

What is Post-structuralism?



- A body of different responses to structuralism.
- A philosophical movement of the 20th century.
- It focused mainly on language, as a system in constant change.



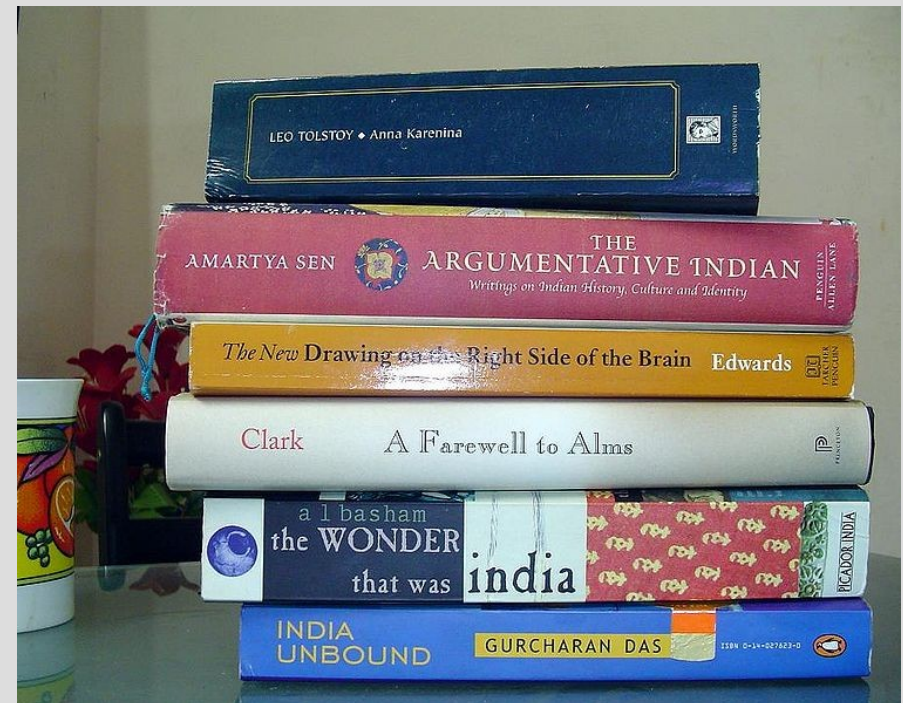
Main figures

- Roland Barthes (1915-80)
- Michel Foucault (1926-84)
- Jacques Derrida (1930-2004)
- Hélène Cixous (b. 1937)
- Etc.



The Death of the Author

- “The birth of the reader begins with the death of the author” (Barthes, 1967)
- Why do we pay special attention to the author and neglect the role of the reader(s)?



Copyright



- The author has traditionally claimed rights upon her/his works.
- In Wikipedia, priority is given to free contents and many authors can co-edit and modify what another has done.



Interdisciplinary approach?

- **Linguistics**
(Saussurean signified/signifier)
- **Anthropology** (the role of Wikipedia in three different cultures; a case study of Catalan, Basque and Galician).
- **Sociolinguistic research**: different dialectal varieties of the same language co-existing in Wikipedia. A brief analysis.



Signifier/Signified

- **Signifier:** the conventional term we use to refer to a given – abstract – concept (the signified).
- **Signified:** the idea conveyed by the signifier.



Examples on Wikipedia

- **Mouse vs Ratón**
(es.wiki)
- **Pullman vs autobus**
(it.wiki)
- **Lift vs Elevator**
(en.wiki)
- **Mirall vs Espill**
(ca.wiki)
- All these terms on the left refer to the same object (signified).
- Different signifiers can point to the same signified.
- Neologisms, dialects, etc.

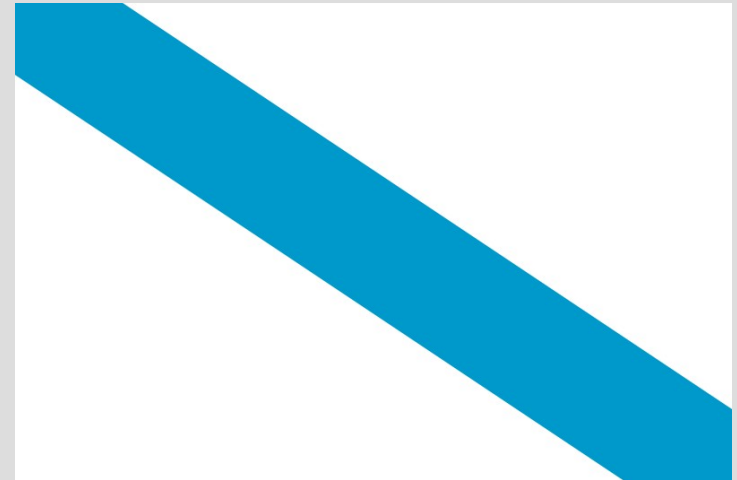
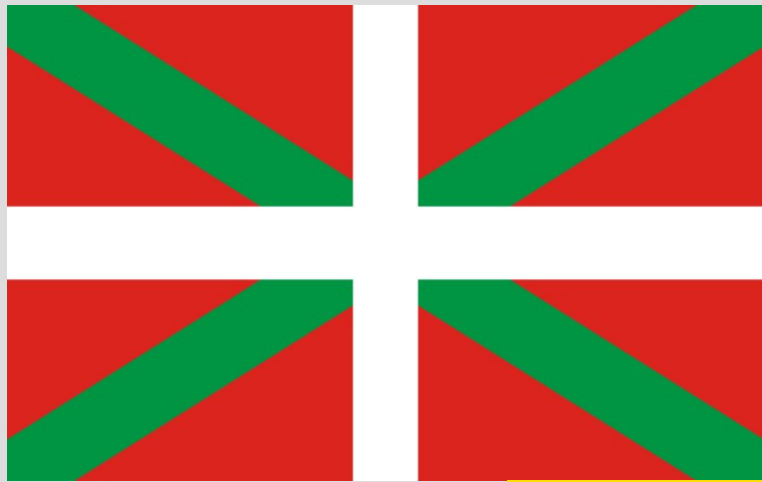


**The best example is Wikipedia
herself!**

**Güquikipedia,
Viquipèdia, Wikipédia,
Βικιπαίδεια.**



Anthropological approach: Wikipedia and the Basque, Galician and Catalan cultures.



Motivation

(cultural, linguistic, or political reasons, leisure, free knowledge, etc)

- Curiosity, minor changes in some articles.
- To promote Basque.
- As a reference for Basque-speakers.
- Spreading the Galician language.
- Attraction by the way Wikipedia works (edit, delete, correct what others do, etc)
- It is funny, one can learn a lot.
- Identification with the philosophy of the project.
- To spread the scope of Catalan online.



The strongest and the weakest points of Wikipedia right now.

- **Pros:** it is free and everyone can edit and add content. It is a valuable and accessible resource online.
- **Cons:** more devices for administrators are requested.
- **Pros:** familiar and friendly environment. Everyone knows each other.
- **Cons:** too much work and lack of people and administrators; some isolated arguments.



The strongest and weakest points of Wikipedia (#2)

- **Pros:** diversity of contents, quick updating, all contents are free and accessible, they are written in a “democratic” way.
- **Cons:** there are still many topics to write about, some small articles need more attention, and the relationship between different linguistic versions also needs to be improved. There is -luckily- too much work to do!



Wikipedia promoting culture

- Basque Wikipedia as one of the few pages in this language online.
- A reference for students; an increasing number of them have joined the project thanks to the Eskola 2.0 program)
- The Galician media has helped to promote Wikipedia in that language.
- It has helped to normalize and “keep alive” the Galician language.
- Emphasis on Galician subjects.



Wikipedia promoting culture. What about Catalan/Valencian?

- It has contributed a lot, especially in schools, where young pupils use it to do their homework or search information about something important in their language.
- For ca.wiki to be in the 14th place regarding the number of articles is quite significant, bearing in mind that Catalan is the 93rd most spoken language in the world.

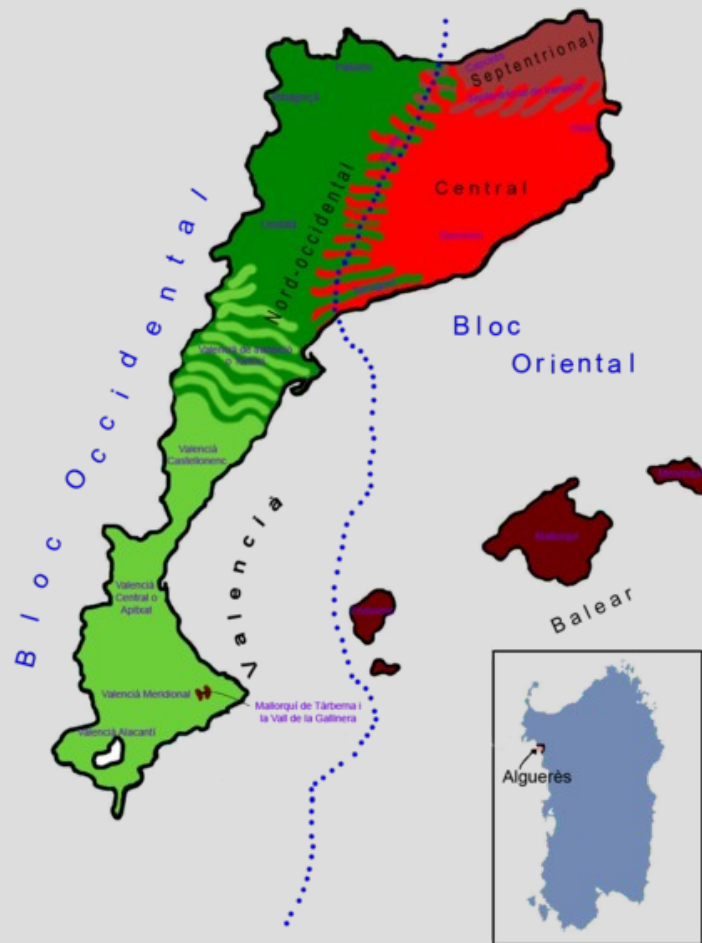


Conclusion

- According to the interviewees, Wikipedia has positively contributed to maintain and promote these languages.
- Its special field of application has been at schools.
- Other factors, apart from those cultural ones, have played a crucial role (leisure, learning new things, the idea of being part of something “important”, etc)



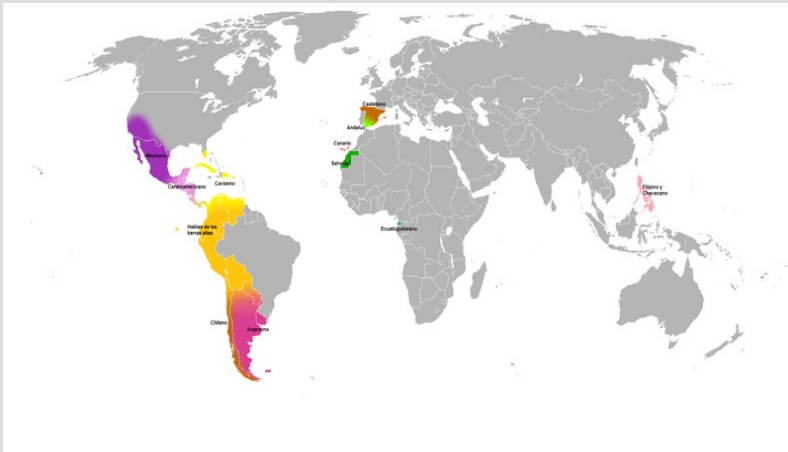
Sociolinguistic research: variational analysis



- About 1.280 articles on ca.wiki use both possessive forms “**seva/seua**” (=your) indistinctively.
- The possessive “**llur**” is less common.
- Other variations include **sigui/siga** (subjunctive), etc.



Sociolinguistic research on the Spanish Wikipedia



- Vídeo vs video.
- Muelle vs resorte.
- The use of the 2nd person plural “vosotros” vs “ustedes” (Spanish America)
- Torta vs tarta vs pastel, etc.



So...this is all we have to say about it?

- Absolutely not...



Dziękuję za uwagę.

Thank you very much for
your attention!

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