

The Creation of an Artificial Language to Facilitate Expression

Fernanda Carvalho Santos

Cynthia S. Wiseman

Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY

Abstract

This research paper presents the process thus far of the creation of a new artificial language Aovrit Mahogick, which is designed to be applied in the artistic field to facilitate communication across different cultures, aid the exchange of knowledge on art history and techniques, and enable artistic collaborations. Aovrit Mahogick is a language system that combines morphological and phonetic elements from more than twenty languages around the globe. For this reason, the language should be easy to learn and relate to by people from different linguistic backgrounds, providing a creative way to share art that transcends language barriers. Data from bilingual/multilingual individuals, and transcription of phonetic, morphological, lexical, and syntactic components were collected. These texts and recorded audios from volunteers speaking in their native languages were transliterated, and the language components analyzed. Aovrit Mahogick has an alphabet, numbers, and 592 commonly spoken words. Here, the process of language creation is discussed, as well as global issues such as aspects of a dominant culture, the advantages of learning a new language, and the adaptation of artificial languages into the arts.

Keywords: artificial language, language creation, constructed language, Aovrit Mahogick.

Introduction

Languages created by a single individual are called constructed or artificial languages (AL), and the creation of an AL can be driven by the desire to reach peace among nations, to use in science-fiction literature and movies, or to be the main language in a specific area of knowledge (Cheyne, 2013). An AL is often rejected because it is not attached to a group of people or a particular culture (Coller, 2017). Esperanto, created by L.L. Zamenhof in 1887, was the most successful AL ever created, and its goal was to establish peace in the world by connecting people through the same language and facilitating knowledge exchange (Gledhill, 2000). Eventually, Esperanto was embraced by different groups of people in different countries

and a new culture was created. The new language for this project is called Aovrit Mahogick, a language system designed to combine morphological and phonetic elements from more than forty languages around the globe. By having familiar phonetic elements, Aovrit Mahogick should be easy to relate to and acquire by people from different linguistic backgrounds. This new language reflects language diversity around the world, and can be used in literature, art, and film.

Literature Review

A language that is created out of the human imagination is called a created, planned, constructed, or artificial language (Blanke & Blanke, 2015). These languages can be initiated for different reasons, from global understanding to literary purposes. Many constructed languages were created by envisioning improvement and perhaps, a solution to communication problems among different language speakers, while other constructed languages have been created for the art field – more specifically, literature, and film.

Communication has been a continuous problem for people who speak different languages in political and social settings. In a globalized world like ours, we need to establish effective communication in order to achieve understanding on a large scale – among nations – and on a small scale – within each country (Archibugi, 2005). Another factor that calls for an international language is the impact of dominant languages over minority languages. Some scholars think that people who speak minority languages are at a disadvantage “compared to those whose thoughts and ideas can be communicated naturally in a language of world currency” (Charters, 2015, p. 289). Furthermore, F. L. Sack (1950) explains that “a common language would also enormously simplify the task of publishing agenda, working papers, reports...,” and it would facilitate “international understanding” and cultivate the “sense of world-citizenship” (pp. 49-50). Daniele Archibugi of the Italian National Research Council discusses cases in America, Poland, India, and in the European Parliament where they found difficulty in agreeing on new communication protocols. Volapük, Ido, Esperanto and Interlingua are some of the examples of planned languages that were designed to facilitate international communication (Blanke & Blanke, 2015; Sack, 1950; Smith, 2020).

Besides ALs designed to create new communication protocols among nations, there are languages focused on bringing life to characters of books and movies - some examples are Na’vi, Dothraki, Wardwesân, Láadan, Klingon, Telerin, Ilkorin, Doriathrin and Avarin (Adams, 2013; Cheyne, 2008; Medium). They add to the narrative and bring life to characters by giving them a

culture, language, and community. Ria Cheyne (2008) states that the constructed language in science fiction transports the reader to a different experience, and “the encounter with the alien language is the encounter with the alien: the created language is both the means by which information about the alien is communicated and the form that brings these beings into life” (p. 399).

Creation of Aovrit Mahogick

Methodology

As an interdisciplinary artist, my approach to the creation of an AL to facilitate communication among artists internationally was grounded in my creative practices. As a Brazilian and a speaker of Portuguese whose professional and academic career led me to study in an English-speaking country and culture, I understood the importance of a medium of communication that would give artists of all nationalities and languages an equal voice. I approached the creation of a language much as I would approach any other artistic creation. The creation of Aovrit Mahogick has followed an organic process inspired by imagination and informed by my own experience in language acquisition, my later study of linguistics, my training and work in artistic mediums.

My initial approach was pragmatic, beginning with the creation of an alphabet, numbers and pronouns, which occurred in tandem with the creation of the sound system. I created these essential elements of this AL by relying on my sensibilities as an artist, sounding out words to find the sequence of sounds that resonated for a particular number, and then, relying on my own native language of Portuguese, I worked out a phonetic transcription system to represent the pronunciation of each of these words in Aovrit Mahogick. The creation of Aovrit Mahogick was mostly inspired and driven by artistic practices and experimental processes, which differentiate it from other ALs that are created assisted by algorithms and coding.

Phonological Component

My approach to the creation of an AL was pragmatic. First, I began the creation of Aovrit Mahogick with the alphabet, numbers, and pronouns. To remember how to pronounce each word, I wrote the pronunciations using a system based on my native language of Portuguese. (See Appendix.)

To further develop the phonological, morphological, and lexical components of Aovrit Mahogick, bilingual/multilingual friends and acquaintances wrote a simple text about any topic in their native languages and to send me an audio recording of a slow reading of the text. In total, I gathered and transcribed 18 texts and 18 audios from 13 people from different parts of the world. Table 1 lists the transliteration of 9 out of 18 texts including 14 languages from 13 volunteers.

Table 1 *Transliteration of Different Languages*

Language	Text
Bambara	Me fai n'ga kanou ani ka kanou di
Arabic	kl alturuq tuadiy 'iilaa hilmiin
Thai	Mero naam swastika ho ani malai ghumna ra naya kura garna maan parcha
Yiddish	Ich bin a mensch vos eibig zicht tsi farshtein di sibeh faar aales vos ich zay in tea. Vaigen daim hub ich gehot kashis in maan ofbrenge in vaigen daim getrofen enfers in maan lernen.
Igbo	Bia onwere ihem choro i gwa gi
Greek	I kalosunh einai mia glwssa pou oi koufoi boroun na akousoun kai oi tufloi na doun
Albanian	Qkemi, une jam Latif. Qyteti im i lindjes është Prishtina. Prishtina është qytet i vogel dhe i bukur. Pjesa më e madhe e popullates janë të rinjë.
Russian	Privet! Segondya bila prekrasnaya pogoda, bilo ne slishkom gharko no i ne slishkom holodno. Osen v New Yorke ochen' krasivoe i romantichnoe vremya goda, ghal chto ono podoshlo k koncu
French	Bonsoir, aujourd'hui j'ai eu une journée fatigante. Je me suis réveillé de très tôt et il faisait encore noir. Je me suis préparé pour me rendre à l'école. Je suis retourné à la maison vers les 5h de l'après midi. Maintenant je mange pour ensuite étudier.

An analysis of the phonetic and phonological structures of the texts from different languages then informed the development of the phonological structure of Aovrit Mahogick. (See Table 2.)

Table 2 – *Examples of phonetic rules*

PHONETIC RULES	WORD	PRONUNCIATION
The combination of the vowel “E” before “W” results in “UE”	DEW	DUE
The vowel “I” after “U” results in an “O” sound.	NIUNFA	NÔN FÁ
Every word with three syllables ending on “A” will have the last “A” as a tonic syllable.	ABALA -	ABALÁ
Every word ending in “O” preceded by a consonant will have a soft “V” sound at the end of the word.	GROHO - YCO - GRIBO -	GROHÔ(V) YCO(V) GRÊBO(V)
When the vowel “I” comes after “R,” it will sound “Ê”.	TRI - GRIBO -	TRÊ GRÊBO(V)

Morphological Component

To develop the morphological structure of Aovrit Mahogick, I researched the prefixes and suffixes in Portuguese, my native language. Since Portuguese is a Romance language, the focus was Latin and Greek prefixes and suffixes in the Portuguese language. I compiled a list of prefixes and suffixes, their meanings, and examples, an excerpt of which appears in Table 3.

Table 3 *Excerpt of Prefixes*

GREEK PREFIX	MEANING	LANGUAGE	WORD	PREFIX MAHOGICK
Aero-	Air	Chichewa	<i>Mpweya</i>	<i>Pwe-</i>
Antropo-	Human	Maltese	<i>Bniedem</i>	<i>Bnie-</i>
Bio-	Life	Chinese	<i>Shenghuó</i>	<i>Shen-</i>
Cosmo-	World	Russian	<i>Mir</i>	<i>Mir-</i>
Crono-	Time	Sesotho	<i>Nako</i>	<i>Nako-</i>
Meso-	Middle	Luxembourgish	<i>Heescht</i>	<i>Hees-</i>
Peda-	Child	Corsican	<i>Ziteilo</i>	<i>Zite-</i>

To further explore the use of the Greek and Latin prefixes and suffixes in Portuguese words and the equivalent expression in various other languages, I used Google Translator. For example, the Greek prefixes “sin-, or sim-,” as in *sinfonia* (symphony) or *simpatia* (sympathy), means simultaneity, group, and reunion. In the construction of this prefix in Aovrit Mahogick, I searched the word “group” in Zulu, which is *iqembu*, and extracted *iqe* to be this prefix in Mahogick language. In total, thus far, Aovrit Mahogick comprises 187 prefixes and suffixes.

Lexical Component

After having created the phonological and morphological foundations of the language, I started to construct words using the phonetic rules and the inventory of morphological structures.

I used a Portuguese dictionary by Nova Fronteira Editor to go through each word and translate them into Aovrit Mahogick.

To build the lexicon, one strategy was to start with the letter “A,” then “AB,” “AC,” “AD,” and repeat the same for “B.” These words emerged through an organic creative process, inspired by the imagination. I explored various combinations of sounds to create each word and examined how they would look when written down. All words in the lexicon of Aovrit Mahogick were transcribed and recorded in the *Banco de Palavras*. (See Table 4.)

Table 4. *Banco de Palavras.*

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
B	A	N	C	O		D	E		P	A	L	A	V	R
AFOSTRI	BABROSK	COB	DANT	EATU	FAGGE	GALMUS		ITUIVA		KAASBA	LAVESCUS		NASKVU	
AEZATIE	BARDRE	CABSA	DATRI	EACIS		GALYT		ITABER			LAVUSP		NYPAX	
AEPONEE	BANTUN	CADRO	DASSBA		FLOHUT	GURCLA		IUDAS			LAXUDS		NIDRAF	
AEMEVR	BAIHASU	CADDIE	DALOUR	EANO	FLAAX	GALIX		IBBUDA			LYTUR		NONY	
AGHAD	BALPOS	CAPIE	DAFIE	EAPLAX	FAHUE	GEFLA		INCRODE			LEXOR		NAOMB	
AICRUCE	BATREL	CAYMA	DANHEP	EBRI	FEXYHA	GANDESS		IRCAEL			LAPONY		NODRRIT	
ABEYEV	BACONTUS	CAÇVU	DAGUES	EBONWI	FHEM	GRAS		IVAPUT			LEBIS		NOGRO	
ACRIJ	BAQUEUN	CAMINKE	DAVELUS	EBASTRI	FIÇLO	GEVUAM		IAVANY					NOR	
AJAKEST	BIGON	CALAX	DACOMUS	EBONIE	FAIQU	GIRROT					LEBUS		NOFLOK	
	BILEPON	CAQWE	DAX	ECLEVE	FHECUS	GEBOAT		IHEVV			LODIT		NOKRI	
AJHEKA	BASMON	CASSARE	DATUB	ECOLIE	FERTRO	GAMROC		IHATH			LECFA		NUPLIVO	
	BULION	CATROSK	DAZUN	ECRIGE	FAKOM	GUWOE		IIHAD			LECIT		NOPLIEA	
	BERDON	CABRI	DAEFAR	EDROVA	FARUTRI	GANES		IUNIE			LEFLEC		NAQUOS	
	BADEW		DAOHE	EDEMONY	FRIDIM	GICRA		INRROVIT			LEDIX		NILCPRI	
AJIVUSPA	BAXOX		DIESTON	FISOLK	GOLINI	ISNYB					LERITIE		NAKOVA	
AJRRE	BAVRIT		DRIVICON	FEIVU	GINOÇK						LEFAU		NHLSK	
	BARROVIT	CAIVRON	DAZON	EFALLHU	FAYNM	GANELB		IRERROT					NIÇHE	
AJPUS	BARCATUS	CERRON		EFOR	FOOB	GUSERN		IWMUL			LEPHUS		NABYK	
AJUUS	BANHEG	CETMON	DYEJON	EFUIZ	FIORRIC	GUARB		IWCRIX			LUFISM		NAGER	
AJUQAX	BAÇVUE	CAMUZ	DABLO	EFLECU	FOJBO	GAOSK		ILXANT			LEFEW		NAVIT	
AIDELF	BENBUS	CAPOLHE	DAMI	EFARE	FIVOSS	GOGUET		ILSQNO					NEBAR	
AJHOOK	BELFUT	CAFARRO	DAQA	EFRIVIA	FUBLEW	GOSIL		ILCETIC					NEÇE	
AJEEW	BEVAZ	CAENHO	DAPLA	EFIAT	FIZAMA	GOLZIET							NEFEW	
AKROTUS	BETYGAN	CAIMAJE	DAVRIK	EGURE	FYTPUS			INDEIT					NORRIAT	
AKUNDILI	BEJOW	CAOBROS	DASCHE	EGASTRI	FUET	GOPANY		IPORD					NOSVIT	
AKIST	BERQAD	CAGOT	DAYVA		FUALY			IPRIVX						
AKIÇOVA	BEDRUX	CAJUN	DAUD		FIQOX	GUVIAT		INSYEVA						
AKLEND	BEDRIPLA	CAK	DAJUN	EFALA	FIRROVIT	GAPRIX								
AKEDRI	BETTEW	CALNUN	DAKEL	EGALUN	FYREW	GLUNIE		ISPYNI						

I also considered the meaning of the words’ origins in creating words in Aovrit Mahogick. In order to achieve the union of languages, one of the steps was to disassemble foreign words and mix them, rearrange, or extract a piece and combine with another foreign word(s). The origins of the foreign words all carry historical or religious value and/or linguistic meaning, and because of that, just some of the words in Aovrit Mahogick had a “poetic” birth. For instance, the word “Inossue” in Mahogick means “child” and this word has multiple origins: Latin and Romance Languages (French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese) have the words *innocens*, *innocente*, *inocente*, which in English is “innocent.” Another strategy used in the creation of words was to invert the spelling of antonyms. In Aovrit Mahogick, the words “*hytos*” and “*sotyh*” mean “heaven” and “hell”. Inversion of the letters and sounds reflects the contrastive opposition of these words.

Conclusion

Aovrit Mahogick is an AL conceptualized to facilitate communication across different cultures, aid the exchange of knowledge on art history and techniques, and enable artistic collaborations. To that end, Aovrit Mahogick combines morphological and phonetic elements from more than twenty languages around the globe, which should make it easy for speakers of many different linguistic backgrounds to learn and relate to and provide a creative way for international artists to collaborate in a medium that transcends language barriers. Data from bilingual/multilingual individuals, and transcription of phonetic, morphological, and lexical components were collected to create an alphabet, numbers, and over 500 commonly spoken words. As a work in progress, the next phase in the creation of Aovrit Mahogick is the evolution of a linguistically multi-faceted syntactic structure that reflects syntactic aspects of a community of multilingual artists around the world. Aovrit Mahogick will be used in artistic projects of moving image (film/video), creative writing, and performance to promote dialogue in Aovrit Mahogick among artists.

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Appendix

Numbers, Alphabet and example of words in Aovrit Mahogick

Number s	Aovrit Mahogick	Pronunciation (not I.P.A.)	ALPHABET			EXAMPLE OF WORDS	
			Letter	Aovrit Mahogick	Pronunciatio n (not I.P.A)	English Word	Aovrit Mahogick
0	Omb	<i>ÔMB</i>					
1	Grah	<i>GRÁ</i>	A	Alska	<i>ÁLSKA</i>	January	Fic
2	Merk	<i>MÉRK</i>	B	Bonn	<i>BÔN</i>	February	Idu
3	Moa	<i>MÔA</i>	C/Ç	Citz/citza	<i>CITSS/CITSSÁ</i>	March	Abala
4	Hibn	<i>RIB(Í)N</i>	D	Dew	<i>DUE</i>	April	Ukotoa
5	Quow	<i>CUÔU</i>	E	Epir	<i>ÊPIR</i>	May	Niunfa
6	Heig	<i>REIGUE</i>	F	Frot	<i>FRÔ(T)</i>	June	Tronsky
7	Naka	<i>NAKÁ</i>	G	Gabu	<i>GABÚ(V)</i>	July	Levuspa
8	Vox	<i>VÓCS</i>	H	Hu	<i>HÚ</i>	August	Jibar
9	Nai	<i>NÁI</i>	I	Inz	<i>ÎNSS</i>	September	Nowm
10	Bla	<i>BLA</i>	J	Joo	<i>JÔ</i>	October	Sabask
11	Blagrah	<i>BLAGRÁH</i>	K	Krev	<i>KRÊV(E)</i>	November	Xeh
12	Blamerk	<i>BLAMÉRK</i>	L	Lunx	<i>LÂNIZ</i>	December	Bravsky
13	Blamoa	<i>BLAMÔA</i>	M	Mirra	<i>MIRRÁ</i>	Millennium	Groicus
14	Blahibn	<i>BLARI(Í)N</i>	N	Nojh	<i>NÓJH</i>	Century	Graicus
15	Blaquow	<i>BLACUÔU</i>	O	Ov	<i>OV(Ê)</i>	Decade	Blicus
16	Blaheig	<i>BLAREIGUÊ</i>	P	Pus	<i>PÂS</i>	Year	Icos
17	Blanaka	<i>BLANAKÁ</i>	Q	Quew	<i>QUUE</i>	Semester	Heicuc
18	Blavox	<i>BLAVÓCS</i>	R	Riun	<i>RÔN</i>	Trimester	Mocuc
19	Blanai	<i>BLANÁI</i>	S	Satz	<i>SATSS</i>	Bimester	Mercuc
20	Merkfe	<i>MÉRKFE</i>	T	Tix	<i>TICS</i>	Month	Cuc
30	Moafe	<i>MÔAFE</i>	U	Uyn	<i>OÊN</i>	Week	Egas
40	Hibnfe	<i>RIB(Í)NFE</i>	V	Vro	<i>VRÔ(V)</i>	And	Je
50	Quowfe	<i>CUÔUFE</i>	W	Wic	<i>UIC</i>	Or	Ras
60	Heigfe	<i>REIGUEFE</i>	X	Xun	<i>XÂN</i>	Not	Ciss
70	Nakafe	<i>NAKÁFE</i>	Y	Ya	<i>YÁ</i>	Yes	Poz
80	Voxfe	<i>VÓCSFE</i>	Z	Zep	<i>ZE(P)</i>	Maybe	Gribo