An Indo--Portuguese undercurrent in Pondichéri French

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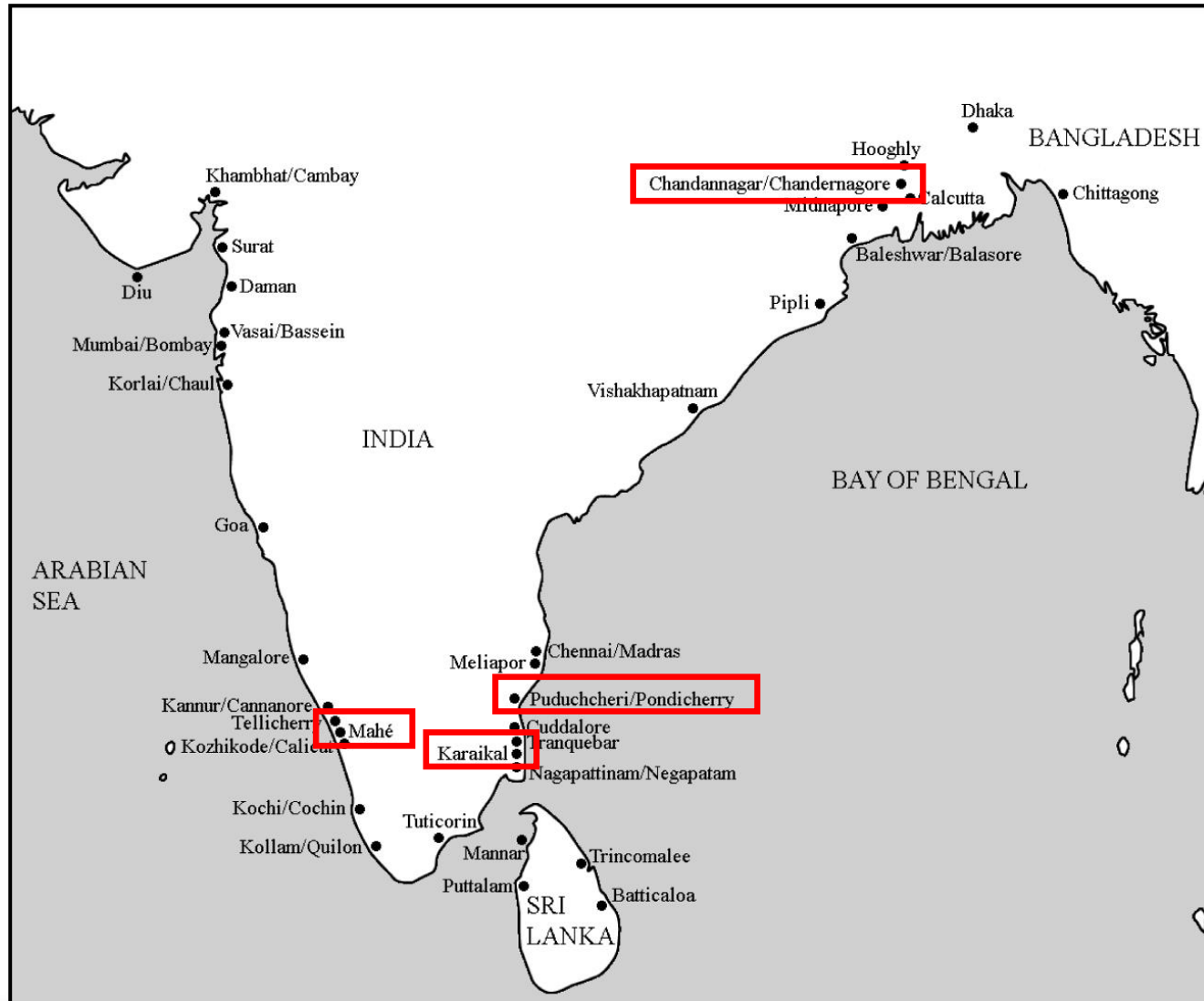CLUL | Centro de Linguística da Universidade de Lisboa (UIDB/00214/2020)

Colonial Pondichéri

- The French established a trading post in Pondichéri in 1674, which became the major French colonial settlement in South Asia;

- Throughout its colonial history, it was briefly occupied by the Dutch and the British, but always reverted back to the French;

- After a negotiated process that lasted between 1954 and 1962, Pondichéri and the other French territories were integrated into the Indian Union.

Anquetil-Duperron (1786)

[…] Dans Nos Etablissements les affaires se sont généralement traitées avec les Naturels du pays, & même avec les autres nations Européenes, par le moyen du Jargon Portugais dont je viens de parler; ou bien on étoit réduit à l'expédient, au moins dangereux, d'employer des transfuges & autres gens d'une fois plus que suspecte.

Indo-Portuguese

Leitão e Castro (Jan 30th, 1884)

[…] *Percorrendo a costa de Coromandel e residindo algum tempo em Meliapor, nada encontrei escripto em portuguez-creoulo e não creio que haja.*

Em Meliapor e Madras poucas pessoas existem já que o fallem, mas ao contrario em Cuddalore, em Pondichery, em Tranquebar e em Karical, é essa a língua de que se serve o povo Est-Indio christão, ou homens de chapeu. Differe porem tanto do nosso portuguez, que não é possível fazer a mais pequena idea do que aquelles indios nos querem significar, fallando-a, nem nós conseguimos que elles comprehendam o nosso portuguez.

Having travelled the Coromandel Coast and having resided for a while in Mylapore, I have found nothing written in Creole Portuguese, and I do not think there is anything.

In Mylapore and Madras, there are now few people who speak it, but, on the contrary, in Cuddalore, Pondicherry, Tranquebar, and Karical, that is the language used by the christian East Indian people, or hatted men. However, it differs so much from our Portuguese that it is impossible to have the slightest idea of what those Indians want to say to us, nor are we able to make them understand our Portuguese.

António Leitão de Castro (missionary, bishop), letter to Hugo Schuchardt

Huillet (Jan. 1867)

Sa composition est des plus hétérogènes: elle comprend quatres éléments bien distincts: les Européens et les descendants d'Européens ou Créoles, les Mixtes ou Topas ou gens à chapeaux, provenant du croisement des Européens et principalement des Portugais dont ils parlent encore la langue et portent les noms, avec les femmes indigènes de basse caste.

The Pondichéri *Créoles*

- **Population of (partial) European ancestry (c. 1000 people)*;***

- **Social and linguistic stratification:**

    - *Haut Créoles* '**High Creoles': (claimed to be) descendants of Europeans exclusively; speak a variety of French close to Standard French;**

    - *Bas Créoles* '**Low Creoles': (claimed to be) descendants of Europeans and Asians; speak a variety of French further from Standard French.**

Earlier known as *Topas*

Kelkar-Stephan (2005: 70)

In the course of the nineteenth century certain 'topa' families managed to get accepted by the 'Creole' society […]. However, their transition from 'Topas' to being accepted by the 'Creoles' was anything but smooth. They were alienated from the 'White' French-speaking population who did not consider them to be part of their community, due in part to the 'incorrect' French they spoke.

Language shift from Portuguese (creole) to French
(19th century)

Pondichéri French

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(Potential) Portuguese influence:

1. The lexicon

Ptg. lexicon (Dalgado 1913)

Word	Meaning	Portuguese etymon
Abada	overhead of a roof	Abada =
Achar	pickle	Achar =
Albatros	albatross	Albatroz =
Aldée	village	Aldeia =
Alfandeque	customs	Alfândega =
Ananas	pineapple	Ananás =
Anil, anir	indigo	Anil =
Anone	custard apple	Anona =
Arack, rack	Arrack	Araca =
Arec, areque	areca palm	Areca =
Argamasse	mortar	Argamassa =
Arratel	a unit of measurement	Arrátel =
Arroyo	brook	Arroio =
Baladine, bayadère	temple dancer	Bailadeira 'female dancer'
Bambou	bamboo	Bambu =

Ptg. lexicon (Dalgado 1913)

Word	Meaning	Portuguese etymon
Banane	banana	Banana =
Bangue	dried cannabis	Bangue =
Benjoin	a type of incense	Benjoim =
Bétel	betel nut	Bétele =
Biche-de-mer	sea slug	Bicho do mar =
Bonite	a type of fish	Bonito 'beautiful; type of fish'
Bonze	a Buddhist priest	Bonzo =
Caire	coir	Cairo =
Cange	rice gruel	Canja 'rice soup'
Caoutchouk	rubber extract	Cate, cáchu =
Carambole	star fruit	Carambola =
Carry	curry	Caril =
Caste	caste	Casta 'caste, type'
Cipaye	South Asian soldier	Cipai =
Cobra-de-capello	cobra	Cobra de capelo =

Ptg. lexicon (Dalgado 1913)

Word	Meaning	Portuguese etymon
Coco	coconut	Coco =
Coco-de-mer	Maldivian coconut	Coco do mar =
Comprador	purchaser	Comprador =
Copre	dried kernel of coconut	Copra =
Corge, courge	a score (mercantile)	Corja =
Cornac	elephant driver	Cornaca =
Dorade	dorado fish	Dourado =
Goyave, gouave	guava	Goiaba =
Igname	yam	Inhame =
Jagra, jagre	jaggery	Jagra =
Jaque	jack (fruit, tree)	Jaca =
Loje	warehouse, fortress	Loja 'shop, ground floor'
Mainate	washerman	Mainato =
Mandarin	a (Chinese) officer	Mandarim =
Mangelin	a unit of measure (for precious stones)	Mangelim =

Ptg. lexicon (Dalgado 1913)

Word	Meaning	Portuguese etymon
Mangostan	mangosteen	Mangostão =
Mangouste	mongoose	Manguço, mangusto =
Mangue	mango	Manga =
Margosier	neem plant	Amargosa 'bitter; neem'
Merigne	sacristan	Meirinho 'bailiff'
Métis	person of mixed descent	Mestiço =
Mort-de-chien	cholera	Mordexim =
Mousson	monsoon	Monção =
Nabab	deputy, dignitary	Nababo =
Naïque	captain, headman	Naique =
Naïre	a Malabar caste	Naire =
Ortolan	lark	Hortulana =
Pagode, pagodin	pagoda	Pagode =
Paillote	thatched house	Palhota =
Palanquin	palanquin, litter	Palanquim =

Ptg. lexicon (Dalgado 1913)

Word	Meaning	Portuguese etymon
Pample	pomfret	Pâmpano =
Papaye	papaya	Papaia =
Pastéque	watermelon	Pateca =
Patemar, patmar	a courier	Patamar =
Pintade	Guinea-fowl	Pintada =
Poyal	raised platform to sit outside a house	Poial =
Sagou	sago	Sagu =
Topas	person of mixed descent	Topaz 'interpreter' =
Toutenaque	alloy of copper, zinc and nickel	Tutanaga =
Véranda, vérandah	verandah	Varanda =

(Potential) Portuguese influence:

2. Object case-marking (with *pour*)

Indirect objects

(1) a. *je   le   donne   pour mon frère.*
     1s.SBJ   3s.OD   give.PRS *pour* my   brother
     'I give it to my brother.' (Burr 1978: 260 ; adapted)

   b. *donner   pour les   personnes.*
       give.INF *pour* ART.DEF.PL people
       'To give [it] to the people.' (Kelkar-Stephan 2005: 81)

   c. *Il   a   donné   une   robe   pour mon fille.*
       3s.SBJ   have.PRS.3s   give.PTCP one.F   dress   *pour* my daughter
       'He gave my daughter a dress.' (Tirouvanziam-Louis 1994: 267)

Indirect objects

Standard (European) French:

- Dative preposition is *à*:

(1) a.

          je   *le*   *donne*   *<u>à</u> mon frère*.
          1s.SBJ   3s.OD   give.PRS *à* my   brother

b.   'I give it to my brother.'

          donner *<u>aux</u>*   *personnes*.
          give.INF *à*.ART.DEF.PL people
          'To give [it] to the people.'

c.

- Some pronouns have special dative forms (e.g. *leur* '3p.DAT').

Indirect objects

(1) a.

Standard (European) French:

- Dative preposition is *à*:

Tamil:

- Dative case marker *–ku, –(u)kku, and –(y)kki* [for recipients, goals of motion, experiencers, standards of comparison, beneficiaries,…]:

kumaar	*appaa.v-ukku*	*oru*	*kaṭitam*	*koṭu-tt-aan̲*
Kumar	father-DAT	one	letter	give-PST-3sm

'Kumar gave father a letter.' (Lehmann 1989: 31)

- Some pronouns have special dative forms (e.g. *leur* '3p.DAT').

Direct objects

(2) a.   *Le*   *policier*   *a*   *arrêté*   <u>*pour*</u> *moi*.
         ART.DEF.SG.M   policeman have.PST.3s   arrest.PTCP   *pour* 1s.EM
         'The policeman arrested me.' (Tirouvanziam-Louis 1994: 207)

     b.   *J'ai*   *gardé*   <u>*pour*</u> *lui*   *dans*   *ma maison*.
         1s=have.PRS.1s   keep.PTCP   *pour* 3s.EM   inside   my house
         'I hid [lit. kept] him in my house.' (Tirouvanziam-Louis 1994: 209)

     c.   *Il*   *obéit*   <u>*pour*</u> *son* *père*.
         3sm obey.PRS.3s *pour* his   father
         'He obeys his father.' (Tirouvanziam-Louis 1994: 223)

     d.   *On*   *a*   *dit*   <u>*pour*</u> *sa* *mort* *à*   *l'église*.
         1p   have.PRS.3s say.PTCP *pour*   his death LOC   ART=church
         'We announced his death in church.' (Tirouvanziam-Louis 1994: 210)

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     e.   *Il*   *tire*   *des*   *fruits*.
         3s.M   pluck.PRS.3s   ART.INDEF.PL   fruits
         'He plucks fruits.' (Tirouvanziam-Louis 1994: 214)

Direct objects

(2) a.

Standard (European) French:

- Direct objects are most often not introduced by any preposition:

On a annoncé sa mort à l'église.
1p have.PRS.3s announce.PTCP his death LOC ART=church
'We announced his death in church.'

b.

- Some pronouns have special accusative forms (e.g. *me* '1s.ACC'):

Le policier m'a arrêté.
ART.DEF.SG.M policeman 1s.ACC=have.PST.3s arrest.PTCP
'The policeman arrested me.'

c.

d.

- A few verbs select a PP – *de*, *avec*, *sur*, *dans*, but the most common is *à*:

Il obéit <u>à</u> son père.
3sm obey.PRS.3s *à* his father
'He obeys his father.'

e.

Direct objects

Standard (European) French:

(2) a.

- Direct objects are most often not introduced by any preposition:

Tamil:

- Accusative case marker –*ai/–e.*

- Selection sensitive to animacy and definiteness:

"i) when the object noun phrase is definite, the accusative case suffix is obligatory […]
ii) when the object noun phrase is indefinite and non-rational and not marked by an indefinite determiner, the noun phrase appears in the nominative […]
iii) when the object noun phrase is indefinite and non-rational and marked by an indefinite determiner, the accusative case suffix is optional […]
iv) when the object noun phrase is indefinite and rational, the accusative case suffix is obligatory […]" (Lehmann 1989: 29-30)

E.g.:

naan	*en*	*caavi.y-ai.t*	*tolai-tt-een*
1s	1s-OBL	key-ACC	lose-PST-1s

'I lost the key.' (Lehmann 1989: 28)

The Indo-Portuguese model

- Asian Portuguese-based creoles in general have syncretic dative-accusative [oblique] marking. In South Asia, marker derived from Ptg. preposition *para* 'for' or *por* 'for, by':

(3)   a.   *Par mi dá   ung   esmolá.*
                OBL 1s give   one   alms
                'Give me alms.' (Nagapattinam; Dalgado 1917: 44)

        b.   *isti   kɔvəra-pə jɐ-olha sə…*
                this   snake-OBL PST-see COND
                If we saw this snake…' (Cochin; Cardoso 2007-2010)

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        c.   *dezoytə an   ye ali   siris   jɐ-faze.*
                eighteen year   1s there work   PST-do
                'I did work there for eighteen years.' (Cochin; Cardoso 2007-2010)

(Potential) Portuguese influence:

3. Non-finite complement clauses (with *pour*)

3. Non-finite complements

(4) a.   *Il   a   commencé* [*pour* *faire   la   table*]*.*
          3sm have.PRS.3s start.PTCP   *pour* make.INF   ART.SG.F table
          'He began to lay the table.' (Tirouvanziam-Louis 1994: 212)

   b.   *Il   aime   beaucoup* [*pour* *jouer   au tennis*]*.*
        3sm like.PRS   much   *pour* play.INF   at tennis
        'He loves playing tennis.' (Tirouvanziam-Louis 1994: 236)

   c.   *Je vais   [*pour* *voir   un   mariage*]*.*
        1s go.PRS.1s   *pour* see.INF   ART.INDEF   wedding
        'I'm going to attend a wedding.' (Tirouvanziam-Louis 1994: 236)

3. Non-finite complements

Standard (European) French:

(4) **a.** - Such complements are normally not preceded by a preposition:

> *Il   aime   beaucoup* [*jouer   au tennis*]*.*
> 3sm like.PRS much   play.INF   at tennis
> 'He loves playing tennis.'

b.

- With some verbs, a preposition is required, incl. *à* and, in few cases, *pour*:

c.

> *Il   a   commencé* [<u>*à*</u> *dresser   la   table*]*.*
> 3sm have.PRS.3s start.PTCP   *à* set.INF   ART.SG.F table
> 'He began to lay the table.'

> *Jeanne insista   [pour venir*]*.*
> Jeanne insist.PST.3s   *pour* come.INF
> 'Jeanne insisted on coming.' (Batchelor & Chebli-Saadi 2011: 563)

3. Non-finite complements

Standard (European) French:

(4) a.

- Such complements are normally not preceded by a preposition:

Tamil:

- In addition to nominalised complement clauses, Tamil also allows non-finite complements, which simply append to the left of the main verb (no overt subordinator):

kumaar [*amerikkaa.v-ukku.p* *poo.k-a*] *virumpu-kiṟ-aaṉ*
Kumar America-DAT go-INF want-PRS-3sm
'Kumar wants to go to America.' (Lehmann 1989: 253)

Jeanne insista [*pour venir*].
Jeanne insist.PST.3s *pour* come.INF
'Jeanne insisted on coming.' (Batchelor & Chebli-Saadi 2011: 563)

The Indo-Portuguese model

- The Creoles of South India also use a morpheme cognate with the oblique case-marker to introduce non-finite complements:

(5)   a.   October-*sə*   *mez-dɛ̃trə* [*vini* *pə-fazæ*]   *lɔ-princəpia*.
october-GEN month-LOC wine INF-make   IRR-begin
'They will start making wine in the month of October.'
(Cannanore; Cardoso 2006-2015; Krajinovic 2015: 55)

    b.   *eli*   *tɐ-gɔsta*   [*ungə* bicycle *pə-tæ*].
3sm IPFV.PRS-like one   bicycle INF-have
'He would like to have a bicycle.' (Cannanore; Cardoso 2006-2015; Krajinovic 2015: 55)

    c.   *ki*   *bɔmba* *tɐ-gɔsta*   [(*pə*)-*kumæ*]*?*
what much IPFV.PRS-like   INF-eat
'What do (you) really like to eat?' (Cannanore; Cardoso 2006-2015; Krajinovic 2015: 56)

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