

Importance of Latin and Romance languages for the production of planned languages and their communities

Věra Barandovská-Frank

(Interlinguistic Studies UAM Poznań)

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Latin was once the international language, source of terminology and reference language. Latin expressions are still present in most European languages and modern grammars were created according to the Latin example. It is the source of the Romance languages: the second largest language group in Europe, dominating in South America, often learned as foreign languages. As Klinkenberg (1994) says, even a third of the vocabulary of English is of Romance origin.

This has always been taken into account in the construction of international auxiliary languages, as documented e.g. by Albani & Buonarroti (2016). Apart from the first one actually used, Volapük, all the major planned languages had a Latin/Romance character (Esperanto, Ido, Latino sine Flexione, Occidental, Novial, Interlingua). Projects of the naturalistic school were also oriented towards Romance ethnic languages, or they reformed the existing planned ones, especially Esperanto. There were also countless proposals to simplify Latin.

In the Internet era, the focus of language production (Conlanging) shifted from Europe to the USA. English has become the most important international language, so that conlangs are mainly used for artistic and experimental purposes, as Peterson (2015) shows. However, Romance Conlangs are still an important group, as observed in historical-linguistic experiments such as Wenedyk, Vandalic, Xar-ràno, Tirkunan, Dalmatica, and their Conworlds. Again and again, people go back to the Roman Empire and Latin origin. The Romance group is always welcome at the popular Conlang Translation Relay.

Furthermore, new international auxiliary languages are being produced. The importance of the Lingua Franca for international trade and the existence of Romance-based creole languages have not been forgotten. New Auxlangs such as Elefen, Trilingvo, Nove Latinus, Palatine and several others are discussed on internet platforms among the popular topics of Language Creation Society.

These matters are also covered by Interlinguistic Studies in Poznan, see Barandovská (2020). My contribution will try to prove the importance of Latin and Romance languages for the creation of planned languages.

References

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