

## Workshop description

Language shift, a change whereby speakers abandon their previous native language in favor of a target language, is a common fact of linguistic life. In this process, the abandoned language becomes a substratum, i.e. an underlying historical stratum. Substratum interference, also called "imposition" (Van Coetsem 1988, 2000; Johanson 2002; Winford 2005, 2013), can be established when there are indications that the substratum influenced the target language as part of the process of language shift. According to Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 38) substratum interference results from "imperfective group learning during a process of language shift".

The majority of the literature on substratum interference deals with the result of recent shifts such as the Irish substratum in English or, of historically attested shifts such as the Gaulish or Basque substratum in Western Romance. Research on substratum interference in linguistic prehistory, however, is rather rare. Exceptions include the investigation of a non-Indo-European substrate in Indo-European (e.g. Salmons 1992, Polomé 1997, Schrijver 1997, Kroonen 2012); a non-Austronesian substrate in the Philippine Negrito languages (Reid 2013); a Khoisan substrate in Bantu (Gunnink et al. 2015) and a forager substratum from Kx'a and Tuu in Khoe-Kwadi (Güldemann forthcoming, 2008).

The goal of our workshop is to refine the existing methods for determining the effects of substratum interference in reconstructed languages and to apply the available methods to specific case studies of language shift in linguistic prehistory. We also welcome contributions on recently attested or historically attested language shift because investigating the extent to which more recent history can be taken as a model for the remoter past is among our key objectives.

The goal of our workshop is twofold, (i) to refine the concepts and methods for determining substratum interference on the basis of recently attested or historically attested language shift situations and (ii) to apply the refined concepts and methods to specific case studies of language shift in linguistic prehistory. We therefore welcome contributions that treat either substratum effects in historically attested or prehistorically unattested contact situations. The extent to which more recent history can be taken as a model for the remoter past is among our key objectives.

Issues to be addressed include, among others:

- Motivation of language shift: Why do some languages wither and end up as substrata, while other languages thrive and spread successfully as superstrata? Which factors encouraged/impeded the speakers of the substratum to shift to the new language? What is the relative importance of economic, demographic and geographic factors vis-à-vis social factors?
- Demography of language shift: Is the language shift the result of cultural diffusion, whereby a new language spreads to a pre-existing population? Is the shift triggered by population movement, whereby a new population spreads taking their language with them? Or, are both cultural diffusion and population movement involved?

- Evidence of substratum interference: How can we determine the effects of substratum interference in a given (proto-)language? How can we distinguish between the effects of borrowing and substratum interference? Can we extrapolate our observations with regard to substratum interference in contemporary and historical cases to establish substratum interference in linguistic prehistory.
- Propensity for substratum interference: Which parts of language are more easily affected by substratum interference than others? Do cases of substratum interference necessarily entail bilingualism?

## References

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