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THEORETICAL ESSAY

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DOCUMENTATION AND EXPANSION OF THE COLONIAL LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE OF 19TH CENTURY NORTH AND WEST AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the contributions of certain individuals to the linguistic landscape of 19th century colonial North and West Africa. It highlights the work particularly of William Brown Hodgson, the American linguist and later diplomat, and the French colonist, Louis Faidherbe, who became Governor of Senegal. The indirect impact of the American on the latter through his documentation of Lingua Franca spurred Faidherbe's interest and engagement with indigenous and colonial languages, and his subsequent encouragement of the use of lexically and grammatically reduced versions of French. Faidherbe's substantial linguistic output was a key tool in his colonial postings, particularly in Senegal. The article reveals how in this era of political and military flux, the shifting context and populations made comprehensible simple and unnuanced language a priority. The two men, both autodidacts, recognized the power of maximizing understanding. Hodgson and Faidherbe's work facilitated communication on a wide scale, between colonists and their subjects, and often between various linguistic groups within the local populations. Faidherbe's study and uptake of many languages, as discovered in previously unseen documents from his personal files in France's *outre-mer* archives and the personal collection of Professor Leland Barrows, and his appreciation of and insistence on basic and essential communication, in part laid the foundations for the teaching of French

throughout France's colonies. The pidgin, Français Tirailleur, a rudimentary military language spoken by the *tirailleurs sénégalais*, the multilingual regiment founded by Faidherbe, may well also owe in part its origins and its evolution to him. The article seeks to credit Hodgson and Faidherbe for their disproportionate contribution to the evolution and spread of languages of essential communication across a swathe of the African continent for a substantial part of the 19th century.

RESUMO

Este artigo explora as contribuições de alguns indivíduos para o cenário linguístico da África colonial do Norte e do Oeste no século XIX. Destaca-se particularmente o trabalho de William Brown Hodgson, linguista e posteriormente diplomata americano, e do colonizador francês Louis Faidherbe, que se tornou Governador do Senegal. O impacto indireto de Hodgson sobre Faidherbe, por meio de sua documentação da Língua Franca, despertou o interesse e o envolvimento deste com as línguas indígenas e coloniais, o seu subsequente incentivo ao uso de versões lexical e gramaticalmente reduzidas do francês. A considerável produção linguística de Faidherbe foi uma ferramenta-chave em suas missões coloniais, especialmente no Senegal. O artigo revela como, nessa era de instabilidade política e militar, o contexto e as populações em constante transformação tornavam prioritário o uso compreensível de uma linguagem simples e desprovida de nuances. Ambos autodidatas, Hodgson e Faidherbe reconheceram o poder de ampliar a compreensão. O trabalho desses dois facilitou a comunicação em larga escala, tanto entre colonizadores e seus súditos, quanto entre diversos grupos linguísticos das populações locais. O estudo e o domínio de várias línguas por Faidherbe – evidenciado em documentos inéditos de seus arquivos pessoais, conservados nos arquivos do *outre-mer* da França e na coleção particular do Professor Leland Barrows –, bem como sua valorização e defesa de uma comunicação básica e essencial, contribuíram, em parte, para o alicerce do ensino do francês nas colônias francesas. O *pidgin* Français Tirailleur, uma linguagem militar rudimentar falada pelos *tirailleurs sénégalais*, o regimento multilíngue fundado por Faidherbe, possivelmente deve também, ao menos em parte, sua origem e evolução a ele. O artigo busca reconhecer a contribuição desproporcional de Hodgson e Faidherbe para o desenvolvimento e a disseminação de línguas voltadas à

comunicação essencial em vastas regiões do continente africano durante boa parte do século XIX.

KEYWORDS
Pidgin; Lingua Franca; Français Tirailleur; Faidherbe; Hodgson.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
Pidgin; Língua Franca; Français Tirailleur; Faidherbe; Hodgson.

INTRODUCTION

This paper traces the role of certain individuals in the trajectory of Lingua Franca – from its established and much attested status as the language of daily life in the Barbary Regencies of North Africa to an invaluable means of communication with the indigenous population for occupying French forces from 1830 onwards, and thereafter as a potential linguistic template for French colonial linguistic innovation elsewhere in Africa. It highlights the invaluable work of remarkable autodidacts in this linguistic diffusion, with particular reference to two, whose paths – while not crossing – certainly mirrored and overlapped, in the evolution and embedding of Lingua Franca in colonial history. William Brown Hodgson's documentation of Lingua Franca in the form of what is known as the *Dictionnaire* (1830), made during his US State Department posting to Algiers would have provided the French soldier, Louis Faidherbe, with the rudimentary manual to communicate with the city's residents when he arrived as a colonial administrator. Later studies found in Faidherbe's files in French archives evidence his uptake of Lingua Franca and its influence on his own subsequent linguistic endeavours, as part of his colonial and military roles in Senegal. As with the study of any dead (and predominantly oral) languages, attempts to make conclusive assertions prove futile and so instead I focus on fitting together piecemeal scraps of information and text to build a compelling holistic picture of the linguistic journey and evolution.

The paper starts with a brief historical background to Lingua Franca, and provides the linguistic context to the documentation of the pidgin, belatedly (and somewhat unexpectedly) discovered (Operstein, 2022) to have been the work of the American government's envoy to North Africa, William Hodgson. The paper then highlights the links and shared interest in language(s) of Hodgson and the French colonialist, Faidherbe. It proceeds to describe Faidherbe's burgeoning commitment, in part generated by his uptake of Lingua Franca, together with his acquisition of other rudimentary languages, to linguistic study *per se* and the more practical goal of maximizing communication with colonial subjects. The paper details Faidherbe's meticulous conception for an African regiment, the *tirailleurs sénégalais* (Senegalese snipers), who, despite their name, were far from exclusively Senegalese, but rather were drawn from across French West Africa as a multinational, multi-ethnic and multilingual force.[1] A plausible element in the creation of the regiment was the use of a military pidgin, which was decades later to be known as Français Tirailleur,[2] a means of communication with reduced vocabulary and grammar, reminiscent of Lingua

1 The *tirailleurs* would have needed a common language to communicate both with their French officers and among themselves.

2 I am not claiming that any pidgin that evolved among the early tirailleurs was known as Français Tirailleur. I believe that the epithet would have been introduced much later, with the exponential growth of the tirailleur regiment at the turn of the 19th / 20th century.

Franca, as experienced by Faidherbe during postings in Algeria, and of Faidherbe's own simplified French- dialect wordlists produced contemporaneously in Senegal. The paper suggests a circulation of both language(s) and documentation across the Mediterranean, with key loci of Marseille and the North and West coast of Africa.

1. BACKGROUND TO LINGUA FRANCA

The term Lingua Franca, a means of communication between at least two linguistic groups which is not the native language of any of the speakers involved, originated in the early modern period. It derives from the eponymous Lingua Franca. As with many elements of the original language's existence, its very name is a subject of debate and contention. According to Kahane and Kahane (1976, p. 27-28, 31) Franca comes either from the Greek, *phrangika*, a term used in the Byzantine region to refer to the West, its citizens and any of its languages or from the Arabic *al-farangi* which initially denoted Latin but later a trading language spoken mostly by Jews across the Mediterranean. As with many such labels, its terms of reference broadened to comprise all European Languages, especially Italian. It is noteworthy that there is a generalizing of languages inherent in both these terms from which Franca may derive, and that they were used to describe the language of 'others' by non-speakers.

Originally a nautical jargon, Lingua Franca became a trading pidgin and eventually the language of daily life in the 17th- 18th centuries among the populations of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli. These city-states were under the nominal rule of the Ottomans but *de facto* control of Arab elites. These Arab rulers were, in turn, shored up by the economic strength of powerful corsairs, many of whom were renegade Europeans. It was, in part, the corsairs' native languages that lexified Lingua Franca, which remained an almost exclusively oral language throughout its 250-year existence.

Italian was the primary lexifier of Lingua Franca's minimal vocabulary (approximately 2000 words), while its basic grammar was exemplified by a single infinitive form for verbs, the ubiquitous use of tonic pronouns and a lack of gender or plurals for nouns. There is very little formal documentation of the language - a single text, both dictionary and phrasebook, known as the *Dictionnaire* (1830), which provided lexical and grammatical information to French colonizing forces, and a handful of limited samples discovered in the French colonial archive. The corpus largely comprises references to, and examples of, Lingua Franca from contemporaneous witnesses in the Barbary Coast. Some of the reported speeches are suspiciously similar. Some sources from Italian

speakers, in particular, are deemed untrustworthy as their native language bias skews the accuracy of their linguistic account.[3]

With the arrival of French colonial forces in 1830, Lingua Franca underwent such a relexification that one commentator observed that there were really two discrete Lingua Francas, "the original, and the more French version" (HSA, 1882: Letter 5-7472, my translation). Lingua Franca became more widely known as Sabir, the verb listed in the Lingua Franca dictionary for *savoir* 'to know', but also the infinitive of the verb which was the default form used when speaking the pidgin. The word, Sabir, was also used repeatedly by the Turkish character in Molière's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* who is speaking a variation of Lingua Franca. Although the Turk's words are to some degree a stylized parody, there is a degree of verisimilitude in the use of certain key elements of Lingua Franca's grammar, namely the infinitive form of the verb and the ubiquitous employment of the tonic pronouns *mi* and *ti*. This connotation of Sabir is confirmed in a letter to Hugo Schuchardt, whose 1909 seminal article on Lingua Franca was published decades after his research,[4] from his correspondent, Alfred Morel-Fatio, then professor at the *École Supérieure* of Algiers, who wrote that Sabir is simply an interchangeable term for Lingua Franca used by a Frenchman familiar with Molière's work (HSA, 1882: Letter 6-7473). The nomenclature Sabir was to resurface in France's colonial linguistic policy on a number of occasions.

Lingua Franca's key characteristics appear to recur in other pidgin languages, including quite possibly the military pidgin, which came to be known as Français Tirailleur, the principal means of communication between French colonial officers and their multinational and multilingual subordinates – the *tirailleurs* 'snipers' - drawn from across West Africa from the late 1850s onwards. Such practice was not limited to the French colonial missions. Although ultimately unrealised, the Germans conceived Kolonial Deutsch, a language whose objective coincides closely with Français Tirailleur, as per the following stated aims:

> it can be used between Germans and "natives" as well as among different linguistic groups of "natives"; it makes it possible to transfer unreliable "natives" from one colony to the other, thus effectively neutralizing what would be now termed potential security risks; it is a powerful symbol of German authority (Avram, 2016, p. 105).

3 The linguist, Fiorenzo Toso, affirms this in his citing of an account of overheard Lingua Franca. Toso comments on the authenticity of the language in this source, far from the repeated formulaic phrases found elsewhere in the corpus, but it is equally noteworthy that Toso, who questions the veracity of Italian sources (Toso, 2012) attributes the reliability in part to the source being an English gentleman.

4 Hugo Schuchardt, known by many as the father of pidgins and creoles, conducted his research into Lingua Franca exclusively through a network of 'informants' on the ground in cities along the Barbary Coast and through the Levant. He received a copy of the *Dictionnaire* (1830) from Louis-Lucien Bonaparte, a nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, a renowned linguist who worked on Lingua Franca as well as Celtic and Basque languages, and was based in London. (For more on Bonaparte and Schuchardt's work on Lingua Franca, see Nolan, 2020).

The height of Français Tirailleur's usage, at the turn of the twentieth century, also coincided with a significant international movement to create auxiliary languages, which included Volapük and Esperanto. Many of the linguists and scholars involved in such efforts were, predictably, also focused on the pidgins, creoles and various patois that had been so central to communication between European powers and natives of the colonial territories.

2. DICTIONNAIRE DE LA LANGUE FRANQUE, WILLIAM HODGSON AND FRANCE'S GROWING INTEREST IN 'ORIENTAL' LANGUAGES

Until very recently, the authorship of the *Dictionnaire* (1830) was unknown and a source of substantial speculation. Commentators including Cifoletti (1989) identified the disproportionately high number of words in the latter stages of its alphabet, and suggested that there was an implausible number of French terms (1999, p. 88). The *Dictionnaire* (1830) was dismissed as the work of an illiterate (HSA, 1882: Letter 6-7473) by Alfred Morel-Fatio, living in Algiers in the late 19th century, who refuted the possibility of its author being French, while a later academic, André Lanly, observed acerbically that it was no more than "work of an opportunist in Marseille" (Lanly, 1962, p. 40-41).

In the research for her comprehensive study of Lingua Franca (2022), the linguist, Natalie Operstein, discovered the true identity of the author of the *Dictionnaire* (1830), contradicting the earlier judgments and highlighting the potential impact of a single individual in terms of documentation, description and, even implementation of a language. The parallels between its author, William Hodgson, an American State Department linguist, and the French colonist, Louis Faidherbe, if not superficial, are striking. As Operstein relates (2022), Hodgson was an auto-didact, constantly in search of linguistic resources, and – as the author of the only Lingua Franca dictionary and phrase book – a generator of significant and substantial linguistic material for practical purposes. So too was Faidherbe, as I will relate, in terms of his research and his output on African languages, and his innovative techniques for teaching rudimentary French to colonial subjects in Senegal, including the *tirailleurs sénégalais*, the battalion he founded in 1857.

As Operstein details, while in Algiers, Hodgson – assigned there to learn the languages of North Africa – tried to acquire respected French language resources. Hodgson's dedicated study and record of Lingua Franca only came about because of the absence of these linguistic materials in Algiers, relating to Arabic, Turkish and Persian, and the delay in procuring the texts he needed from the *École des Langues Orientales* (Operstein, 2022, p. 22). This school had been established in the late 18th century, soon becoming a recognised centre of linguistic excellence. European focus on learning and speaking Arabic reflected the increase in trade and international diplomacy across the

Mediterranean, along the Barbary Coast of North Africa and in the Levant. Falaky (2023, p. 5) highlights how learning was another area of international jostling: "Commerce trumped religion in due course, and throughout the 18th century, rivalry between different scholarly centers closely mirrored the commercial competition between Europe's dominant powers."

According to Falaky (2023, p. 5), Volney characterised this as "*un mouvement de soixante trois millions d'échanges, plus réellement riche que la possession de terres vastes et lointaines*" ["a movement of 63 million exchanges, more tangibly valuable than the possession of vast distant lands', describing the globalising impact as a *théâtre du commerce de tout l'univers* 'theatre of trade for the whole universe"] (Volney, 1795, p. 19-20, my translation).

Volney, in his manifesto-like manual to learn Arabic, urged his readers:

> *Supposons tout à coup la facilité de communiquer établie; supposons l'usage familier et commun de langues et tout le commerce change de face: les marchandises mêlent…les esprits s'électrisent; les idées se répandent et bientôt, par ce contact general, s'établit entre l'Asie et l'Europe, une affinité morale, une communication d'usage, de besoins, d'opinions, de moeurs… un caractère uniforme ou du moins resemblant.*
>
> [Suppose that all of a sudden the established means of communication, the familiar and common use of languages and trade change entirely: goods are mixed, spirits are lit up, ideas spread and very soon through this general contact, a moral affinity, regular communication of needs, views, habits is established – a uniform or at least shared character] (Volney, 1795, p. 2-3, my translation).

Plausibly, Hodgson would have eventually received Volney's book, even though the Paris-based language school was not the realisation of Volney's linguistic education aspirations. Volney had advocated the establishment of a language school dedicated specifically to Arabic, Turkish and Persian, based in Marseille (again, a common thread in the evolution and spread of Lingua Franca and its embedding among French colonial forces), because, as he so appositely observed, it was, "*là où abordent, où vivent nos nationaux qui ont passé des années au Levant, et les indigènes du Levant qui viennent commercer à Marseille*" ["there that our citizens who have spent years in the Levant arrive and settle as do the natives of the Levant who come to trade in Marseille"] (Volney, 1795, p. 3, my translation).

Volney's emphasis – as evidenced in his book dedicated to increasing the accessibility of the "oriental" languages to a wider French audience – was on teaching those who were going to use these languages. He proposed the idea of a second school in Paris to teach linguists whose focus was translation of classical texts. Ultimately the *École des Langues Orientales* was established by a more conservative linguist, Sacy, who articulated his aim as:

> *une langue châtiée, régulière, simple et bien construite, opposée aux parlers vulgaires. Cette langue est l'expression de la raison et doit s'imposer à la nation régénérée tandis que les expressions barbares et obscurcissantes dont use le petit peuple doivent être combattues, ou sont tout du moins destinées à disparaître.*
>
> [a polished, regular, simple and well-constructed language, rather than vulgar dialects. This language is the expression of reason and must impose itself on the regenerated nation while the barbaric and obscuring expressions used by the common people must be fought, or are at least destined to disappear] (Messaoudi, 2015, p. 47-48, my translation).

This exemplifies the ideological polarisation with regard to the learning of foreign languages and teaching of French. This purist approach was mirrored a century later with the rejection of teaching methods seemingly advocated originally by Faidherbe for the military and the senior colonial administrator (and later director of France's *École Coloniale*), Étienne Aymonier, for colonial use. These men's methods were based on the grammatical and lexical minimalism and maximised communication inherent in Lingua Franca, and its later re-titled iteration, Sabir.

Hodgson's original documentation and description of Lingua Franca mostly prioritised essential vocabulary, and its structure was modelled on Italian grammar books by Vergani and Veneroni (Operstein, 2022, p. 37) with a section of eight dialogues, again with an emphasis on practical use and facilitating communication. The short (just over 100 pages) dictionary comprises a wordlist translating essential (and regionally appropriate) French vocabulary into Lingua Franca, followed by the dialogues with different vocabulary from the earlier section, which exhibit a more Italian lexical bias than the more Spanish-influenced wordlist.

3. MARSEILLE

Volney's view of Marseille as the most appropriate location for a language school to teach North African and Middle Eastern languages was utterly reasonable. The city, by virtue of its cosmopolitan port as one of the key locations for trade across the Mediterranean, not only ethnographically mirrored the multinational demographic makeup of the Barbary Regencies, but was also the principal embarkation point for French occupying forces bound for Algiers.

Ports across the Mediterranean, such as Marseille and Livorno, had comparably cosmopolitan populations, with Turk[5] slaves as well as merchants from the Levant. Marseille, often a republic throughout French history, mirrored the socio-political hierarchies (or lack thereof) and the pre-eminence of commerce that existed in the Barbary Regencies, and especially Algiers (Takeda, 2011, p. 78). "A royal edict opening Marseille up to foreign traders in 1669 led to a surge in the city's population and by 1720, Marseille was a bustling metropolis of 100,000. An untold number among them were of foreign origin" (Takeda, 2011, p. 113).

Guiral's detailed account of the key role of Marseille in the early occupation of Algeria reveals not only the commercial benefit for the city of the colonial mission, but also its provision of infrastructure and various forms of accommodation. In his review of Guiral's book, Emerit (whose study of the French on the Barbary Coast also includes his biography of a Lingua Franca-speaking

5 Turk was the general term used for Muslims, or even non-Christians, at the time. The phrase 'turn Turk' meant to convert to Islam.

French slave and later minister to the Bey of Tunis, Thédenat-Duvent) summarises the various functions fulfilled by Marseille:

> *Les Marseillais se sont intéressés progressivement à la conquête. L'apport de leurs capitaux fut cependant réduit. Commerçants et marins, ils n'étaient pas alors tentés par des entreprises agricoles, rentables seulement à longue échéance. Mais Marseille a servi de magasin, d'hôpital, de prison. Certains commerçants n'ont même pas négligé le profit des fournitures d'armes à nos adversaires. Les classes populaires étaient fières de la dernière conquête du roi. Tout le monde profitait du travail procuré par le ravitaillement du corps expéditionnaire.*
>
> [The people of Marseille were gradually caught up in the conquest. Their financial support was, however, limited. Merchants and sailors, they were not tempted by the farming opportunities, which seemed likely to fail. But Marseille acted as warehouse, hospital and prison. Some traders even profited by arming our adversaries. The lower classes were proud of the king's latest conquest. Everyone profited from the work generated by the regeneration of the expeditionary forces] (Emerit, 1958, p. 599, my translation).

As mentioned, the *Dictionnaire* (1830) was printed in Marseille by a publishing house, Feissat et Demonchy, which appears to have become the official organ of Algeria-related information. Both the *Dictionnaire* (1830) and the topographical study of Algiers (promoted in the back pages of the former) were issued in 1830, in response to the hastily galvanised French operation. There is scant record of the publishing house but it is worth noting that the two owners were also the proprietors and founders of Marseille's oldest newspaper, *Le Sémaphore*, and had sought to expand into publishing more than once in the years prior to their licences being granted in 1829 (http://elec.enc.sorbonne.fr/imprimeurs/node/23809).

4. LOUIS FAIDHERBE

Faidherbe arrived in Algiers from Marseille in the early 1840s as a junior officer in the French colonial force. Although he was later commended for his multilingualism and, as his personal writings demonstrate, was fascinated with, and later, expert in linguistics, he had no ability in foreign languages prior to his overseas experience. Nevertheless, the need to communicate with colonial subjects both to impose French authority and expand France's colonial economies made Faidherbe acutely aware of, and engaged in, expanding his own repertoire. Demaison reports a senior officer's view of Faidherbe in his second posting to Algiers: "*Le Capitaine Faidherbe, qui parle un peu l'arabe, est un officier intelligent et instruit*" ["Captain Faidherbe, who speaks a little Arabic, is an intelligent and educated officer"] (Demaison, 1932, p. 44, my translation). Like many linguists, the more Faidherbe learned and recognized interconnections between dialects, pidgins and patois, the more he identified the importance of essential communication, with an emphasis on lexical and grammatical simplicity to maximise clarity and understanding. Faidherbe was posted to Algiers on two occasions in the 1840s and 1850s with a stint in Guadeloupe between. He spent several years in Senegal in the 1850s, eventually being appointed Governor of the colony in 1854 and remaining there for another decade.

Within France's dedicated colonial archive, *Archives Nationales Outre-Mer*, there is a *fonds Faidherbe* which holds both personal correspondence and research, and professional documentation including awards, appointments and military records. One of the documents is Faidherbe's military *rapport peculier* 'personal report', dated 1859, and presented to him in St Louis, Senegal. It is of significant value to the military and colonial historian in its comprehensive detailing of Faidherbe's military training and progression through the army ranks, followed by all the postings, campaigns and operations in which he took part or directed. Further areas of the report include his military honours, and, pertinently, a section entitled *langues étrangères et connaissances diverses* 'foreign languages and general knowledge', which relates how Faidherbe:

> *a acquis une compétence assez complète de la langue arabe et s'est livré à des études spéciales de linguistique ancienne et moderne, a obtenu une mention honorable de l'Institut au concours de 1856 pour les langues de la côte occidentale d'Afrique et du Soudan.*
>
> [acquired an almost complete mastery of Arabic and devoted himself to special ancient and modern linguistic studies, he obtained an honourable mention from the Institut in the competition of 1856 for languages of the West African Coast and Sudan] (Fonds Faidherbe, 1859, APOM 113, 2, my translation).

This reflects Faidherbe's prolific output in various West African languages, but does not do justice to his wider linguistic study. There is, however, a specific folder in the Faidherbe archive dedicated to *Études de langues* 'language studies'. This folder provides remarkable insight into Faidherbe's interest in, and exposure to, French dialects and patois, languages and pidgins. The most salient example of this is a 20-page hand-written (much although not all in Faidherbe's hand) booklet,[6] with excerpts of 17 romance language pidgins, patois and the creole of Guadeloupe. This collection of writings is eclectic. There are songs, poetry, passages from famous literary works spanning centuries, but also pieces that appear to be spontaneously written, perhaps elicited by Faidherbe as part of his linguistic research.

The Guadeloupe creole excerpt within the language studies folder is a proclamation made days into Faidherbe's posting to the island, announcing the forced abdication of the French king, Louis Philippe, in 1848. The language recorded includes hallmark linguistic features of the creole which Faidherbe, in a much later article (1884) in which he summarizes his principal views on French instruction for non-native speakers (or colonial subjects),[7] highlights as key simplifications to be

6 The booklet includes *Dialecte corse, Langue romane, Franc-comtois, Patois languedocien, Patois normand, Langage créole de Guadeloupe, Patois limousin, Patois picard, Patois bressan, Patois bourguignon, Patois béarnais, Patois dauphinois, Patois lorrain, Patois Bourbonnais, Patois gascon, Patois Auvergnat, Langue bretonne.*

7 Faidherbe's 1884 article, published in the *Revue Scientifique*, is a highly detailed, prescriptive call for the teaching of a simplified form of French in France's colonies as a means to maximise accessibility and uptake of the language by native populations. It summarises a number of the linguistic practices he had himself instigated in his colonial educational programmes in Senegal.

emulated in any rudimentary teaching of the language. In the 1884 article, Faidherbe states that verbs should be rendered

> *par un mot unique, généralement l'infinitif, plus ou moins modifié ou simplifié, comme fé pour faire, coué pour croire (le créole supprime très volontiers les r).*
> [by a single word, usually the infinitive, more or less modified or simplified, like fé for faire (to do), coué for croire 'to believe' (creole regularly suppresses the 'r')] (Faidherbe, 1884, p. 105, my translation).

Such verbal simplification exists in the example of Guadeloupian creole within Faidherbe's papers: "*pas coué c'est yon engrien*" ["don't believe that it's nothing"], together with multiple other verbs similarly declined. His transcribed example concludes, "*c'est saché, mangnioc pour défini…Vivre la Ypublique couté moin*" ["Know this, now and forever, Long live the Republic, listen to / heed me!"]. These are similarly in the reduced form advocated by Faidherbe, with the stem ending in é, and the phrase also features the tonic pronoun, an integral linguistic element of Lingua Franca and another adaptation recommended by Faidherbe in his 1884 article as an effective single solution to the French language's multiple pronouns: "*Ajoutez une forme simplifiée du pronom et vous avez ainsi une conjugaison extrèmement réduite*" ["add a simplified form of the pronoun, and you have thus an extremely reduced conjugation"] (Faidherbe, 1884, p. 106, my translation). The Guadeloupian creole includes the assurance, "*moin ka pas menti*" ["I'm not lying"]. The tonic pronoun and the simple negative *pas* are both features the creole shares with the later Français Tirailleur, raising the potential for elements of the Guadeloupe creole, several of whose features overlap with Lingua Franca, to have resurfaced in a simplified version of French Faidherbe embraced in his educational programme in Senegal.

Documents in the personal collection of Leland Barrows, who conducted research into the commercial practices of French companies in 19th century Senegal, evidence Faidherbe's specific knowledge of, and deliberate attempts to acquire, Lingua Franca during his colonial postings in Algeria. Barrows' collection was mostly acquired in the 1970s from Faidherbe's grandchildren in Paris, and several of the documents were shared with the *Archives Nationales Outre-Mer*. There are two pages which appear to be printed language-learning exercise sheets. The concurrence of Arabic and Lingua Franca on the sheet (Fig. 1) under the title, *Noms des jours de la semaine* ["Names of the days of the week"] confirms both as the preeminent languages spoken in Algiers. A second sheet (Fig. 2) lists points on the compass and the different regional winds affecting the Barbary Coast. Both sheets (Figs. 1 and 2) feature a column entitled *langue franque* with Lingua Franca translations of the French and Arabic.

It is also worth noting that the vocabulary related to the calendar, climate and geography, that Faidherbe felt it important to master, does not feature in the *Dictionnaire* (1830). (Days of the week are translated in the *DIctionnaire* (1830) from French in the Arabic wordlist but do not feature in the French- Lingua Franca section.) These are, thus, additional subject areas which Faidherbe may even have elicited himself from a speaker, and are relevant to the interactions Faidherbe, and soldiers

under his command, might have needed. The sheets are written in more than one hand, including Faidherbe's own, and the various fonts are evident elsewhere in his archive. Indisputably, Faidherbe was involved in the production of the vocabulary sheets. It is not entirely clear whether they were created purely as reference material, further to the *Dictionnaire* (1830), or whether the sheets were also issued with blank spaces for colonial forces to practice.

As with much of the archive material relating to Faidherbe, there is valuable metadata on the first language exercise sheet (Fig. 1), suggesting not only Faidherbe's knowledge of Lingua Franca but also his insight into the pidgin. Next to the column of the Lingua Franca translation of days of the week, there is an annotation of *esp.*, the abbreviation for *espagnol* 'Spanish' beside the entry for Sunday and *it.*, the abbreviation for *italien* 'Italian' beside all the other six days, denoting, presumably, the lexifying language of the Lingua Franca vocabulary. Such annotation implies Faidherbe's level of linguistic analysis, and understanding of the constituent elements of Lingua Franca. The exercise sheets provide additional material to the extant corpus of Lingua Franca, which lacks written data, and suggests at least French forces (perhaps at the instigation of Faidherbe, himself) studied and deliberately acquired Lingua Franca as a means of promoting communication with the resident population of Algiers.

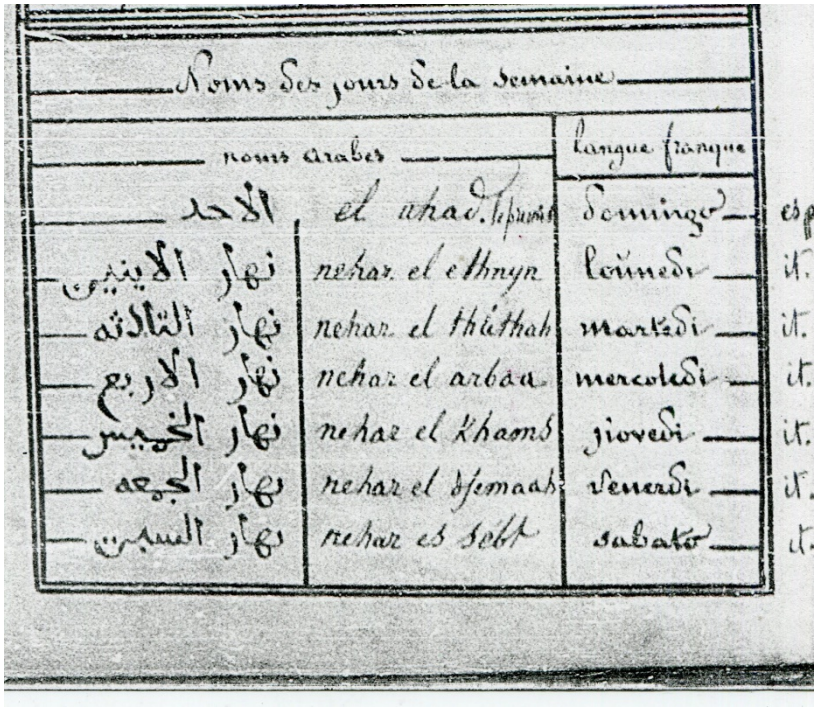


Figure 1. Arabic and Lingua Franca translations of days of the week (Leland Barrows personal collection).

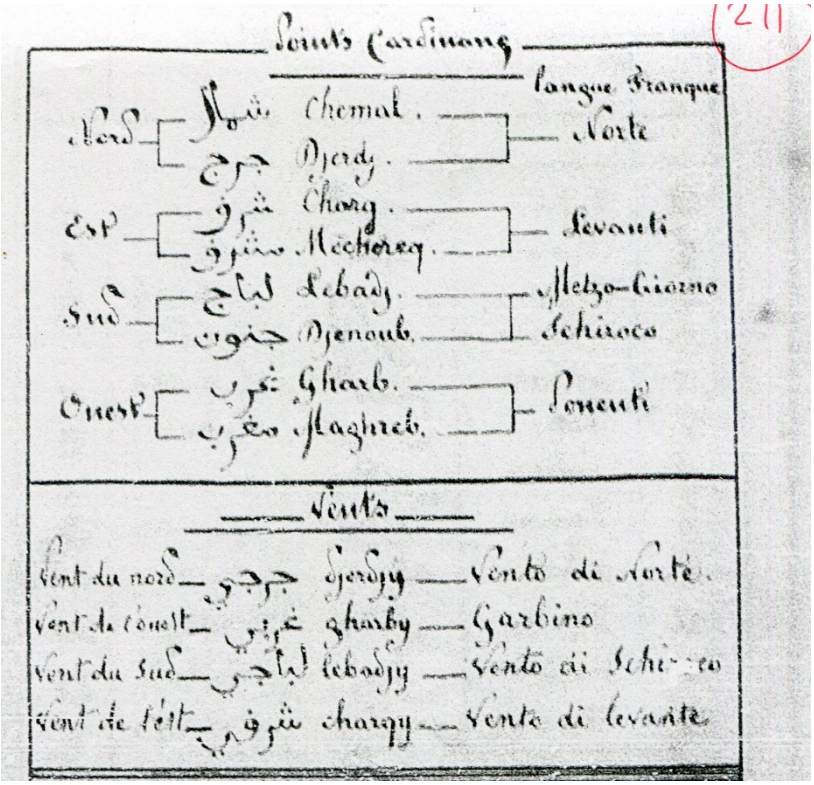


Figure 2. Arabic and Lingua Franca translation of points of the compass and winds (Leland Barrows personal collection).

The *fonds Faidherbe* offers further evidence of Faidherbe's exhaustive quest for knowledge, as well as his view that empirical 'on the ground' knowledge is of most value. On a sheet of otherwise blank paper, in his handwriting, are the words,

> *La première chose à faire pour se livrer à ce genre d'études c'est d'approprier tout ce que a été fait par des devanciers afin de connaître les questions non traitées ou non résolues. J'espérais trouver à la bibliothèque de St Louis tous les ouvrages.*
>
> [the first thing to do to engage in this kind of study is to get hold of all that has been done by predecessors in order to know which questions haven't been addressed or resolved. I was hoping to find all the texts in the library of St Louis] (Fonds Faidherbe, n.d., APOM 113, 5, my translation).

This search for texts in Senegal recalls Hodgson's attempt to acquire French texts in Algiers. Faidherbe's reference here to the work of predecessors, as well as a later comment in his own account of his time in Senegal and issues of colonial language policy, "*nous devons imiter ce qui se fait en Algérie*" ["we must copy what is done in Algeria"] (Faidherbe, 1889, p. 32, my translation), contribute to a sense that Faidherbe saw merit in putting into practice tried and tested methods.

Faidherbe's burgeoning interest and expertise in linguistic manuals is provided by the numerous works he produced, documenting and describing African languages. Although these were published in their entirety in the 1870s and 80s, decades after the conclusion of his colonial postings, the

notions grammaticales, vocabulaires et phrases for Wolof, Arabe-Hassania, Soninké and Sérère, as well as several other works on Peul and Zénaga, a Berber language, were a compilation of the dedicated linguistic research Faidherbe undertook in the 1850s and 60s during his time as the Governor of Senegal. These brief, practical linguistic descriptions bring to mind Hodgson's *Dictionnaire*, with their emphasis on essential and everyday vocabulary. Another feature of Faidherbe's forensic research is his interest in earlier Europeans' exploration and study of the region. Within his personal documents in the colonial archives, there are his transcriptions of the works of the French missionary and ethnographer, Père Labat, and the British explorer, Mungo Park. Faidherbe was quite patently influenced by Labat's engagement with the indigenous population of Senegal. In his book, *Nouvelle Relation de l'Afrique Occidentale*, Labat writes:

> *Ils scavent parfaitement ce qui s'est passé dans les tems les plus reculés. Ils ont une mémoire si heureuse, et une tradition si constante…qu'il y a du plaisir à les entendre raconter les faits qu'ils ont appris de leurs pères, et que ceux-cy avoient appris de leurs ayeuls.*
>
> [They know exactly what happened in the distant past. The have such a joyful memory and such a consistent tradition…that it's a pleasure to hear them tell the tales they have learned from their fathers, and that the latter had learned from their grandfathers] (Labat, 1728, p. 151, my translation).

In his biography, Demaison comments on Faidherbe's similar fascination with

> *La tradition orale, les details inouïs, les croyances et les terreurs transmises à chaque generation, augmentées au cours des siècles.*
>
> [the oral tradition, unimaginable details, beliefs and fears transmitted from one generation to the next, exaggerated over centuries] (Demaison, 1932, 51-52, my translation).

I echo Barrows' (1974, p. 105) expression of regret that little remains of Faidherbe's private papers from this period. Barrows observes, nevertheless, that Faidherbe's interest in indigenous languages clearly only deepened while in Senegal from late 1852, partly as a consequence of his having taken an African Sarakholé mistress, Dionkounda Siadibi, and his study of Wolof, Poular, and Soninké or Sarakholé, all of which she spoke (Barrows, 1974, p. 105), but also given his genuine and profound interest in Senegalese society. Coursier cites Oumar Ba, an archivist at Senegal's National Archives, who observes, on the basis of materials he accessed there, that Faidherbe was,

> *Psychologue autant que sociologue, il s'est toujours évertué à explorer à fond les moeurs et les coutumes des sociétés exotiques avec lesquelles il entrait en contact, ce qui lui a permis d'acquérir une connaissance certaine des dialectes du Sénégal.*
>
> [a psychologist and sociologist in equal measure, [who] always strove to explore in depth the customs and traditions of the exotic societies with which he came into contact, which allowed him to acquire a marked ability in the dialects of Senegal] (Ba, cited in Coursier, 1989, p. 48, my translation).

Indeed, in addition to his initial colonial duties, Faidherbe soon began to produce various social and linguistic analyses of the people of West Africa. His first article was on the Mauritanians for the *Bulletin de la société de géographie* de Paris in late 1852 (Barrows, 1974, p. 106), and early the

following year he wrote to the society president, offering to send further similar articles given that he was particularly interested in

> *vivement profiter de ce séjour prolongé [au Sénégal] pour faire, si c'était possible, quelques pas à ..l'ethnologie de l'Afrique septrionale.*
>
> [making the most of this prolonged stay in Senegal to take a few steps, if possible, in the ethnology of Northern Africa] (BSGP, 1854 4, 7, p. 129-130, my translation).

Interestingly, just under 20 years earlier, Hodgson had also contacted the same journal, summarizing his possible contribution as a detailing of "*la géographie, les langues et les statistiques de l'Afrique septentrionale*" ["the geography, languages and statistics of North Africa"] (Hodgson, 1836, p. 247, my translation). The two men clearly shared similar areas of focus in their research but also a desire both to promote themselves and their knowledge. Faidherbe's offer was accepted and he wrote an ethnological study of the Berbers and Arabs living on the borders of Senegal. One can only assume that at this time Faidherbe also began compiling his documentation and description of several of the prevalent languages of Senegal.

Faidherbe's linguistic documentation, a 1500-word vocabulary of common French words and their translation into the Wolof of Saint-Louis (as well as six other Senegalese languages) was published by the *Imprimerie du Gouvernment* 'Government Printer' in St Louis, Senegal in 1864. Its explicit purpose was for use in Senegalese schools to teach students French from a young age. Faidherbe prefaces the text with a description of the widespread use of the Wolof language, and a justification for having chosen the Wolof spoken in Saint Louis,[8] acknowledging that while not the purest Wolof dialect, it was the most useful to know (Faidherbe, 1864, p. 4). Once again, this reflects Faidherbe's utilitarian approach to language and communication with colonial subjects. Very shortly thereafter, Faidherbe's secretary, a *métis*, Louis Descemet, published a complementary French-Wolof phrasebook, which, as McLaughlin observes,

> a phrasebook would be the logical extension of a project to provide reference materials in an environment where Wolof and French were spoken and which could be of use to both French colonials and Wolof-speaking school children. The idea of a phrase book might have originated with Descemet, or he might have been encouraged by Faidherbe to produce such a document. Although at this point we can only speculate on these details, it is nevertheless abundantly clear from the texts themselves that the two men were aware of and involved in each other's projects (McLaughlin, 2008, p. 718).

Faidherbe was evidently heavily invested in the linguistic element of colonial education policy. McLaughlin describes Descemet as a linguistic broker. (McLaughlin, 2008, p. 719), and it would seem equally fair to categorise Faidherbe as such. Early in his governorship, Faidherbe wrote to the

8 The Wolof of St Louis was heavily influenced by French, with many borrowings given the already sustained contact between the two languages over two centuries of trade.

Minister of War in Paris (ANS, 11, Avril 1856) that a systemic change was required to educate the population of Senegal, and specifically to learn French: "*ils n'ont pas seulement le moyen d'apprendre notre langue*" ["they just don't have a way to learn our language"] (my trnaslation). Faidherbe believed that teaching in standard French was too complicated and alienating for Senegalese children and instead advocated teaching them very basic simplified French, using words and short phrases relevant to daily life.

In a later compilation of *Langues Sénégalaises* (Faidherbe, 1887), Faidherbe explicitly articulates his intention to provide a grammar and lexicon that would enable essential communication, and this, in fact, applied to all of Faidherbe's output - official publications, basic textbooks, and personal papers. He states:

> *les personnes qui, dans un but tout pratique, veulent se server d'une langue indigène pour les besoins ordinaires ou les relations commerciales, peuvent se contenter des petits traités que nous mettons à leur disposition, en les complétant par la pratique.*
>
> [people who, with an essentially practical aim, want to use an indigenous language for ordinary needs or commercial relations, can make do with the short constructions that we are making available to them, and which they can put into practice] (Faidherbe, 1887, p. 2, my translation).

This view echoes Hodgson's words in the *Dictionnaire's* (1830) introduction which describe the pidgin's use in "*[les] usages familiers de la vie, et aux rapports commerciaux les moins compliqués*" ["daily life and the simplest commercial relations"] (1830, p. 6, my translation).

The result of such emphasis on everyday basic language, Faidherbe acknowledges is, "*nous n'aurions peut-être pas ainsi une grande exactitude dans les nuances, mais nous aurons plus de simplicité*" ["we will not have thus such a level of nuance, but we will have greater simplicity"] (Faidherbe, 1887, p. 10, my translation). His prescriptive 1884 article, promoting the use of a reduced and simplified French was consistent in message: "*Les nuances n'y sont pas, mais qu'importe!*" ["there are no nuances, but who cares!"] (Faidherbe, 1884, p. 159, my translation).

Brunel's (1892) biography, admittedly an uncompromisingly favourable portrait, offers an account of Faidherbe's linguistic enterprise that coheres with the general's 1884 article, cited above and the primary sources held by Barrows (1974) and at the *Archives Nationales Outre-Mer*, if in rather euphemistic terms:

> *Pour mieux rapprocher les indigènes des Européens, Faidherbe souhaitait la formation d'une langue analogue au créole des Antilles ou au Sabir de l'Orient. L'essentiel, disait-il, est que nos petits noirs puissent échanger avec nos petits Français des idées élémentaires.*
>
> [To bring the indigenous people closer to the Europeans, Faidherbe wanted to create a language analogous to the creole of the Antilles or the Sabir of the East. The essential, he said, was that our little black subjects can communicate basic concepts to our little French children] (Brunel, 1892, p. 135, my translation).

Faidherbe's focus on maximizing communication and his understanding of languages together with his attention to detail in the organization of his troops suggests that he would have embraced and promoted the use of the functional pidgin, Français Tirailleur.

5. FAIDHERBE AND FRANÇAIS TIRAILLEUR

Although we lack concrete and indisputable evidence linking Lingua Franca and Faidherbe to the evolution of the pidgin that became known as Français Tirailleur, there is substantial circumstantial evidence (in terms of Faidherbe's documented pursuit of languages and linguistics and his sustained emphasis on simple and functional language) from archive sources, as well as linguistic studies of Français Tirailleur, that point to Faidherbe's commitment to the widespread use of a reduced version of French to maximise understanding. This would have been of fundamental importance in a military context.

Valdman (1978) describes Français Tirailleur as:

> *une variété de Français qui était fort répandue dans les unités coloniales et elle remonterait sans doute directement au Sabir (petit mauresque) d'Afrique du nord.*
>
> [a variety of French which was widely spoken in colonial regiments and could undoubtedly be traced directly back to the Sabir (petit mauresque) of North Africa] (Valdman, 1978, p. 39-40, my translation).

Frustratingly, Valdman does not substantiate this assertion, somewhat undermining the *directement* but nevertheless it is unlikely, based on his detailed research into pidgins and creoles, that he made it without some justification. The two pidgins, Lingua Franca and Français Tirailleur, are explicitly linked by the introductory comments of the *manuel*[9] (Anon, 1916):

> *De même que dans l'Afrique du Nord le contact des Arabes avec les Français, les Italiens et les Espagnols a engendré une langue spéciale, le Sabir…de même nos tirailleurs noirs au contact de leurs instructeurs européens ont crée un langage que l'on a appelé le 'petit nègre'…parlé par des indigènes d'origines et dialects différents…*
>
> [Just as in North Africa contact between the Arabs and the French, Italians and Spanish gave rise to a special language, Sabir…so too our black tirailleurs in contact with their European masters have created a language known as 'petit-nègre'… spoken by indigenous people of different origins and dialects] (Anon, 1916, p. 5, my translation).

While this does not confirm that Faidherbe – or any other French colonists – played a direct role in the evolution and shaping of Français Tirailleur, there is a sense that at least in its basic essence *petit-nègre*[10] was a pidgin with similarities to Sabir, and that the evolution is a result of contact between the French and their African subjects.

9 The *manuel* (Anon. 1916) was published in 1916 to formalize the grammar and (largely military) vocabulary of Français Tirailleur and to act as an instruction manual for French soldiers on how to communicate with their African subordinates.

10 There are alternative names for what is officially known as Français Tirailleur. As well as the pejorative *petit nègre,* as per the *manuel* (Anon.1916), the pidgin was referred to as *moi ya dit toi ya dit* and *forofifon naspa*, a name which combines the word meaning black

The origins of Français Tirailleur are a subject of contention. As with Lingua Franca, there are those who dispute its very existence, while some view it as an inter-African pidgin and still others who insist that it was entirely devised by French colonial administrators. (For a more detailed account of this debate, see Nolan, 2023). It seems likely that, at least later in its evolution with the exponential growth in numbers of recruits, there was a significant element of French formalization and instruction of Français Tirailleur. However, there may well have been a minimal jargon in use among African soldiers before the imposition of a more rigid linguistic framework and its documentation in the *manuel* (Anon, 1916). It also seems possible that Faidherbe, with his demonstrated ability in several African languages and, as detailed herein, his active study and acquisition of Lingua Franca and enthusiasm for simplification of language, was invested in the uptake by the *tirailleurs* of a mutually comprehensible pidgin. Faidherbe would have been both capable and determined to maximise communication among the various linguistic groups of his regiment and with their French commanders by means of a more structured language – with basic grammatical rules and a limited lexicon, both of which are in evidence in the various patois and pidgin excerpts he details in the language studies booklet, and in the increasingly French-influenced Lingua Franca (or Sabir). That the tirailleurs sénégalais and a military pidgin originated around the same time is reinforced by the coincidence of dates, as identified by Parkvall (2018): "it could well be that the emergence of the pidgin more or less coincides with that of the first battalion in 1857, especially since the first recorded sentences in the pidgin are from the 1860s" (Parkvall, 2018, p. 60).

This earliest record of Français Tirailleur comes from Père Dupratz, a French missionary in Senegal, whose account of Senegalese tirailleurs' speech in a report sent to his religious superiors in France in 1864 highlights short, ritualistic phrases in Français Tirailleur, which are remarkably similar to the staccato brevity of Lingua Franca:

> *Vous n'ignorez pas l'espèce d'axiome qu'ils ont sans cesse à la bouche: 'manger bon, dormir bon, s'amuser bon; tirailleur pas bon'.*
>
> [You won't be unaware of the kind of axiom they are always saying: 'eating good, sleeping good, having fun good; tirailleur no good] (Dupratz, 1864, p. 397, my translation).

Faidherbe's attention to detail, as evidenced in his linguistic pursuits and his desire to win over the tirailleurs, is supported by the choices he made in terms of their uniform and weaponry. They wore a crimson *chechia*,[11] a white turban, a Turkish-style coat and waistcoat with a wide red cloth belt,

in Malinké and the pidgin equivalent of *n'est-ce pas* 'isn't it?', according to the Malian diplomat, Hampâté Ba, who encountered it on multiple occasions through his childhood and military training. (Hampâté Bâ, 1992, p. 360). It would seem plausible that the nomenclature varied over time and place, as the language itself would have done. As such, what was termed Français Tirailleur in 1916 may well have been an iteration of a pidgin whose roots were encouraged almost 60 years earlier by Faidherbe.

11 A *chechia* was a traditional North African hat, like a high beret in appearance.

carried an infantry sabre and double gun, a weapon traditionally the exclusive preserve of indigenous chiefs *qui vaudra aux tirailleurs le nom de soldats-princes* 'which earned tirailleurs the title of soldier-princes' (Niang, 2021, p. 165, my translation). Faidherbe was clearly aware of the lack of French spoken by the troops. Chasseloup-Laubat, one of his men, informed him that very few of the tirailleur recruitees were familiar with French language or culture, and consequently enlistment proved challenging. (ANS 1, Chasseloup-Laubat, 1863). As such, according to Norden (2017, p. 3), only 500 tirailleurs were recruited in 1857. Despite this, Niang (2021) comments how Faidherbe believed that the tirailleurs would create "*un esprit de corps transcendant les differences raciales et ethniques, linguistiques et sociales, embryon de la nation sénégalaise*" ["an esprit de corps which transcended racial, ethnic, linguistic and social differences, an embryo of the Senegalese nation"] (Niang, 2021, p. 167, my translation). The tirailleurs served not solely as an African military regiment but perhaps rather more significantly as an indigenous political tool.

In his 1884 seminal article, consistent with his linguistic output and the languages he encountered, and potentially contributed to, during his colonial career, Faidherbe prescribes a bespoke but basic French similar to the philosophy underpinning his language phrasebooks. Even several decades after his final colonial posting, he advocates the use of a reduced version of French, at least in the early education process. He emphasises the utility of the spoken rather than the written, and places value on words which will be most used and of most use. He explains the ideal progress of a hypothetical colonial subject learning French, moving from single words to multiple word phrases, but still using only vocabulary relevant to everyday life. Similarly, the grammar he prescribes is rudimentary (Faidherbe, 1884, p. 106). He concludes:

> *Quel sera le résultat? Ces élèves, au bout d'un an ou deux, commerçants, soldats, ouvriers, domestiques, sauront écrire des notes, des carnets pleins de fautes d'orthographe, mais compréhensibles pour eux et qui leur sont d'une grande utilité. Nous l'avons vu par expérience.*
>
> [What will be the result? These students after a year or two, traders, soldiers, workers, domestic staff, will know how to write notes, their notebooks will be full of spelling mistakes, but understandable to, and very useful for, them. We know this from experience] (Faidherbe, 1884, p. 107, my translation).

Perhaps it is speculative to suggest that his linking, in these words, of traders and soldiers might infer a relationship between Lingua Franca and the military pidgin which came to be known as Français Tirailleur, but the mention of 'soldiers' as well as 'experience' (or empirical proof), in conjunction with the substantial circumstantial evidence reinforces my view that Faidherbe recognised the value, and promoted the use, of pidgin languages across many contexts.

Faidherbe's substantial language and linguistic output was at least as prolific as Hodgson's, but his work was perhaps motivated by, and emulated, the latter's description and documentation of Lingua Franca. Both made invaluable contributions to the corpus of language manuals and instruction in colonial Africa. Faidherbe's wordlists and phrasebooks of west African languages evidence his unequivocal emphasis on the need for clear and basic communication. Faidherbe's insistence on the

spread of the French language – initially in a more simplified version – support my hypothesis that a French-lexified military pidgin - Français Tirailleur - was at least a means of communication he would have embraced and advocated, and that his experience of the effective communicative function of Lingua Franca may well have informed this. In her essay, exploring contemporary African lingua francas, McLaughlin (2017, p. 9) observes that now, as in the mid 19th century, 'the most important attributes that contribute to a language's spread are its prestige and its usefulness'. In terms of both Lingua Franca and Français Tirailleur, the latter quality is indisputable.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Demonstrably, the study of predominantly oral and dead languages requires thick description in research and analysis combined with evidence-based conjecture and, at times, a leap of faith. As McLaughlin (2008, p. 717) observes, "historical data of this sort are not without problems", or indeed, quoting Lodge (2004, p. 50), "historical data are inherently bad", but she then proceeds to defend the use of such sources as the phrase and vocabulary books herein as "some are better than others [and these are] 'the best that we could hope for'" (McLaughlin, 2008, p. 717). It is simply not possible to be conclusive but I hope herein to have made a convincing argument in my tracing of the trajectory from sea jargon to military pidgin.

This link between Lingua Franca and Français Tirailleur owes much to the work of the two men, Hodgson and Faidherbe, who shared a deep linguistic interest and expertise. Hodgson and Faidherbe were both autodidacts, the former a dedicated US linguist and interpreter sent to research and record languages indigenous to the Barbary Coast, and the latter, a French colonial officer, monolingual when he arrived there. Their paths linguistically overlapped in the multilingual crucible of Algiers (and, to a lesser extent, Marseille). Hodgson's compilation of the 1830 *Dictionnaire* not only potentially provided a tool for French colonists posted to Algiers, but may also have been a catalyst to Faidherbe's personal linguistic mission, and specifically to his awareness of the value and utility of pidgin languages. Faidherbe's own linguistic output - several West African language-French phrasebooks - appears to have been lexically focused and structured along similar lines of fundamental basic communication as Hodgson's *Dictionnaire*. Faidherbe's unconfirmed but likely role in the rudiments of Français Tirailleur (as a sort of godfather[12] rather than the father of the military pidgin) exhibits the influence on him of Lingua Franca, as well as his study of other pidgins

12 This term was suggested by Professor Anthony Grant, and I fully endorse the role it suggests Faidherbe played in the evolution and spread of Français Tirailleur.

and patois. While not directly connected, the two men both indisputably contributed to the communication between colonists and their subjects, and the evolution and spread of pidgins on the North and West African coast, establishing something of a linguistic continuum, across a swathe of the continent of Africa and much of the nineteenth century.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no competing interests.

STATEMENT OF DATA AVAILABILITY

The data, codes and materials that support the findings of this study are available in the Archives Outre-Mer de France, Hugo Schuchardt Archiv in Graz, Austria, and from the personal collections of Professor Leland Barrows, Vorhees University, South Carolina, USA.

REVIEW AND AUTHORS' REPLY

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