

**\*\*NOTE:** This is a pre-final version. The published version can be found in:

*Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 21.2 (2006), 359-370.\*\*

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## **Diu Indo-Portuguese at present**

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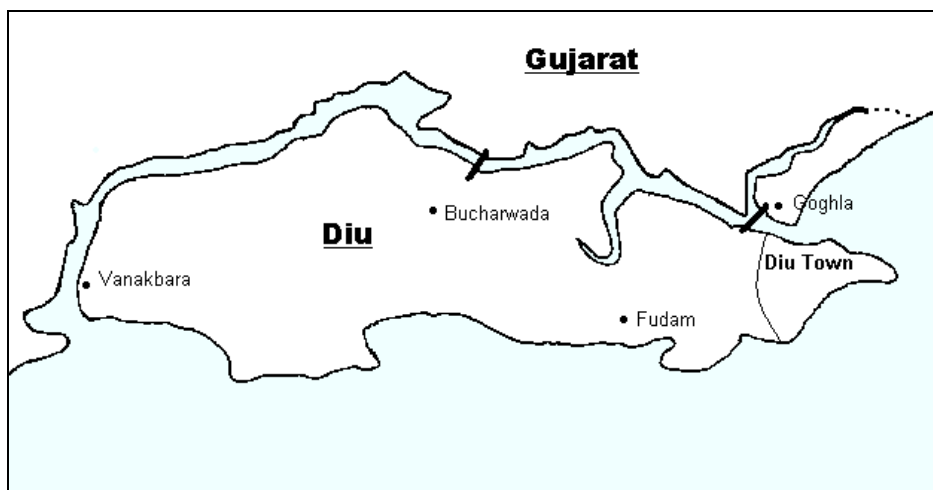
### **1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

This note reports on the synchronic status and distribution of Diu Indo-Portuguese (henceforth DIP), while in the process presenting some preliminary linguistic data collected during a three-month period of fieldwork on the island in 2005. Under uninterrupted Portuguese control from 1535 to 1961, the small island off the southern tip of the state of Gujarat, India, has long been known as the location of one of the varieties of Indo-Portuguese (henceforth IP). The creole was only briefly described by Hugo Schuchardt in 1883, deserving an acknowledgement on the part of Dalgado (1903) and, crucially, a somewhat detailed comment by a local resident, Jeronymo Quadros, between 1902 and 1905 (Quadros, 1907). For a long time after these documents, nothing else was written on the creole, leading to a general

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Umberto Ansaldo and Clancy Clements for their comments on previous versions of this text, as well as Don Winford for his editorial suggestions; any possible shortcomings remain my own responsibility.

assumption of its extinction. Clements (1991) and Tomás (1992), however, noticed that DIP still existed by the time of their visit to Diu, though they could only provide the briefest of descriptions of the linguistic community.



Map 1. Diu

On the island, both the creole and Standard Portuguese (henceforth SP, referring to the norm of Europe and adhered to in Goa) are subsumed under the designation *Portuguese*. The native speakers themselves use a range of epithets (*līg tɔrt* ‘twisted language’, *purtagéz kəbrad* ‘broken Portuguese’, *purtagéz barat* ‘cheap Portuguese’ or *līg d trap* ‘ragged tongue’) when it becomes necessary to distinguish their own variety from SP. Given that these are not official names for the language, and bearing in mind their depreciative nature, the designation to be retained throughout this note will be *DIP*.

The extent to which DIP is used on the island at present is explored in section 2, which provides the available demographic information on its

distribution. Section 3 addresses the complexity of the linguistic picture among the DIP speech community, touching on factors such as the relative availability of SP, the role of Gujarati, Hindi or English and the variation that has been observed to operate in the language. DIP's vitality and signs for or against long-term maintenance are discussed in section 4.

## **2. Language distribution**

Knowledge of DIP and SP extends across several groupings that make up the Diuese society. The most encompassing variable governing the social structure of the Diuese inhabitants is religion; the groups so defined are invoked in this section so as to characterise the linguistic landscape of the territory.

### **2.1. Roman Catholics**

The Christian community in Diu is Roman Catholic. The Portuguese introduced Christianity in Diu as soon as they gained control over the fort, with the first church being consecrated as early as 1536 (Morais, 1997: 42). As such, the Christians are widely seen as the cultural descendants of the Portuguese; it is common to hear that Portuguese (a term encompassing SP as well as DIP) is the 'language of the Christians'. While both DIP and SP are to be found among other communities, this epithet is partially justified. In fact, the Christians are, *grosso modu*, those for whom DIP is a first language; the Christian community at large, unlike any other, uses DIP in everyday life and

within a family context. Children and youngsters of Christian descent are the only ones of their generation who speak DIP.

Access to administrative posts and education in SP granted the Christians high social status during Portuguese rule; this is not necessarily the case at present. Singh *et al.* (1994:51), referring to both Diuese and Damanese society, write that ‘presently, they [the Christians] perceive their position as inferior to the Brahman, Vania, Koli Patel, Kamli, Bhandari, Sagar and Bari, and superior to the Machhi, Mangela, Mitna, Dhodia, Dubla, Momin and Mahyavanshi [caste distinctions external to Christianity – H.C.]’ Ranking of the Christians along the local caste hierarchies is debatable, but the point to be retained is that of a certain social decay following the integration of Diu into India. Nonetheless, it can safely be said that the Christians of the territory still command some prestige and visibility, not only on account of the jobs many of them take up (administration, health-care or teaching) but also because they concentrate in Diu Town (pop. 21,576 in 2001), their public religious celebrations and churches are very conspicuous on the island, there is a Christian school with branches in Diu Town as well as two large villages, and because the historical significance of former Portuguese rule has to some extent been transferred onto them.

Whereas most Christians are native Diuese, Damanese or Goans (with families of mixed provenance a common phenomenon), some from other areas of India have in recent years settled in Diu; these come mostly from southern India (Kerala and Tamil Nadu in particular), according to unofficial statistics.

The official census (data from 1991 and 2001) can provide only limited information on the Christian population of Diu. Out of a total population of 44,110 in the whole of the territory in 2001, only a small percentage (representing a total of 2,904 people) is described as Christian; this total refers indiscriminately to both Diu and Daman and results from the census of 1991, when the population of Diu was given at 39,488.

One is therefore left to rely on data provided by the parish priests, who report that at present about 250 Christians, divided over some 35 households, reside in Diu. Assuming the population of Diu has not significantly changed since 2001, the approximate percentage of Christian residents is 0.6%.

Of the 250-odd Christians estimated in Diu at present, around 50 are originally from outside Diu, Daman or Goa, and have no knowledge of DIP or SP. Of the remaining 200, one must allow for a small margin of those who, for one reason or another, have little knowledge of any of these languages. Overall, it can safely be advanced that around 170 of the Diuese Catholics use DIP or SP, or both, as their everyday language(s).

## **2.2. Muslims**

Knowledge of DIP or SP among the Muslim community is less widespread. According to the census of 1991 the Muslim community made up nearly 6% of a population of 39,488. The figure therefore approaches 3,400.

Quadros (1899: 97) mentions the fact that some of the non-Christians were 'able to speak, read and write Portuguese' [my translation]. Middle aged to

senior Muslims state that most of their generation can speak Portuguese. This claim must be taken with a grain of salt, as it is not clear what degree of proficiency in the language is being referred to. At any rate, some of the speakers encountered were indeed fluent in either SP or what seems at first sight to be acrolectal DIP. Emigration (mostly to Mozambique) has played a role in the history of this community, as has education in SP prior to 1961. Many Muslim men run local shops and reportedly interact in SP or DIP with some of their customers, in particular the Christians.

Despite the optimistic claims mentioned above, only a small number of proficient speakers were encountered. Without statistic data concerning the Muslim community skills in DIP, it unfortunately becomes very difficult to advance a figure here.

### **2.3. Hindus**

Among the Hindus of Diu, the picture is very similar to that of the Muslim community. The native language of the overwhelming majority is Gujarati, and those who speak DIP or SP do so non-natively. Once again, even an approximate figure of how many are proficient in these languages is elusive.

Some 93% of the population (i.e., close to 37,000 out of a total population of 39,488 in 1991) is Hindu. Knowledge of DIP and SP can reflect a variety of personal histories: official employment, (primary) education or emigration. The strongest present-day link to the language is by means of emigration to

Portugal. As expected, the younger generation of Hindus typically does not acquire DIP; instead, they may encounter SP as emigrants, or not at all.

Unlike the Christian and probably also the Muslim community, Hindu speakers of DIP are also found outside Diu Town. In the villages of Fudam (with a high emigration rate), Bucharwada and Gandhipara (v. Map 1) it is possible to find some. Unfortunately, it was not possible to research Vanakbara and the village of Goghla on the mainland; however, according to reports made by locals, DIP seems to be unrepresented in the latter, or only marginally so.

### **3. The language and its linguistic surroundings**

Despite developments that may have taken place over the past century or so, even superficial observation will show that there is continuity between DIP's present state and that recorded at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> c.; (1) is taken from Quadros (1899: 98), while (2) was elicited from a child in 2005:

(1) *Io tá vae igrej e tá dixá cum sinhá pa mim fi Pasquin.*

1s PRS go church CNJ PRS leave with madam PRP POSS son Pasquin

'I'm going to church and I'll leave my son Pasquin with you, madam.'

(2) *use fik aki, jo tə vaj fama.*

3s stay here 1s PRS go call

'You stay here and I will call [him/her].'

The orthographic notation of 1s pronoun in (1) suggests it had (approximately) the same phonological make-up as that of its correspondent

recorded in (2), which contrasts with that of SP. More significant, though, is the use of a preverbal particle with tense implications (*tá / tə*, see also (6) below), followed by an infinitival form of the verb (*dixá*), following the pattern found in other varieties of IP (cf. e.g. Dalgado 1902-3 for Daman IP and 1906 for Norteiro; Clements & Koontz-Garboden 2002 for Korlai IP). While (2) does not show a verbal form etymologically based on a Portuguese infinitive, *vaj* fulfils the same function. The form of this verb in particular is in fact something of an exception in this respect and, crucially, that is mirrored in the form *vae* in (1).

This variety, descendant of the Creole recorded earlier, is not in isolation in Diu, nor does it constitute a normative, homogeneous code among its speakers. The following subsections deal with these aspects.

### **3.1. DIP and SP**

Even though Portugal lost its sovereignty over Diu in 1961, the cultural ties have not been completely broken. Anyone who can prove descent from a local family is in theory entitled to a Portuguese passport and, despite bureaucratic hindrances, a considerable number of Diuese have indeed settled in Portugal. Some have returned to the island after having secured some income or return occasionally for short periods, and those have had extensive contact with colloquial SP. Given that most of the island's population is Hindu, this is also the most significant parcel of the emigrant population.



During Portuguese rule, mobility between the different colonies under Portuguese rule was relatively easy, and the *Estado da Índia* (which in 1961 comprised Diu, Goa and Daman only) established a close link with Mozambique. The effects of this migratory route are still felt in Diu, as many families remain represented in Mozambique.<sup>2</sup> In Mozambique, Portuguese administration would have ensured the availability of SP. Still, in the speech of former emigrants in Mozambique I have found so far, some DIP features are nonetheless retained.

Present-day migrations within the former *Estado da Índia* are also linguistically relevant. The closest link is with Daman, on account of some physical and historical proximity and also a shared administrative structure. It is crucial to note that Daman is the area of an IP variety intimately related to that of Diu. SP, on the other hand, is more easily available in Goa. This territory still attracts some Diuese for work and study. The Roman Catholic priests in Diu are nominated by the ‘Archdiocese of Goa and Daman’ and until 2002 conducted services in Portuguese. Whereas English has replaced Portuguese since, the prospect is to resume Portuguese services soon.

### **3.2. DIP and the official languages of India**

Diu and Daman form a Union Territory, i.e. an administrative unit directly dependent on the central government, but the island is part of the cultural

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<sup>2</sup> Historical sources (e.g. the 17<sup>th</sup> century archives of the Goan Inquisition, kept in Lisbon’s *Torre do Tombo* Archives) show that large scale emigration to Mozambique is in fact an older

landscape of the state of Gujarat. Gujarati is the native language of the Hindu and Muslim communities, and was so even during Portuguese rule.

The creole-speaking population is largely fluent in Gujarati, as it is necessary for daily life, social interaction and commercial exchange. Classes in the government-run schools in the territory are taught in Gujarati; in English-medium schools, Gujarati is still one of the compulsory courses.

Hindi, though not indigenous to the area, is very conspicuous in the Indian media. Younger people in particular tend to master this language. English has also taken up the role of a pan-Indian language; in Diu it attracts strong allegiance among the DIP-speaking children and youngsters (its role in nationwide business, as well as tourism locally, is perhaps involved in this preference). All the children and teenagers who speak DIP natively attend an English-medium school and display some code-switching with this language:<sup>3</sup>

(3) *ali te garaf d beer.*

LOC EXS<sup>4</sup> bottle of ---

‘There is a bottle of beer there.’

Resort to English was also observed in somewhat older speakers; in (4), a young informant *circa* 30, clearly signals the search for a DIP or SP word:

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trend than emigration to Portugal, with a community of Diuese traders firmly established in Mozambique at least by the early 18<sup>th</sup> century (Boxer 1963: 53).

<sup>3</sup> This may be partly due to the perception that English is a language shared with the researcher. However, code-switching with English is a very widespread phenomenon in present-day India, across native languages (v. e.g. Joshi 1985 for Marathi; Annamalai 1989 for Tamil; Pandit 1990 for Hindi).

<sup>4</sup> The conflation of possessive and existential meanings (see (8) for an illustration of the former) into a single verb *te* (from Portuguese *tem* ‘he/she has’) is shared with other IP varieties, including Daman IP, concerning which Dalgado (1902-3) posits that the existential

(4) [...] *ũ di faze es bridge, u ki dig?*

one day make DEM --- ART what say

‘One day they made this *bridge*, how do you say it?’

Code-switching with Gujarati has also been recorded. An example is given in (5), uttered by a male child:

(5) *el e bẽ bəḍəka, el bəḍəka.*

3s COP QUANT --- 3s ---

‘(S)he is very fearful, (s)he (is) fearful.’<sup>5</sup>

### 3.3. Status

Whereas most (native) DIP speakers perceive the difference between their language and SP, others (among whom the non-DIP speakers but also non native speakers of the creole) strongly equate the two. This fact is relevant in defining the relative prestige attributed to the language.

Among DIP-speakers, SP still commands great prestige. It is common for those who, by virtue of family tradition or education, have knowledge of SP to regard the basilectal register(s) as a communicative concession, and there is a general wish for further access to SP; in this equation, DIP is widely regarded as ‘incorrect Portuguese’. In the presence of a foreigner at least, some families may attempt to correct the most salient creole features in their children’s

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reading is reserved to the construction *alli tem* (cf. example (3)), where *alli* means ‘there’. The existential meaning of the verb *ter*, attested in the 16<sup>th</sup>-century, has since been lost in SP.

<sup>5</sup> Notice the retroflex phoneme [ɖ], part of the Gujarati phonemic inventory but (almost) entirely absent from that of DIP; this observation suggests that this example is indeed a case of

speech and, whenever possible, creole speakers will revert to SP or variable approximations of it. A foreigner is likely to be directed to the members of the community most skilled in the European norm.

Non-(native)-speakers of the creole also tend to equate it with SP; in their case, however, they seem to be unaware of the differences between the two codes. Consequently, DIP commands from them the same kind of attitudes that used to be directed to SP.

### **3.4. Variation**

Considering all the factors above, it is no surprise to notice that DIP displays some degree of variation. SP being something of a foreign (and unknown for many) standard, no local norm is to be found, which licenses a high level of accepted variation.

It is understandably easier to gather samples of the basilect from children or relatively unschooled speakers, as their access to the acrolect is/was less extensive than for other members of the community; this usually correlates with a minor awareness of the differences between the two registers and less hesitation in speaking DIP. Children in particular are very unashamed about exhibiting basilectal features. This may give the impression that their register is intrinsically more 'creole-like' than that of adults; Tomás (1992:65) hypothesises that the speech of children is recreolising by contact with

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code-switching instead of the display of a loan word, a hypothesis lent further support by the fact that DIP does indeed have a Portuguese-based equivalent: *medroz* 'fearful'.

Gujarati. Although the children's lesser skill (or will) in reverting to SP may be responsible for the difference perceived by a foreign interlocutor, the hypothesis that present-day Gujarati influence extends beyond lexical loans or code-switching is a line of investigation definitely worth pursuing as more data becomes available.

As an illustration of variation along what can be seen as a continuum linking IP and SP, let me refer to the choice of the verb used to predicate the notion of fear. Consider the following examples:

(6) *use t fika med d lagətif?* [child]

2s PRS stay fear of lizard

'Are you afraid of lizards'

(7) *med ficav.* [48-year-old woman]

fear stay.PST

'(I) was afraid.'

(8) *asĩ ʒa nã te med.* [middle aged woman]

ADV ADV NEG have fear

'This way you won't be afraid anymore'

(9) *Tenho medo.* [SP]

have.1s fear

'I am afraid'

(10) *Fiquei com medo.* [SP]

stay.1s.PAST PREP fear

‘I was afraid’

The utterer of sentence (8) is an educated woman and, whereas the speaker responsible for (7) has some proficiency in the acrolect, her discourse was rather hesitant. Both (6) and (7) share the choice of the verb *fika*, while (8) employs *te* in the same position. The latter is reminiscent of the standard strategy in SP shown in (9); in SP, the verb *ficar* and *medo* must be linked by the preposition *com*, as in (10), which provides a possible source of the construction in (6) and (7). An important observation at this point is that a construction equivalent to (6) and (7) was reported for Daman IP by Dalgado (1902-3).

The physical territory of DIP is much too small to allow for regional variation, in particular since the Christian population concentrates exclusively in Diu Town (v. Map 1). However, the influx of Damanese to Diu by means of official work or marriage has led to the contact of two regional varieties of IP. It is widely acknowledged, by both native Diuese and Damanese, that Daman IP is more ‘deviant’ from the norm than DIP is, but it is still unclear to what extent the contact between these two varieties has had any linguistic effect.

#### **4. Vitality**

The figures advanced here concerning DIP and SP fluency contrast with the original expectations, given that DIP has variously been given as extinct (v. Smith, 1995) or spoken by a minute group of people (around 15 people, as estimated by Clements, 1991: 351). The creole’s present vitality comes as a

relative surprise but the truth is the future status of the language is quite unpredictable and, in result, the cause of some concern.

Two main factors conspire to favour the potential maintenance of DIP among the Christians: the fact that, by and large, Christian children are raised speaking the creole and also its speakers' affection for the language (as it is a defining trait of their community). It may be the case that occasional contact with SP (e.g. during religious services) and/or an expression of interest from outsiders will reinforce the usage of DIP. Both are likely to be the case in the near future, as Portuguese mass may soon be reintroduced in Diu and the number of visitors from Lusophone areas is apparently on the rise. Close contact with Damanese Christians can have the same effect.

Threats to the maintenance of the language include the progressive diminution of the Christian population, the rising prestige of other languages (namely, English and Gujarati) or the influx of Christians with no knowledge of DIP (or SP, for that matter). A Portuguese institution has expressed interest in providing regular SP courses in the territory. Should this be the case, the effects are somewhat difficult to foresee; however, given the prestige attributed by the speakers of DIP to the European norm as well as a general lack of awareness of the cultural uniqueness of contact languages, this will most likely be disastrous for DIP. At less than 200, the native speaker population may not be large enough to ensure stability.

The survival of the creole among non-Christians is an entirely different matter. With no proper transmission onto the youngsters, knowledge of DIP

seems destined to die out within two generations at most. Some DIP or SP formulae may last longer, but no fluency is to be found among the younger Muslims and Hindus. The influx of SP through migration to and from Portugal (in particular among the Hindu population) may grant this variety some vitality in the territory for a long time, but DIP is likely to be abandoned.

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