



Metadiscursive regime and register formation on Aymara radio

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the links between language use, speakers and institutional authority at the oldest Aymara-language radio station in Bolivia. The station's Aymara language department develops and approves scripts and monitors programming, identifying Spanish loan words – “aberrations” – and replacing them with Aymara neologisms. In the context of indigenous political resurgence in Bolivia, language has become a metonym for the indigenous nation, another terrain for decolonization and personal transformation. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork and discourse analysis of a broadcast of the program *Aymara Language*, I argue that the metadiscursive regime operating at the station plays a role in consolidating a distinct register of Aymara and its elusive model speaker.

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1. Introduction

The city of El Alto, Bolivia sits perched at the edge of the Andean high plain (*altiplano*) overlooking the nation's capital below, La Paz, snow-covered peaks visible beyond its rooftops. At an altitude approaching four thousand meters above sea level, views here are as breathtaking as the very atmosphere, which leaves many visitors wanting for air. This rarely poses a problem for El Alto's residents, some of whom can be heard in busier neighborhoods as they work operating the city's main system of collective transport, calling out the names of avenues, landmarks and neighborhoods from inside hundreds of minivans filling the streets to the pedestrians passing by—teenagers in school uniforms, men in suits with briefcases, women wearing the heavily pleated skirts and bowler hats typical of Aymara women. El Alto is not only among the highest cities in the world, but also among the most densely indigenous, with 82% of its population consisting of Aymara migrants from the surrounding high plain and their descendants (INE, 2001). As home to nearly half of all ethnic Aymaras in the greater Lake Titicaca region, El Alto might also be considered the capital of the Aymaras (Albó, 2006).

Boarding one of these vans, most conversations overheard are in Spanish but also sometimes in Aymara, which might also be heard coming from the radio if perhaps the driver has tuned into Radio San Gabriel (RSG), “The Voice of the Aymara People,” the longest-running Aymara language radio station in Bolivia. Radio San Gabriel may well also be one of the place names called out to passing pedestrians. The well-known, Jesuit-affiliated radio station serves as a landmark in this sprawling city and, with its exclusively Aymara broadcasting, stands out in the city's soundscape. While some other radio stations here run early-morning Aymara programs targeting agricultural and manual laborers, RSG's programming is unique in being entirely in Aymara. If, for commuters navigating El Alto, RSG serves as a landmark, as the preeminent station from which clearly articulated Aymara voices are broadcast, RSG provides an additional orienting role. A well-elaborated regime of metadiscursive practices in place at RSG orients projects of multiple scales – from individuals' own projects of personal

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transformation to broader interventions, including the expansion of a linguistic register of “pure Aymara.” This paper examines RSG’s Aymara Language Department, focusing on two of its members, who find themselves at the intersection of multiple and intertwined sources of linguistic and other authority: the Catholic Church, disciplinary linguistics, and their families in the countryside. The protocols of metadiscursive scrutiny they maintain at RSG constitute a key site in the constitution and diffusion of this register of Aymara. By following the individuals who enforce this metadiscursive regime, how they enter it and maintain it, I describe how “pure Aymara” becomes audible on the airwaves.

2. Radio in Bolivia and the birth of RSG

Radio enjoys a higher profile in Bolivia than many Latin American countries, and is more relied on for news and entertainment than in the US or Europe (Albó, 1974; Archondo, 1991; O’Connor, 2006). Within the broader field of Bolivian radio, Aymara language broadcasting has a long history (Albó, 1974; Grebe and von Gleich, 2001). This contrasts sharply with the presence of Aymara language in television, film and print media. While some films have been made in the Aymara language, most famously by the neorealist director Jorge Sanjinés, and Bolivian state television occasionally runs Aymara language programming on programs like *Entre Culturas* (‘Between Cultures’) (Himpele, 2004, 2008; Schiwy, 2008), these are exceptions proving the rule of Spanish language dominance within Bolivian film and television. Aymara texts circulate in educational settings, particularly at the primary level where teachers emphasize textual literacy (López, 2007; Arnold and Yapita, 2006), and in those corners of higher education tied to intercultural bilingual education (Hornberger and Hult, 2008; Hornberger and Swinehart, in preparation). Still, the number of Aymara speakers who regularly engage with their language in written form is relatively small. Considering this range of Aymara language media, radio is arguably the format with the greatest reach among Aymara speakers and serves as an important field of discourse in which models of Aymara language circulate.

The degree to which any one such model is recognizable as a distinct register to those encountering it often depends on encounters with institutions that disseminate the register together with metapragmatic stereotypes; often, the embodied representatives of these institutions serve as emblematic speakers of the register (Agha, 2007). In the case of RSG, such encounters are linked to polity and deity: RSG describes itself as “The Voice of the Aymara People;” and its “voice” is linked to celestial authority through the name of the radio, San Gabriel being the messenger of God. Yet “The Voice of the Aymara People” is not simply a voice of religious authority: it is a composite of multiple institutional projects, including the authority of religion, the authority of disciplinary linguistics, and the moral, collective authority evoked through appeals to Aymara nationhood. This paper explores this nexus of institutional, moral and scientific authority that come together in RSG’s Aymara Language Department in ways that make this register of radio talk audible as a complex icon of Aymara personhood.

Radio San Gabriel was founded shortly after the Bolivian National Revolution of 1952, a major social upheaval in which miners’ militias played a crucial role. Jesuit priests had founded radio stations in mining communities within a wider broadcasting milieu dominated by radical and communist political currents (O’Connor, 2006). Although miners are remembered as the central protagonists in the 1952 revolution, also crucial to its victory were the highland indigenous communities who overturned nearly feudal relations in the countryside, often through insurrectionary land expropriations (Dunkerley, 1984). In 1955, Maryknoll Jesuit priests founded RSG in the small Aymara community of Peñas near the shores of Lake Titicaca, later moving it to El Alto. The principal aims of the radio station were Spanish language literacy and Christian evangelization. Bolivian social historian Javier Hurtado (1987) writes in his history of RSG:

La motivación principal de los padres Maryknoll para su trabajo entre los indios era, obviamente, la evangelización de una población que a pesar de cinco siglos de cristianización seguía siendo pagana y lejos todavía de una fe cristiana monoteísta. Fue esta situación lo que los indujo a pensar en la necesidad de castellanizarlos, a través de la alfabetización, como medio indispensable para la evangelización: recibir la palabra de dios.

The Maryknoll Fathers’ principal motivation for their work among the Indians was, obviously, the evangelization of a population that despite five centuries of Christianization continued being pagan and still far from a monotheistic Christian faith. It was this situation that induced them to thinking about teaching them Spanish, through literacy, as an indispensable means for evangelism: to receive the Word of God.

(Hurtado, 1987, p. 18 as cited in Ccama, 2006, p. 149, translation mine)

Within this framework of evangelism, RSG approached the Aymara language as a bridge to Spanish language literacy and integration into the mainstream of the Catholic faith. This approach was in line with the new government’s modernizing projects and with earlier formulations by the Catholic Church of “the Indian problem” as a problem of national integration (Orta, 2004). Yet these initially assimilationist orientations would quickly shift due to political ferment in Bolivia and changes in the Catholic Church. The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) made an opening, particularly in Latin America, for a social justice-oriented evangelism of “liberation theology” (Orta, 2004).

During the 1970s radical Aymara nationalism, or *katarismo*, was on the rise. It found institutional expression through organizations like the *Movimiento Revolucionario Tupak Katari* (MRTK, ‘Revolutionary Movement Tupak Katari’) and perhaps most notably in the founding of the *Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos Bolivianos* (CSUTSB, ‘Trade Union Confederation of Rural Workers of Bolivia’) under *katarista* leadership in 1979. The influence of Aymara nationalism on RSG during this period was profound. During this period, RSG made a dramatic shift in orientation towards Aymara language and

culture, adopting an Aymara-centric idiom that resonated with these other nationalist currents in Aymara communities, while remaining within Maryknoll Jesuit discourses of social justice and service to the poor by reformulating “liberation theology” as a “theology of inculturation” (Orta, 2004). Practices earlier demonized by the Catholic Church as “being pagan and still far from a monotheistic Christian faith” were now celebrated as being essentially Christian—with the spilled blood of a sacrificed llama, for example, recast as analogous to the wine of the sacrament. Pre-Colombian iconography such as the motif of the *chakana*, an iconic representation of the Southern Cross constellation, and also a symbol of the Inca Empire (Tawantinsuyu), with its four political units, or *suyu*, was adopted as a homologous representation of the Christian cross.

In 1971, the RSG established the *Centro Aymarista de Comunicación Social* (“The Aymaraist Center of Social Communication”), its literacy campaigns became bilingual, and all radio programming from that point on was designed to “recognize, value and promote cultural expressions of the people” (Ccama, 2006, p. 150, translation mine). By the radio’s own account in their 50th anniversary commemorative history, these changes represented “a relationship with the Aymara people marked by horizontality, self-education and socioeconomics, defining a transcendental change in the policy of RSG” (Radio San Gabriel, 2005, p. 80, translation mine). Here we find the confluence of a Jesuit discourse of egalitarianism with a recognition of the Aymara as a people (*el Pueblo Aymara*) (see Fig. 1).

3. A register for the radio

A new orientation to the Aymara language was a central feature of the shift in policy during this period and in the decades to follow. It would be difficult, however, to characterize this new orientation as being simply “horizontal” or democratic. While there is an undeniably democratic appeal in the promotion of a vernacular via mass media, the Aymara spoken on RSG’s airwaves differs from the daily speech of most Aymara speakers of any regional variety. These differences exceed the divergences that might be anticipated from radio genre norms, such as the exaggeration of both enunciation and prosodic contours. The Aymara spoken on RSG also differs from what Lucy Therina Briggs described as “Radio Aymara” in her 1976 doctoral thesis on dialectal variation in Aymara. Analyzing Aymara language radio broadcasts in the 1970s, Briggs identified Radio Aymara as a “translation dialect” because of its imposition of Spanish SVO word order on the SOV preferred word order of Aymara. Briggs also characterized Radio Aymara as having a heavy presence of Spanish loan words (Briggs, 1976, pp. 675–713). Rather than differing from other varieties of Aymara for the presence of Spanish features of lexis and syntax, the Aymara on RSG today is notable for precisely the opposite: a conspicuous absence of Spanish loanwords and their replacement with neologisms.

The maintenance of this register provides a central focus for RSG’s Aymara Language Department, which occupies a prominent position within RSG’s organizational infrastructure. This department plays a central role in the production, revision and approval of scripts for the radio station, serving as Aymara language authorities, as a collective epicenter of “pure Aymara.” In many ways this could be seen as what has been termed corpus planning (Ferguson, 1968). Corpus planning studies have often focused on written texts as opposed to *spoken language* and have tended to examine interventions at the levels of the nation-state or educational institutions (Hornberger, 1994; Canagarajah, 2005). An examination of RSG’s Aymara Language Department, however, provides an account of both the metadiscourse surrounding the “pure” register, or the *idiom of purism*, and actual instances of its use, or *discourse purism* (Neustupny, 1989). Insofar as this is also an instance of the mass-mediatization of a register formation (Agha, 2011), it provides insight into the processes that make this register formation available on a large scale among Bolivian Aymara speakers.



Fig. 1. Radio San Gabriel in 2007 (Author).

4. Recruiting the model speaker

Who counts as a speaker can be a vexing question for linguists and state authorities alike (Muehlmann, 2012; Moore et al., 2010) but also for members of minoritized language communities and language advocates who belong to them (Smalls, 2012). The recruitment of speakers as the audible representatives of RSG is accomplished in part through competitions for employment at the radio. Unlike the language competitions examined by Alexandra Jaffe (1999) on Corsica, these competitions are not public but happen behind the scenes. They are gatekeeping devices for entrance onto the radiophonic “stage” of RSG. Yet the recruitment of the initial labor pool is not completely hidden from the public. The availability of positions is publicized by the radio station itself. Once candidates arrive at the El Alto radio station offices, their proficiency in reading, composition and locution in Aymara is evaluated together with assessments of content areas of expertise.

One member of the Aymara Language Department, Celia Colque Quispe, explained to me her experience being hired through such a competition¹:

Había una convocatoria aquí en la radio misma, lo han publicado, entonces yo he escuchado un ratito, o sea, un medio día un programa de felicitaciones, Aruntawi, en ese programa he escuchado. Y yo, yo me he dicho ¿Por qué no puedo ir? Convocatoria lo decía que tienen que saber leer y escribir Aymara, traducción, y también tienes que saber a escribir a máquina. Entonces, ¿Por qué no puedo ir? He venido un día lunes directo y dieron el examen, entonces para la competencia. He venido y allí estábamos, treinta éramos y estaban de la UMSA también, determinado comunicación había de lingüística de la UMSA. Y también de otros radios han venido también. Cuando hemos venido nos han dado una hoja en castellano estaba escrito y nosotros eso tenemos que leer en Aymara, hablar en Aymara directo. En una hoja estaba dada y esto directo teníamos que hablar en Aymara – traducción. Y otro cuántas palabras puedes escribir en un minuto, y luego locución, cómo hablabas en Aymara... todo eso, si podemos hablar en radio me han preguntado y luego de eso... los que manejan este radio, los jefes, el personal, ellos han decidido.

‘There was a notice right here at the radio, they published it, so I listened to it, one noon on the announcements program, *Aruntawi*, I heard it on that program. And I, I said to myself, “Why can’t I go?” The notice said that (you’d) have to know to read and write Aymara, to translate, and also you’d have to know how to type. So, why can’t I go? I came directly on a Monday and they gave the test, for the competition. I came and there we were. We were thirty. They were there from the UMSA (*the prestigious state university*) too. There had been a certain communication with UMSA’s linguistics department. They had also come from other radio stations. When we came they gave us a sheet written in Spanish and we had to read it in Aymara, to speak directly into Aymara – translation. And another was how many words per minute you could write and later locution, how you spoke in Aymara. ... all that, they asked me if we could speak on the radio and after that. ... those who run this radio, the bosses, the staff, they decided.’

Competing against trained linguists from Bolivia’s most prestigious university and others with radio experience, a young woman, a native speaker of Aymara from a community near Lake Titicaca, won the contest. This competition inverted the general tendencies that otherwise predominate within Bolivia’s linguistic market (Bourdieu, 1991) by privileging the rural, native speaker over urban and university-educated ones. Celia’s ability to express herself eloquently in Aymara, together with her metalinguistic awareness, secured her employment in a salaried position at a prestigious institution. This point is not lost on Celia. From her experience being hired and through her experience at the station, her Aymara identity and language has afforded her prestige rather than contempt. The value of her language became evident within the interactional sequence of the interview I conducted with her. She responded to my first question, posed in Spanish, in Aymara, effectively switching the code from Spanish to Aymara:

Karl: ¿Cómo es que llegaste a la radio?	‘How did you come (to work) at the radio?’
Celia: ¿ <i>Aka radiatorux?</i>	‘Here at the radio?’
¿En Aymara <i>Castallanuti?</i> (<i>se ríe</i>)	In Aymara? or Spanish? (laughing)’
K: Como quieras, yo como... Como quieras.	‘As you please, because I... As you please.’
C: En Aymara y Castellano	‘In Aymara and Spanish.’
K: Como quieras, como quieras <i>Radio San Gabriel radiatorux qallta...</i>	‘As you please, as you please. You began at RSG radio...’
C: ¿ <i>Kunjamas purinta?</i>	‘How did I end up here?’
K: ¿ <i>Kunjamas purinta?</i>	‘How did you end you up here?’

Celia proceeded to explain her experience participating in the Aymara language competition mentioned above. Her confidence in responding to my Spanish question in Aymara bears no resemblance to the behavior of someone looking to accommodate another’s lack of Aymara fluency. Celia knew I could speak Aymara, even if with limited proficiency, and challenged

¹ I am using the following conventions for transcription: *italics* for Aymara language, roman script for Spanish, English glosses are in ‘single quotes’, neologisms are underlined and the boundaries of prosodic contours are marked with “...”.

me to conduct the interview in Aymara. Celia's interactional style here contrasts sharply with some Aymara speakers who may deny speaking the language in order to assume a more "urban" or "sophisticated" presentation of self. This is one stereotype of the linguistic behavior of Aymara migrants to the city. Yet this interactional stance is completely counter to Celia's own, and one incompatible with her experience at RSG. Indeed, when I asked her what she liked most about her job, she responded simply, "Claro, aquí ser Aymara. Me gusta ser Aymara." ('Clearly, here, being Aymara. I like being Aymara.') (see Fig. 2).

5. Laying down the (lexical) law

The Aymara Language Department is one of many departments at the radio. Although relatively small, with only seven employees at the time of my study, its role is to ensure the use of "pure Aymara" across all radio broadcasts, thus providing it with considerable authority. The department intervenes prior to each broadcast by either writing or editing scripts, and is responsible, along with the radio's director, for these scripts' ultimate approval. Yet its responsibilities do not end with broadcasts' content. The department is also responsible for a protocol extending through and beyond the actual broadcasts called *seguimiento*, or 'following.'

Seguimiento involves two procedures: the real-time monitoring of broadcasts for "aberrations" and a follow-up interaction with those who utter them on air. "Aberrations" is not a term of my choosing, but comes from the very protocol of *seguimiento*: it names not a concern with purity of content, but a focus on linguistic form.

Seguimiento protocols are documented in a ledger containing four columns on each page. Each column has a Spanish heading: aberración ('aberration'), léxico aymara ('Aymara lexeme'), fecha ('date'), firma ('signature'). Members of the Aymara Language Department record "aberrations" uttered on air, write the "correct" Aymara word and have the offending party sign the ledger. This real-time monitoring of broadcasters' utterances with its follow-up protocol organizes RSG's internal regime of metadiscursive normativity as a speech chain (Agha, 2007), one in which the Aymara Language Department decides what legitimately should be heard or not heard on the airwaves as an authentic sample of Aymara speech.

How is the monitoring phase of *seguimiento* conducted? If you were to enter the Aymara Language Department's offices at RSG, you would invariably hear a radio playing, tuned to RSG, with at least one of the department's seven members listening in with a *seguimiento* ledger at close reach. Yet this is a selective form of transcription, not only due to its institutional focus solely on "aberrations," but also due to human limitations on auditory acuity and attention. As a literacy practice tied to listening, this initial step of *seguimiento* may be considered a form of stenography, namely "a technology that faithfully turns physically-audible speech into a precise and permanent written record at the real-time moment at which the recorded speech is uttered" (Inoue, 2011). The social arrangement into which this stenographic practice is introduced, however, is



Fig. 2. A member of the Aymara Language Department prepares a radio program script (Author's photo).

completely the opposite of the one described by Miyako Inoue in Meiji-era Japan. In this case, we also find asymmetrical power relations between transcriber and speaker, but within *seguimiento's* division of labor, it is the authority who transcribes the voice of the subordinate.

In the follow-up phase of *seguimiento* this same power asymmetry obtains a performative character between those who commit aberrations and those who track them down. But there is an added twist. Here we find an inversion not only of the institutional relations defining other types of stenography, but also of the confession model: rather than bringing a list of sins to the priest, the language authority compiles the list of sins to deliver to the sinner. Standing before the authority, the list of “aberrations,” the appropriate remedies (léxico aymara), and the date of sinning, the sinners performatively confess with their signatures to those sins and promise a change in future acoustical behavior.

The Aymara Language Department is invested with authority within this speech chain, but who are the authorities for the authorities? The institutional counter-valorizing of rural Aymara speakers' linguistic abilities (from low to high) in the language competitions, as described above, indicates that one source of authority is the institutional alignment with rural Aymara communities. Other more institutionally consolidated centers of authority also play a role within the department—namely, through the discipline of linguistics. The director of the department, Hilarión Chinahuanca Siñani, describes the process of self-education among the employees of the Aymara Language Department (himself included), which they undertake upon their employment at RSG:

Han llegado a la radio, no han pensado a estudiar lingüística pero la necesidad misma, mi pueblo me pide y me dice que aclare esto – ¿De dónde viene? ... Sabemos hablar pero todavía no comprendemos. Esas cosas me han reflexionado. Allí me he metido en la casa de lingüística en la Universidad Mayor de San Andrés. Inclusive semi presenciales, sábados y domingos, sábados y viernes por las tardes estudiamos. ... Me dedico a esto, a estudiar.

‘They’ve arrived at the radio, not having thought to study linguistics but from necessity itself – my people ask this of me, and they tell me to clarify this, “Where does this come from?” ... We know how to speak but we still don’t understand. People have reflected on those things with me. I’ve placed myself over there at the ‘house of linguistics’ at the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés. We’ve even studied in short courses on Saturdays and Sundays, Saturdays and Fridays in the afternoon. ... I dedicate myself to this, to studying.’

This is not simply a story of self-improvement through education or the pursuit of individual interest or passion, although it may surely also be these things. Embedded in this narrative is an ethical and moral sense of responsibility that responds to a collectivity, to a request of him and his colleagues from the Aymara people (mi pueblo me pide, ‘my people ask this of me’).

The compiling of reference grammars and linguistic texts soon becomes a collective project of the department members. It is also imbued with moral and nationalist value. This process is often talked about in terms of the Aymara concept of mutual aid and reciprocity, or *ayni*:

Hilarión: Entonces, cada uno trae su texto con referente a la lingüística. Pese que en la radio, la radio es muy grande y su biblioteca también pero no tenemos aún todos estos textos. ... Entonces este es un tipo de ayni que hacemos nosotros. No decir – Tengo en mi casa pero ¿por qué voy a traer? No. Es que la gente, la población misma con una palabrita, nos animan, nos fortalecen. Es por eso que estamos acá.

Hilarión: ‘So, each one bring his own text with reference to linguistics. Even though at the radio, the radio is very big and the so is its library but we still don’t have all these texts ... So this is a type of ayni that we do. It’s not to say, “I have it home, why bring it in?” No. It’s that the people, the very population with one little word encourage us, give us strength. That’s why we’re here.’

Although the development of metalinguistic expertise and authority through study requires educational materials, the technical authority of linguistics is embedded within the national-moral authority of *ayni*. Moreover, the contributors to this practice soon expand beyond linguists, the membership of the department, and come to include “the people,” who contribute (if not with books) sometimes even ‘with one little word’ (con una palabrita) in unbeknownst acts of *ayni*.

Among reference grammars, an important text for the work of this department is Ludovico Bertonio’s 1612 Aymara dictionary.² Here we find some historical continuity with the Catholic Church playing a prominent role in corpus planning for the Aymara language. From colonialism’s earliest days in the Andes, the Catholic Church recognized the necessity of mastering local languages, particularly Quechua and Aymara, which remained in wide use in the wake of the Spanish invasion. Describing the city and province of La Paz, where contemporary El Alto is located, the Jesuit Priest José de Acosta stated in 1591:

Todos los indios de esta provincia y ciudad hablan la lengua general que se llama aymara, aunque también muchos de ellos hablan y entienden la lengua quechua, que es la lengua general del Inga.

‘All the Indians of this province and city speak the general language which is called Aymara, although many of them also speak and understand the Quechua language, which is the general language of the Inca’ (as cited in Torero, 1975, p. 225, translation mine).

² Bertonio’s 1612 dictionary predates those of most modern European languages, coming more than a century before Samuel Johnson’s 1755 English dictionary, and decades before L’Academie Française’s publication of its first dictionary in 1694. A copy of Radio San Gabriél’s 1994 edition of the dictionary can be seen in Fig. 2, to the Aymara Language Department member’s right.

In the 17th century, Aymara became a central vehicle for missionization, and Bertonio's dictionary became part of a larger metadiscursive project of Jesuit and Franciscan production of dictionaries and grammars in the service of colonialism and evangelism in the Americas and beyond (Hanks, 2010; Heath, 1972; Mannheim, 1984; Rafael, 1993).

Bertonio's dictionary plays an authoritative role within the metadiscursive matrix of *seguimiento*. When encountering a Spanish loan word a decision must be made by the lexical authorities concerning which word provides the proper remedy for the "aberration." Before resorting to the invention of neologisms, an effort will be made to establish whether or not a word can be "rescued" (*rescatado*), i.e. to have an archaicism introduced in the slot of *léxico aymara*. There is the temptation to view Bertonio's dictionary as a linguistic time capsule, a text-artifact that is not just a repository of words, but of words used by Aymara speakers 400 years ago.³

Nevertheless, the expulsion of loan words from the radio broadcasters' speech is the principal focus of *seguimiento*, with the remedy for any "aberration" being the *léxico aymara*. The director of the department accounted for this when discussing the most common errors heard on the radio's programs:

Hilarión: Más en la radio es siempre incursión del préstamo. Yo mismo a veces, no me doy cuenta, pero sale – has dicho esto. Ellos también están en la misma situación. Entonces escuchan la radio nos salta cuál es la palabra castellana que se preste. Los nombres no hay problema pero hay palabras habiendo y se presta. Esto es el problema. Por ejemplo, dicen minutos *minutus*. Dicen *Chika urutxa tunka minutunakampixiw*. Pero en Aymara ya tenemos *k'ata*. *Chika urutxa tunka k'atanakampixiw* y la gente entiende, no es que no entiende. . . . Habla mi mamá, habla mi familia, usa esas palabras. Entonces no podemos seguir *minutus*, *minutus*.

Hilarión: 'More on the radio it's always the incursion of the loan. Even me sometimes, I don't even realize it, but it comes out, "you've said this." They also are in the same situation. So they listen to the radio and it strikes us which is the Spanish word being borrowed. There's no problem with names but there are words that are there and they get borrowed. That's the problem. For example, they say minutes *minutus*. They say *Chika urutxa tunka minutunakampixiw* ('ten minutes past noon'). But in Aymara we already have *k'ata*. *Chika urutxa tunka k'atanakampixiw* and people understand, it's not that they don't understand. . . . My mother says it, my family says it, uses those words. So we can't continue *minutus*, *minutus*.'

At the opening of this passage, the director reanimates the voice of a coworker disciplining him, "You've said this." In this act of self-deprecation, he provides a mini-diagram of one link in the speech chain of the metadiscursive regime, except in this case the culprit breaking the standard of purity to which RSG aspires is the director himself. When the Aymara language authority (and enforcer of the norm) admits that he too is guilty of using Spanish loans we encounter the awkward interstice between what Neustupny (1989) termed *idioms of purism* (the metadiscourses of language purity) and *discourse purism* (the adoption of "pure" forms within the object-discourse). We encounter the distance between prescribed behavior and actual behavior: exemplary speakers themselves find it difficult to follow the standard to which they aspire. He then continues to provide an anecdote of a typical aberration, denoting the time of day—"it's ten past noon." The sentence in question contains the phonologically assimilated, or what Hardman (2001) calls *aymarized*, *minutus*. The director would have preferred the broadcaster to say *k'ata*, which he had written in the column headed *léxico aymara* ('Aymara lexeme') and beside the aberration *minutu*. He invokes the linguistic practices of his family as authoritative, the director having been raised in a rural community—"My mother says it, my family says it, uses those words." This further justifies the corrective practice of the department's protocol—"so we can't continue *minutus*, *minutus*." When I asked other Aymara speakers what *k'ata* meant, including a linguist and native Aymara speaker, Juan de Dios Yapita, who is familiar with many varieties of Aymara, no one replied with "minute" or any unit of time. Whether or not the director has given an accurate depiction of his own family's linguistic practices is less important here than is his appeal to their authority: rural speakers serve as the model speakers of the register in this account; and the use of his own family as a sample of model speakers anchors his own practice of *seguimiento* in the mantle of authority.

In this same discussion, the director showed me his own ledger with further examples uttered during a news broadcast earlier that morning:

Kasta, kasta es préstamo, de castellano viene. *May maya* en Aymara tiene que decir. *Phasillakiwa* de "fácil es." Pero aquí *yachaykiwa* en Aymara. El léxico aymara y la aberración que ha cometido, entonces el responsable está consciente, y firma. Así, todos los que tienen programa.

'*Kasta, kasta* is a loan, it comes from Spanish. *May maya* in Aymara [he] has to say. *Phasilakiwa* from *fácil es* ('it's easy') but here *yachaykiwa* in Aymara. The Aymara lexical [item] and the aberration [he] has committed, then the responsible party is aware and signs. Like that for everyone who has a program.'

Both *kasta* and *phasil* are loans from Spanish, but loans of different types. The second example, *phasil*, is another aymarized loan, the phonological assimilation of *fácil* (easy). Without the labiodental voiceless fricative /f/ in their phonemic inventory, Aymara speakers have used the closest phoneme available, the aspirated voiceless bilabial stop /ph/. *Kasta* (type)

³ A literal illustration of this notion appears on the cover of Radio San Gabriel's 1993 edition of Bertonio's dictionary where a man wearing a knit *lluch'u* hat is depicted pulling what appears to be a time capsule from the earth. Written on it are not 'Aymar Aru' (Aymara language) but the nearly homophonous 'Jaya mara aru' (language of a distant year). Behind him is a demonstrating crowd, mouths open, carrying two banners reading 'nuestra cultura es milenaria' (our culture is millennial) and 'lengua antigua' (ancient language).

Table 1

Aymara neologisms: days of the week.

Spanish day	Aymarized loan	Neologism	Direct gloss	English gloss
Lunes	Lunis	Phaxsi uru	Moon day	Monday
Martes	Martis	Saxra uru	War day	Tuesday
Miércoles	Mirculis	Wara uru	Star day	Wednesday
Jueves	Jwivis	Illapa uru	Lightning day	Thursday
Viernes	Wirnis	Ch'aska uru	Venus (star) day	Friday
Sábado	Sawaru	Kurami uru	Rainbow day	Saturday
Domingo	Tuminku	Inti uru	Sun day	Sunday

is a loan of a different type, coming from the archaic Spanish *casta*, which would contemporarily be expressed in Spanish with *tipo* ('type') or *variedad* ('variety'). Other loans like this in Aymara, including very common words (such as the verb "to speak", *parlaña*, from the 16th-century Spanish *parlar*) are testament to 500 years of contact with Spanish. Many loans denote referents introduced to Andean society since Spanish invasion. Livestock like sheep, for example, now common throughout the high plain, were unknown before conquest; the Aymara word *uwija* 'sheep' is an ayamarized rendering of the Spanish *oveja*. Like sheep, units of time like minutes, hours, 7-day weeks and the 12-month year were introduced through colonial imposition, even very shortly following Spanish invasion. The following entry from Ludovico Bertonio's 1612 dictionary gives us some sense of this:

Día y sus partes: Vide: Partes del tiempo, donde se hallaran los nombres de las horas, casi correspondientes a las nuestras.

'Day and its parts: Vide: Parts of time, where they are found the names of the hours, almost all correspond to ours.'

(Bertonio, 2006 (1612), p. 197)

Curiously, while Ludovico's dictionary includes entries for day (*uru*), month (*phaxsi*), year (*mara*), and time (*pacha*), absent are entries for minute, hour, and the names of the days of the week. Were these the parts of time that "correspond to ours"? There are ayamarized loan words for the days of week (Table 1) and for the 7-day week itself, *simana* from the Spanish *semana* ('week'). The neologism to replace *simana* is homophonous with the Aymara word form 'seven,' *pāqalq*, becoming *pāqanaka* when replacing *simanas* 'weeks' with the addition of the plural marker *-naka*. Interestingly, the neologisms for the days of the week share etyma with the European terms: "sun day," "moon day," etc. These draw not only from Spanish etymology but even from English and Norse: *illapa uru* 'lightening day' alludes to the lightening associated with the Norse god Thor, the source deity for the English Thursday (Table 1).

When asked, Aymara speakers indicated some familiarity with these neologisms (Table 1), but only those tied to educational organizations (like RSG, the Aymara Educational Council or those involved with bilingual education) claimed to use them regularly. Whether or not the ayamarized loan words for days of the week were adopted by Aymara speakers at the time of Bertonio's writing, these have long been a part of the daily speech of Aymara speakers, yet they remain targets for lexical reform at RSG.

Days of the week feature prominently in the opening segments of many radio programs. The convention of announcing the date and time establishes for the audience that it is a live, not prerecorded program. In the following transcript from the May 10, 2007 opening of the Aymara Language Department's flagship program, *Lengua Aymara* ('Aymara Language'), we encounter an interface between the use of neologisms and the particular discourse genre of the radio program, resulting in a surprising tension with how calendric time and its denotation are handled.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. CELIA: Kamisaki jilata kullakanakax? | How are you brothers and sisters? |
| 2. Jallakípaxa nayasa jumanakaruwa arumt'tatapxta | I'd like to welcome you as always |
| 3. Lengua Aymara wakichaypunirakiniwa | with the program Aymara Language |
| 4. wasitat Radio tuqin qamart'asipkarakta | here at the radio. You're living with |
| 5. Radio San Gabriel ist'apkarapta pātunka | Radio San Gabriel, listening in twenty |
| 6. provincianakaxa arumt'tatarakiwa | provinces you're greeted |
| 7. qhirwanakana suntanakana [????]nakana | in valleys, in the heights, in the [????] |
| 8. thayampis wichhumpi, chikt'ataw | with the cold and wind |
| 9. jumanakax ist'iraksta Radio jallakipanaya | you're listening to the radio's message |
| 10. sasina arunt'atapta | saying you are greeted [welcome] |
| 11. HILARIÓN: Jallakipana achachila awicha | Grandfathers and grandmothers |
| 12. kamaraki mama t'allâ mallku kawwirinakas | even mama t'alla and mallkus |
| 13. jilata kullaka kamaraki wayna tawaqunakaraki | brother, sister and even young boys, girls |
| 14. jisk'alalanaka jumanakasa arumt'taxaraptawa | and little ones you are all welcome |
| 15. jichhurux niyaw ukaxa illapürû ukjamaxraki | Now that it's Thursdaÿ, like that |

(continued on next page)

16. aka <u>llamayu</u> phaxsin niyaw akaxa tunka urunaka	in this month of <u>May</u> , 10 days
17. mäkiptawayxi. urunakas <u>päqanakas</u>	are almost done. The days, the <u>weeks</u>
18. phaxsinakas jalakpun jaliwa	the months are always running, flying
19. chikamaru puriñanixa	We're arriving at the middle
20. aka Calendario Gregoriano	of this Gregorian calendar
21. ukanxa utjiti wasa yatiqsta	in that you know
22. machax maraxa jak'achasinkaraki.	the new year is approaching.
23. Jilata Martín Tarki jupampi chikañtasiñani	Together with brother Martin Tarki
24. ukjamaxa sapumayniw arum'tapta	every one of you is welcomed
25. qallantañaniwa wakichawisampi	we'll start with our program

An apparent incoherence appears in lines 19–22: how does the middle of the calendric year reveal that “the new year is approaching”? There is a tension here between the Western, Christian, Gregorian calendar and a solar, agricultural, Aymara calendar. This dissonance highlights the very neologisms Hilarión uses to refer to units of time: the neologism *illapüru* instead of *jwivis* ‘Thursday’ (line 15), *llamayu* instead of *mayu* ‘May’⁴ (line 16) and *päqanaka* instead of *simanas* ‘weeks’ (line 17). *Illapüru* denotes ‘Thursday’ in Aymara (at the lexemic level), but situates it within two distinct frameworks of time reckoning: (1) the Western, Christian calendar (“it is now the month of May” [line 16] and “the middle of the Gregorian Calendar” [line 20]) and (2) the upcoming Aymara New Year tied to the southern hemispheric winter solstice (“you know the new year is approaching” [lines 21–22]). The broadcaster orients the listeners to two distinct yet overlapping time frames—one Western and one Aymara. The incongruity of these two distinct frames brings the denotation of temporal neologisms into discursive focus.

A second type of lamination concerns the prosodic conventions of the radio genre and Hilarión’s use of the lexical register. Exaggerated prosody can be found in many radio discourse genres. In the example above, Hilarión uses it to bring focus to the use of a neologism. Two words share a salient prosodic contour: *mama t’alla* and *illapüru* (lines 12 and 15). These words are uttered more slowly and with parallel prosodic contours; the first three syllables are high pitch (H) and the final syllable low pitch (L), a parallel (H–H–H–L) contour motivating a relation of equivalence between the two (Jakobson, 1960). The equivalence here is not that these are both neologisms—*mama t’alla* is a rotating position of political authority for women within traditional Aymara communities. Poetically linking the neologism *illapüru*⁵ with a title emblematic of traditional Aymara political organization configures it within a discursive diagram of Aymara authenticity as parallel to *mama t’alla*, co-textually imbuing the neologism with values of tradition and authority.

Despite their best efforts, the eradication of Spanish loans is incomplete and the audience hears *provincianaka* (line 6), *provincia* being a loan from Spanish and *-naka* the Aymara plural marker. In this case, there is a potential Aymara equivalent, as there were political administrative subdivisions in pre-conquest times, the aforementioned *suyu*. If ever challenged to account for her use of a Spanish loan here, perhaps Celia might resort to the confessional discourse we encountered with Hilarión’s earlier admission that *no me doy cuenta pero sale* (‘I don’t realize it but it comes out’). Indeed, no one is perfect, no one is free of sin. Even the language authorities commit *aberraciones*.

6. Combating colonialism (i.e., ‘contact’) through correction?

The Aymara Language Department’s efforts to enforce purity in their language may remind readers of the figure of a schoolmarm correcting others’ grammar. Language purism projects necessarily involve language correction, demarcating what constitutes legitimate and illegitimate forms of speech, making this an Aymara variety of verbal hygiene (Cameron, 1995). The schoolmarm comparison would be misguided in this case, however, obscuring the sociohistorical matrix in which these metadiscursive practices unfold. The conflation of language and ethnic identity may be accompanied by a sense of moral obligation to defend and uphold the language as metonym for “the people” within contexts of social oppression. Language purist discourses often respond to perceived or real pressures on minority communities as a kind of “battle cry” (Jernudd, 1989, p. 3). Speaking to the moral discourse within some language revitalization projects, Fishman (1997) writes: “Since the beloved language is closely and inseparably associated with other verities, the moral imperatives that exist to defend the latter also directly and obviously apply to the language as well. Not to do so would be unthinkable and clearly morally reprehensible” (Fishman, 1997, p. 73). For some at the station, the loan word seemed to reflect this process, and they perceived the introduction of neologisms and maintenance of a distinct lexical register as part of protecting the language. Recall Hilarión’s view that his job implied a responsibility to his people (*mi pueblo*) and his invocation of an Aymara cultural

⁴ *Llamayu* is interesting because of its similarity to Spanish *mayo* and the Aymarized *mayu*. The source domain for this neologism is the highland agricultural cycle, however, referring to the Aymara word form for the harvest of potatoes (and other tubers) during this time of year. Its use to denote a month, rather than the harvest itself, is novel.

⁵ The difference between the spelling of *illapa uru* in Table 1 and Hilarión’s pronunciation is an example of the gap between the Aymara orthographic norm and pronunciation with vowel elision: the second *a* is replaced with a lengthened initial *u* in *uru*: *illapa uru* → *illapüru*.

norm of reciprocity (*ayni*) in explaining the compiling of work materials. The link between morality and linguistic practice was even echoed in his impatient admonition “we cannot continue *minutus, minutus*.”

The threat of a large-scale language shift from Aymara to Spanish concerns others besides Aymara organizations like RSG. The central Andes has been identified by linguists employing language endangerment discourses as one of the world’s “hot-spots” of language endangerment, together with other regions such as Siberia and northern Australia (Harrison, 2007).⁶ Another way to understand these “hotspots,” however, might be as areas of linguistic resilience, as regions where indigenous peoples have managed to maintain their languages and life ways in the face of colonial domination and subjugation. In Bolivia’s case, it is one of the only nation-states of the Americas with a majority indigenous population (the other being Guatemala). This unique status is not the result of somehow escaping the ravages of colonialism. Hardly isolated from the world economy, Aymara communities have been linked to a global economy since the 16th century, when gold mined by conscripted laborers left the Andes for Europe to put the gold in “the Golden Age.” Andean indigenous communities’ asymmetrical relationship with the world economy did not end with colonialism, continuing through the twentieth century with extractive industries taking Bolivian tin to factories from Detroit to Dresden. The plundering of natural resources for foreigners’ benefit, together with the historical backdrop of genocide, feature prominently in Aymara historical narratives. One Aymara radio broadcaster told me that the Aymara were the “Jews of the Andes” because, like the Jews of Europe, the Aymara maintained their language and culture despite attempts to eradicate them as a people. The sentiment behind this surprising analogy echoed through other conversations with Aymara Bolivians who on varied occasions expressed their desire never to become an “extinct tribe.”⁷ This was the prognosis one century ago of Bolivian intellectuals like Alcides Arguedas, who, in his hopes of a “modern” Bolivia, predicted the disappearance of the Aymara as a distinct ethnic group through linguistic and cultural assimilation (Arguedas, 1979 [1909]). A century later, discourses of “endangerment” continue to resonate with narratives of Aymara nationhood.

If protecting the language is commensurate with protecting the people, at RSG this means targeting loanwords that are reminders of the painful processes of colonialism to which the Aymara have been subjected. Further evidence of this is found in the Aymara Language Department’s selectivity in its attention to which loanwords are purged. Aymara has been in contact with Quechua for much longer than Spanish, yet Quechua loans are not the focus of *seguimiento*.⁸ This selective purging is not unique or surprising; it simply underscores the sociohistorical situatedness of such purist efforts. Neustupny (1989, p. 218) provides Czech purism as another example of selective purging of loan words, where German loans were subject to replacement but not French or Latin loans. In post-Soviet Tatarstan, home to a Muslim and Turkic minority group in the Volga region, Tatar language purists purge Russian loans but embrace the re-adoption of Arabic and Persian loans (Wertheim, 2003).

If there were any attempt to purge Aymara of Quechua loan words there would be at least two problems. The first would be the large percentage of the southern Quechua and Aymara lexicon that is shared, and the second would be determining the directionality of the loans (Cerron-Palomino, 1994). Words as common as door (*punku*), wall (*pirqa*), and the numbers three (*kimsa*), five, (*phisqa*), six (*suxta*) and ten (*tunka*) almost surely came into the Aymara lexicon from contact with Quechua. Reciprocally, there is a compelling theory that the ejective consonants of southern Quechua emerged as an areal feature from contact with Aymara (Adelaar and Muysken, 2004). The point here, however, concerns not the feasibility of a different purist project but why the Spanish loan word is a target and not the Quechua loan word. This concerns Spanish invasion; the *aberración* is both a metonym for and the indexical residue of Spanish invasion, or what more frequently, and euphemistically, is called “contact.”

7. Conclusion

The consolidation and maintenance of a distinct register of pure Aymara on RSG’s airwaves is considered by its promoters to be part of a larger historical process of decolonization. Yet its source materials derive from Catholic institutions, an issue not without its historical ironies. The Catholic Church’s interest in developing expertise in indigenous languages was fundamental to the colonial project, and animated the work of the 16 and 17th century Jesuits and Franciscans discussed above (see also Hanks, 2010; Heath, 1972; Mannheim, 1984; Rafael, 1993). Aside from the Catholic Church’s complicity in the very processes that the actors at RSG aim to reverse, there are other residues of colonial hierarchies lurking within the metadiscursive regime examined here. In Bertonio’s 1612 dictionary, Spanish remains the matrix language in which Aymara is framed and commented upon. Today, the Aymara Language Department’s flagship program has a Spanish name—*Lengua Aymara*. And the ledgers of *seguimiento* bear column headings words that are in Spanish (*aberración, léxico aymara, fecha, firma*), not Aymara. Despite the decolonizing aims of this protocol, Spanish remains the authoritative language within this framework (see also Meek and Messing, 2007). In addition to the framing of Aymara by Spanish in the ledgers of *seguimiento* or in the title of *Lengua Aymara*, there are traces of translation in the neologisms for the days of the week we encountered above.

Might there be unforeseen consequences from emergent asymmetries of competence between those who are familiar with the neologisms deployed on RSG and those who are not? In any language there are asymmetries of competence, with speakers recognizing more registers than they are able to command with any fluency (Agha, 2007, Chapter 3), and all stan-

⁶ UNESCO designates Aymara as a ‘vulnerable’ language. More critically endangered languages of the region include Chipaya and Callawayá.

⁷ A recurring commentary I would hear from Bolivian Aymaras contrasted the future of the Aymara to the fate of the “pieles rojas” or ‘Redskins’ (their words) and the (false) impression that there remain almost no indigenous peoples in the US.

⁸ Despite claims to the contrary (e.g. Wardaugh, 2010 p. 26) Aymara and Quechua are not mutually intelligible nor understood as distinct languages merely due to the ideological commitments of their speakers.

andardization projects introduce new asymmetries (Gal, 2006). Researchers like Arnold and Yapita (2006) and Andrew Canessa (2000) discuss the distance between a register of Aymara purged of Spanish loans and the daily varieties used by Aymara speakers as harmful in educational contexts. Canessa (2000) describes rural Aymara children becoming discouraged upon encountering written Aymara that is foreign to them, feeding into already circulating ideas of semilingualism, i.e. that they do not speak “real” Aymara. Arnold and Yapita (2006) note that many of the neologisms confused students and sometimes shared unfortunate homonyms with local varieties Arnold and Yapita (2006). Elsewhere in the Andes, among Quechua speakers, Coronel-Molina (2008) examines a similar case in which register bifurcation is cultivated by the Academy of Quechua Language between *qhapaq simi* (rich language) and *runasimi* (people’s language). Coronel-Molina (2008) argues that, despite claims to the contrary, the asymmetries of competence resulting from the Academy’s interventions do more to curtail Quechua language use than to promote it, with the primary result being the formation of a new, self-appointed class of language experts. “The sense of prestige derived from using the ‘authentic’ Quechua boosts the perception of their own status among Academy members. This in turn reinforces their feeling of authority *vis-à-vis* the communities” (Coronel-Molina, 2008, pp. 333–334).

These are all compelling accounts, but I am hesitant to draw similar conclusions—or to see in any of these other cases easy analogues to the metadiscursive regime in place at RSG. Examining the metadiscursive “heavy lifting” required to maintain a distinct lexical register of Aymara audible on RSG’s airwaves should not be misinterpreted as “exposing” or “deconstructing” practices of an “invented authenticity” that serves only to reinforce the authority of those enforcing the register itself. That could be one conclusion, and may indeed be the case in other seemingly similar scenarios (e.g., Coronel-Molina, 2008). In the case of RSG, however, a simple pro-vernacular critique—e.g., of *seguimiento* as a form of Foucauldian ‘governmentality’—might well be misguided, especially if it ends up divesting authority from actors in societies still wrestling with colonial legacies (Briggs, 1996); new forms of discursive authority are an important part of what they are fighting to establish.

Furthermore, such conclusions run the risk of sidestepping the potentially awkward, but necessary, reflexive move to consider how articles and edited volumes like this one and the academic disciplines they address also constitute metadiscursive practices bestowing authority to those engaged in them (Briggs, 1996). The development of authority in language and communication, per se, whether among researchers or radio broadcasters, need not be problematic, but demands reflexivity and, perhaps equally challenging, increased *ayni* among those engaged with and studying these processes. Certainly, the “voice of the Aymara people” has every right to develop its voice and authority over how it will sound, just as the Aymara people may decide whether or not to listen. There is more going on here, however, than simply the extension of an RSG brand or attention to a slice of the radio market.

There are individual, social and linguistic consequences of the processes unfolding at RSG. We may recognize in RSG what Foucault (1988) called “technologies of the self,” or those technologies which “permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality” (18). Foucault discussed technologies of the self as distinct from, if at times overlapping with, technologies of sign systems—technologies “which permit us to use signs, meanings, symbols, or signification” (18). For those involved in maintaining the metadiscursive regime within RSG, however, the development and reproduction of metalinguistic expertise combines with metadiscursive protocols to create a nearly complete overlap of technologies of the self and technologies of sign systems. In a country where even today, to hear an Aymara voice is for many to hear the voice of the poor, the anti-modern, the rural people, who are worthy only of contempt or fear, the metadiscursive regime at RSG contributes to Celia’s reporting with ease that the best thing about working at RSG is “being Aymara.” While the regime in place at RSG is evidently transformative for those involved, it extends beyond a project of personal accomplishment, or of individual linguistic intervention, to one of a broader—and, from Celia and Hilarión’s perspective, more emancipatory—scope.

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