

## Language Documentation Data and Diachronic Investigation: a case-study in Trumai

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The goal of this presentation is to discuss how language documentation can contribute useful data to diachronic studies, which themselves can be very relevant for understanding a language that is undergoing changes due to external forces.

The presentation will focus on the case of Trumai, a Brazilian endangered language. Trumai is currently in a delicate situation: it is dying, being progressively replaced by Portuguese (the national language of Brazil). To revitalize the use of Trumai, the speech community initiated educational activities, producing pedagogical books written in Trumai by their own teachers. Although the books are overall appreciated by the group, they also generate some criticism by the older speakers, who claim that the teachers (who are young) are speaking Trumai "in a different way" because of the influence of Portuguese. The issue is to determine if this is really the case, or rather just a matter of misperception by the older speakers (who tend to be normative and purist in relation to their language).

In order to evaluate such situation, one needs to conduct diachronic studies, analyzing data from different phases of the language and trying to identify possible changes that may have occurred. For this task, it is crucial to work with a broad corpus. The Trumai language was documented within the framework of the DoBeS program (2001-2005). In the archive that was organized, materials from three different researchers were incorporated, including not only data from the present stage of the language, but also recordings and materials obtained in previous years of research: 1960s (when few Trumai individuals spoke Portuguese), part of 1970s, end of 1980s and 1990s (when Portuguese became more present). In other words, the data available in the archive cover a period of 40 years of work with the Trumai people. The activities conducted during the DoBeS project indicated that the diachronic investigation of the language is indeed one of the most interesting points about Trumai. A first analysis of the data available in the corpus shows that consistent changes happened along the years at the phonological and lexical levels, as well in the grammar.

A particularly important study, from the diachronic point of view, relates to the evolution of the morpheme *(i)yi*. This morpheme, which occurs as the rightmost element of a 3rd person NP, was not very often employed in the sixties, but nowadays it is frequently observed in the speech of Trumai speakers, particularly the young ones. *(I)yi* is most likely a pragmatic marker, but its role seems to have altered over time. The question is whether this happened because of a natural development of the language (i.e., due to internal motivations) or because of the external influence of Portuguese. On the one hand, one could state that the generalized use of Portuguese by the younger people may have indeed caused the increasing in the use of *(i)yi*. On the other hand, some of the data suggest that the influence of Portuguese may not be the only factor behind the change (i.e., even if there is some contribution, it seems to be limited).

The present study will explore the evolution of this morpheme, using diachronic data from the Trumai-DoBeS corpus. The study will also discuss some challenges that the historical change undergone by *(i)yi* may bring toward the production of educational materials, as well as some issues that the Trumai teachers may face in their revitalization activities.