimo*, the use of progressive constructions with the verb 'to stay' and the gerundive (on the model of Italian *sto andando* 'I am going', while Piedmontese uses the locution *esse an camin a/che*, lit. 'to be on (the) way to/that'). Italian loans are often inserted with no or minimal adaptation. E.g., the Piedmontese impersonal construction for 'must', *a venta*, is changed into *bsògna*, from It. *bisogna*. Italian adverbs and interjections are freely inserted in texts, like *difatti* 'actually' (*idem* in Italian), *apen-a* 'just' (from It. *appena*, while Piedmontese has *pen-a*), *presto* 'quick, fast!' (*idem* in Italian; Piedmontese is *lest*), etc. Piedmontese words are often Italicized when possible: *rivé* 'to come' may become *arivé* on the pattern of Italian *arrivare*; *arcordé* 'to remember' becomes *ricordé* (It. *ricordare*), etc. *Facia* 'face' (It. *faccia*) replaces *fassa* (itself an Italian loan), *aqua* 'water' (It. *acqua*) makes its appearance (and tends to replace nowadays the original *eva*), and *bròd* 'broth' (It. *brodo*) substitutes the old *breu*.

It is worth noting that many of these Italianizations are not even used nowadays by the "common" Piedmontese speakers, who nevertheless engage on a daily basis in codeswitching in Italian: while Piedmontese has certainly regressed as a spoken medium, the borders with Italian have somehow been preserved.

It is evident that the authors, although certainly conscious of the distinctiveness of Piedmontese *vis-à-vis* Italian, do not bother about "keeping the borders": the traditional interplay between varieties dictated by diglossia was accepted – no attempt at the Ausbauization of Piedmontese was even dreamed, let alone planned.[5]

5. Ausbauization: modernization through French morphology

One hundred years later, the picture has radically changed: faced with the imminent demise of their language, revivalists have been trying in the last decades to consciously develop Piedmontese in a modern, full-fledged medium.

The basic rule of Ausbauization is to stress diversity with the competing varieties. If needed, diversity can be downright invented. At the same time, internal differences must be eliminated, or at least reduced (Tosco 2008).

Ausbauization of Piedmontese is made easier by the existence of a century-old koiné. But it is exactly this koiné which is currently in danger, reduced (and perceived by the speaker) more and more to the status of a vanishing dialect among others. Ausbauization's golden rule of maximizing difference entails for Piedmontese (and for similar varieties within the Italian cultural area and the borders of the Italian Republic) the necessity to increase as much as possible its distance from Italian.

The particular way to emphasize Piedmontese distance from Italian has been to resort to Gallicization. In short, the Ausbauization of Piedmontese involves the selection of a neighboring foreign language in order to increase the distance from the local, dominating medium.

This is reflected especially in the lexical choices, but also in the phraseological enrichment and, to a certain extent, the morphology of neologisms. While the process often involves in lexicon the resurrection of obsolete loans, in morphosyntax it may lead to the analogical extension of derivational loan morphemes, often resulting in "fake" French loans and constructions. A French word may simply be morphologically adapted to Piedmontese; but a neologism may also be created using the Piedmontese form of the French derivational morpheme used in the corresponding French word. The result may then take the form of an "Italian-looking" word with the "wrong" derivational affix.

A special structural problem in the enrichment of Piedmontese is given by those Italian deverbal nouns with a Ø derivational affix, in which the gender marker is directly affixed to the stem. Modern Italian is particularly rich in these formations. Their integration in those varieties where most final short vowels have historically been lost poses special problems: the usual rendering of Italian loans requires a final *-o* (the Masculine gender marker) to be dropped, but this would make the word identical to a bare stem, a

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[5]   The contemporary Italianization of spoken Piedmontese has of course been dealt with abundandly, and most recently and effectively by Berruto (1997, 2006) and Ricca (2006, 2008).

fact which is not easily licensed in Piedmontese. The integration through a derivational morpheme is a likely solution, and a French calque with the Piedmontese equivalent of a French derivational morpheme a particularly common one:

- *ambarcament* (/ambarka'mæŋt/) 'boarding'; cf. It. *imbarco* vs. Fr. *embarquement*, as well as *dësbarcament* 'disembarking', cf. It. *sbarco* vs. Fr. *désembarquement*;
- *anvironament* 'environment'; cf. Fr. *environnement* vs. It. *ambiente*. Italianized Piedmontese would probably have *ambient;
- *lanciament* (/laŋʧa'mæŋt/) 'launching'; cf. Fr. *lancement* vs. It. *lancio*;
- *usage* (/yza'ʤe/-i/[6]) 'use'; cf. Fr. *usage* vs. It. *uso*;
- *verificassion* (/verifika'sjuŋ/); cf. Fr. *vérification* vs. It. *verifica*;
- *modificassion* (/mudifika'sjuŋ/) 'modification, change'; cf. Fr. *modification* vs. It. *modifica*.

In a few cases it is rather the stem to be borrowed from French:

- *fusëtta* (/fyzət'ta/) 'rocket'; cf. Fr. *fusée* vs. It. *razzo*. The word is attested in Piedmontese from the early 19th century and is probably a loan from French, with the Piedmontese derivative Feminine marker *-ëtta*;
- *surfassa* 'surface'; cf. Fr. *surface* vs. It. *superficie*.

No need to avoid a Ø-derivation can be claimed for many other cases, which are therefore due to the ideological concern for a less Italian-looking Piedmontese:

- *espluatassion* (/esplyata'sjuŋ/) 'exploitation'); cf. Fr. *exploitation* vs. It. *sfruttamento*. The neologism seems to be motivated by the desire to avoid an evident Italianism (*sfrutament). Neither a verb *espluaté nor a verb *sfruté (or *dësfruté) are attested in spoken Piedmontese.
- *spantiament* (/spaŋtja'mæŋt/) 'diffusion', where the native verb *spantié* 'to spread' is used in order to derive a noun with the common derivational affix *-ment*; it is to be noted that the only other viable alternative would have been a French- *and* Italian-looking *difusion* (/dify'zjuŋ/; cf. Fr. *diffusion*, It. *diffusione*). In this case, the minority language (Piedmontese), in order to mark its distance from the dominating language (Italian), has to turn its back from the foreign target (French), too.
- *virament* (/vira'mæŋt/) 'bank transfer'; cf. Fr. *virement* vs. It. *bonifico*. A non-Ausbauized variety of Piedmontese would here have *bonifich (/bu'nifik/), while the proposed neologism plays on the existence in Piedmontese of a verb *viré* 'to turn' which is roughly homophonous and synonymous with Fr. *virer*. The neologism is therefore based upon the metaphorical extension ('to turn' > 'to transfer money') of Piedm. *viré* along the lines of its French counterpart; the creation of a deverbal derivative (*virament*) along the lines of Fr. *virement* follows. This metaphorical extension is not found in Piedmontese nor in Italian, and the neologism is probably hard to understand for the unsophisticated speaker.

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[6] Final unstressed /e/ is realized /i/ in a number of varieties.

- *auteur* (/awˈtœr/) 'height'; cf. Fr. *hauteur* vs. It. *altezza*. Spoken Piedmontese has *autëssa* (/awˈtəssa/), but also *autor* (/awˈtur/) locally.

as well as in derived adjectives:

- *governamental* (/guvernamenˈtal/) 'governmental'; cf. Fr. *gouvernemental* vs. It. *governativo*. *governativ (/guvernaˈtiw/) would probably be the "natural" solution of the unsophisticated Piedmontese speaker;
- *fiàbil* (/fiˈabil/) 'reliable'; cf. Fr. *fiable* vs. It. *affidabile*;
- *abominàbil* (/abumiˈnabil/) 'abominable'; cf. Fr. *abominable* vs. It. *abominevole*;
- *serios* (/seˈrjuz/) 'serious'; cf. Fr. *sérieux* vs. It. *serio*. The presence of an adjectival affix in Piedmontese (*-os* /-uz/) shows that French serves here just as a model in reinforcing a pre-existing form.

and, with other derivational affixes:

- *aterissage* (/ateriˈsadʒe/-i/) 'landing', an obvious calque from Fr. *atterrissage* against It. *atterraggio*. The desire to make Piedmontese different from Italian is here evident – the "natural" neologism for a diglottic Piedmontese-Italian speaker would have been *aterage (/ateˈradʒe/-i/).

Somewhat different is the use of native derivational material in order to build neologisms, where French acts as a reinforcing element:

- *dësvlup* (/dəˈzvlyp/) 'development', but also *dësanvlup* (/dəzaŋˈvlyp/) and *dësanvlupament* (/dəzaŋvlypaˈmæŋt/). Cf. It. *sviluppo* vs. Fr. *développement*. Although in heavily Italianized Piedmontese the prefix *s-* is often heard, its native counterpart is rather *dës-* (/dəz-/), as in all the neologims; but while the form *dësvlup* is a direct morpheme-by-morpheme translation of Italian *sviluppo*, and shares with it the Ø derivational morphemes, *dësanvlupament* points back directly to French. To the same group belong also:
- *dëscuerta* (/dəzkyˈærta/) 'discover' or *dëscheuverta* (/dəzkœˈværta/). Cf. It. *scoperta* vs. Fr. *découverte*. This is an old Piedmontese word (attested from the 18th century) probably "rediscovered" nowadays.
- *anandiament* (/anandjaˈmæŋt/) 'beginning'. The form is built on the native verb *anandié* (/ananˈdje/) 'to begin', which is probably less common than its synonym *ancaminé* (/aŋkamiˈne/). The preference for the former in many modern Piedmontese writings is possibly due to the similarity of *ancaminé* to Italian *incamminare* (or reflexive *incamminarsi*) 'to get going', and only marginally 'to set off, start, begin'. In other words, It. *incamminare* is less grammaticalized than Piedm. *ancaminé*. The avoidance of the latter in Piedmontese writings seems to be due to an unconscious sifting of Piedmontese through an Italian mindframe: I suggest that *ancaminé*, as well as the existing noun *ancamin* (/aŋkaˈmiŋ/) 'beginning', are avoided because their Italian counterparts are unacceptable or not used in many

contexts. *Anandié* has no such drawbacks. The derived *anandiament* seems to be formed in its turn on the model of Fr. *commencement* 'beginning'. For 'to begin, start' Italian uses instead *iniziare*, and for 'beginning' the Ø-derivation *inizio*. Italian is therefore not a viable option for Piedmontese – apart from the usual problems with Ø-derivations, the Italian verb is unknown. A roughly synonym in Italian is *cominciare* (more popular than *iniziare*, which is somewhat formal), which has an equivalent in Piedmontese as *comensé* (/kumæŋˈse/) – and nowadays, in heavily-Italianized speech, also *cominsé* (/kumiŋˈse/). And here we find an existing Piedmontese word 'for beginning': *comensi* (/kuˈmæŋsi/). *Comensi* is such a "strong" word that it has even entered the popular Italian of Piedmont as *comincio*. But, again, this looks too much like Italian. *Anandiament* satisfies all the conditions: it certainly does not look Italian, and it is based upon a native verb with a derivational affix. The role of French in this case is to provide the mould for a Piedmontese word formation.

Finally, ambiguous is the case of

- *overtura* (/uværˈtyra/) 'opening', a direct transfer of French *ouverture* with final -*a* marking the Feminine gender. The French root *ouvr-* itself does not exist in Piedmontese, nor the Italian verb *aprire*. The most common forms for 'to open' in Piedmontese are rather *doverté* and *deurbe*, which would produce, if anything, **dovertura*.

6. Conclusion: the difficult road to Ausbauization

As is well known, puristic tendencies can be much stronger in a situation of heavy encroachment by a dominant language, because stronger is the need to reaffirm a vanishing identity and linguistic autonomy. It comes therefore as no surprise that new technologies offer a wide range of opportunities for neologisms:

- *ordinator* (/urdinaˈtur/) 'computer', cf. Fr. *ordinateur* vs. It. *computer* (realized as /komˈpjutɛr/). The word has been widely used in recent publications in Piedmontese. It is to be noted that an equally possible form **ordinateur* has been avoided, just as a voiced **ordinador*. The Golden Rule of Ausbauization has been respected when the lexical stem – which provides differentiation enough from the dominating language – has been borrowed, and no further move is necessary;
- *giari* (/ˈdʒari/) '(computer) mouse', cf. Fr. *souris* vs. It. *mouse* (realized as /mawz/). Again, this has been widely used in recent publications in Piedmontese, and it is based upon the metaphorical extension of *giari* along the lines provided by (among other languages) French;
- *ragnà* (/raˈɲa/) 'webnet', lit. 'cobweb'. Both French and Italian use here either English loans (*web*, *net*) or metaphorical extensions on the basis of the English

model (Fr. *toile*, It. *rete*). This neologism is widely found in the web itself, such as in the home of the Piedmontese wikipedia: 'La wikipedia a l'é *la pì gran enciclopedìa dël mond an sla Ragnà*' ('Wikipedia is the largest encyclopedia of the world on the web'; http://pms.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intrada; emphasis in the original);

- *anliura* (/aŋˈljyra/) '(computer) link', cf. It. *link* (realized as /link/) vs. Fr. *lien*;
- *claviera* (/klaˈvjera/) 'keyboard', cf. Fr. *clavier* vs. It. *tastiera*. This last example is interesting because a pre-existing word is well attested in Piedmontese: *tastadura* 'board' (e.g., in music), and is sufficiently different from Italian.

How far can the process go? How much purism will be tolerated by the community of the speakers? Or: Is all this "real"? In other word, are the words we have considered part and parcel of "common Piedmontese"? Certainly not. But this is beside the point.

Excesses of purism in endangered languages are obviously a well known phenomenon: Igla (2003) has pointed to "the Indianizing syndrome" in Romani and the mistakes of much proposed Romani lexical enrichment, while Moal has analyzed lexical innovation in Breton, 'the production of armchair neologist – often one-man-operated – factories,' addressed at a 'largely virtual' generation of Breton-speaking teenagers (Moal 2004: 89–90).

We do not know about the reaction of the "common, unsophisticated speaker" of Piedmontese faced with certain neologisms, but I suggest that refusal, or simply misunderstanding, are often likely. We know what happens in similar cases, and we know that Ausbauization, if not accompanied by status planning, may result in the speakers being further alienated from their language. Again, this picture is familiar to us from many languages: we can recall here Moal's (2004) description of the situation in Breton, or Thomson's (1994) remarks on "modernized" Scottish Gaelic spoken by native speakers of English, and we discussed the issue at some length before (Tosco 2008).

Certainly, any notion of the "regional", "lesser-used" languages being preserved and developed hand in hand with the national, big languages encroaching them seems utterly misguided: as remarked by Laponce (1984: 64), "[E]ntre langues, l'état normal, c'est l'état de guerre".

What the history of Ausbauization – the history of its victories and even more of its failures – teaches us is that the key to its success does not rest in the hands of the linguists, the lexicographers, nor the language activists. Success comes from the community of the speakers, their reactions, and, even more so, their attitudes towards their languages – the minority and the dominating one alike. Ultimately, it is ideology and politics which make the difference, not linguistics.

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