Standardization and vitality
The role of linguistic purism in preventing extinction

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This paper examines the relation between linguistic purism, standardization and vitality, and argues that linguistic purism warrants renewed emphasis as a necessary heuristic for preventing language endangerment and extinction. Linguistic purism has developed an unfavourable reputation in contemporary linguistics and is frequently portrayed as irrational and reactionary. This is partly due to its historical association with nationalism, and partly due to the descriptive rather than prescriptive nature of contemporary linguistics. This paper argues that linguistic purism is actually rooted in progressive rather than reactionary political thought and activity, and is a constitutive feature of Western Modernity. Moreover, its historical association with nationalism is more accurately understood as anticolonial resistance, a grassroots version of which can be observed across numerous non-Han ethnic groups in the PRC today. Using the explanatory framework of linguistic relativity, the paper further argues on identity-based grounds that purism is a rational rather than reactionary response to excessive translingual borrowing.

Keywords: linguistic purism, linguistic relativity, language standardization, China, anticolonialism, linguistic nationalism, nation-building

t   Introduction

A significant measure for preventing the extinction of minoritized languages is the development of language technologies in conjunction with language standardization. In an age of accelerated globalization with communication increasingly transferred to virtual space, the need for language technologies to adapt has become all the more pronounced. The spread of English as the main global *lingua franca*, coupled with the increasing use of smart devices and social media as mainstream platforms of communication, have accelerated the threat to already vulnerable and endangered languages. With young people in particular spending significant parts of their lives in a mainly English digital world, and much of human communication taking place via English-based virtual assistants such as Alexa, Siri, Cortana etc., native

minority language proficiency is consequently declining. Indeed, it is currently estimated that at least 21 European languages are in danger of digital extinction,[1] while 3,045 of the world's 7,151 known spoken languages are currently endangered.[2] This is a trend whose reversal requires sustained investment in language technology software including interactive personal assistants, synthetic voices, speech recognition, automatic translation systems, spelling and grammar checkers, search engines, and specialized subject-specific (*e.g.* healthcare or law) machine translation systems.

The future of minoritized languages therefore depends in large part on their successful accommodation in the development of language technologies as we enter an increasingly digital age. Central to this is the ongoing process of language standardization whereby lexicographers and terminologists at language academies or other authoritative bodies monitor, regulate, approve, and coin words for new and emerging concepts in order to fill the lexical gaps. The most familiar example in question is of course *L 'Académie Française*, whose puristic language planning has been central to French state-building since its establishment in 1635. Although the amount of language planning varies across linguistic communities, it is undeniable that such centralized direction is needed if languages facing endangerment or extinction are to avoid being superseded by neighbouring dominant languages. In a hyper-globalized world where English terms for new and emerging concepts and discourses are continually entering everyday language via social media and smart devices, preventing the resultant language shifts requires the constant coining of conceptually equivalent terms in the recipient language. For the alternative is the increased code-switching and code-mixing between the minoritized and neighbouring dominant language or *lingua franca*, which in turn exacerbates language shifts and perpetuates the perception that the minoritized language lacks technical, academic, or official feasibility.

Against this background, this paper focuses on the role of language standardization in preventing extinction; specifically, the ideological divide between so-called "linguistic purism" and a more permissive approach to translingual borrowing.[3] It is common knowledge that there is a practical need for minoritized language communities to resist excessive translingual borrowing, especially loan words and loan translations. Consequently, language communities facing marginalization and endangerment typically put

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1. Rehm et al. (2020) and Uszkoreit & Rehm (2012).

2. Eberhard et al. (2022).

3. There are, of course, numerous other contributing factors relevant to language vitality other than standardization. These include, though are not limited to: official status, rigorous language acquisition planning, a "normal" age distribution among speakers (not excessively skewed towards the elderly), status-increasing policy measures, an adequately short time-lag between policy implementation and outcomes, relatively stable residence patterns among the speakers, salience/visibility, congruent jurisdictional borders, and sufficiently large group size among the speakers. See Wickström et al. (z0z3) for an in-context discussion of each of these.

greater effort into coining new words derived from their own indigenous roots.[4] What is problematic, however, is that this practice is widely labeled by linguists as "linguistic purism",[5] where purism is typically associated with cultural chauvinism or reactionary attitudes among the minoritized language community[6]. The paper argues that this pejorative association is largely unwarranted, since not only is purism a widespread response to language oppression and colonization.[7] it is also necessary to safeguarding the role of language as a carrier of culture. Furthermore, far from being an irrational idiosyncrasy, purism is inescapably rooted in rationality-centred Humanist and Enlightenment thinking. Using the explanatory framework of linguistic relativity, I further argue that linguistic purism warrants renewed emphasis within the language standardization profession given its culture-conserving functions. Consequently, its common characterization by linguists as "reactionary" needs to be recalibrated if language standardization is to fulfill its potential as a mitigator of language minoritization and endangerment.

2   Linguistic purism: Conflicting approaches and caricatured characterizations

Linguistic purism is an ill-defined term with no fixed, one-size-fits-all application. Nonetheless, it is required to specify a rate of change considered optimal for language vitality in the face of existential threat by neighbouring dominant languages and *lingue franche*. It must be emphasized from the outset, however, that it is the *rate* of change that is in question,[8] rather than the question of whether there should be any change   at all. Clearly, there is no such thing as an entirely "pure" language, since every known language has undergone significant historical change via contact with other languages, lexical borrowings, neologisms, and standardization measures[9].

Even (nominally) "purer", lesser-modified languages such as German or Welsh   are laden with loanwords and loan translations: commonplace German words such   as *Universität*, *Straße* and *Kirche* derive from the Latin *universitas* and *strata* and Greek *κυριακόν*, while the Welsh *braich* (arm) and *pont* (bridge) derive from the Latin *brachium* and *pons*, respectively. Moreover, language contact and change are precisely what give rise to distinct languages in the first place. Medieval Norwegian bifurcated into Modern Norwegian and Icelandic due to the former's sustained contact with Low German, while Hindustani's two standard registers of Hindi and Urdu are continually evolving into increasingly distinctive languages largely due to the respective Sanskritization and

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4.   Prys et al. (z0z0).

5.   Hansen et al. (z018) and Thomas (1991).

6.   Indeed, this is a characterization commonly attributed to the puristic tendencies of *L 'Académie Française,* viewed by many as 'trying officiously and pointlessly to hold back the inescapable evolution of the French language' (Lichfield 2002). See (Estival and Pennycook 2011) for an account of the prevalence of this attitude.

7.   Baioud & Khuanuud (2022) and Roche (2021a).

8.   Wickström (2012) and Wickström et al. (2023).

9.   A relevant distinction which is sometimes made here is that between *Sprachpurismus* (linguistic purism where the purity consists not so much of rejecting foreign loanwords, but rather correctness in accordance with the grammar established by the standard variety) and *Fremdwortpurismus* (linguistic purism focused specifically on resisting foreign loanwords). This distinction, originally presented by (Kirkness 1984, 290), enables us to differentiate between linguistic change and linguistic borrowing, where linguistic purity need not strictly be characterized by remaining completely static, since *Fremdwortpurismus* can in principle occur without *Sprachpurismus* (or indeed vice-versa, which is usually the case of English)

Perso-Arabization of their vocabularies and grammars.[10] In terms of loan translations (*i.e.* words or phrases which are composed of domestic elements (and therefore look domestic) but were in fact directly translated part-for-part from a foreign language), it is impossible to find a language which lacks them. In German[11], for instance, everyday words such as *Vaterland* (fatherland), *einwandern* (immigrate), and *Menschenfreund* (philanthropist), which originate from the Latin and Greek equivalents *patria*, *immigrare*, and *φιλάνθρωπος*, respectively, are but a few drops in the sea of loan transfers which constitute the German language.[12]

Given that the notion of absolute purity cannot accurately be used to characterize any language at all, how should linguistic purism be understood? Linguists have differed considerably in their treatment of it. On the one extreme, it is defined as the belief that "words (and other linguistic features) of foreign origin are a kind of contamination sullying the purity of a language",[13] and the "desire on the part of the speech community [...] to preserve a language from, or rid it of, putative foreign elements, or other elements held to be undesirable".[14] However, such characterizations are particularly pejorative, implying that the resistance to excessive translingual borrowing is a type of xenophobic prejudice and bigotry. Indeed, the very term "purism" is semantically overloaded: it implies an ideology of cultural chauvinism[15] whereby foreign imports are viewed as "impure" encroachments on the recipient language which needs to be "cleansed" of their influence[16].

Linguistic purism is widely caricatured across much of the linguistics literature which discusses it: Brunstad (z003), for instance, introduces the notion as a merely "mental construct" on the basis that there is no such thing as "pure" versus "impure" language "as we find it in linguistic purism".[17] But just what instance of linguistic purism bases itself on this false dichotomy between absolute purity vs impurity remains a mystery: as mentioned, a more charitable interpretation concerns the optimal *rate* of change, rather than whether there should be any change at all. Similarly, Comrie (1994) ends his discussion of Thomas's (1991) landmark study *Linguistic Purism* by suggesting that it could in principle be used as a handbook for purists, were it not for the fact that "the degree of irrationalism that all too often haunts purism will make practitioners

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10. Humayoun et al. (z0zz) and Ritter (z004).

11. It is also worth noting that linguistic purism is by no means confined to standard languages; it is also equally prevalent within national varieties (and to a lesser extent regional dialects) of pluricentric languages. Take the Austrian and Swiss standard national varieties of German, as defined by the *Österreichisches Wörterbuch* of Austria and the *Schweizer Schülerduden* of Switzerland. Both countries defend their national integrity against cultural and linguistic dominance partly by consciously maintaining the linguistic particularities within their own national varieties of the German language. Linguistic purism has played a major role in establishing Standard Austrian German as the national variety in particular, with the authors of the Austrian dictionary eventually marking German German words with an asterisk after the sustained influence of the puristic campaigning of the likes of Carl F. Hrauda and Friedrich Torberg. While Hrauda proposed a checklist of German German words which Austrians should try to avoid, Torberg proposed to mark the German German variants; both motivated (as Austrian Jews who had been persecuted by the Nazis) by an aversion to German German whose intrusion into the Austrian variety was portrayed as a kind of war (Pütz 1997).

12. Martyn (1997).

13. Trask (1999, page z54).

14. Thomas (1991, page 1z).

less open to his sensible suggestions".[18] Even George Thomas, whose volume on the topic offers a nuanced typology of purism's manifold varieties, dismisses purists as "unyielding to change, intolerant of the transgression of others […] one cannot ignore the fact that purism combines within itself all three elements of the anal-retentive triad: obsessive obstinacy, orderliness and parsimony".[19]

This assignment of primitive irrationality to purists, typically made on the basis that they allegedly believe that absolute lexical purity is a property that can reasonably be assigned to language, is widespread. Indeed, it is one of the central reasons why most academic linguists have traditionally ignored linguistic purism,[20] even though it is unclear whether anyone actually believes that such absolute purity is even a real possibility. But this is remarkably bad scholarly practice: in order to measure the merits or flaws of any given position, it must be considered in its strongest and most reasonable form: no one is interested in the attacking of straw men. Given this mismatch between the caricatured notion of linguistic purism which is rife among linguists and the actual practice of resisting excessive translingual borrowing, therefore, it is worth considering other perspectives on the topic.

A promising though lesser-studied alternative approach to linguistic purism is to emphasise its role as a vital tactic for resisting colonization and securing ethnic survival. Despite receiving insufficient attention by linguists, the puristic practice of resisting translingual borrowings in order to safeguard the language's integrity has functioned as a tool of anticolonial resistance for centuries. Even Fichte's (19zz) polemic against the incursion of French loanwords ("perversions") into German was delivered as a direct reaction against Napoleonic imperialism, though this is widely taken out of context in the literature on national identity and presented as an instance of unilateral national chauvinism. But while linguistic purism, like any ideology, is not immune from degrading into prejudice or chauvinism among its extremist margins, the exception cannot be the rule.

In this regard, one of linguistic purism's most noteworthy features is that it usually only targets the loanwords of neighbouring dominant languages, or languages which have been imposed on the recipient language speakers as a direct result of historical conquest and colonialism, or excessive soft power influence[21]. Tibetan linguistic purism, for instance, focuses exclusively on eliminating Putonghua (普通话, Standard Mandarin Chinese) loanwords, while simultaneously tolerating those derived from

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15. Although purism if often accompanied by chauvinism, this chauvinism is, as this paper argues, in the vast majority of cases a direct reaction to cultural, linguistic, and/or political imperialism, rather than an independent by-product of purism itself.

16. While there may be advantages in coining a new term to disassociate the concept from chauvinism (e.g. *linguistic conservationism* or *protectionism*), I shall bracket this possibility aside for future attention since (1) purism successfully conveys the relative resistance to translingual borrowing; and (2) since purism is the term standardly used in this debate, using a different term here would risk talking at cross-purposes.

17. Brunstad (2003, page 52).

18. Comrie (1994, page 864).

19. Thomas (1991, page 34).

20. Langer & Nesse (z01z, page 610).

English, Hindi, Sanskrit, and Mongolian.[22] German intellectuals in the Wilhelmine era deliberately purged German of French and English loanwords while tolerating Latin and Greek influences; while today, Italian suffixes are generally acceptable in Norwegian morphology while English ones are not.[23] The anticolonial nature of linguistic purism will be examined in relation to minoritized languages in the People's Republic of China in Section 6; however, the present focus will shift to the role of purism in language standardization.

3 Purism and standardization: A reactionary synthesis or pillar of western modernity?

There is a sense in which linguistic purism and language standardization are inextricably linked: the very process of systematizing a language's lexicon and grammar involves specifying which elements should be included and which "elements held to be undesirable"[24] should be removed. The focus here, however, is confined to the puristic practice of resisting translingual borrowings, rather than simply any undesirable elements at all. In this sense, the process of codifying and standardizing languages has historically also invariably involved linguistic purism. The Grimm brothers' *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (1854–1960), for instance, deliberately excluded countless commonplace and historically established loanwords, such that its surviving status today as the most comprehensive and authoritative German dictionary continues to deny the status of numerous   widely-circulating   foreign-origin   loanwords.[25]   Similarly,   Welsh lexicographers have historically been highly reluctant to fill lexical gaps with English-based loanwords, preferring to coin new words from either Welsh resources or Latin or Greek roots.[26] This tendency is no less prevalent today: even popular general-language dictionaries exclude the vast majority of direct English loanwords unless they are already entrenched in the language, usually having undergone morphological naturalization, such as acquiring Welsh spelling and plural endings.[27]   Further, the vernacular grammar-writing of post-Renaissance Europe paved the way for the puristic rejection of translingual borrowings to enter 18th century dictionaries and grammars *en*

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21. One clear exception here is English: although often considered the prime example of an intrinsically democratic, borrowing, and bottom-up language, it has not been exempt from puristic intervention either. Consider the Queen's English Society for instance, or Orwell's landmark admonitions against the excessive use of Latin and Greek loanwords in 'Politics and the English Language' (Orwell 1946). Such puristic activity is neither anticolonial not aimed at securing its preservation; rather, it is aimed at upholding standards within this otherwise largely unregulated lingua franca.

22. Roche (z0z1a, page 115).

23. Langer & Nesse (z01z, page 61z).

24. Thomas (1991, page 1z).

25. Langer & Nesse (z01z, page 613).

26. Hawke (z018).

27. Prys et al. (z0z0, pages 16z-163).

masse.[28]

Linguistic purism has been an institutional feature of systematic language planning and standardization since the founding of the Italian *Accademia della Crusca* in 1582.[29] Renaissance Humanists' rediscovery and remodeling of classical Latin's grammar and style in line with Ciceronian eloquence necessarily involved "purifying" Latin of the stylistic impediments and erroneous or inaccurate words and expressions amassed throughout the Medieval period.[30] From here, the very same template of lexical, grammatical and syntactical refinement was extended to the vernaculars of emerging European nation-states, providing the major languages of Western Europe (Italian, French, Spanish, English, Dutch, German, Portuguese, to name a few) with standardized written forms used for literary production and state administration.[31] Indeed, as Absillis & Jaspers (2016) compellingly argue, linguistic purism has served as a central, constitutive force in Western modernity, playing an indispensable role in the Scientific Revolution, Enlightenment philosophy, and indeed the creation of the modern nation-state.

In addition to producing urbanization, market economies, secularization, state administrations, print capitalism etc. etc., Modernity was also characterized by a constellation of conceptual frameworks which can be understood as comprising its ideological dimension. Rooted in Humanist and Enlightenment thought, a central part of this framework involved the belief in Progress: the human capacity to improve the world via rational intervention, civil communication, and individual accountability manifested universally in the development of modern institutions, and unfolding with the succession of time.[32] It is this Progressive line of thought, moreover, that was at the heart of language standardization. That is: the belief that language is perfectible and requires intervention precisely in order to facilitate the public discourse of a rational politics, necessary to the progressive improvement of society and mankind.[33]

This principle, in turn, fed into Herderian Romanticism: what Patten (2006) terms "linguistic nationalism"; namely the promotion of language (which itself requires reviving and standardising historically rooted vernaculars) as a fundamental condition of political legitimacy within nation states. Romanticism and Enlightenment thinking,

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28. Langer & Nesse (z01z, pages 613 6z3).

29. Thomas (1991, page 102).

30. Burke (z004).

31. Patten(2006).

32. Absillis & Jaspers (z016) and Bauman & Briggs (z003).

33. Ibid.

though often treated as juxtaposing positions, converged in relation to language, differing mainly in emphases. While both saw language standardization as necessary to modern progress, Herderian Romanticists emphasised the vitality and traditions embedded in local domestic vernaculars whose maintenance was necessary to cultural continuity and cohesion. This required traditional regional dialects to be assimilated and refined by intellectuals and linguists into a standard language designed to be intelligible to all while simultaneously retaining its historical rootedness in order to both facilitate modern communication and maintain cultural continuity within nation-states.

Given that purism as an inextricable feature of language standardization has functioned as a driving force of Modernity, with its central emphasis on rationality and with its revolutionary developments in science, politics, education and economics, then, it is somewhat surprising that its reputation as a backwards idiosyncrasy of reactionary mavericks retains its hold on contemporary linguists. One plausible explanation for this is that linguistic purism has in some historical instances become entangled with national chauvinism. Chief among these is Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation* (1808), which bemoans the prevalence of loan words and loan translations in the German language, which he viewed as "perversions" and "corruptions" contributing to the fragmentation and disunity of German culture. Excessive translingual borrowing, according to Fichte, dilutes the recipient language's transparency and natural lucidity, amounting to being "severed from its living root" and "enshroud[ing] the hearer in darkness and incomprehensibility" .[34] Indeed, this is precisely what he claims caused the French to lose their cultural authenticity and develop in its place a cultural and moral degradation, including a "lack of seriousness about social relations, the idea of self-abandonment, and the idea of heartless laxity".[35] A similar attitude was reflected by Herder who objected to Germans learning and studying French: "the slime of the Seine" which could only "deform" the German mind.[36]

Prima facie, such instances of Francophobic national chauvinism may appear to suggest that purism is a slippery slope which *inevitably* leads to xenophobia. But this supposition is mistaken: it is colonialism, rather than purism, that leads to defensive cultural chauvinism. In the case of Fichte's remarks, these were a direct response to French imperialism, delivered shortly after the Battle of Jena which saw the French defeat and occupy Prussia which, until then, had been the only remaining German state not yet subjugated to the French Empire. Fichte's francophobic polemic, which

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34. Fichte (1808/1922, pages 68-71).

35. Fichte (1808/1922, page 67).

36. Herder (1891), quoted in MacNamara (1971, page 42).

emphasises the cultural distinctiveness of the Germans, therefore, must be understood against the background of France's imperial invasion. They were an attempt to instill a sense of national pride and consciousness among the Germans in the face of their imperialism-induced desperation, and were indeed successful in sowing the seeds for the regeneration of German consciousness which led to its eventual unification in 1871.

Similarly, Herder's prejudice against the French language was the result of France's cultural and linguistic domination of Europe, and the resultant subordination of the German language. While French was fast becoming the main European language of culture and education, German was becoming increasingly confined to the lower orders, thereby inducing cultural shifts among the literate classes who were influenced by French intellectuals' claim that the French language is superior.[37] Indeed, as a democratic republican and cultural egalitarian who defended the rights of all nations to self-determination while opposing the subjugation of indigenous peoples, Herder was a noteworthy early critic of colonialism: "An empire forcing together a hundred peoples and a hundred-twenty provinces is a monstrosity and no body of state".[38] Considered within their proper historical context of cultural, linguistic, and political imperialism, there is a sense in which Fichte's and Herder's remarks are unsurprising and entirely unremarkable instances of anticolonial rhetoric.

Cultural chauvinism, then, is most likely to accompany linguistic purism when the background context is anticolonial resistance involving the drive to secure ethnic survival, where language is central to that ethnicity. Although purism tends to be correlated with cultural chauvinism in such cases, it would be implausible to conclude that the latter is the result of the former, as opposed to the underlying anticolonial attitudes. Admittedly, this does present a somewhat inconvenient dilemma to anticolonial scholarship: either one has to bite the bullet and accept that anticolonial resistance and cultural chauvinism are almost invariably linked, or anticolonialism itself, insofar as it contains such chauvinism, must be reappraised across the board. To this end, it is interesting to note that the sinophobic purism of the PRC's minzu,[39] the instances of russophobic purism among Ukrainians[40] or Hindi/Anglo-phobic purism among Bengali speakers,[41] to name a few, seem to evade the familiar charge of reactionary irrationalism assigned to Western instances of the exact same phenomenon.

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37. Juliard (1970, page 84).

38. Herder (1784/1966, page 325).

39. Baioud & Khuanuud (2022).

40. Bilaniuk (2017-2018) and Harrison (2021).

41. Awal (2022).

However, there appears to be no principled reason for this disparity in their respective appraisals. Although it could be argued that this mismatch is justified because of the former's anticolonial nature (which somehow makes the purism more excusable), such an inference is either based on a false premise, or commits the fallacy of special pleading. For French and German purism, to take two obvious examples, are equally linked to historical anticolonial resistance against the English and French, respectively, and therefore cannot be sectioned away from the broader anticolonial genre. Indeed, applying such a double standard seems arbitrary at best, and internally incoherent at worst.

It can be seen, then, that far from being an irrational and functionally redundant idiosyncrasy, linguistic purism not only continues to play a major role in anticolonial resistance movements; it is also constitutive of Western Modernity. Somewhat strikingly, this is the exact reverse of irrationality: Modernism's fundamental emphasis on progress by means of rational intervention in science, politics, education, economics, and indeed language, was at the heart of its revolutionary innovations; without a standard language none of which would have been possible.

4   Language as a carrier of culture: Renaissance precursors

These and countless other examples illustrate that purism in the sense of resistance to loanwords derived from coloniser or neighbouring dominant languages has historically been central in the process language standardization. From a practical perspective, the reasons why are obvious: standardized languages have been necessary to literary production, state administration and nation-building, in addition to preventing assimilation via an incoming tsunami of lexical incursions from coloniser or neighbouring dominant languages in order to arrest domestic language shifts leading to eventual extinction. There is, however, a further less obvious though equally relevant reason behind the prevalence of linguistic purism: fostering and maintaining the integrity of language as a vehicle of culture. This idea, already examined in relation to *Ivrit* (Modern Hebrew) in Wickström et al. (2023), is associated most saliently with Herderian Romanticism and represented in the notion of *Volksgeist*, is that language mirrors its speakers' cultural particularities:

> Has a nation anything more precious than the language of its fathers? In it
> dwells its entire world of tradition, history, religion, principles of existence;
> its whole heart and soul.
> Herder (1891), quoted in Berlin (1976, page 165)

In addition to being a vehicle of culture, language also sets the limits and contours

of human cognition as the "formative organ of thought… Thought and language are therefore one and inseparable from each other".[42]   In contemporary parlance, this is known in cognitive linguistics as linguistic relativity, and is by now substantiated by extensive empirical evidence, the main evidence for which will be synoptically summarised in due course. Meanwhile it is worth noting that the commitment to linguistic relativity, as well as purism, has also been a constitutive part of the Renaissance and Modernity. As has already been noted by Nauta (2006) and Patten (2006), a prime motivation behind Renaissance Humanists' revival and refinement of Latin in line with Ciceronian eloquence was their belief in language's formative influence on thought and world-views. Acknowledging that classical Rome had been the most successful civilisation to date, humanists viewed classical Latin as a fundamental contributing factor to the Romans' civilisation and political success; hence their belief that its revival and use would be indispensable to the political and cultural consolidation of Europe's emerging states.

Specifically, the semantic precision, richness and refinement of classical Latin's lexical, syntactical, and morphological features were considered to be unparalleled by any of the contemporaneous vernacular languages. As such, Latin was considered to be more capable of expressing the subtler nuances and complex aspects of historical processes and reality, which in turn would have significant implications for the development of art, morality and politics. In terms of art criticism, the categories and distinctions embedded in Latin were considered to enable one to perceive and interpret a greater range of qualities and stylistic configurations: concepts such as *compositio*, *decor* and *decus*, for instance, directed one's attention to aesthetic criteria such as proportion, balance, and valence in a manner not available in Italian.[43] A similar point was applied to historical understanding: according to Witt (2021), the appreciation of classical Latin's syntactical, grammatical and stylistic superiority is what enabled Albertino Mussato to discover the "more exacting ways of expressing sequential relationships", articulate "semantically complex historical phenomena" and "capture the temporal relationships involved in constructing historical discourse".

This application of linguistic relativity to art and historical scholarship, moreover, was further extended to politics. Lorenzo Valla, for instance, claimed that the Romans' linguistic achievements were unparalleled and at the heart of their military, political, and cultural success. When the Latin language flourishes, "all studies and disciplines thrive, as they are ruined when it perishes":[44]   in other words, as Alan Patten

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42. Humboldt (1836/1999, § 9).

43. Nauta (2006, pages 176-179) and Baxandall (1971, page 6).

44. Valla (Valllensis) (1471), cited in Patten (2006) from Garin (1952, page 599).

puts it: classical Latin "served as a vehicle for spreading the liberal arts, Roman law, philosophy, and refined manners".[45] Ronald Witt, moreover, argues that the semantic and syntactical resources recovered from classical Latin and used in aesthetic judgement were also applied by Bruni to the Florentine constitution:

> [The] three divisions of the Florentine government, executive, judicial and legislative […] combined in their operations to create political and social order, elegance and harmony. [Thus, the] mastery of the periodic sentence had heuristic consequences, leading Bruni to reinterpret the political structure of Florence in the light of an aesthetic and functional ideal Nauta (2006, page 179), quoted from Witt (2021, page 414)

In sum: the Renaissance humanists' emphasis on the constitutive function of classical Latin in the realm of culture and politics cannot be overlooked. For it was this very same template of reviving, standardizing, and promoting language, driven by the notion of language as a vehicle of culture and coupled with linguistic purism, that was subsequently carried over into Modernity and built upon in the state-building of Western European nations in the late 18th and 19th century.[46] We have already seen that purism has played a constitutive role in the rationality-centred ideological underpinnings of Modernity, and that this has invariably been informed by the principle of language's formative influence on thought *qua* a vehicle of culture / *Volksgeist* / linguistic relativity. Again, this underlines the status of linguistic purism as being rooted in progressive rather than reactionary political thought and activity.

5   Linguistic relativity

Perhaps unsurprisingly, however: similarly to the notion of purism itself, the notion of *Volksgeist* / linguistic relativity has not been treated particularly charitably by linguists writing on standardization and purism/prescriptivism. Deborah Cameron, for instance, presents it as an "old idea", held by Anglocentric and Islamophobic policymakers, that "each language has its own distinctive character, and functions as a vehicle for the values it embodies",[47] meanwhile, simply present it as a tool which has been used for explaining the superiority of one language over another, such as the alleged manliness and heroism of German compared to the weak and effeminate nature of French.[48] Bracketing aside

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45. Patten (2006, page 239).

46. Patten (2006).

47. Cameron (2013, page 71) and Langer & Nesse(2012)

48. Langer & Nesse (2012, page 622).

the fact that language as a vehicle of culture has actually been central in most nationalist and anticolonial movements of the 19th and 20th centuries and is therefore highly unlikely to amount to little more than a chauvinistic "old idea", the following synopsis of the evidence in its favour shows that it would actually be irrational not to endorse it.

Linguistic relativity is based on the two premises that (1) there are differences in conceptual repertoires across languages, and (2) the concepts embedded in language influence or determine thought. If these two premises are true, it follows that the speakers' thought processes differ according to which language they speak. Linguistic relativity is typically defined in a robust sense, where language is characterised as a repository of its speakers' culture-specific traditions, sensibilities, and values. As Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, puts it: "Language as culture is the collective memory bank of a people's experience in history. Culture is almost indistinguishable from the language that makes possible its genesis, growth, banking, articulation, and indeed its transmission from one generation to the next".[49] In other words: linguistic relativity highlights the necessary clustering of language, culture and history in that language embeds its speakers' historically-accumulated cultural norms, beliefs, outlooks, thereby serving as an anchor for a people's cultural continuity.

What are the arguments and evidence for these two premises? Regarding the first premise of cross-cultural linguistic variation: that different languages vary considerably in their conceptual repertoires and lexical/grammatical categories is uncontroversial. Untranslatability (*i.e.* the inability achieve exact conceptual equivalence between the source and target languages) is well-documented in both academic studies and common-sense illustrations. Take the German word *Kitsch* which refers to worn-out clichés such as Christmas decorations and pop songs, Santa Claus smiling lovingly, Walt Disney's Bambi, or pictures of poodles with ribbons in their hair: in other words, fake art which elicits fake emotions "on the cheap". Since there is no direct synonym in English, the loanword *Kitch* is used instead. Similarly, it is often noted in New Testament scholarship that there are at least three senses of the term *love* in Ancient Greek: $\varphi\iota\lambda\acute{\iota}\alpha$, $\sigma\tau\sigma\rho\gamma\acute{\eta}$, and $\acute{\alpha}\sigma\tau\sigma\rho\gamma\sigma\varsigma$. While these distinguish between degrees of affection and friendship, using their only English counterpart *love* causes these conceptual nuances to become lost in translation. Another is *bromance*, which is specific to English and is typically mistaken for homosexuality in other cultures.

In addition to such examples of denotative untranslatability, similar patterns can be seen in grammatical systems such as gender. Cubelli et al. (2011) illustrate this difficulty by citing Ivan Krylov's attempt to translate Jean de la Fontaine's version of *The Ant and the Grasshopper* into Russian. Since grasshopper is feminine in French but

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49. Ngũgĩ (1986, page 15).

masculine in Russian, Krylov had to change it to dragonfly: allegedly, the depiction of the grasshopper's frivolous and light-hearted attitude would otherwise have become lost in translation. Since then, a considerable body of experimental evidence has been compiled documenting the influence of grammatical gender on meaning. A seminal study by Phillips & Boroditsky (2003) showed that grammatical gender influences how objects are conceptualized, with speakers of German and Spanish, for instance, judging person/object picture pairs to be more similar when their biological and grammatical genders matched. Although recent replication attempts have found results to be somewhat task-dependent and context-dependent,[50] it is nonetheless undeniable that gendered language can at least prime or induce certain kinds of thought.

The most rife form of cross-linguistic variation, however, concerns metaphorical and figurative meaning. Since the publication of Lakoff and Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By*,[51] cognitive linguistics has come to view metaphors and figurative meanings as all-pervasive building blocks in language and cognition, and extensive experimental work has examined their prevalence and effects.[52] In English, metaphors such as *Achilles' heel*, *Pandora's box*, and *Herculean task* activate connotations of Greco-Roman mythology; *an eye for an eye*, *fall from grace*, and *apocalyptic* are laden with Biblical connotations, while *winter of discontent*, *faint hearted*, and *break the ice* are Shakespearean. In Malagasy, past events are referred to by metaphors such as *taloha* or *teo aloha* (before, in front), while future events as conceived of as after or behind (*aoriana*, any *aoriuna*), which designate different categories of time orientation.[53] WEIRD populations tend to conceive of health and disease in terms of the metaphorical concept of *body as a machine*, while speakers of Tagalog view disease as intertwined and undetachable from the person's overall state of wellbeing.[54] It can be seen, then, that different languages are laden with different metaphors, many of which are culture-specific.

It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that cross-linguistic variation occurs to a nontrivial degree. Although its exact scope remains indeterminate, experimental progress is being made. Jackson et al. (2019), for instance, studied the linguistic networks of 24 emotion terms across 2474 languages using concept colexification   (*i.e.* when a single word refers to multiple concepts in a given language) and found significant levels of cross-linguistic variation in colexification patterns. This implies

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50. Elpers et al. (2022) and Samuel et al. (2019).

51. Lakoff & Johnson (1980).

 52. Danesi (2021).

53. Dahl (1995).

54. Danesi (2021, page 115).

cross-linguistic variation in the speakers' conceptual association patterns, and is further substantiated by Xu et al. (2020) which found in their analysis of 250 languages that conceptual association patterns also predict the corresponding colexification patterns.

There is also significant reason to suppose that the second premise of linguistic relativity, the inextricability of language and thought, is equally justified. Although a thorough analysis of the evidence and arguments in its favour is beyond the scope of this paper, it suffices at present to underline the following justificatory considerations. First, the prevalence of framing effects is well documented: using apparent synonyms with differing connotations (which enhance the saliency of some properties over others) affect the way that people conceptualize a given topic, as well as the choices they make on its basis.[55] The same is true of metaphors and idioms, which frame thought processes by highlighting certain associated semantic domains at the expense of others. Nowhere is this more widely used than in political persuasion, where the effects of metaphorical frames on political reasoning have been documented extensively over the past two decades.[56]

Secondly, of particular relevance is also the work of linguist Daniel Everett on the Amazonian hunter-gatherer Amazonian tribe, the Pirahã. Everett's Pirahã studies constitute a striking z-in-1 case study in that they evidence both cross-linguistic variation and significant language-based constraints on cognition. The grammar of the Pirahã language, for instance, has an "immediacy-of-experience constraint";[57] namely the absence of a capacity to talk about or think of events in the distant past. This is evident from the fact that the Pirahã language lacks terms for numbers, numerals, quantification, colours, in addition to lacking recursion, and indeed any grammar for expressing the distant past; consequently, the Pirahã are unable to think in such terms.[58] Finally, as mentioned above, the research on the influence of grammatical gender on object categorization also suggests that gendered language can at least prime or influence gender-specific thought.

It is therefore evident that linguistic relativity, which is the mechanism whereby language functions as a carrier of culture, cannot be brushed under the carpet as an "old idea" infused with cultural chauvinism in debates about the nature and functions of linguistic purism. For what it demonstrates is that language is indeed a significant vehicle of its speakers' culture, and as such, purists' resistance to excessive translingual

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55. Kahneman (2011) and Simon & Jerit (2007).

56. Boeynaems et al. (2017), Musolff (2014), and Ottati et al. (2014).

57. Everett (2005, page 26)

58. Everett (2005, page

25).

borrowing is essentially based on two rational grounds. The first is that too high a rate of translingual borrowing over too short a timescale compromises the degree to which the recipient language reflects its speakers' cultural heritage. The second is that, consequently, resisting excessive translingual borrowing from neighbouring dominant languages is necessary to securing ethnic survival given language's culture-conserving function.

6   Linguistic purism as anticolonial resistance

Regarding linguistic purism as a tool of anticolonial resistance, it is important to note that its underlying commitment to linguistic relativity has been central not only in 19th century resistance to Napoleonic imperialism, but also among several of the 20th century's leading anticolonial thinkers. Although neither of these refer to the hypothesis by its name (since clearly none specialized in cognitive linguistics), their commitment to its truth is incontrovertible. According to Franz Fanon, speaking the coloniser's language exacerbates the inferiority complex he ascribes to subjugated peoples since it causes them to internalize the racist attitudes embedded within that language: "to speak a language is to take on a world, a culture".[59] According to Albert Memmi,[60] the marginalization of Tunisian Arabic from postcolonial Tunisia's public life in favour of French causes an internal cultural rift within Tunisians since their own cultural particularities and sources of spontaneity remain embedded in their native tongue, and cannot be replicated in French. According to Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, writing in one's indigenous language is necessary to recovering and resuming its associated culture in postcolonial African states, since this is central in preserving, disseminating, and transmitting their cultural, historical, and artistic inheritance: the images and metaphors which fashion their mental universe.[61] The list goes on.

A particularly relevant case study which I shall use to drive home linguistic relativity's *contemporary* relevance for purism is the current language shifts experienced in the PRC's autonomous regions, where approximately half of their languages are endangered[62] due to the CCP's assimilationist programme. Officially, the PRC has 56 recognized ethnic groups[63] spread across five autonomous regions with some degree of cultural recognition via *e.g.* co-official language policies. However, given that the actual

59. Fanon (1952/2008, PAGE25).

60. Memmi (1957/2021).

61. Ngũgĩ (1986, pages 15-17).

62. Xú (2013).

63. Ma (2017).

number of minority languages far exceeds this number (302 according to *Ethnologue*, the most authoritative resource on global linguistic diversity, though 130 according to estimates produced in the PRC,[64] the non-recognized status of the surplus of minority languages accelerates their erasure in a distinctively top-down manner. The shoehorning of China's extensive range of ethnic minorities into 55 groups was the direct result of the PRC's Ethnic Classification Project of 1954, AND THE LIMITED STATE SUPPORT OF RECOGNIZED MINORITY LANGUAGES IS DWARFED BY THEIR PROMOTION OF *PUTONGHUA* (普通话, STANDARD MANDARIN CHINESE) AS THE STATE-MANDATED NATIONAL COMMON LANGUAGE. AS SUCH, IT IS REASONABLE TO CONCLUDE THAT THE ENDANGERMENT OF BOTH RECOGNIZED AND NON-RECOGNIZED MINORITY LANGUAGES IS NOT THE RESULT OF ORGANIC LAISSEZ-FAIRE TRENDS, BUT RATHER A TOP-DOWN PART OF THE PRC'S INTERNAL COLONIAL PROJECT.

While Mandarin is obligatory in most contexts of public life and serves as a gatekeeper in education and employment, all other formally recognized languages are "optional" and highly restricted in their opportunities for use. This is further exacerbated by the pervasiveness of an imperialist ideology of Han Chinese supremacy whereby a dichotomy between minority languages as backwards/traditional vis-à-vis Mandarin as modern/advanced is insidiously[65] disseminated as part of the CCP's Han-centric state building.[66] While PRC citizens are ranked according to their Mandarin proficiency according to a national standardized test and are therefore strongly incentivised to learn it, no such parallel ~~political or socio-economic~~ incentives exist for other languages, which in turn accelerates their erosion.

Take the case of Inner Mongolia whose Mongolian population has, according to the China Population Census 2010, been reduced to about 17% due to the sustained influx of Han Chinese settlers since the early 20th century[67]. Despite the co-official status of Mongolian with Mandarin, the Mongolian language is nonetheless undergoing significant minoritization and marginalization due to the increasingly assimilationist nature of China's minority language education policy, and the CCP's wider policy of Han-centric state building.[68] This combination of status relegation, population displacement, assimilationist policies, and failure to properly uphold the autonomous rights initially promised to the Mongols has led not only to language loss, but also to frequent code-switching in everyday settings. The result has been the emergence of a mixed Mandarin-Mongolian speech variety called *holimog hel*, which has become a recent target of purist critiques. The linguistic anxiety caused by the ongoing Mandarin-induced Mongolian language shift has given rise to a countermovement which contrasts mixed Mongolian

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64. Eberhard et al. (2022) and Sun Hongkai et al. (2007).

65. Although the CCP maintains an official line of combating Han Chauvinism (*Da Han minzuzhuyi*), this is sheer rhetoric and the exact reverse of their actual policy measures which promote the superior cultural and political representation of the Han majority.

66. Baioud & Khuanuud (2022, page 318).

67. NB it is difficult to know the actual Mongolian share of the IMAR's total population since official statistics produced within the PRC are not reliable estimates; however, no non-official sources exist to ~~my knowledge.~~

68. Beckett & Postiglione (2012).

with "pure Mongolian", where "pure Mongolian" is associated with an untarnished agrarian, poetic, ancestral Mongolian worldview and tradition. Mixed Mongolian, by contrast, is equated with a destructive and polluted non-language symptomatic of ~~muddled~~ disordered thinking and Han Chinese domination. Hence the Mongolian purism movement aims to replace the Mandarin loanwords of mixed Mongolian with Mongolian words as part of their campaign to reverse Chinese influence on the Mongols' mindset and resist the Han Chinese political-linguistic hegemony.[69]

Such puristic resistance against the PRC state's assimilationist programme can also be seen among numerous other non-Han ethnic groups in the PRC, not least the Tibetans[70], Yi[71], Mongols[72], and Uyghurs[73]. whose predicament can also be interpreted as an instance of anticolonial resistance against the PRC's wider project of colonial erasure. The Ethnic Classification Project of 1954 which classified the whole of China's non-Han population into 55 minorities has meant that language erasure in the PRC not only concerns the fate of minority languages vis-à-vis Mandarin, but also the erasure of distinct languages *within* the formally recognized minority languages.[74] The Mongols, for instance, speak at least six different mutually unintelligible languages,[75] but are nonetheless only formally recognized as one of the 56 ethnic groups with only one designated language, namely Chakar Mongolian. This means that Chakar Mongolian is fast replacing the Mongols' other languages which have no formal recognition, while simultaneously also being replaced by Mandarin.[76]

Similar patterns of language shift are affecting the Yi population who, again, have only one formally recognized standard speech variety, despite speaking over 60 languages.[77] The communication barriers and constant interaction with the Han Chinese has consequently given rise to a new mixed-code Yi/Han language called *Tuanjie hua*.[78] Against this background, a puristic "Yi Mother Tongue Movement" has

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69. Baioud &Khuanuud(2022).

70. Roche (2021a).

71. Kraef (2013).

72. Baioud & Khuanuud (2022).

73. Cabras (2017).

74. Roche (2019, 2021a).

75. Eberhard et al. (2022).

76. Bulag (2003).

77. Bradley (2009).

78. Tsung (2012).

emerged, aiming to secure the state promotion of a single Yi standard language in order to reverse the code-mixing-induced language shift, but consequently (though inadvertently) creating further knock-on language shifts among the other Yi languages by exacerbating their marginalization.[79]

Finally, a further instructive anticolonial linguistic purism campaign is underway in the Tibetan Autonomous Region, where approximately 30 non-recognized languages (Tibetic and non-Tibetic) are spoken in addition to Tibetan (Suzuki z018). Although Standard Tibetan receives a relatively high degree of state promotion in education, broadcast media, public spaces etc. as an official language in the Tibet Autonomous Region, its subordinate status relative to Mandarin is nonetheless bringing about its erosion. Simultaneously, as an officially recognized language, its privileged status vis-à-vis non-recognized languages is currently replacing at least six languages in the region.[80] A noteworthy driver of this erosion is the stigmatization of non-recognized languages perceived to be highly mixed and impure in the sense that they are "ridden" with Mandarin loanwords. Driven by widespread anxiety surrounding the endangerment of the Tibetan language, a vigorous puristic movement has emerged which aims to rid Tibetan of all Chinese influences, as well as eliminating minority languages viewed as excessively mixed with Mandarin incursions within the region.

One such unrecognized "mixed" language facing extinction is Manegacha, which not only lacks any broadcast media, publishing industry, or recognition in any employment activity or major public institutions, but is also actively banned from local schools   and stigmatized in civil society.[81] The Tibetan "language purism movement" emerged in the wake of the state's violent crackdown on the demonstrations of the 2008 Tibetan uprising, a series of anti-state protests against the Chinese government's subordination of Tibetans. The movement advocates speaking Tibetan in a "pure", non- mixed form in order to defend it from Han domination, and is propagated in a mainly decentralized grassroots manner via social media, popular culture, religious leaders, public intellectuals, school settings, and civil society at large.[82]

Although its main aim is to purge Tibetan of Mandarin loanwords, an unfortunate side-effect of the movement is that it also targets unrecognized minoritized languages perceived as excessively "corrupted" by Mandarin. In the case of Manegacha, which has

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79. Roche (2019).

80. Roche(2018).

81. Roche (2021a, 2021b) and Roche & Suzuki (2018).

82. Lhagyal (2021).

borrowed roughly half of its lexicon from Tibetan[83] and is considered to be a mixture of Tibetan and Mandarin, its perceived hybridity is taken as evidence of intrinsic impurity, and its speakers are consequently racialized and subjected to everyday race-based abuse. According to Roche (2021a), for instance, its speakers are frequently likened to a type of cross-bred cow/yak hybrid which are eliminated due to their lazy, unproductive and infertile nature, encapsulated in the slur "[a]mong livestock, hybrids; among people, Manegacha and Ngandehua speakers".[84] In this instance, the existential anxiety caused by the structural, state-mandated subordination of Tibetan identity has led to a knock-on grassroots parallel campaign of race/ethnicity-based discrimination of minorities within minorities. This is nothing if not a divide-and-rule colonial template.

7   Conclusion

What is underlined most saliently by the PRC case study is that linguistic purism is equally likely to occur by grassroots, bottom-up means as it is by top-down "elitist" standardization measures. Another noteworthy factor is that the equation of language preservation with cultural survival is fundamental. The puristic counter-movements against the language shifts induced by the PRC's assimilationist programme are invariably framed in terms resisting Han Chinese cultural domination, and the existential anxiety caused by such shifts is primarily expressed by identifying Mandarin incursions with cultural encroachment. Although purism is strongly associated with cultural chauvinism in these contexts, it would be a mistake to conclude that this the direct product of purism, as opposed to the underlying anticolonial attitudes which are *by definition* chauvinistic against the coloniser's culture.

Linguistic purism is a common denominator in virtually every instance of anticolonial resistance (both Western and non-Western) involving the drive to secure ethnic survival, where language is central to that ethnicity. The reason for this, as I have argued, is linguistic relativity, which demonstrates that language is a vehicle of culture rather than simply a facilitator of supra-regional communication. Linguistic relativity also explains why so-called puristic discourses are framed in terms of cultural loss, revival, preservation, promotion, etc. Ultimately, importing linguistic relativity as an explanatory framework into the debate recasts linguistic purism as a rational rather than reactionary response to excessive translingual borrowing, since it functions as a cultural driver of behaviour which resists coerced linguistic (and by extension cultural) assimilation and marginalization.

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83. Wu (2003).

84. Roche (2021a, page 116).

In addition to this behaviour-based account of linguistic purism's rationality, I have also argued that linguistic purism is largely rooted in progressive rather than reactionary political thought and activity. Linguistic purism and linguistic relativity were both central constituents of Renaissance Humanism and Western Modernity: humanists' emphasis on the constitutive function of classical Latin in the realm of culture and politics formed the basis of their project of reviving, standardizing, and promoting Latin and later the vernacular. This, in turn, was a template that was carried over into Modernity (with its emphasis on Progress via rational intervention in the interconnected realms of politics and language), and built upon in late 18th and 19th century European state-building. Given both the practical and ideological emphases on rationality in the history of purism, therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that its characterization by linguists as an irrational idiosyncrasy is superficial, at the very least.

The consequence of this for the contemporary practice of language standardization is that linguistic purism warrants renewed emphasis as a culture conserving heuristic and should be used liberally by lexicographers and terminologists in their coining of neologisms to fill lexical gaps. As mentioned, the future of minoritized languages depends largely on their successful accommodation within the development of language technologies, informed by accurate machine translation which requires constant updating with incoming neologisms and further standardization measures[85]. Given that the main raison d'être of language revitalization is maintaining the speakers' cultural integrity, and that language is a prime vehicle of that culture, resisting excessive translingual borrowing is necessary to achieving this. To this effect, purism is a prerequisite of language vitality, and contemporary linguists' near-orthodox tendency to reject it while viewing the study of linguistics as solely descriptive rather than prescriptive, unless updated, risks sawing off the branch that they are sitting on.

Acknowledgements

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85. See e.g. Korpics (2023) for an account of the Ladin language whose historical lack of standardization had caused a drastic decline in speakers over centuries until recent decades' rise in Ladin-medium media which has started to bring about its *de facto* standardization. A clear implication is that without standardization measures, minoritized languages are at particularly heightened risk of extinction.

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Crynodeb

Archwilia'r papur hwn y berthynas rhwng safoni ac adfywio iaith, a phuryddiaeth ieithyddol. Dadleuir bod angen ategi pwysigrwydd puryddiaeth ieithyddol fel egwyddor angenrheidiol ar gyfer atal difodiant ieithyddol. Mae puryddiaeth ieithyddol wedi datblygu delwedd anffafriol ymhlith ieithyddwyr cyfoes, ac fe'i portreadir yn aml fel agwedd afresymegol ac adweithiol. Mae hyn yn rhannol oherwydd ei gysylltiad hanesyddol â chenedlaetholdeb, ac yn rhannol oherwydd natur ddisgrifiadol yn hytrach na rhagnodol ieithyddiaeth gyfoes. Dadleua'r papur hwn bod puryddiaeth ieithyddol mewn gwirionedd wedi'i wreiddio mewn syniadaeth a gweithgarwch gwleidyddol blaengar yn hytrach nag adweithiol, a'i fod yn nodwedd ganolog o Foderniaeth Orllewinol. Ar ben hynny, mae'n fwy cywir ystyried ei gysylltiad hanesyddol â chenedlaetholdeb fel ymwrthedd gwrth-drefedigaethol, a gellir gweld fersiwn "gwreiddiau glaswellt" ohono ledled nifer helaeth o gymunedau ethnig an-Han yn Tseina heddiw. Gan ddefnyddio'r fframwaith esboniadol o berthynoledd ieithyddol, dadleua'r papur ymhellach, ar sail hunaniaeth, fod puryddiaeth yn ymateb perffaith rhesymegol i or-fenthyca traws-ieithyddol.

Resumo

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