Volume 01.
Inaugural Issue:
Proceedings of the 6th Sociolinguistic Summer School

June 2016

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Two themes of global significance unite the papers in this collection. One is the interconnectedness of a world bound together over the Internet, creating virtual communities of communicators on an unprecedented scale. The second is the mass global migration that has characterized the last decades. Migration may be personally or internally motivated, driven by economic considerations, a curiosity about other cultures or a desire to advance language learning. Often however it is driven by trauma, by fears for personal and family safety, as refugees flee war in their own countries, or is a response to State policies of persecution and discrimination. In Ireland alone, the proportion of the population drawn from migrant communities has grown from just over one-quarter of a million in 1990 to more than 750,000 by 2015 (http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates15.shtml). Seventy-five percent of these migrants coming into Ireland in 2015 were individuals from groups other than those considered returning Irish or migrants from the United Kingdom (http://emn.ie/emn/statistics). The diversity of nationalities and of languages now present in almost all urban areas continues to grow, offering new opportunities to explore what happens when languages come in contact and when language speakers engage with each other.

This collection of Working Papers is drawn from the 6th Sociolinguistic Summer School held in the Long Room Hub in Trinity College in the summer of 2015. They offer a rich and diverse insight into many of the existing and new research questions that these global shifts represent. Bettina Migge sets the scene in Article 1, setting out the different kinds of research agendas that focus on the broad area of language and migration. Reviewing not only the research areas but also the methodologies that have been applied, she also sets out a road map of the many gaps that remain and the need for cross-fertilization of approaches and disciplines.

As is fitting, many different languages are represented in the pages here: English, Polish, French, Akan, Chinese – to name a few. Some of the discussion in these pages focuses on the bilingual context. For example, in Article 2, Irma Bochorishvili, Mirjam Eiswirth and Kathryn Notheast explore the additional resources available to bilingual speakers and the complex choices implicit in code switching across different language. In the context of migration however, an individual language speaker faces complex choices about integration, preservation of cultural and ethnic identity and assertion of individuality. Language displaced from its roots may struggle to survive and language forms may shift even by the second generation of migrant children, as outlined by Solace Yankson in Article 13 in relation to Akan speakers in Accra, Ghana. By the third generation, the role of a home language may shift from community building to identity preservation (see Romina Buttafocco, Article 3). The perceived loss of language competence or relevance of a home language may be replaced with traces of language use to assert a cultural identification, as suggested by the findings of Buttafocco’s study of Italian-Australians. As they remain in a relationship with their home language, migrants may simultaneously strive to assert their integration through adapting and accommodating to the majority language of the environment, as explored by Suzie Telep (Article 10) and Maka Tetradze (Article 11).

Languages represent far more than a vehicle for the transmission of meaning, as outlined across these papers. This theme is developed further by Loo May Eng as she
explores the nuances of language choice in relation to Mainland Chinese immigrants in Singapore (Article 5). Annarita Magliacane (Article 6) explores a longitudinal data set derived from a specific sub-group of 'migrants by choice', i.e., students who engage in a study abroad experience as part of their language learning processes. The focus of this study is the emergence of the discourse marker ‘well’, a complex linguistic device that, as Magliacane explains may function as a marker of insufficiency, a face-threat mitigator, an indicator of topic change or a delay device - functions that this study suggests are not easily acquired.

In line with the breadth of the research topics within this volume, data have been drawn from multiple sources, including survey data, interviews (e.g., Fergus O'Dwyer, Article 9), questionnaires, analysis of online interactions (e.g., Leonardo Dias Cruz, Article 4; Tunde Nagy, Article 8), official EU documents and legal texts (Silvia Manessi, Article 7) and archival documents relating to the British Board of Film Classification (Julie Villesseche, Article 12). Methodologies span the qualitative and quantitative divide, reflecting the diversity outlined in the scene-setting paper by Bettina Migge (Article 1).

The papers in this volume represent an abundance of riches, not only in their focus and content but also in their genesis. The Working Papers bring together contributions from established researchers, but more importantly from the next generation of researchers, those on whom the field will rely over the coming decades. This volume represents the combined efforts of very many individuals, but without doubt it would not have come into being without the energy, enthusiasm and commitment of Irma Bochorishvili, Stephen Lucek and Katherine Morales. They deserve many congratulations on revitalizing the proud tradition of the Centre for Language and Communication Studies in promoting and disseminating scientific understanding of language in all its diversity and richness. It is a very great pleasure to have the privilege of writing a Foreward, through an act of fortuitous timing, as Head of School. I look forward to a continuation of this tradition.

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INTRODUCTION TO WORKING PAPERS

The process of bringing the Working Papers to life grew out of the active and collaborative postgraduate seminar series at Trinity. In October 2011, following a spirited debate about Ph. D. candidates publishing their work, a decision was made to investigate the feasibility of starting our own Working Paper series at Trinity College, as the natural success to the then dormant Occasional Papers series. We were encouraged and guided by 13 Working Papers who were generous with their time and support. While he has finished his work as a doctoral student at Trinity, Dr Colin Flynn’s work during the early stages was integral to the quality and focus of the current project. Through this medium we hope to encourage our postgraduate students, staff members and visiting professors to publish their original work. As a working papers journal, authors will not be precluded from publishing their papers elsewhere.

Our goal as editors is to present the linguistics community at Trinity College Dublin to the wider linguistics community. As part of the strategic plan for the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences, raising awareness of the work that our researchers are producing helps to fulfil the goals of the Knowledge generation and transfer, as well as enhancing the student experience and through our open access structure, providing engagement with society on the whole and the linguistics community, specifically.

This is the inaugural issue of Trinity College Dublin’s Working Papers in Linguistics. In this volume you will find the proceedings of the 6th Sociolinguistics Summer that took place during August 4th – 7th 2015 at Trinity College Dublin. The SSS6 saw over 70 participants from different countries from all over the world. The Working Papers journal reflects this diversity and provides a global insight to the ever-growing field of sociolinguistics. As organisers of the SSS6 we are deeply thankful to our supervisor Dr. Jeffrey Kallen for his encouragement and support through the organization of this conference. The Head of the Centre for Language and Communication Studies Dr. Elaine Uí Dhonnachadha has also been instrumental in the online advertising of our event. We would also like to thank the Head of the School of Speech, Language and Communication Sciences, Dr. Martine Smith, for her unconditional support in the creation of this journal. Her encouragement throughout this entire process has been both inspiring and instrumental to its launch and continued success. Of course this event would have not been possible without the help of our sponsors: the Trinity Long Room Hub, TCD’s Benefaction Fund, TCD’s Centre for Deaf Studies, TCD’s Centre of Asian Studies, the Irish Times, Justisigns, John Bejamins Publishing Company, and the Routledge Taylor & Francis Group. And, finally, we are extremely indebted towards our contributors who not only made this event possible, but also contributed to the very creation of this journal.

Our first issue includes work from both experienced scholars in sociolinguistics and sociolinguists-in-training. It pleases us to share our vibrant discussions from the summer school through this medium, and we hope our audience find these contributions both interesting and beneficial towards their own work. We hope that you enjoy these papers, and should you have any comments or suggestions for the authors, you are encouraged to contact them directly, as we have included their email addresses at the start of their
papers. A linguistics community need not be located in one place, and these working papers will encourage international collaboration and engagement.

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Linguistic Variation, Integration & Identity Construction in Contexts of Migration: An Assessment of Current Approaches

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Linguistic Variation, Integration & Identity Construction in Contexts of Migration: An Assessment of Current Approaches

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Abstract
Research in sociolinguistics has to date predominantly dealt with (so-called) monolingual contexts and spatially fixed populations. However, with the growing focus on globalization, hybridity, identity construction and authenticity in the humanities and social sciences, there is renewed interest in what bilingual and multilingual populations do with their linguistic resources in contexts characterized by processes of mobility.

The aim of the paper is to give a critical overview of the research in linguistics that deals with language and mobility. I show that there are a variety of research strands that have partially different research foci and apply different approaches (of data collection and analysis). While there is some cross-fertilization between research strands, I argue that greater integration of both quantitative and qualitative approaches on the one hand and attention to complementary research in the social sciences on the other would much enhance our understanding of how mobility and language phenomena mutually impact each other.

1. Introduction

(Socio)linguistic research traditionally focuses on monolingual and spatially ‘fixed’ people. “[I]migrants are often excluded from sociolinguistic research on the grounds that they are not members of the core speech community” (Schleef et al. 2011, p. 207). A frequent outcome of mobility, namely language contact, is even today viewed with suspicion in many disciplines of linguistics such as structural linguistics and historical linguistics and languages that are well known results of contact-induced change (Creoles, Pidgins, Bilingual Mixed languages) are often excluded from certain research programs or typological databases (e.g. WALS (Dryer & Haslpeamath 2013)). Language users with a migration background, including those who speak more than one language or variety and the hybrid practices that they produce, are widely seen as peripheral and possibly as deficient (read unsystematic) mostly because purity, homogeneity and simple correlations between language and society that hail from the nationalist era still impact on our ways of conceptualizing language.

The mostly covert persistence of such views is, of course, not justified because much of the research on second language acquisition (Ellis 2008) has shown that learners of so-called non-native speech may diverge from so-called native speakers’ speech patterns, but is still systematic in nature. That is, learners’ so-called interlanguages are not unprincipled, but are, like so-called native-speakers’ language use, guided by structural rules and principles (Selinker 1972)—the latter are simply different from those of the traditional native speaker group. Beyond structural principles, more recent work (e.g. Norton 2000) has also highlighted the role of so-called non-structural, subjective factors—such as language ideologies and social motivations to align with certain social groupings or social stances—in whether or not certain native patterns are adopted or rejected by non-habitual users of the language, or entirely new patterns emerge. Similar findings have emerged from the flurry of activity that has

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1This is a write up of a presentation given at the Sociolinguistics Summer School in August 2015 at Trinity College Dublin.
developed in the area of contact-induced language change following the publication of Thomason & Kaufman (1988). This research has shown that types of contact outcomes are closely related to the makeup of the social contexts in which they emerge and that the linguistic phenomena that arise from language contact are as complex and rule-governed as those found in languages less heavily affected by processes of contact.

In recent years, hybridity has become the center of attention in research in the Social Sciences and in the Humanities. Focusing on populations in large western urban agglomerations, Vertovec (2007) argues that population diversity is not only the norm nowadays, but that this diversity is also different in kind and primarily driven by processes of migration. People are not only coming from a much wider range of countries and regions in the world, but are also socially, religiously, politically and linguistically much more heterogeneous than in previous decades. It is no longer (or has it ever been?) easily possible to generalize over population groups as their life experiences including their origin, their trajectories and their aspirations, practices and social, cultural and linguistic models are likely to be rather disparate.

This new interest in diversities is also obviously having an impact on linguistics. Linguistic Anthropology, Sociolinguistics, and Applied Linguistics (language acquisition research) are the primary areas in which diversity is systematically investigated. Current work follows on from an earlier tradition of research in language acquisition which investigated the structural nature of immigrants’ language use and tried to infer, either based on the phenomena observed or on the basis of observation, the processes that gave rise to these innovative phenomena. So, for instance, Pfaff’s (1987) and Klein & Perdue’s (1997) work on so-called Gastarbeiter varieties of European languages examined using descriptive and formal linguistic tools the degrees and nature of simplification in immigrants’ speech from unguided language learning and argued that processes of pidginization and fossilization (Ferguson 1996) were responsible for these phenomena. Later work was concerned with identifying the differences between native and non-native speech (Adamson & Regan 2001; Bayley & Preston 1996). Using quantitative sociolinguistic tools, they were particularly interested in determining whether or not both groups of speakers were making use of variable linguistic features to the same degree which were conditioned by the same kinds of social and linguistic conditioning factors. This line of research is still active and has recently received new impetus.

There is also qualitative research in the area. This line of research, spearheaded by researchers such as Ben Rampton (1995) and Blommaert & Rampton (2011) among others, is not so much interested in correspondences between native and non-native speech, but in how speakers draw on different languages in order to create social meaning. Research focuses primarily on language-based issues while socio-politically relevant findings such as how this research can contribute to a better understanding of highly debated issues such as integration, belonging and newcomers’ identity construction are not systematically considered. The only line of research that takes these issues as the primary focus of their research is work within Critical Discourse Analysis.

The aim of this paper is to provide an overview and to critically assess the linguistically-relevant research on migration and to relate it to social science research on migration. Given that there is a much longer tradition of research on issues of migration in the Social Sciences, linguistically-based research can and should benefit from their insights in terms of getting to grips with the larger social issues. Social Science research, in contrast, can greatly benefit from the insights offered by linguistic research as it provides an empirically-grounded basis for how these social categories are constructed, maintained and challenged. The paper will draw on the published literature and on my
own research on the broad topic of language and migration that has mostly been concerned with the Republic of Ireland and the South American countries of Suriname and French Guiana.

In part two I examine relevant social key concepts such as migration and mobility, integration and identity construction. In part three I look in more detail at the different linguistically-based research strands on migration and hybridity with a view to tracing, where possible, the historical development of this research and highlighting current indicative findings and methodological issues. The concluding section summarizes the findings and discusses their implications.

2. Key Social Concepts in Language and Migration Research

In this section I briefly deal with relevant issues and key concepts that play a role in language and migration research.

2.1 From Migration to Mobility

Samers (2010, p. 8) succinctly defines migration as “a complicated, challenging, and diverse phenomenon involving changing statuses and multiple geographical trajectories.” Migration as a concept is part of the larger complex of mobility studies and, broadly speaking, deals with issues relating to human mobility. Mobility studies generally distinguish between different kinds of mobilities. There is geographical mobility which examines the similarities and differences between regional or local mobility phenomena and those that involve long-distance displacement, such as transcontinental human mobility. Movement between rural and urban spaces have traditionally received most attention in the wake of increased globalization, but less widely studied phenomena such as urban-rural, rural-rural and urban-urban mobilities also clearly fall into the area of mobility studies. Besides rural-urban mobility, transnational mobility, which involves movement across regional borders, has probably received the greatest amount of attention in mobility research. In fact, the term migration is nowadays nearly uniquely identified with transnational movements in lay speech and increasingly also in academic language. Finally, research has also invoked metaphorical mobility which broadly refers to changes in social and cultural status. Although research may examine each of these types of mobilities as independent phenomena, they are by no means distinct, but take place concurrently, consecutively and are heavily intertwined.

To give an example from my own research sites, many people from rural Suriname move to urban centres in search of cash labour opportunities. For some, this geographical movement is best termed regional migration because they move to the capital of Suriname, Paramaribo, while for others, who have more extensive family networks in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni, this geographical mobility is transnational because the latter town is situated in the French overseas region of Guyane Française (French Guiana). All people who engage in this rural-urban movement are also automatically implicated in metaphorical mobility in that they have to position themselves in a new social order. Older people, who often carry important community responsibilities in the rural communities such as arbitration of disputes, suddenly find themselves demoted because these functions are carried out by various institutions of the state in the urban centres. Younger people, who might have accrued a certain status in the rural community due to their ability in traditional activities such as hunting or gold-mining may find their status demoted to unskilled labourer in the urban centres where such skills are
not highly valued. By contrast, people who have good academic skills may, due to regional and/or transnational mobility experience, a rise in status.

Among types of mobilities, not only transnational but also permanent migration have received the greatest amount of attention while circular or bi-directional mobility and changing patterns of mobility have received less attention overall. In fact, it is often assumed that once people leave from one place and arrive in another, they will not engage in further mobility. While regular back and forth movement between different locations, especially if they were separated by oceans, was much less regular and common in earlier periods, this has changed significantly with the greater availability of diverse means of travel at more reasonable prices, at least in some regions. For instance, Irish people have a long history of migrating to North America. While earlier generations tended to remain for long periods (years) in the new home country or the old home before they engaged in further travel (back to the new home or the original home country), people now often do this journey at much more frequent intervals and also stay for shorter periods of times. At the same time, the phenomenon of remigration has become more important. People migrate to North America or UK, for instance, stay there for a number of years, decide to return to Ireland and then, after several years, again return to North America or the UK, or a third country such as Australia. Mobility is also not only or mainly driven by economic factors, but by a variety of reasons. For instance, in our research on migration to Ireland, my collaborator Mary Gilmartin and I have found that people’s’ reasons for migrating to Ireland ranged from love, family relocation, adventure, desire for change, and education to more economically based reasons such as job opportunities and financial needs, or a combination of different reasons (Gilmartin & Migge 2015a).

Finally, migration research in the main tends to focus its investigations on the place of arrival, rather than on the place of departure, and the ‘area/period’ in-between receives even less attention as there is the assumption that mobility has only an origin and an endpoint. This is at odds with people’s lived experiences because many people nowadays undergo several waves of migration throughout their life, making it difficult to clearly define endpoints and beginnings. All the locations that are part of a person’s migratory trajectories have an important impact on their life: aspirations, opportunities, practices and on the development (or lack thereof) of these trajectories. For instance, many of the Haitians that come to live in French Guiana generally at least pass through, often spending periods of time stretching from a few days to several years in Suriname – or literally between the two countries as they go back and forth between them – where they forge important contacts and are exposed to practices – particularly in relation to local languages – that turn out to facilitate insertion into multi-ethnic and multi-lingual French Guianese society. While many end up staying in French Guiana once they have obtained residency papers, others, mainly men, often prefer to live most of the time in Suriname, possibly going back and forth between the two countries, because they find life more adapted to their needs there (Laëthier 2015). This suggests further that research on mobility should pay greater attention to so-called non-structural factors such as ideologies, motivations and socio-cultural issues which are best accessed at the level of the individual rather than the group.

Research on language and mobility has mostly focused on phenomena of language that arose due to transnational mobility (but see Kerswill & Williams (2000) for the effects of regional mobility). Language contact and sociolinguistic research has mostly focused on groups of people and on broad, objectifying social categories (e.g. age, citizenship, year-of-arrival cohorts etc). However, in recent years there has been a growing interest in focusing more widely on people’s lived experiences and changes over time; this is only slowly being taken up in language and migration research. We also
need to obtain more information on the variation in individuals' practices, to take account of non-structural social factors such as personal, social and linguistic ideologies, as well as to focus on people's own networks and perceptions in order to define social groupings and categories that are more suitable for investigating the linkages between language and social practice in contexts of mobility. In addition, we also lack research on various forms of geographical mobility and how these, particularly circular migration and the 'in-between spaces' and other forms of non-permanent migration, affect mobile people's language practices.

2.2. Integration

Social Science research on migration is often not only interested in people's movement across space, but also focuses on questions of integration which can be broadly defined as how “newcomers to a country become part of society” (Castles et al 2002, pp. 112–113). Research often distinguishes between migrants who move to another political constituency on a temporary basis and immigrants who move to another country with the expressed aim of becoming a member of that society. The two terms are then further conflated with modifiers that indicate the permanency, legal status and/or spatial origin/destination of that movement, e.g. illegal rural migrant. In actual practice, the terms are often used interchangeably though, and are most commonly applied to low status and low-income newcomers rather than to all newcomers. A more neutral way of referring to people who have moved across political border is the term 'newcomer'.

Although questions of integration are obviously of great importance to nation states and societies, the term has been notoriously difficult to define and has been changing over time. Traditionally, integration referred to a process more or less identical to social assimilation. Essentially, it was assumed that newcomers will adopt or emulate closely the practices and customs of the local population and, at least in public, abstain from continuing those from their place of origin. Thus, according to that model an integrated person would be someone who has fully internalized and fully applies all the practices of the community they are intending to integrate with. This conception of integration has been widely criticized as being rather restrictive because it stipulates that the ‘burden of the action’ lies with the newcomer and no action is required from the in situ population. Moreover, there are serious issues with identification of the target norms for assimilation as they are not only variable within society, but are also continually changing. Instead, people are now often talking about acculturation. While this term can be interpreted to mean assimilation, it is generally taken to signal a two-way process whereby newcomers make an effort to find out, respect and learn the customs of the in situ population and the latter do not only recognize that the newcomers have different cultural practices but also try to find out about them and learn to respect them. Ideally, this would give rise to a situation whereby the in situ population and the newcomers mutually accommodate to each other and over time negotiate mutually acceptable ways of getting on with each other. In practice, however, the in situ population is often accorded greater power in defining the rules of the game. A third option is what has often been referred to as the salad bowl in the United States. This assumes that a society is made up of different cultural grouping that mutually respect each other’s differences and that are glued together by a few minimal practices that are accepted and practiced by all of its members, regardless of their cultural ancestry.

Regardless of the model of integration that is accepted by a society, each body that attempts to measure integration will have to make decisions as to how they define and measure integration. The same is true for linguistic research on the issue. So far, linguists have not overtly addressed the issue in linguistic research outside of general
comments. However, there has been the underlying assumption, particularly in quantitative linguistic research, that native speech norms function as the learning targets for non-native members of a community. This would clearly position linguistic research in the acculturation camp. Essentially, researchers determine the variants of the variable in native speech, possibly stratifying them socially, and then compare them to those found among non-native speakers. However, the question that is rarely tackled is whether the linguistic findings correlate with the social findings. That is, do linguistic and social measures of integration cohere and if not, why not. The main reason for the absence of such studies to date seems to be that linguistic research does not make reference to integration as a social phenomenon as discussed in the social sciences, but generally relies on traditional sociolinguistic and applied linguistic criteria.

A very useful way for measuring integration as a lived experience and for determining changes in levels of integration is presented in Ager and Strang (2008). They propose to use an inductive approach for identifying domains of integration. These domains fall into four interrelated categories: foundations; facilitators; social connections; and markers and means that can be adapted to specific local contexts. These can be applied to three broad domains—cultural issues, social interaction, and employment—that were, for example, mentioned by interviewees in Ireland (MCRI 2008; Gilmartin & Migge 2015a). Facilitators are language and cultural knowledge, markers and means are employment-related matters and social connections relate to bridges and bonds with co-nationals, other newcomers and members of the local population. People’s lived experience at one point in time and across time can then be measured in relation to these three domains.

2.3. Identity

Another issue that is regularly invoked in migration research are the identities of mobile people and the processes involved in their negotiation. As succinctly outlined by Samers (2010), so-called migrant identities, like those of so-called non-mobile people, are rather complex, being impacted by a variety of influences:

Though migrant identities constantly change vis-à-vis citizens, other immigrants, and compatriots remaining in the country of origin, they are shaped by influences associated with the country, region, or village of origin and other axes of differentiation including age, gender, religion, and skin colour. The ability to express this identity or these identities in the country of immigration in which they settle is a particular concern for many migrants. At the same time, many migrants also wish to adopt at least some of the cultural, political, and social practices of the majority of citizens in the country of immigration. (pp. 19–20)

This quote exemplifies the properties of identities and identity-construction processes as discussed by Bucholtz & Hall (2010). They argue that identities are not fixed, easily identifiable predispositions but are always emergent and temporary in that they are actively negotiated in interaction via a range of media. That is, in all their interactions, people actively position themselves in relation to their interlocutors, the nature of the encounter, the topic, their personal and institutional goals, etc. by negotiating alignment (adequation) with or distinction from one another and by assuming various stances (e.g. hesitancy vs firmness of opinion) or social positions such as authority vs. subordination. The process of identity construction may be highly intentional and conscious as, for example, in the case of active styling among teenagers or for a job interview, or it may be mostly unconscious and habitual. Negotiation of identities takes place via various semiotic processes at different levels of human practices such as,
language practices, clothing practices, spare time activities, choice of educational institutions, social aspirations, choice of country of immigration, etc., that are at people’s disposal. Different processes may or may not cohere in that people’s identities are not always logically consistent because people assume different identity positions in different contexts and the different identities from these different contexts influence each other. Negotiations also involve different indexical processes. People may overtly mention their identities (“I’m a traditional Irish lad!”) or they may be expressed indirectly (and can be inferred from analysis of) through the use of linguistic practices, implicatures and evaluative stances. Several processes are usually operating at the same time and they do not always necessarily cohere.

Different research traditions take different approaches to identifying and analyzing identity processes. In Social Science research on migration, discussions about identities are typically based on people’s overt statements about their self-identification and about their use of certain cultural resources. So, for instance, in research on migration in Geography, researchers are examining how migrants conceptualize space, the politics of belonging and how they create place-belongingness (Antonsich 2010). The lattermost refers to how people construct emotional and affective bonds with a place such as feelings of being at home while the politics of belonging refers to socio-spatial processes of inclusion and exclusion. While this research is mostly interested in the actual practices, they are typically discussed based on narratives elicited via semi-guided interviews. However, instead of systematically analyzing interviewees’ responses from the point of view of identity construction, research typically takes a much more objectifying approach to people’s responses (but see Gilmartin & Migge 2015b).

In Linguistics, identity processes are also studied using semi-guided interviews about people’s lives, but traditionally, sociolinguists are not overtly interested in the content of these narratives. Topics in sociolinguistic interviews generally function to elicit different styles or types of speech where the aim is to obtain the most casual everyday speech (see Labov 1970, 1984). Sociolinguists traditionally study the distribution of variants of variable linguistic features in relation to a number of extra-linguistic features (e.g. gender, class, age) and then infer the social functions of these features from these correlations (but see so-called third wave approaches).

2.4. Issues of Methodology

This brief discussion suggests that the two areas, Linguistics and Social Science research (e.g. Geography and Sociology), are in fact complementary. While Social Science research examines the nature of social categories and broader social processes, Linguistics provides the tools for an empirically-based narrow analysis of people’s actual practices of these categories and processes. This allows us to understand in more detail the dynamics, including the contradictions between them, that exists between people’s ideologies (what they say they do) and what they are actually doing in specific settings.

In terms of approaches, the discussion so far suggests that an ethnographically-based approach which considers different data types is most suitable for a thorough investigation of issues of migration, identity and integration and their relationship to language. On the macro-level, there is a need to investigate the broad socio-historical, political and linguistic context, such as when did movements take place, who moves to where and what kinds of events or processes appear to drive this mobility. What type of mobility is involved? What are its overall demographics, such as origins of people involved, numbers and broad development of the numerical distribution? What are the languages that are spoken by both the mobile and the non-mobile population? These
issues are best determined on the basis of secondary literature published on the context. With respect to the meso-level of analysis, we need to examine the ideologies as they relate to issues of migration, integration, linguistic heterogeneity, etc., of all the people involved, those who are mobile and those that appear not to be, including decision makers. Matters of ideology can be researched using semi-guided interviews with different local social actors and observations which can then be examined using qualitative methods of analysis. On the micro-level, it is important to examine people’s actual language use, for example, in situated interactions or in semi-guided interviews that deal with issues sensitive to migration. With respect to non-linguistic matters per se, it would be useful to examine how people talk about and position themselves to issues relating to migration and integration. In the remainder of this paper I will examine research on migration that deals with issues of language.

3. Language and Migration: An overview of types of approaches

Research on language and migration roughly falls into two broad camps: quantitative and qualitative research. While the former studies are typically interested in exploring the distribution of variable linguistic features and their conditioning factors in one language, (usually the language of the so-called host country), the latter kinds of studies examine how people deploy linguistic repertoires in interaction in order to create social meanings.

3.1. Variationist Sociolinguistic studies on language and migration

Variationist approaches to language and migration have their origins in Second Language Studies that are primarily interested in understanding the process(es) involved in acquiring an additional language (Ellis 2008). While early research was mainly concerned with how people acquired the structure of a language, newer research is concerned with the acquisition of non-native speakers’ sociolinguistic competence. That is, they explore how people acquire the social and linguistic factors that govern language use and the use of variable linguistic features in particular. This kind of research provides insights into the dynamics of language variation and change and into the processes of second (or additional) language learning. This approach to studying language and migration takes its cue from first and second wave quantitative sociolinguistics (Labov 1963, 1970, 1984). Specifically, it is based on an empirical investigation of actual language use in sociolinguistic interviews. The focus is on identifying sociolinguistic variables that are relevant to both native and non-native speech, to study this variation (i.e. identify the variants and their distribution), to quantify their occurrence in the recordings and to correlate the frequency distribution of the variants with relevant social categories. The final step involves comparing non-native to native speech patterns in order to see to what degree the former target, and have acquired, the patterns of language use of the latter. That is, (a) do non-native speakers of a language make use of the same variants as the native speakers, (b) is their frequency distribution subject to the same conditioning factors and (c) do the conditioning factors have the same strength. In line with the quantitative sociolinguistic paradigm’s focus on vernacular language use, research typically focuses on non-standard features or variation between so-called standard and non-standard options.

Researchers obtain their data from both classic learners, such as people who learned a language through classroom-based learning and those who learned it outside of the classroom also referred to as unguided language learners. For instance, Adamson and Regan (1991) examined language use among Vietnamese and Cambodian immigrants in Philadelphia and Washington DC, respectively, Bayley (1996) studies language use of Chinese-English Bilinguals in California and Mayor (2004) explored the
speech of Japanese and Spanish learners of English in the US. Examining (ing), Adamson and Regan (1991) found that both native and non-native speakers showed similar patterns of variation and applied similar constraints which, however, applied in different ways. As in the case of native speakers, Cambodian and Vietnamese men were also using the variant [n] more than Cambodian and Vietnamese women. However, there was more linguistic variation. They used the [n] variant to a greater extent with nouns and t-words such as something. Mayor found that non-native speakers of English acquired gender differences in language use rather quickly while style differences only developed later. Finally, Bayley (1996), investigating so-called ‘t/d deletion’, found that the frequency of deletion is dependent on the type of network. Chinese-English bilinguals who were integrated into a mixed social network were less likely to omit word final [t, d] than those who were in more homogeneous networks. Another study on L2 learners of French in Canada by Mougeon, et al. (2004) that investigated thirteen different variables found that the relative degree of fit between native and non-native speech did not only depend on social and linguistic factors but also differed from variable to variable.

One of the most recent studies in this line of research is Meyerhoff and Schleef (2012) which investigates the variables (ing), (t-deletion) and the use of quotatives in the speech of Polish youth living in Edinburgh and London and their local peers in both locations. With respect to the (ing) variable, they found that both groups used mostly the variants [n] and [ŋ], however, Polish interviewees also used a reinforced variant [ŋk]. In both locations the Polish interviewees were sensitive to local norms, but only partially applied the same conditioning factors as the locals and the same factors, such as grammatical category, for instance, had a different strength in the two data sets.

In recent years the focus in this line of research has shifted from mostly morpho-syntactic features to pragmatic markers or discourse markers that are not essential from a grammatical perspective but add information about stance etc. According to Müller (2005, p. 1), “pragmatic competence in terms of knowing the cultural values of the second language […] is […] essential for successful communication” and acquisition of such markers is highly dependent on exposure to native vernacular norms because they are not generally taught in classroom contexts nor are people much aware of them. Studies that examine the use of pragmatic or discourse markers are Müller (2005) who looks at a number of such elements in the speech of German learners of English. Nestor et al (2012) analyzes the use of like in the speech of Polish youngsters in Ireland and Diskin (2015) looks at a number of discourse markers such as like, you know, I mean in the speech of Chinese and Polish adults in Ireland. Finally, Migge (2015) discusses the frequency distribution of now in the speech of a range of newcomers to Ireland, including non-native speakers of English and speakers of other varieties of English. All studies show that there is a fair amount of variation among speakers which cannot be easily explained on the basis of language acquisition processes, but seems to be related to extra-linguistic factors. Markedly local forms were used with the highest frequency by those who identify most closely with local culture. However, alignment with local culture is not the only factor that impacts on usage patterns. Attitudes to local and standard varieties of English and contexts of interaction also have an effect as well as the nature of the linguistic features as some features lack salience. For instance, some newcomers to Ireland show low levels of usage of local features despite positive alignment with Ireland because they have negative attitudes to non-standard speech (Migge 2012).

This line of research has produced significant insights into the relationship between native and non-native speech with respect to different varieties of English. However, there are also some shortcomings. First, studies rely too heavily on overall frequency distributions rather than examine the impact of the interactional context as is
typically done in so-called third-wave studies. Second, there is too much reliance on statistical inferences. Studies do not always investigate the social contexts in much detail and do not focus on understanding why certain people are ‘off-target’. Third, it is tacitly assumed that variants belong to a single social dimension. Fourth, the selection of variables is not always done on the basis of whether or not they seem salient in the context, but on the basis of theoretical interest. Fifth, many studies take a national community approach, assuming that nationality is always an important factor in self-identity that will impact on language use patterns (Gilmartin & Migge 2015b). Because studies essentially have a linguistic rather than a social focus and do not consistently investigate socially relevant notions such as integration and identity, it is hard to say what social insights we can gain from these studies beyond the fact that non-locals only partially conform to local norms and that this is due to a variety of social and linguistic factors.

3.2. New Dialect Formation

Another line of research on language and migration that makes use of quantitative sociolinguistic tools and methods is research on the emergence of new language varieties. It has its roots in language diffusion and dialectology and its main aim is to investigate the mechanisms, factors and outcomes of language change. Focusing on vowel variables, the most well known study in this area, Kerswill & Williams (2000) and Kerswill (2002), investigates the levelling of different varieties of English and the emergence of new norms in the newly emerging town of Milton Keynes. Other studies have investigated such processes among varieties of Hindi in Fiji (Siegel 1985, 1997) and varieties of diaspora Hindi in Suriname and Mauritius (Yakpo & Muysken 2014). All these studies suggest that in cases where speakers of different varieties of the same language come in contact, the children growing up in these contexts will early on diverge from their parents’ speech and establish their own norms that generally emerge from processes of koinization phenomena involving mixing, reallocation and levelling of related functionally equivalent forms.

A particularly interesting recent study in this area is Cheshire, et al. (2011). It investigates the outcomes of processes of dialect leveling involving first and additional language varieties that currently take place in all major northern European cities due to widespread migration and the emergence of multi-ethnic populations where language and language diversity is quite substantial and unguided language learning (of the ‘host’ language) is the norm. Focusing on Multicultural London, they investigate the features that characterize Multicultural English, when and how it emerged and the kinds of conditioning factors that govern its emergence and development. Relying on the synchronic and diachronic language data from three generations of both Anglo- and non-Anglo speakers (children, teenagers, adults), they explore the frequency distribution of a range of variables. They include so-called off-the-shelf, local and innovative variables. Off-the-shelf variables such as discourse marker be like and the GOOSE vowel are easily available in many places and are not heavily linked to other features. They are very salient, but their conditioning factors differ across settings. Local variables refer to variation between vernacular variants and standardized forms such as past copular agreement, article allomorphy and realization of the KIT, FOOT, STRUT, PRICE, etc. vowels. Innovative variables are those that refer to entirely new options for expressing certain meanings which are, however, usually in variation with local or standardized forms. In the study on Multicultural English, this is + speaker quotative was considered an innovative variable.
The study shows that children growing up in this context typically rapidly shift to English as their main means of communication. In terms of linguistic norms, children focus on peer-group norms from early on, about the ages of 4–5 rather than on the linguistic models of their caregivers. They show that incrementation plays a role for some off-the-shelf features (be like and GOOSE vowel) whose frequency rises during teenage years but peaks in pre-adolescent years. The use of other features such as the vowel in FOOT, FACE and GOAT appear to be conditioned by gender and ethnicity. Anglo women appear to lead changes followed by Anglo men and non-Anglo women and then non-Anglo-men. The innovative quotative marker is led by pre-teens though it is not clear whether it will be sustained into adulthood. Comparison with the earlier data shows that some of the features (raised GOAT, FACE and lowered MOUTH, PRICE) closely resemble earlier speakers’ vernacular style suggesting that these features are driven by additional language speakers of English. Cheshire, et al. (2011) argue that Multicultural English is certainly heteroglossic in that different features are led by different speaker groups and changes “are only loosely associated with specific ethnicities or language backgrounds” (p. 190). This variety is a good case of a koiné because speakers do not have clear target norms but are mutually accommodating to each other and the features that emerge in this process are developing into the local norms.

This type of study is very useful because it looks at different age groups and people from different socio-cultural, including national, groups and considers a range of variables. It shows that the process of new dialect formation is rather heterogeneous and involves many different processes which affect individual variables in different ways. However, the researchers do not examine how the different features or the entire feature bundle correlates with locally significant and emerging identities and/or social categories. Once certain features have been identified as salient, a third-wave approach would be highly useful in order to sort out the meanings and functions of these particular variables and their variants.

3.3. Variation and change in the ancestral language

While the dominant language of the community to which migration has taken place is generally the focus of attention in migration research, because it is assumed that competence in that language is of utmost importance for successfully negotiating one’s life in the community, there is also some work on what is often referred to as the migrant’s heritage language(s). Traditional research on migration often assumes that people immigrating to a new country essentially give up their language more or less rapidly and primarily make use of the dominant language. However, this is not always the case and some community languages are maintained over several generations.

One of the projects that fit into this line of research is Naomi Nagy’s research project entitled The Heritage Language Variation and Change Project (HLVC), which is based at the University of Toronto. She describes her multilingual and multi-level project as pushing “variationist research beyond its monolingually-oriented core by synthesizing methods for examining both intra- and interlanguage choices made by multilingual speakers” (projects.chass.utoronto.ca/ngn/HLVC/0_0_home.php). The project examines language use and change in eight non-official heritage languages spoken in Toronto (Cantonese, Faetar, Hungarian, Italian, Korean, Polish, Russian, Ukrainian). Some of these languages have long-standing communities in Toronto while others are relatively new. The project employs mainly questionnaire surveys to determine the language use patterns as well as attitudes towards the languages and their use. The data for linguistic analysis comes from recordings of conversations and sociolinguistic interviews and elicitation tasks. These data are analyzed using quantitative sociolinguistic methods in
order to examine the nature and development of a range of variable linguistic features from different areas of grammar. The data from the different languages are then compared to homeland varieties, English and to each other in order to arrive at generalizations about the role and development of contact-induced language change. For instance, Nagy, et al. (2011) examines the variable of (pro-drop). Examining this variable for the impact of a number of factors (e.g. continuity of reference, formal ambiguity of the subject’s referent, clause type, priming by preceding subject, generation, ethnic identity, language use) in heritage language data from Cantonese, Italian and Russian, they show that there appears to be no relationship between any of the social variables and this variable, suggesting that it is not involved in the construction of social identity-related issues.

A somewhat different approach is pursued by my own project in part carried out together with Isabelle Léglise. Focusing on the Eastern Maroon Creoles of Suriname and French Guiana, we examine how they develop over time, particularly in the context of rapid migration from rural areas in Suriname (and French Guiana) to urban centers in both political constituencies. Relying on two school surveys, one carried out in each constituency, long term participant observation in both constituencies among Eastern Maroons and in encounters between the latter and non-Maroons, qualitative and quantitative analysis of recordings (situated, semi-guided interviews, conversations) in the Eastern Maroon Creole and mostly French, the project aims to explore a number of issues. They include the types of practices that relate to the Eastern Maroon Creoles, their social meanings and functions in the current French Guianese and Surinamese context, the (linguistic and social) relationship among varieties, to native varieties and other languages that have an important impact in the region and the ideologies of both a range of language users and non-users of these practices. To date, the study (cf. Migge & Léglise, 2013; Migge & Léglise, 2011; Migge & Léglise, 2015) suggests that hybrid practices are very salient throughout and are thus found both in smaller village communities as well as in urban centers and play a role in public and private encounters though to different degrees. On the one hand, hybrid practices emerge from contact with other local languages such as the related Surinamese urban vernacular, Sranantongo, and Dutch, French and English. On the other hand, they emerge due to broader social changes that impact communicative patterns. Beyond the adoption of vocabulary items from Dutch and French to designate things that are specific to this context (e.g. administrative terms), habitual users of the language have borrowed few lexical items. The incidence of such lexical items is higher among non-habitual users of these practices who mostly use it for cross-linguistic communication. It appears that their higher use is due to both crutching due to incomplete language competence and identity management. The relative lack of large-scale importation of foreign vocabulary suggests that the language and its speakers maintain a relative distinct identity. This is also confirmed by work on a trilingual dictionary where local collaborators are very insistent that what they consider to be regular native but not necessarily traditional speech patterns are to be clearly distinguished from those that are linked to strongly interlingual speech contexts. The arguments in favor of this approach always center on identity differences (them and us discourses) which are, of course, problematic in some ways because all of participants are French citizens. Code-switching patterns which involve both discourse and identity-related alternation patterns between Eastern Maroon practices and those from other languages are rather common in public and peer-group speech. In many cases they are of the insertional/code-mixing type where the Eastern Maroon creoles function as the matrix frame. However, there are also many instances where people appear to create linguistically fuzzy practices that cannot be easily related to any specific Maroon variety or any other language such as Sranantongo and are best
described as multilingual practices. Alternational practices serve an important role in managing social and interactional alignment and identities.

Equally surprising is the fact that to date we see relatively little structural change where new constructions or constituent orders have been adopted or differences in frequency distributions emerge due to the influence from the official language(s). This is quite unlike what we see for Sranantongo, for instance, which is undergoing significant change under the influence of Dutch (Yakpo, pc 2015). However, we do see changes in the overall communication patterns in everyday encounters and new social contexts. Changed or new features involve, for instance, the adoption of shorter greeting procedures, more direct communication (direct questions, lesser use of special polite vocabulary etc), and new politeness and status signaling procedures. These changes appear to be driven by overall social change rather than specific language-based models. These innovative patterns are giving rise to new styles and new variable patterns (Migge & Léglise 2013). Further analysis of diachronic data using quantitative sociolinguistic methods is necessary in order to understand in detail the interrelationship between social and linguistic factors. Overall, the research shows quite clearly that a multi-methods approach that combines several types of methods for collecting and analyzing social and linguistic data and which pays important attention to language ideologies and a detailed archeology of the historical context is best suited to obtaining a holistic understanding pattern of language variation and change.

3.4. **Code-alternation, crossing and mocking: Exploring linguistic diversities**

An important linguistic phenomenon typically associated with human mobility is code alternation also referred to as code-switching in the literature. It is defined as referring to the use of two or more languages or varieties of a language in the same interaction or across different ones. There is a relatively long tradition of research on this phenomenon both from a structural and from a socio-cultural perspective. The former line of research is mostly interested in so-called intra-sentential language alternation because the use of more than one language in the same sentence challenges formal theories of syntax that are premised on monolingual conceptions of language. Researchers (e.g. Poplack and Meechan 1995; Muysken 2004; Myer-Scotton 1993b) in this line of research are mostly concerned with discovering the grammar underlying such practices and what insights it contributes to current understandings of language cognition and the construction of grammatical models.

A different approach is pursued by social and functional approaches to code-switching initially spear-headed by Blom & Gumperz’s (1972) research on the juxtaposition and use of two varieties of Norwegian. Their insights were then developed further by Auer (1984) from the perspective of conversation analysis and applied to data from immigrant communities. Myer-Scotton (1993a) applied it to data from East Africa. Their overall aim is to identify the types of code-alternation patterns that exist and to determine their social meanings and functions in the discourses in which they appear and thus to arrive at a broader understanding of the semiotics of such practices and the social processes that condition their emergence and maintenance in specific contexts and more generally. Researchers examine situated language use, drawing on the development of the conversational interaction (Auer 1984) and on the larger interactional and social context (Myer-Scotton 1993a) in order to understand the meanings and functions of code-switching. They rely very heavily on the notion of ‘contextualization cue’, as coined by Gumperz. That is, code-alternation practices do not have a fixed referential meaning, but make relevant “some aspects of the context which, in turn, is responsible for the interpretation of an utterance in its particular locus of occurrence.”
(Auer 1995, p. 123). This means that the meanings of code-switching are arrived at through a process of inferences. This happens in two ways. Either it creates a contrast with what happened before, indicating otherness such as lack of agreement or difference, for instance. Or, in addition to signaling otherness, it also restricts the number of possible inferences “because cues may have (received) an inherent meaning potential due to conventionalization or frequency of use of the pattern” (ibid, p. 124). According to Auer (ibid), code-switching also has its own characteristics because “the situated interpretation of code-alternation as a contextualization cue is strongly related to the sequential patterns of language choice.”

What researchers examine is how mobile populations or their descendants draw on their linguistic repertoires in order to negotiate their place in society, including the different social networks they are part of. So, for instance, in Migge (2007) I show that Eastern Maroon male elders use code-switching (marked code-switching) with Sranantongo and other languages in order to negotiate peer-type solidarity relationships and unmarked code-switching in contexts with non-Maroons often functions to negotiate an outsider status for the latter. Code-mixing or insertional switching is commonly used among young men in order to assert notions of young, urbanized and sophisticated manhood.

A specific type of code-switching is ‘crossing’ which was coined by Ben Rampton (1995) based on his research among multiethnic youth of immigrant background in the UK. He argues that it involves cases of language alternation where the actors make use of practices from languages that are not typically part of their repertoire, a so-called disjunction between speaker and code. They essentially appropriate practices ideologically linked to other speakers (or speaker communities) in order to create interactional meanings such as specific stances, assessments of people and contexts, alignments with certain social groupings and identities, etc. These meanings are typically of a marked type and take place in interactions among pupils and between pupils and teachers. For instance, he shows that students with different ethnic backgrounds draw on (Jamaican) Creole in order to criticize someone using a stance of power and authority. Conversely, Asian kids in particular draw on what he calls ‘stylized Asian English’ linked to traditional first generation Asian immigrants in order to criticize someone for wrong-doing using a shaming approach; a hyper-polite and submissive posture is created using stylized Asian English which essentially invokes a traditional master-servant relationship where the interlocutor is positioned as a colonial master. The use of other’s language practices can function as a way of creating alignment with others. By highlighting their language competence, even if it is marginal, the speaker is creating alignment with the language’s speaker community (Dirim & Auer 2004). While there are issues with the specifics of the definition of crossing, it represents a useful start for thinking about the similarities and differences between language alternation involving different linguistic repertoires and how notions of language ownership impact on code-alternation generally and on its interpretation. These aspects play an important role in the context of lesser-used languages, especially if a politically charged relationship exists between the minority language speakers and those who belong to the dominant community. For instance, in her book *White Racism*, Jane Hill (2008) shows that the use of ‘other’s languages’ is not always benign but can majorly contribute to the construction of highly racist depictions of already discriminated population groups. She shows that many Anglo-Americans’ (often times purposefully) defective use of (written and spoken) Spanish linguistic practices in English discourses in public contexts serves to create a light, easy-going and humorous stance for the speaker, but at the same time functions to reinforce negative stereotypes about Latina/os in the United States.
3.5. **Superdiversity**

Superdiversity is a term coined by Vertovec (2007) in order to describe the newly emerging heterogeneity typically associated with major western urban centers. According to Vertovec (2007) superdiverse situations are involve a great increase in the categories of migrants. They differ greatly with respect to nationality, ethnicity, language, and religion, but also with respect to subjective factors such as reasons for migrating, location targeted, the trajectory and processes of insertion into the new society. With the realization that homogeneity is (and probably always has been) the exception to the norm, “mobility, mixing, political dynamics and historical embedding are now central concerns in the study of languages, language groups and communication” (Blomaert & Rampton 2011, p. 3). The focus in this newly emerging research area, which obviously cross-cuts many others such as language contact, sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology and brings together researchers and discussions about research methods, approaches and assumptions from these disciplines, is to examine the very variable ways in which individual linguistic features with identifiable social and cultural associations cluster whenever people communicate. Unlike other research approaches to date that focus on language and specifically on spoken (vernacular) language, this line of investigation examines all aspects of variation and both written and oral communication in a range of media such as electronic media (Deumert 2014; Barton & Lee 2013), traditional texts, graffiti, notes and face-to-face communication. They examine sound and morph-syntactic variation as well as alteration in the orthographic representation of language practices. This research shows that diversity in expression is not epiphenomenal but plays an important role in negotiating community, alignment and signaling belonging.

3.6. **Critical Discourse Analysis**

This approach to issues around migration is quite different from previous approaches. Unlike previous approaches that are very language phenomenon driven, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) focuses on a particular macro-social issue such as the construction of belonging among migrants in Europe through discourse (Krzyżanowski and Wodak 2008). Analysis of this topic, for instance, is based on an examination of discursive strategies employed by newcomers in semi-guided narratives of their lived experience. For other topics, such as the construction of Europe’s language ideologies or national identities (or the intersection between them) researchers examine discursive patterns in EU policy documents, for instance. Newspaper articles and other media productions such as propaganda materials of political organizations are also frequently drawn on as a corpus to examine social issues such as racism.

In their article on migrant identities, Krzyżanowski and Wodak (2008) examine migrants’ sense of self, place and identity through analysis of narrative strategies that emerged from focus group interviews in a number of EU countries. In their analysis, they look at different strategies that are employed in order to construct identities in discourse. They look at how social actors are named and positioned in discourse. For instance, do they refer to themselves (or others) with specific national identifiers (e.g. I’m Italian) and what is the nature of the attachments that they create. Some people rely on metaphorical constructs such as home and family to create attachment to a national identity. Another

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Research generally focuses on major western urban centers because there is the empirically as yet unfounded assumption that rural spaces and cities outside of the urban periphery are relatively homogeneous both linguistically and socio-culturally.

See for instance Wodak 2009, for an Introduction to CDA.
important issue is whether or not people create attachments to one or more nations. Some people create clear linkages to only one country, such as the country of origin or the new country, while others present attachments to two or more such entities. In some cases these attachments are of a highly ambivalent nature, being expressed using hesitation and mitigators, while in others they are expressed confidently, even using boosters. The types and numbers of attachments presented are varied and provide important insights into the notion of national belonging (see also Gilmartin and Migge 2015b). It is also interesting to investigate how national entities and the identities that are part of it are evaluated and positioned using descriptions, quotation patterns, down-toning or distancing devices, and overtly evaluative statements. These and other strategies can then be examined with respect to their narrative function. De Cillia, et al. (1999) suggest that there are so-called constructive, perpetuating and dismantling strategies which build shared identities, support them or challenge and demythologize them, respectively.

4. Conclusion

The main purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of the different kinds of research agendas that focus on the broad area of language and migration. The research approaches differ with respect to the level of attention that they pay to the social context and social issues such as identity, integration, etc., the nature of attention that they pay to the linguistic context, the way they approach language and the sociolinguistic approaches that they employ. Quantitative sociolinguistic perspectives and new dialect formation perspectives, for instance, are little overtly interested in social issues, per se and usually do not specifically delve into the Social Science literature about migrant identities, but essentially rely on inferences from linguistic analysis in order to make statements about issues of identity and integration. These issues are strictly secondary to linguistic issues. They also generally focus analysis on variable patterns in one language, usually the language of the so-called host community, analyzing to what degree newcomers have acquired these variable patterns and ultimately the sociolinguistic competence of the native speaker community. Other approaches such as those that focus on understanding the nature of hybrid constructions aim to understand how people are using two or more languages, the kinds of new practices that emerge and how these are employed to construct social identities. This kind of research is typically qualitatively oriented, using discourse analytical methods and make a much greater effort to develop the social categories and to identify how language plays a role in their construction. While there is a focus on hybrid practices, these kinds of studies are more holistic in that they aim to define the overall social and linguistic context and its impact on the nature, use and function of the emerging hybrid constructions. CDA approaches are, of course, most interested in the social issues and thus pay the greatest amount of attention to them. However, as in many other studies, they typically focus on language data from only one language and do not, as such, examine the linguistic context.

Interestingly, there appears to be very little cross-fertilization between approaches. This kind of cross-fertilization would, however, be very useful in order to contribute to current understandings of language and society and to the construction of specific social identities. For instance, quantitatively based approaches would benefit from a more detailed engagement with social categories and thus CDA approaches could be a useful starting point. Research on superdiversity and code-alternation practices could benefit from a greater engagement with social categories as well as with thinking about issues of linguistic representativeness which are much discussed in quantitative approaches. Linguistic research has not yet even taken up the issue of how
mobility affects the in situ population, for instance, how linguistic practices that are related to migration filter into mainstream society and thus potentially affect so-called native practices. Linguistic research is in a good position to provide empirical evidence for and critically examine theories and concepts developed in the Social Sciences, but this potential has to date hardly been explored.

5. References


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Repeated questions and code-switching:
Issues of Politeness and Preference

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Repeated questions and code-switching: 
Issues of Politeness and Preference Organisation

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Abstract

Described by Milroy and Muysken (1995, p. 6) as ‘perhaps the central issue in bilingualism research’ that occurs in all bi/multilingual societies to a greater or lesser extent, code switching (CS) affects everybody who is in contact with two or more languages. Throughout recent years, scholars interested in CS have examined it from various perspectives including Sociolinguistics, Conversation Analysis, Psycholinguistics, etc.

The present paper deals with the Sociolinguistic background of repeated questions in bilingual conversation. Three independent studies on CS presented at the International Conference on Bilingualism 2015 in Malta provide data which shows that one of the phenomena of bilingual speech is repeating a question in a switched code. The three language constellations are Polish-English, Greek-Georgian, and German-French. The aim of this analysis is to examine and compare these examples of repetition based on politeness theory and conversation analysis in order to state the possible functions of repeated questions in code-switching. The study of these examples shows that in the context of repeated questions it is possible to combine Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory (1987) with the Conversation Analytic perspective, as this interpretation of the data is connected with the notion of politeness in communication.

1. Introduction

The present paper will discuss the sociolinguistic motivations behind repeated questions in bilingual conversation. We discuss evidence from three independent studies on code switching (CS) presented at the International Conference on Bilingualism 2015 in Malta, which suggest that a common feature to bilingual speech is repeating a question in a switched code. The three language groups are Polish-English, Greek-Georgian, and German-French. The aim of this analysis is to examine and compare these examples of bilingual repetition through Politeness Theory and Conversation Analysis (CA) in order to uncover possible functions of repeated questions in CS. Our analysis suggests that in the context of repeated questions it is possible to combine Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Theory with a Conversation Analytic approach as many aspects of CA are connected to the notion of politeness in communication. First, we discuss the functions of bilingual and monolingual repetition in bilingual conversation, then we describe the main assumptions of Preference Organisation in Conversation Analyses and Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Theory. After this theoretical introduction, we analyse the material through our proposed approaches. We argue that observing code switching practices, such as repeated questions, through a combined methods approach provides a more comprehensive look at the sociolinguistic potential of bilingual interaction.

2. Bilingual and Monolingual repetition in code-switching

Researchers who discuss repetition in code-switching (CS) often approach this phenomenon in two different ways: monolingual or bilingual repetition. Monolingual
repetition can occur in different situations within bilingual conversations. It sometimes consists of the same content of the utterance expressed in the same language, but it can also include different content expressed in the same language. This can be observed very often in insertional CS (Boumans 2002). According to Boumans, CS takes place as a delayed repetition. When a conversation is led by bilinguals in a dominant language (L1) and a L2 insertional switch occurs, this can be interpreted as a delayed repetition of an earlier utterance, phrase or grammatical structure. It can refer to something that was said during the conversation, but also to an expression that was heard before the conversation. It may also be a word that a bilingual speaker learnt in L2 contexts, which increases the probability that, during a conversation in their L1, they will switch to their L2 in order to say this word.

Koostra et al. (2012) discuss priming structure repetition. This is a tendency in language to repeat the structure of the sentence, which also impacts CS behaviour. Among others, they describe the role of lexical repetition (cognates) on structural priming within bilingual speech. With reference to a study carried out by Berneol, Hartsuiker and Pickering (2007) and to Clyne’s notion of triggered switches (2006), they note that “the tendency to switch at the same sentence position as in a code-switched prime sentence is stronger when the sentence contains a cognate than when it does not contain a cognate” (Koostra 2012, p. 5–6).

Bilingual repetition, on the other hand, takes place when the same content is said in two different languages. The switch, in contrast to monolingual repetition, does occur as an insertion of L2 in the dominant language L1. It rather means a language switch from the utterance in L1 to the same utterance repeated in the L2. That is what is meant by “bilingual repetition”. This may happen in various bilingual situations, such as informal conversations between friends, relatives, as well as more formal conversations in a bilingual classroom. The latter is most frequently discussed by researchers of this phenomenon.

Code switching in the classroom is a controversial topic when it comes to discussing methods of teaching second languages. It is often said that teachers should avoid using the native languages of their students in order to immerse the learners in a second language. Naturally, this is a difficult issue because switching may sometimes be unavoidable or, on the contrary, impossible when there is a mixed group of different language users. Researchers Flyman-Mattsson & Burenhult (1999), and Greggio (2007) discuss the various functions of code-switching inside classroom, both related to the teachers’ and students’ needs. Amongst these functions are: changing of topic, socializing functions, affective functions, linguistic insecurity and clarification. The latter is connected precisely with repetition. Flyman-Mattsson and & Burenhult state that repetition in ESL class occurs “when teachers convey the same message for language clarity” (Flyman-Mattsson & Burenhult 1999, p. 3). Although, as mentioned, CS in a classroom is a controversial issue, studies have shown that both teachers and students consider it an important resource (e.g. Ajmal Gulzar 2010; Hamzehlou Moghadam 2012). This also includes code-switching to repeat an expression in the student’s native language for clarification purposes.

Another example of the role of repetition in CS was discussed by McClure (1977) who analysed code switching in Mexican-American children’s speech. Apart from noticing functions of code-changing and code-mixing in general (e.g. expressing one’s identity, focusing, mode and topic shifts, etc.), McClure lists other functions of bilingual repetition, such as emphasis, elaboration, and clarification. She also shows that some translated repetitions may occur when the speaker wants to avoid tedium or insistence, in which case the translation is interpreted as a paraphrase rather than a repetition.
Gardner-Chloros (2009), who also points out a similar function, comments on a switch noting that repeating a word in a switched code helps the speaker in breaking up monotony of repeating the word in English (Gardner-Chloros 2009, p. 32). It is important to emphasize that repetition has an important sociolinguistic impact in code-switching research, as it proves that CS is not merely a consequence of lack of equivalents in the spoken language, nor a lack of proficiency. Rather, repetitions play an important role in the structure of conversation, style, and mode. Therefore, they should be analyzed in terms of conversation analysis and in accordance with theories of conversational discourse.

Gardner-Chloros (2009) refers to repetition and reiteration in CS as dual marking. Paraphrasing Tannen, she states that this phenomenon achieves a number of discourse functions within monolingual conversation. Repeating a message with a CS stresses the emphasis which has already been achieved by the repetition itself. Gardner-Chloros notes that in some cases, switched repetition may occur to avoid rudeness since it appeared that “switching languages for repetitions allowed speakers to hold the floor and to create coherence between different parts of their utterance without the marked connotations of exact monolingual repetition, which can appear rude or condescending” (Gardner-Chloros, 2009, p. 75).

The examples above point to bilingual repetition as a marked choice. Very often, the speaker wants to signal a hidden meaning or allude to something. It also determines the style of the utterance. This is discussed by Poplack (2007), who analyzes bilingual repetition in terms of emphasis. She contends that:

“[A] very common type of momentary marked switching is change in code for emphasis. Such switching often involves repetition (in the marked code) of exactly the same referential meaning in the unmarked code. The fact there is repetition makes it very clear that the new information is the change in code and therefore its social associations.” (Poplack 2007, p. 153)

To exemplify this, Poplack quotes two situations of refusal to give money, both of which involve CS as an emphasis.

3. Preference organisation and repeated questions

Contrary to everyday-language use, the term preference in Conversation Analysis does not refer to a psychological state or a personal preference, but to how things usually get done - to an analysable “structural phenomenon” (Levinson 1983, p. 332) linked to certain formulations. In their influential collection “Structures of Social Action”, Atkinson and Heritage (1984) open the chapter on preference organisation with some general remarks, among them is the following definition of preference:

“The term preference refers to a range of phenomena associated with the fact that choices among non-equivalent courses of action are routinely implemented in ways that reflect an institutionalized ranking of alternatives.” (1984, p. 53)

Preference does not deny speakers agency, it merely focuses on the fact that there are always various ways of getting an action done in conversation, and that these ways are ‘non-equivalent’ when it comes to their social desirability, frequency, implementation and form. Furthermore, preference also entails that from a conversation we can infer the way that these actions are ranked with respect to how and how often they get done. This also underlines that preference is not a psychological concept; it does not refer to what a
speaker wants or prefers to do in the everyday-kind-of-way. Rather, it is a structural phenomenon that indicates what is routinely done.

One of the central analyses is Anita Pomerantz’ discussion of second assessments. Pomerantz (1984), shows that preferred turns tend to be the unmarked choices, they contain direct, explicit references to what they do (i.e. agree), immediately follow the turn they respond to, and do as much of the preferred action as they can fit in their turn. Dispreferred turns, on the other hand, contain as little reference to the dispreferred action as possible, are full of delays of the dispreferred action (e.g. fillers, pauses or insertion sequences), and are often indirect (i.e. not explicitly doing the dispreferred action) (Pomerantz 1984, p. 64; Levinson 1983, p. 334). This inventory of dispreference markers has been taken up by other researchers and has become very well-acknowledged, being presented in all recent major textbook reviews of preference organisation (Liddicoat 2007; Pomerantz & Heritage 2012; Sidnell 2011).

A second aspect of preference theory is that of correlating specific actions with their status as preferred or dispreferred. Levinson (1983, p. 336) draws up a table outlining the preference status of actions, which is still frequently cited in introductions to preference in CA. According to this table, the preferred response to a request or an offer/invitation is acceptance, to an assessment agreement, to a question the expected answer (or the one projected by the turn format, especially in yes/no questions), and to blame denial. If there is no binary choice between a preferred and a dispreferred option, alternatives are “ranked” with respect to how (dis)preferred they are (cf. Levinson 1983, p. 341). The analysis of preference can offer this idea of a social rulebook. It can also be seen in Pomerantz’ and Heritage’s (2012) overview of the field, who underline that “participants follow [potentially conflicting] principles, often implicit, when they act and react in a variety of interactional situations (Pomerantz & Heritage 2012, p. 210). For example, the principles avoid disagreement or avoid self-praise, which are based on Sacks’ (1987) early work on preference organisation.

By definition, questions structurally require an answer of some kind, and sometimes the question already projects a specific answer format (polar question, suggestive question). Thus, the absence of an answer is an interactional trouble that needs to be addressed and repaired. Speakers could take several courses of action. They could repeat the question verbatim or rephrase it in some way. They could expand the question to give their interlocutor more time to formulate a response. They could ask directly (i.e. Why are you not answering?). They could also drop the question. And, in bilingual conversation, they have an additional option: they can repeat the question in another language.

These courses of action are based on different assumptions about the reason for the absence of the reply. Expanding the question implies: ok, you might need more time. Dropping it implies: well, I guess you don’t want to answer this, so I’ll leave it. Repeating the question verbatim might be perceived as slightly aggressive and as implying: do you not want to answer me? This question made explicit is probably even less desirable. Rephrasing the question implies: maybe you need more time to think or you didn’t see what I’m getting at, so I’ll put this in different words. In bilingual conversations, especially when the bilinguals are not fully balanced and competent in both languages, repeating the question in the other language offers an easy and face-saving way out for both conversationalists. Repeating the question in the other language implies: you might not have understood what I wanted to know, you might need more time to think, you might not have heard me, so here, I’ll give you the info you need to respond – give it another go. This way, the asker does not blame their interlocutor for not responding, and might achieve the interactional goal of getting a response to the question.
4. The concept of Politeness

The concept of politeness has been a part of linguistic studies since the late 1970s, but it was the publication of Brown and Levinson’s politeness book in 1978 that established this issue as one of the main areas of pragmatics, a novelty that emphasised the importance of this concept in human interaction (Sifianou 1992). As mentioned in Sifianou (1992), etymologically, polite could be derived from either the Greek poli which means city, and politizmos meaning civilization, or by the Latin politus, past participle of polire which means to smooth. Thus, the original meaning of polite was to do with smoothness, however, it gradually transformed into other definitions to do with people’s behaviour, such as refined, cultivated and well bred (Sifianou 1992). Currently, the definition of politeness is to do with “the attitude of being socially correct, being refined and having good manners” (Oxford English Dictionary). From this definition two issues emerge immediately: first that neither speakers’ linguistic behaviour necessarily accounts for their real motivation, nor should we assume that all languages share the same perceptions as far as concepts as ‘good manners’ or ‘social correctness’ are concerned (Thomas 1995; Sifianou 1992). Nowadays, scholars have agreed on the fact that politeness is conceptualized differently and, consequently, manifested differently in each society. In support of this argument, Sifianou (1992), points out that “...despite popular stereotypes, no nation may be objectively verified as more or less polite than any other, but only polite in a different, culturally specific way” (Sifianou 1992, p. 42).

Politeness can be manifested through general social behaviour as well as linguistic means. This assumption, however, emphasizes that politeness cannot and should not be assessed out of context, since from a pragmatic point of view, all utterances in conversation are interpreted firstly contextually and only secondly literally (Coulmas 1981). The hypothesis that what is implied and/or meant at a discourse level varies according to the context of the utterance became popular among scholars from Grice’s work in 1968. Within the issue of politeness, the most respected theory appears to be, as aforementioned, Brown and Levinson’s work. The basis of their theory is the concept of face, a term referring to every individual’s sense of self-image. This concept involves a positive and a negative aspect:

- **negative face**: the want of every ‘competent adult member’ that his actions be unimpeded by others.
- **positive face**: the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others. (Brown & Levinson 1978, p.60).

The concept of face leads to the hypothesis that certain illocutionary acts could be face-threatening, an idea introduced once again by Brown and Levinson (1978). Face-threatening acts (FTA) are liable to threaten or damage the Hearer’s positive face. They can be expressions of disapproval/criticism, accusations, contradictions, interruptions, and violent emotions, among others. They can also communicate orders, requests, reminders, offers, and threaten the interlocutor’s negative face. Moreover, certain acts can also be face threatening to the Speaker’s positive face, such as expressing thanks, excuses, acceptance of offers/apologies; as well as their negative face, such as apologies, acceptance of compliments, confessions/admissions of guilt or responsibility. Thus, according to Brown and Levinson’s hypothesis, the Speaker should adopt certain strategies, in order to maintain his or her own face undamaged and at the same time to minimize the possibility of affecting the positive or negative face of the Hearer. If the
Speaker decides to perform a FTA, then Brown and Levinson (1978) suggest a framework that determines the choice of his/her strategy, outlined in the chart below:

![Chart 1: Brown & Levinson 1978, p. 60](image)

5. **Polish-English, Greek-Georgian, and German-French repeated questions**

As mentioned previously, these three sets of examples were among the data presented on three separate talks at the *International Conference on Bilingualism 2015*. It was considered appropriate to use the authentic alphabets for Polish, German and French because of their resemblance to English. However, in case of Greek and Georgian, we considered it better to use a simplified version of the IPA with some details like [ʰ] for aspiration in Georgian, an omission which might have caused a change of the word’s meaning, as well as the use of phonetic symbol [θ] for the Greek part of the dialogue. Punctuation symbols, such as a question mark [?], are used to show the rise of the intonation. The change from one variety to another is indicated by the use of the bold script.

5.1. **Polish-English examples**

The two present examples are part of a larger linguistic experiment which collected its material from a social role-playing game *Mafia*. The game presents a simulation of a battle between the mafia (the informed majority) and the town (the uninformed minority). The participants of the experiment were members of two bilingual Polish-English families living in Poland.

(1)  
A: B, czy masz jakieś argumenty, dlaczego uważasz, że C jest w mafii?  
B: B, do have any arguments, why you think that C is in mafia?  
B: [no response]  
C: Właśnie, dlaczego myślisz, że to ja?  
Exact why you think that is I?  
D: **B, why do you think C is in the mafia?**
ask the same question (i.e. Why does B think that C is in the mafia?) in slightly different forms: A asks in Polish for arguments, C doubles the question using the word “exactly” in Polish (Pol. \( w\lambda s\acute{n}e \)). B does not respond to the question, therefore D asks the question in English. This can be a signal that D thinks that maybe he should not “push” the question too much (he would be the third person asking), so he changes the language just to decrease the stress. However there are also other explanations, i.e. that for D English is his first functional language, thus it comes naturally to him.

(2) A: \( \text{mo\'zesz mi poda\'c kart\k{e}?} \)  
    can me pass card  
B: [no response]  
A: \( \text{could you pass me the card, please?} \)

In example 2 the conversation is happening in Polish but when A does not manage to make B give her the card, instead of repeating a request in the same language, she decides to do so in English, something which is likely to be speaker A’s choice in order to minimize her imposition.

5.2 Greek-Georgian examples

(3) A: \( \text{Mogec'onat salat'a niko bidzia?} \)  
    You liked salad Nick uncle  
B: \( \text{Giorgi modi aq dajeqi chemtan ertad} \)  
    George come here sit with me together  
A: \( \text{Kir niko sas arese i salata me to kotopulo?} \)  
    Mr. Nick you liked the salad with the chicken  
B: \( \text{ma\'ʃ ma\'ʃ gia sta heria su} \)  
    of course of course health to hands your  
‘Yes, of course, well done’

Example 3 is from a dinner table in Greece among balanced Georgian-Greek bilinguals where the host, following Georgian traditions of hospitality, wants to make sure her eldest guest (Speaker B) is enjoying the food. After asking the question in Georgian (the dominant language of conversation) about his opinion on the chicken salad (which goes unnoticed because of a new person’s arrival), A decides to ask the question again in Greek. Similar to Example 2, it is likely that speaker A is trying to minimize her imposition.

(4) A: \( \text{gu\'ʃin gadaigo t'u ara cvimama gaviqecit\''} \)  
    yesterday stopped or not rain we run  
    ninostan\'' vinaxulot\''  
    to nino to see (her)  
    ‘Yesterday, once the rain stopped we went to visit Nino’

B: \( \text{Ise ra daemart'a a mis gogos gaiqet\''?} \)  
    so what happened to her daughter you know  
    ‘Did you find out what happened to her daughter?’

A: \( \text{ra iko ise es cvima qalo ot\'' hi dge mze} \)  
    what was so this rain woman four days sun  
    ver dabinaxet\''  
    could not we see  
    ‘So what was with all the rain, we didn’t see the Sun for four days’
Examples 4 and 5 are similar in the sense that the conversation, as was the case with example 3, is happening in Georgian and a more private question is asked and ignored by the Hearers. After not getting answers to their questions in examples 4 and 5, Speakers B and A reiterate the question in Greek.

5.3 German-French examples

The German-French CS examples are from two students in Germany who meet regularly to practice their German and French respectively. The German dominant speaker is originally from Brazil, with fluent German and B1/B2 level French, and the French dominant speaker is an Erasmus student in Germany with B1 level German. During this interaction they are at the Brazilian student’s home, trying to bake a German cake.

(6) A: on va (.) mixer les OEUFS?
We will beat the EGGS?
B: NON (.) quOi?
NO (.) whAt?
A: wir müssen die eier mixen (.) so mit MAshine,
We have to the eggs beat (.) like with the machine,
B: nein (.) das ist die NÄChste;
No (.) that’s the NEXT

In example 6, the French native speaker suggests to first beat the eggs – presented as a declarative statement, but with rising information. Having had some smaller disagreements about how the cake should be made right before this exchange, his interlocutor immediately replies “Non”, ‘no’, but then self-corrects and asks “Quoi?” ‘what?’ The suggestion now gets repeated in German, with a slightly less strong rising intonation. Still, the immediate response is negative, and he drops the topic. A moment later his interlocutor gives in and they beat the eggs. The repetition of the suggestion in another language ensures that both speakers understand what is being discussed (the “what?” can be interpreted as a lack of understanding, or because the other speaker didn’t listen, or found the suggestion ridiculous). It also allows the speaker making this suggestion to beat the eggs to avoid sounding too pushy about his desire. Because this dialogue happens in a language learning context where the speakers teach each other
their language, repeating a question in the other’s dominant language does not constitute a face threat with respect to the other’s language competence, because there is no expectation of fluency on either side.

(7) A: HOP- ensuITE () qu’est-ce que c’est çÀ; NOW () what’s this hEre ;
IA::···Hi? c’est (toi) qui fait des PATES?
Did you make PAStà ?
[4 minutes pass]
((kitchen noises))
A: c’est toi qui a fait (l)es PÂtes, là?
Is it you who made the PAStà ?
B: ()
hmm?
A: hast du () pasTA gekocht () [letztens],
Have you pasta cooked a while ago,
B: [ja ]
yes-
A: a::h,

In example 7, the French native speaker pursues the question “Did you make the pasta” over an extended period of time, repeating it three times until he obtains a response. When he asks the first time, his Brazilian interlocutor appears to not have heard him, because at this point she is in a different room. Once she is back in the kitchen, the French speaker repeats the question in French, but still the only reaction he gets after a short pause is “hmm?” with a rising intonation – a request for clarification or repetition. A minimal answer like this in a position that calls for a more elaborate reply signals trouble giving that reply. Therefore, the repetition of the question is almost explicitly called for – and repeating it in the other language available, the dominant language of that speaker, also address the language competence issue. As soon as the speaker has repeated the question, the addressee confirms that she has indeed cooked the pasta, and this ends the topic.

6. Conclusion

The examples presented in this paper show a similar pattern of CS with regards to repeated questions. Although the literature discusses various reasons for repetition in monolingual and bilingual speech, it seems that both Politeness Theory and Conversation Analysis can provide helpful interpretations of why the repetition in bilingual speech occurs. We analysed the examples using both theories which brought us to a conclusion that a code-switch can be a strategy aimed to maintain politeness in a conversation.

In all seven examples, regardless of the relationship of the interlocutors, their level of understanding (in languages A and B), or their location, all speakers who repeated questions appeared to have chosen to do so to receive answers to their questions. By doing so in a different language, instead of repeating the question in the same language, these speakers achieve the purpose of minimising their imposition towards the hearer, and thus manage to save their face. Since asking a question in both monolingual and bilingual speech is potentially a face threatening act, it requires the hearer to act immediately; asking the question twice doubles these chances. Our examples demonstrate that speakers in bilingual interactions have an additional
resource at their hands to reduce this imposition. When a question in a bilingual conversation is not answered, the speaker can pursue the question with minimal threat to the hearer’s face through changing the language of communication.

This paper provides an exploratory study of code switching behaviour in bilingual interactions in three different language constellations. We found that repeating a question in a switched code is a politeness strategy available in these contexts. Future studies could compare more and more widely different language pairs in order to see if there are cross-cultural differences in the application of this strategy. It would also be interesting to see if there are gender differences. Given that our samples were comparatively small, this was not possible with the present data but offers an interesting avenue for future analyses. Following the topic of repetitions in a switched code, it would also be interesting to analyse repeated requests, demands, or orders in bilingual conversations. Language alternation might be used as a tool to mitigate the imposition to the interlocutor’s face in these activities, too.

7. References


The role of languages for the construction of cultural identity: Language use and attitudes among young Italian-Australians

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The Role of languages for the construction of cultural identity:
Language use and attitudes among young Italian-Australians

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Abstract

While Italian-Australians still form the greatest group of non-English speaking ancestry, language shift is inevitable in the long-term perspective as their community language loses its communicative value. With a greater symbolic value for self-identification and a privileged status in education, Italian can, nevertheless, attain an important role for the construction of cultural identity among the younger generations (cf. Bettoni 2007; Rubino 2002). Having multiple options of identities, young Italian-Australians can also display them in various ways. This small-scale study investigates this interplay of self-identification, language use and attitudes in a mixed methods approach with qualitative (sociolinguistic interviews, conversation analysis; 3 participants) and quantitative data (written survey; 34 participants). Whereas most previous studies focussed on either Italian or Australian English (e.g. Bettoni & Gibbons 1988; Pitronaci 1998), the aim here is to display the interaction of both. To operationalise the measurement of the identification, direct attitudes (based on the concept of perceived vitality, cf. Gibbons & Ashcroft 1995) and indirect attitudes (acceptability) were surveyed and correlated with the variables of language proficiency, use and self-identification. For a more reliable view into the perceptions of Australian English, the quantitative data were supported by a control group of similar size with informants of non-Italian background. The results indicate that Italian, although it has lost ground in most domains, has gained a personal value for many participants. Particularly code-mixing can be employed in a phatic and expressive function among peers and act as identity marker. Attitudes towards such differ strongly on the preference of a self-identification term in the way that Italian oriented participants are more sensitive towards the direction of code-mixing. While Italian is generally seen positively, the attitudes towards Australian English are more mixed, however, obviously varying according to the self-identification patterns. The discussion of Australian identity markers and greater controversy about them suggest the need for further research.

Keywords: Language attitudes; multilingualism; language and identity; sociolinguistic variation.

1. Introduction

Although multilingualism has been gaining support in many countries around the world, studies suggest that most migrant communities are sooner or later affected by language shift (cf. Fishman 1991; Clyne 2003). While Fishman (1989, p. 206) suggests that a migrant language is most likely replaced by the language of social and economic mobility within three generations, Giles et al. (1977, p. 328) argue that a community language can “be reawakened under conditions of strong ethnolinguistic vitality.” In comparison to other countries, Australia offers a rather positive setting for many community languages:

Since the 1970s, multiculturalism and multilingualism have been promoted as defining elements of Australia. With the establishment of services such as SBS (Special
Broadcasting Service), which have offered a public space to different languages, government funding for community-run language schools, and the promotion of foreign language teaching in schools, Australia has provided great actual and symbolic support for people of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (cf. Bettoni 2007, pp. 41–42). However, the linguistic reality of Australia suggests that language maintenance is still not guaranteed, since research shows that all communities experience some level of language shift in the long run (cf. Clyne 1991; Clyne & Kipp 2006).

The Italian community in Australia provides a particularly noteworthy case because it represents one of the largest post-war migrant groups whose language has enjoyed a relative privileged status in education. While thirty years ago it may have been difficult to grow up as an ethnic minority, nowadays it is considered “fashionable” to display one’s cultural heritage and be a proud “wog” (cf. Warren 2001). For instance, Rubino (cf. 2002b, p. 8) reports a general revival of Italian culture and language use among second and third generation Italian-Australians. Nonetheless, young Australians of Italian decent have multiple options of identities. Pitronaci (cf. 1998, p. 30) observes varying degrees of Italianness and Australianness within her sample of second and third generation Italians; the different levels of identification depended on variables such as age or trips to Italy, but also on the ethnic background of interlocutors as well as how the informants were perceived by others.

In fact, various factors can be involved in the question whether a young Italian-Australian feels more attracted to one part of his/her culture(s), or if they develop a more bicultural sense of identity. From a sociolinguistic point of view, it is likewise worthwhile to investigate how this formation of cultural identity relates to the actual use of and attitudes towards both their languages. While former research illustrates that the use of a migrant language can help strengthen ethnic identity (cf. Padilla & Borsato 2010, p. 12) but is not necessary (cf. Liebkind 2010, p. 20–21), likewise, it should be underlined that identification with the Australian variety of English is not a matter of course, especially as Australia is still struggling with finding a clear linguistic identity and cultural self-image (cf. Collins and Blair 2001, p. 1). Whereas most previous studies on language attitudes among Italian-Australians focused on either Italian or Australian English (e.g. Bettoni & Gibbons 1988; Pitronaci 1998), the interaction of both languages adds a further remarkable perspective on the subject of cultural identification.

The central question of this paper, therefore, is whether the use and the perceptions of language play a role in the construction of cultural identity. In this multilingual context, the focus of interest lies not only on the community language but also on the local variety of English (in this case Italian and Australian English). After an introduction to the sociolinguistic situation of Italians in Australia, this paper reports on three key points of language and identity in multicultural zones: (1) it analyses variation in language use including the functional differences of Italian observed in this study (specifically in terms of code-mixing); (2) it provides an evaluation of the social factors that correlate with a specific cultural identity; (3) it discusses the role of language attitudes towards both code-mixing and overtly Australian English (AusE) features in relation to cultural identity.

2. The Sociolinguistic Case of Italians in Australia

Among the different migrant groups in Australia, the Italian community stands out for several reasons. For decades, Italian migrants and their descendants formed the largest non-English speaking group in Australia (cf. Clyne & Kipp 2006, p. 8). Only in the most recent Census of 2011, Italian was surpassed by Mandarin as the most spoken
community language in Australian homes\(^5\) (cf. Appendix 2: Table A; Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012; Karvelas 2012). Nevertheless, the Italian community remains the greatest non-English speaking heritage group as more than 900,000 people in Australia state that they are of Italian ancestry (cf. Appendix 2: Table B).

What census data do not reveal, however, is the fact that “Italian” as a label subsumes a diverse linguistic population. Many of the early post-war migrants, which form the base of the Italian community, actually spoke dialects (e.g. Sicilian, Calabrese, Venetian, etc.) as their mother tongue, which are not social or geographical varieties of Standard Italian but actually separate Romance languages; Italian was only a second language for many of them (cf. Bettoni 1994: 264). In census data, this complex linguistic situation is simplified and the term “Italian” is used to refer to both the standard and the dialects. Studies (cf. Rubino & Bettoni 1998; Rubino 2006) indicate that diglossia has been maintained with Standard Italian as the high variety (i.e. to be used in formal contexts, and when speaking to strangers and people from different regions) and the original dialects as the low variety (i.e. used in more informal domains, among family and friends). Therefore, for many second and third generation Italian-Australians, not Italian, but a dialect is the actual “heritage language”.

This heterogeneous make-up of the community contributes to ongoing language shift as the actual “home languages” do not receive great support outside the family and lack the prestige of Standard Italian (cf. Bettoni & Gibbons 1988; Pauwels 1988). Still, the Italians are in the “middle-field” regarding language shift towards English in comparison to similar migrant groups in Australia since they maintain the(ir) language(s) to a better extent than for example the Dutch or Germans (who often already switch to English in the first generation of migrants) but are not as successful as similar groups such as the Greek (cf. Clyne & Kipp 2006). A theory by Smolicz (1981) suggests that those groups are more successful in maintaining a language who consider language as a core value of their identity, for whom the heritage language has a crucial function within the community. Former research illustrates that, for the Italians, this is not necessarily the case: other aspects such as the importance of family, their cultural heritage, or traditions as food and festivals are considered more fundamental for living Italian identity (cf. Chiro & Smolicz 1997; Smolicz, et al. 2001).

However, there are many opportunities to learn and use Standard Italian in Australia. Australia’s multicultural policy, which has started in the 1970s, incorporates explicit policies on language learning. Thus both in community-run schools and in public education, many community languages have been generally conceded a greater attention. Italian, in particular, has gained a privileged role in Australian education (cf. Rubino 2002b, p. 8). Italian has been pushed in public schools as a foreign language for a long time as it has been regarded as rather easy to learn. So it is not uncommon for Australians to start learning Italian already in primary school. Also the drafts for the new Australian National Curriculum of languages were first developed for Mandarin and Italian (cf. Topsfield 2011).

So, there are those three factors that shape the Italians’ special case: the large size of the Italian community, a complex sociolinguistic situation that moderately favours language shift in the long term, and a remarkably positive status of Italian in Australian education. The initial question of this project therefore is what the young Italian-Australians actually make out of this situation. The focus lies on those young Italian-Australians, mostly the second and third generation Italians, who are actually Australian-born or at least migrated at such a young age that they were socialized in Australia.

\(^5\) The original question in the Australian Census asks which languages other than English are spoken at home.
Consequently, they are all dominant in English and do not necessarily need Italian for communication in their daily lives. Considering this tension between language loss within the family and good opportunities for studying the standard, it is still reasonable to ask: Does language play an important role in the construction of their cultural identity?

3. Methodology

In this study, language use and attitudes towards both Italian and AusE are chosen as indicators for the degree of identification with the languages. The approach combines qualitative data through semi-structured interviews (3 participants; aged 21–26; one female, two males) with quantitative through an online questionnaire (34 participants; aged 19–26; 20 females, 14 males). The sample was restricted to informants that were of both Italian and Australian ancestry; that either were born in Australia or had spent most of their lives there, and whose dominant language should be AusE in order to exclude confounding variables such as differences in proficiency and socialisation.

In the questionnaire, the term of self-identification chosen by the informants was of central importance and was combined with demographic data as well as information on language use and learning. The direct language attitudes were elicited in the form of a subjective vitality questionnaire (cf. Brudner & White 1979; Bourhis, et al. 1981; Gibbons & Ashcroft 1995; Silva-Corvalán 1996). The indirect attitudes were investigated in an acceptability section that included the evaluation of examples of language mixing. In the mixed items, standard or regional Italian has been preferred for different practical reasons, although it is more likely that the informants may have encountered mixes with dialects in their families. Not only am I as the researcher not proficient in any dialect, but the choice of one dialect would also narrow down the range of participants. Besides, most studies on Italian in Australia work with the standard as well, presumably also due to the researchers’ lack of competence in the dialects or in order to preserve a “pure form” of Italian (cf. Bettoni 2007, pp. 45–46). The acceptability part also included items of different more or less marked features of AusE. The original study put a greater emphasis on the attitudes towards and use of both Italian and AusE. Since reporting all results, however, goes beyond the scope of this paper, the focus is narrowed mainly to the role of Italian in the interplay of self-identification, use and attitudes regarding the Italian language.

4. Results: Language use, proficiency and social functions of code-mixing.

In order to comment on the interplay of self-identification and language use, it is necessary to take the linguistic repertoire of the participants into account. As expected, English is the language that is mostly spoken at home for the vast majority of the informants (94%). Still, more than 60% claim to have a good knowledge of Italian. This might be influenced by the fact that actually every single informant had formally studied Italian at some point of their lives. Most did so at secondary school or university (68%); however, the sample shows a large range of language learning experience as some people had only had some instruction in primary or secondary school while others had studied Italian at several levels and institutions. Formal education as an important language input is thus probably one reason why most participants actually declare to speak mostly or exclusively standard when speaking Italian (76%). Nonetheless, there are a few participants that state to use mostly dialect (15%). The complexity of the linguistic situation as laid out before has thus slightly reduced in the younger generations, but is still reflected in the sample. To simplify the survey, the informants
were advised that after they had stated to what proportion they speak the standard or a dialect, the questionnaire would subsume this information by only referring to Italian in following questions.

Concerning the function of Italian in the participants’ daily lives, proficiency plausibly is a key variable that influences language use. The proficient speakers differ from the less proficient speakers in their higher use of Italian as they simply are able to do so more often. Still, there are some high proficient speakers who show a greater commitment to Italian as they use it as well in interaction with older generations and native speakers of Italian, and to a lesser extent also with peers. If we compare the different proficiency groups in their language use in interactions, we can see similar trends, however, to various extents. While in all groups, the grandparents represent the family group that are most spoken to in Italian, we can also see a gradual language shift across the generations. The high proficiency group (=HPG), in general, stands out for their higher commitment to using Italian which is also reflected in their communicating in Italian with native speakers that know English as well. Roughly half of the HPG even use Italian with Australian peers of both Italian and other backgrounds. More intriguing, yet, is the fact that Italian insertions in English speech are an important instance of language use regardless of the level of proficiency. In fact, only four among the total sample of 34 stated that they would never use Italian expressions when talking in English.

**Figure 1: Use of Italian within different proficiency groups**

That also the less proficient speakers use Italian expressions points at the relative importance of code-mixing if more advanced skills are not available in the speaker’s repertoire. As it had been shown in former studies on language use within the family (cf. Bettoni 1991; Rubino 2002a; Cavallaro 2010), at least in this context the Italian or dialectal expressions refer to the “lessico familiare” which contains nicknames, titles, or relates to traditions and food. Likewise, those studies illustrate that the families’ dialects do not have a communicative value anymore for the younger generation but rather fulfill other social functions. This is corroborated by the discrepancy between proficiency in Italian and the use of code-mixing in this study’s sample.

Especially the qualitative data could support the questionnaire results, such as one remark made by a 22-year-old male respondent in the written survey underlining the idea of using mixed speech to signal ethnic identity:

(1) **Survey comment on identity markers**
There are a lot of Italians who assert their Italian identity with minimal competency in Italian. Also, the words the Italians in Australia use are interesting, such as “rubbishne” for rubbish, “checca” for cake (when we know it means something else haha).
This comment corroborates that for later migrant generations, code mixing is not often an issue of negative transfer or language attrition, but clearly has different social functions. Such as performing acts of identity in the sense of Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985, p. 181) which means that individuals create or adapt linguistic patterns in order “to resemble those of the group or groups with which from time to time [they wish] to be identified”. One informant in the interviews also explained that he used code-mixing - or “trash Italian” as he labelled it - particularly in interactions with his cousins.

(2) On inserting Italian expressions
M: But yeah it’s, it’s ((1s)), I’m totally unaware of it like I don’t even realise. I – my dad does it as well (h-r t) and I think it’s been passed down (h-r t) and especially when I’m with my cousins you know we kind of, do that as well, we talk a bit of trash Italian [...] we’re describing you know a car or a girl or a night we had out, you know. We, we just kind of throw all of these Italian words like “Oh she’s a bona”6 and that car you know “What a bestia” like, it’s really dirty Italian like <exclaims> not DIRTY as in vulgar just, it’s so uncouth like it’s just, yeah, it’s not even Italian, it just sounds ridiculous.

By describing a car with “che bestia” (what a beast) or a girl as “che bona” (slang term for a very attractive girl), on the one hand, he exploits Italian for its expressive function. By saying “che bestia”, he sounds certainly more dramatic and colourful than by using a phrase such as “great car, isn’t it?”. On the other hand, using such an expression with peers, or as he did, with his cousins who can understand this “code”, he further underlines their shared common ground, their membership to the same in-group.

This in-group membership is further confirmed in the phatic function of code-mixing, as the speaker does rather perform a social task than convey extra information with the insertions. In another short instance during the interview of two friends, the male addressed the female by saying:

(3) Diminutive suffix
M: Is there anything left, Lauruccia?

Also here, the use of the Italian suffix fulfills this double purpose of displaying both their membership within the Italian in-group and their relationship. Although the Italian suffix -uccio usually adds a slightly pejorative meaning to a word, it is often used to create nicknames. Similarly, on this occasion, it reflects their social relation and familiarity which go in hand with their teasing each other that had taken place during the interview. Even with this small morpheme only, the speaker can perform an act of identity. Thus, although young Italian-Australians may not communicate in Italian with their peers or relatives of the same age to a similar extent as they probably do with their grandparents, they still command the pragmatics of Italian and may exploit the social functions of mixed language.

A) Self-identification

Since the Italian language in its different functions is still relevant for many of the participants, it is the more interesting to see whether the language itself also has an effect on their identification as Italians. Although the term of self-identification, that the informants could choose, does not do justice to the dynamic negotiation of identities (e.g.

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6 “She’s a bona” could be translated as “She’s fit”
Mendoza-Denton 2004, p. 475; Bucholtz & Hall 2004, p. 376), it can represent the psychological dimension of identity. Functioning as temporary statements of someone’s cultural self-concept, those self-ascribed ethnic labels can be seen as overt manifestations of identification with a certain ethnic group (Padilla & Borsato 2010, p. 11).

In the survey, the participants could choose between a mono-dimensional term, by calling themselves “Australian” or “Italian”, or a bicultural one, referring to themselves as “Italian-Australian” or “Australian of Italian ancestry”. The preference for a certain term can be seen as self-positioning oneself on a continuum of identity options. While the ancestry term seems more Australian-oriented, the hyphenated term rather expresses equal membership within both cultures. In direct comparison to the ancestry term, however, it emphasizes the Italian side more strongly, and therefore this term is interpreted as relatively more Italian-oriented.

The vast majority identified themselves as Australian of Italian ancestry (cf. Figure 2). Only half the size is the group that prefers a hyphenated identity. If we compare this to the migrant generation they belong to, we can already see a strong connection. So the bulk of those claiming to be Australians of Italian ancestry are also third generation Italians, that means that it was their grandparents who originally migrated to Australia. Those preferring the hyphenated term are mostly second generation Italians with at least one Italian-born parent. More curious, however, are certain special cases such as those who have migrated to Australia during their childhood, labelled here as generation 1b. While those two are closest to being Italian, they also chose a different bicultural term each. On the other hand, the only fourth generation participant chose the hyphenated term. Only by this comparison, we can estimate the complexity of why someone might choose a certain label for their cultural affiliation.

Compared to the other variables tested, there are even more important factors than the generation that are correlated with this choice. The strongest correlation was found between self-identification and the subjective vitality of Italian which was tested in the questionnaire through direct attitudes. This means that the more personally important they regarded Italian, the more likely it was that participants chose an Italian-oriented term. The moderately strong correlations of language proficiency and language use show that those factors can favour a stronger emphasis of Italian identity, thus corroborating results from former studies (cf. Table 1). Generally, those who had stressed their Italianness in this survey, tended to be proficient in Italian while those who only have gained intermediate or low language skills tended to not stress their ethnic identity.
Table 1: Correlation of self-identification pattern with different variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Correlation coefficient (Pearson’s r)</th>
<th>References to former qualitative studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>personal importance of Italian language</td>
<td>r = .57</td>
<td><strong>Symbolic value of Italian</strong> cf. Rubino (2002b); Bettoni (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language proficiency</td>
<td>r = .39</td>
<td><strong>Positive effect of proficiency:</strong> cf. Gibbons &amp; Ashcroft (1995); Chiro &amp; Smolicz (1997); Pitronaci (1998); Cavallaro (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language use in interaction</td>
<td>r = .3</td>
<td><strong>Construction of identity in interaction</strong> e.g. Rubino (2006); Fellin (2007); Cavallaro (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>generation</td>
<td>r = .2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language spoken while growing up</td>
<td>r = .18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Still, roughly half of those with high proficiency preferred an Australian-oriented term. So those factors are actually not sufficient for the accentuation of identity. This becomes even more evident as there were actually some high proficient speakers who also used the language relatively often but still preferred the term “Australians of Italian ancestry” over a more Italian-oriented one.

Offering further insight into this matter, the indirect attitudes tested in the acceptability section also show a difference between the identification groups. Although the results were not distinctive at first sight, different tendencies could be found between the more Italian-oriented and the more Australian-oriented groups in their evaluation of mixed code and features of AusE.

### B) Attitudes

Comparing the attitudes towards mixed code, it becomes evident that, among all groups, Italian insertions into English are generally more accepted than English insertions into Italian speech. But especially the more Italian groups, i.e. those who chose either the term “Italian” or a hyphenated self-identification, show a higher sensitivity towards the direction of code-mixing as they identify more strongly with the Italian insertions.
### Table 2: Average of acceptability ratings divided by self-identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Italian (n=2)</th>
<th>Hyphenated (n=10)</th>
<th>Ancestry (n=19)</th>
<th>Australian (n=2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All items</td>
<td>Mean 2.35</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD 0.07</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It in E</td>
<td>Mean 1.90</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD 0.14</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E in It</td>
<td>Mean 3.00</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD 0.00</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Annotations:** It in E: Italian expression in English phrase; E in It: English expression or transfer in Italian phrase; the closer the average value is to 1, the more positive were the answers rated.

This preference may point out that Italianised speech is rather used to mark ethnic identity while the other direction may be more associated with low proficiency. This seems to be confirmed as those groups differentiate more clearly whether the English insertions were compulsory or optional mixes. Therefore, we can see that for many participants, the emphasis of their Italianità goes in hand with certain puristic attitudes towards Italian and a demarcation from “un-Italian” linguistic behaviour (cf. Bettoni & Gibbons 1988).

Concerning English transfers into Italian speech, the more Australian groups showed a higher acceptance which might reflect their actual linguistic realities, especially of those less proficient, as they simply might have to resort to competence-related code-mixing more often. Towards the Italian insertions, by contrast, they did not show more negative attitudes but a higher variation of possible attachment or distance to the language as their attitudes were less positive in comparison to the consistent statements by the Italian groups (cf. Table 2).
Table 3: Average of acceptability ratings for Australian items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Italian</th>
<th>Hyphenated</th>
<th>Ancestry</th>
<th>Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUS</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marked</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annotions: Items are separate in this analysis as two phrases, one containing youse and one containing double negation, were so negatively rated that they would have skewed the results.

Looking at the attitudes towards Australian English, additionally, we can see again certain tendencies within the different identification groups (cf. Table 3). The more Australian-oriented group rated features of AusE generally more positively. Nevertheless, the results of the more Italian groups also show two interesting aspects: regarding the common AusE features, there weren’t similarly clear tendencies as the internal variation of ratings were comparably higher. Yet, regarding the marked features, their ratings were generally more negative and slightly less varied. A few of the hyphenated group and one Italian continually dissociated themselves as they rated most Australian features more negatively. It therefore seems that while the ancestry group contained more diverging individuals regarding their perceived Italianness, the hyphenated group now shows a greater range of interpretations concerning their perceived Australianness. We thus can see that the differences in self-identification among the sample are also partly reflected in their language attitudes.

A case in point that illustrates the complexity of language use, attitudes and self-identification is the aforementioned fourth generation informant (cf. p. 11). The 21-year-old female, grown up in an exclusively English-speaking home, labelled herself an Italian-Australian despite her mere passive knowledge of Italian whereas the rest of the hyphenated group mostly stood out for their proficiency. Although she never uses Italian, she expressed very positive attitudes towards Italian language and culture, which were not resembled as clearly in the acceptability section; in contrast, she strongly distanced herself from AusE by not identifying with it in the direct attitude section as well as by rejecting most overtly Australian items in the acceptability part. Several factors may account for her contradictory behaviour of identifying more with a language that she does not speak, such as that she finds being Italian more exotic and attractive. Although having lived for the longest time of her life in Australia, she had spent longer periods abroad during her adolescence. She could thus have developed a strongly negative image of Australianness in those situations of cultural contact which now make her identify more strongly with her Italian heritage. Nonetheless, her case exemplifies the complex interplay of Italian and Australian English as both languages can function as symbols of identification, and therefore corroborates the relation between language attitudes and cultural identity.

5. Conclusion

Despite what former research suggests, i.e. that Italian has in fact not been considered of central value to the Italian community’s identity and is losing its importance as a home language, there are also positive developments among many young Italian-Australians who still learn and use the language. This positive linguistic orientation may range from
inserting expressions and code-mixing in day-to-day interactions to stronger commitment towards using it regularly in their daily speech. Such factors as proficiency and frequent language use can enhance stronger identification with the Italian side, but this is not sufficient. Generally, there are trends among the more Italian groups in the sample in the way that they regard the Italian language as personally important and also show this by their behaviour and attitudes. However, it should be underlined that also identification with or demarcation from Australian English can play an influential role in the construction of cultural identity. As this matter has only been touched in this small-scale study, further research on the influence of Australian identity markers on questions of self-identification would surely be rewarding.

This project could only give a very brief insight into the interplay of cultural identity and the roles of languages into how accentuation of identity may be reflected in language attitudes. The actual motives that lie behind such accentuation also go beyond the scope of this study. Identity is a very multi-faceted construct that is influenced by many different factors and experiences that make an individual feel more attracted to one or both cultures and consider single aspects such as a community language as personally important. Therefore I’d like to conclude with a statement from two informants in the interview:

(4) Personal importance of Italian
L: I think Italian’s important.
M: Yes, I concur.
L: And I want my children to speak Italian.
M: Yes, as would I.[…] We wanna continue the language, we wanna continue the culture and the tradition. BUT at this point in our lives, I think, we don’t really see its relevance. We know it’s important, but we can’t really articulate why it’s relevant. Yeah/
L: / it’s rather – a personal thing/ Just a part of us.

6. References


Appendix 1. Transcription Codes

/item/ = simultaneous speech  
<> = non-verbal communication  
( ) = further comments  
CAPITALS = stressed  
(h-r t) = high-rising tone

Appendix 2. Census Data on Italians in Australia.

Table A: Ten most spoken Community Languages in Australia 1991-2011*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>418,804</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>353,606</td>
<td>Mandarin</td>
<td>336,178</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>285,700</td>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>263,718</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>299,829</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>162,896</td>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>225,307</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>287,171</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>162,896</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>209,371</td>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>263,538</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>113,336</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>174,236</td>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>252,211</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>110,187</td>
<td>Mandarin</td>
<td>139,288</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>233,888</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>90,479</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>93,595</td>
<td>Tagalog(Fil.)</td>
<td>136,846</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>66,932</td>
<td>Tagalog(Fil.)</td>
<td>78,879</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>117,493</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonian</td>
<td>64,429</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>76,444</td>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>111,349</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatian</td>
<td>63,084</td>
<td>Macedonian</td>
<td>71,994</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>80,366</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* adapted from Clyne & Kipp (2006, p. 13) and Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012)

Table B: Top 10 responses on ancestry 2011 and 2006, ranked by size*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ancestry</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>7,238,117</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>6,259,400</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>7,098,097</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>7,357,165</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>2,087,738</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>1,799,654</td>
<td>9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish</td>
<td>1,792,672</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>1,497,789</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>916,148</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>851,379</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>898,561</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>809,483</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>866,001</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>669,306</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>390,852</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>234,171</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>378,160</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>364,990</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>335,319</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>309,302</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Men and Feminism? Discursive constructions of masculinities in relation to the feminist movement

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Men and Feminism?  
D/discursive constructions of masculinities in relation to the feminist movement

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Abstract

The advent of the web 2.0 has enabled users to engage in translocal and transtemporal interactions in which meanings can be constantly (re)constructed. The fluidity of such interactions in the time-space spectrum makes it evident that D/discourses (GEE, 1999) are always in movement and that here-and-now discursive practices are always linked to macro Discourses in social structures. Considering these assumptions, this study aims at exploring the social construction of masculinities in light of feminist D/discourses in online interactions. The data used are a series of comments from readers of an article posted in a website for (projected) male audiences. In order to approach the movable and fluid nature of such interactions, I examine the data through the lens of processes of entextualization, social positionings and indexical cues. The analysis explores the interactions as social arenas in which struggles for the control over entextualization processes are clearly noticeable. Moreover, two main stances are perceived: one that legitimates male’s participation in Feminism and one that rejects such participation.

Keywords: Entextualization, Feminism, Masculinities, Positionings

1. Introduction: “Diversity within diversity”: the contemporary scenario

Nowadays, people are connected to others in an intense flux. And, we have always been in flux: from the first expeditions of centuries ago to the digital paths we go through nowadays, we, human beings, have always rendered ourselves mobile. And the vast migration of individuals throughout the twentieth century, alongside the advent of the Internet, has made such mobility increasingly intense. In fact, the emergence of digital environments plays a pivotal role in people’s transit through different times and spaces. If letters were required for communication decades ago, instant texting became the rule in current interactions, for example.

Trying to make sense of such scenario, Bauman (2013) uses a metaphor of liquidity in his works. For the author, we would be living in a liquid modernity in which things happen in an accelerated pace and people get in contact with each other in the most unexpected ways. As a consequence, we can now say that all sorts of mixtures undergo online and face-to-face interactions and distances and frontiers – be them social or geographical -- are being erased (Bauman 2013). The stability of borders, frontiers and social categories is becoming less and less distinct.

My study takes place within this current scenario, and aims at understanding the dynamics of sign and text circulation on the web. Considering the Internet as a space of possible social agency (Moita Lopes, 2010), I intend to explore how people construct masculinities in relation to debates regarding Feminism. My main question is: how do people position themselves regarding the relation between men and Feminism? My interest for online practices is justified by the incredible growth of concern for this theme on the web. In Brazil, at least, people are talking about Feminism all the time, defending points of view and critically positioning themselves in a scale never before seen.

In this paper, my focus is directed to one article and its comments from a website titled “PapodeHomem” (“Men’s talk”, in a free translation). I chose this online space as
the site of research due to its high number of readers and relevance in the promotion of online discussion concerning Feminism and masculinities. There have been lots of articles published during the first four months of 2016, for example, and readers are engaging in the debates promoted. This is, therefore, a space that provides me a lot of materials to examine as it is central to the issues I target.

Through my paper I hope to show how signs, texts and D/discourses travel through different comments in ways that defy static views of language and meaning. I also aim to demonstrate that social categories such as “men” and “women” are frequently negotiated, furthermore that no unique position regarding feminist men is achieved. Rather, there are constant struggles over meaning constructions. The gains of this study, in my view, are related to the possibility of understanding how people are discursively constructing subjectivities online in ways that challenge stereotypes, and how meanings are always negotiable and never fixed.

2. Shaking what is stable: revisiting notions of language, D/discourse and context

To talk about struggles over meaning constructions is to assume that, when using language, people are not representing the world – in a metaphysical sense of the term represent – but constructing it. In this sense, Foucault’s (1972) notion of discourse presents itself as an interesting concept for the development of this study. Foucault states that discourses are “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault, 1972, as cited in Mills 2004, p. 15). Language is, then, a form of action and has a constitutive and performative nature.

Austin (1990), by studying speech acts, explores this idea of language as action. The author argues that we should go beyond the view of statements as purely descriptive for there are certain utterances that do not describe “reality”, but perform an action. As Austin (1990) suggests in his own work, performatives are utterances that cannot be qualified as true or false; they are utterances that, when said, something is being done.

Butler (1997) establishes a dialogue with Austin’s ideas by arguing that “by being called a name, one is also, paradoxically, given a certain possibility of social existence” (Butler 1997, p. 2). Following this view, people’s social existence would rely on being recognized and recognizable and on being named and nameable. For Butler, whose ideas are bounded with this constitutive and performative perspective of language, people come to exist in language use and being called something is what provides such existence.

If we align ourselves with such perspective, we come to understand social identities as being constructed and negotiated in daily practices. It would mean that a person is not born man or woman, heterosexual or homosexual. In everyday interactions, people perform and, on these performances, they position themselves and are positioned by others as men, bisexual, white, middle-class, Brazilian, among others (cf. Moita Lopes 2002). It should be clear, then, that I am working with a performative view of social identities, i.e. gender, sexuality and race, for example, as things we do and not things we are born with.

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I use “reality” within quotation marks in order to highlight my understanding that reality is not a given entity. In accordance with a social constructionist perspective, I see reality as being constructed by individuals in their everyday practices of language use.
There is one single aspect that pervades the theoretical contributions of all authors discussed so far: the intrinsic connection between the linguistic and the social. If we regard these ideas in relation to the social-cultural-historical scenario of the contemporary moment, however, some concepts should be revisited and reconstructed. The notion of context, for example, has been under constant scrutiny and researchers like Bauman and Briggs promote a change in paradigms by “mov[ing] the emphasis from product to process” (1990, p. 67). For these authors, the pre-configured, normative and static view of contexts should be disregarded to make space for the notion of processes of contextualization – that somewhat manages to capture people’s agency. The authors affirm:

“Contextualization involves an active process of negotiation in which participants reflexively examine the discourse as it is emerging, embedding assessments of its structure and significance in the speech itself.” (p. 69)

Process of contextualization, therefore, reflect the ways people work on the practices in which they are embedded, i.e. how they have a constitutive role in the practices of which they are part. It is possible to note, then, that contexts as pre-conceived entities do not exist; they are rather processes of contextualization marked by flexibility and mobility. There is no such a thing as a context, but several processes of contextualization that co-occur in social-discursive practices and may give us an appearance of stability.

If we stick to this approach, we are inclined to understand that the totality of a discursive event may not be apprehended. The here-and-now of such events is connected to many other events and practices from different dimensions. It means that “social events and processes move and develop through on a continuum of layered scales” (Blommaert 2007, p. 1), in which the local and the global are deeply articulated and interlaced. It means that the local level of a practice establishes dialogue with a series of D/discourses and intertexts from different layers, developing an intricate translocal and transtemporal network.

In an attempt to contemplate such co-existence and interrelation between layers, I decided to use Gee’s (1999) graphic proposal D/discourse. In this approach, discourses are the local, micro, situated practices of meaning construction while Discourses are systems of knowledge shared by the interlocutors in a macro level. It is true that there are only two graphic possibilities and we are still resorting to a binary system; however, this proposal shows that social events occur in multiple scales that are constantly intertwined – making D/discourses, signs and texts trajectories through different levels and practices possible.

Texts, then, may also be considered mobile. And, in light of that, authors like Silverstein and Urban (1996) and Bauman and Briggs (1990) understand them as processes rather than “self-contained, bounded objects” (Bauman and Briggs 1990, p. 72). We should speak of processes of entextualization, which are described as processes of “rendering discourse extractable, of making a stretch of linguistic production into a unit - a text - that can be lifted out of its interactional setting” (ibid, p. 73). Entextualization, therefore, is related to practices of decontextualizing texts and signs and recontextualizing them in a different setting – a process that, whether we like it or not, always implicate in something new (Fabricio 2014).

If we take all these ideas together, we can notice that signs like “men” and “women”, usually regarded as stable, travel from practices to practices and may have very different meanings depending on which social events they are being used and on how they are entextualized. The same happens to “Feminism”: depending on the
discursive event, this sign will be entextualized differently and point to very distinguishable meanings. In the next section, I present a discussion about these themes - men, women and feminism – in order to have a complete theoretical framework to support my study.

3. Feminism and masculinity: what about it?

One could expect that this section would start by answering the question: what is Feminism? That is a very difficult question to answer. Because of a simple reason: there is single answer to it. Feminism might mean different things to different people. Nevertheless, there are some guiding ideas that somewhat pervades all (or, at least, most) feminist perspectives and groups. In a general approach and based on knowledge from everyday situations, we could say that Feminism acknowledges that the way society is organized results in some forms of oppression towards minority groups, including women. Although some face the movement as a “group of unhappy women” (Rago 1997), it should be seen as a way of fighting against patriarchy and this socially constructed inferior position created for women. As Simone de Beauvior affirms, “one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” (1967, p. 9). Female subjugation, then, is not given by nature; rather, it is created and perpetuated in our daily practices.

The current status of female oppression is not easily describable, mainly because it is not homogenous across all societies. In most nations, for example, women can vote, while there are still countries that do not recognize such right. In Brazil, women are said to have the same rights as men; however, daily events such as verbal abuse are usual. Consequently, because of these cases of abuse, Feminism has become an extremely popular topic in social networks of Brazil. There are a myriad of pages on Facebook dedicated to the issue of gender inequality, such as Moça, você é machista (“Lady, you are sexist”). Other examples include blogs like Escreva, Lola, escreva (“Write, Lola, write”) and Capitolina (a digital magazine of which name makes reference to Capitu, a character from Machado de Assis’ novel Dom Casmurro), which deal with themes of abortion, abuse and race.

Websites directed towards male audiences are starting to present materials related to Feminism as well. PapodeHomem (“Men’s talk”) is the digital environment analyzed in this study and it is possible to note a growth in the number of publications about the movement – mainly from 2012 to present times. And PapodeHomem’s materials usually deal with a topic that is always under constant scrutiny is: can men be feminist? As for the first question proposed in this section, there is no single answer here as well.

First of all, we should be aware that the category “men” - as I mentioned before - is very unstable and people construct masculinity in various ways. Therefore, we could speak of masculinities, in the plural, and such multiplicity play an important role in the (possible) relation between men and feminism. Secondly, it is important to note that “the involvement of men in campaigning for gender equality is not new, although it has always been a minority of them” (Gaag 2014, p. 22). However, debates regarding if/how men can be feminist – and use the label “feminist” to describe themselves – have been controversial and, depending on the feminist perspective or group, their participation in the social movement is either recognized or refused. Taking this into account, I shall turn myself to a discussion regarding both online practices in general and the specific online linguistic event to be considered in this study.
4. What about all of this on the internet? Reflecting about online social positionings

According to Moita Lopes (2010), the internet can be compared to the ancient Greek agora, meaning that the internet is a contemporary space of political actions as the agora used to be in the past. The possibility of not only consuming but also producing information on digital spaces, provided by the advent of the web 2.0, has enhanced people’s agency. We are now “prosumers” (Gomez-Cruz 2008 apud Moita Lopes 2010, p. 400). This possibility of acting made room for some micro-politics to emerge in these spaces, characterizing them as loci of collective agency. Discourses that defy hegemony started to appear in the online world – a political world.

Feminism has, then, gained space in this world. And the website PapodeHomem (henceforth, PdH) is one of the sites where it is thoroughly discussed. This website is (in theory) directed towards a male audience. The page offers materials of a great range of themes: from sports to food; from trips to sex; from arts and politics to Feminism. The materials always present a problematizing attitude encouraging readers to comment and engage in healthy discussions. Maybe such variety of topics is the reason why the website is so popular. PdH is followed by 13 thousand people on Instagram, 51 thousand on Twitter and 429 on Facebook. Besides, all articles published have generated at least 100 comments – but some go far beyond this number. Thus, the website is available in different platforms and in each of them a large public is connected to it.

In this paper I will focus on the article “Feminismo é papodehomem?” (“Is Feminism men’s talk?”), written by Marília Moschkovich and published on February 2014. In the article, which generated 135 comments, Marília takes a stand and argues that, in her opinion, men could be feminist. She believes that the social movement can contribute to masculine issues as well as men can also contribute to the spread and enhancement of feminist ideas. The main question proposed is: how? For the author, men do not know what it is like to be a woman and be subjugated and humiliated because of that. However, excluding them from the movement might not be an effective decision as people, including men, should go through the process of deconstructing stereotypes and prejudices and fight against gender inequality. At the end of the text, Marília invites all readers to join her in a meeting about Feminism that happened on February 2014 in São Paulo, a city in Brazil.

For this paper, I selected three comments from different readers that directly problematized the issues of feminist men. PdH’s editors and Marília Moschkovich have granted me access to all the materials so that I could develop my research. Despite this fact, I am still changing the names of all participants in order to maintain their anonymity and preserve their identities. Having said that, the next section is going to deal with some analytical tools I decided to use in this study in order to approach the data.

5. Methodology

In order to better examine the comments, I draw on some of Wortham’s (2001) indexical cues. In dealing with narratives, Wortham (2001: PAGE) described five indexical cues that, for him, were most prominent in his data. The cues are the following:
Reference and prediction: indicates which objects of the material world are referred to and characterized in discourse respectively;

Metapragmatic descriptors: are related to verbs of saying;

Epistemic modalization: signals the epistemological status of the subjects, i.e. their positionings towards what is being constructed in the interactions;

Citation: indicates the context of one’s utterances;

Evaluative indexicals: refers to linguistic elements socially interlaced with certain social categories’ specific forms of expressions.

Wortham’s cues seem valuable to my research as they fit into my main goal of understanding people’s online positionings while debating online. Attempting to make the analysis clearer, I decided to use a color/graphic-based approach to distinguish each indexical cue in this way:

✓ Reference: Blue.
✓ Prediction: Orange.
✓ Metapragmatic descriptors: Red.
✓ Epistemic modalization: Brown.
✓ Citation: Italics.
✓ Evaluative indexicals: Bold.

I shall, in addition to Wortham's tools, detect entextualization processes and their effects on meaning construction so that I can make sense of how signs and texts are circulating on the web. I will also pay attention to scale movements made by the interlocutors in their texts in an attempt of trying to understand the interrelation between the local and the global, the micro and the macro. With these pieces of information presented, let us engage with the data.

6. Analysis

The first comment analyzed is from the participant called Eduardo (fictional name) and he responds directly to Marília. The comment is:

Great text, Marília, and I envy the ones that will be able to attend the meeting. I’ve been studying a bit about the so called performativity, queer movement and the update (is this a good word?) of the feminism proposed by Judith Butler. It seems (as far as I understood, I might be wrong) that she affirms that the purpose of the feminist fight itself should be reviewed, as the concept of equality between man and woman presupposes that there is in fact an essential binary division between both of them, which she (I guess) problematizes.

But I want to tell a concrete story. A curious thing happened to me some days ago. In a certain day I defended the idea that men were also victims of patriarchy, and some debaters seemed to deny any rights of men combating sexism. I tried to be conciliatory, open space for consensus, but these debaters said that male's suffering was irrelevant in comparison to the female’s (and I don’t think it’s necessary to quantify and measure the levels of suffering), that deep down all men were responsible for the situation and that, therefore, they had to fight or legitimacy to combat sexism. The feeling I had was that they said: “Wear that sexist uniform, use that sexist helmet and hold that sexist bayones, my friend, because we want you to fight in the front of the enemy’s army! And get ready because we’re going to attack you with all out strength during the battle! Don’t you dare being a floater!”

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8 The data here presented is originally in Portuguese. For the purposes of this paper, I translated them and tried to make the best English I could. It should be noted that Portuguese has some peculiarities regarding some terms used in the comments. The word “machismo” can be either a noun – meaning “patriarchy” – or an adjective – meaning “sexist”. Therefore, I opted for using either “patriarchy” or “sexist” when this word appeared in the data selected.
In this comment, Eduardo, through references “Marilia” (line 01) and “text” (line 01), being the latter predicated as “great” (line 01), entextualizes the article “Feminismo é papodehomem?” in his own comment. This entextualization is confirmed by the reference “meting” (line 01): the meeting organized and presented by Marilia. The D/discourses that precipitate in the article are, then, recontextualized and valued as Eduardo uses such D/discourses to construct his position.

By recontextualizing some concepts like “performativity” (line 02), “queer movement” (line 02) and “update of feminism” (lines 02 and 03), connected to the reference “Judith Buttler” [sic] (line 03), Eduardo projects an academic frame for the conversation. The metapragmatic descriptors “affirm” (line 04) and “problematize” (line 06) are used to cite Butler’s ideas (lines 04-06). In the citation, the reference “feminist fight” (line 04) entextualizes D/discourses of Feminism as struggle; struggle not in a negative sense (like in irrational battles that result in unhappiness), but in a sense of search, movement towards a specific goal. These elements signal a critical position of the author who proclaim them; and Eduardo seems to align himself with these ideas.

Eduardo also makes use of epistemic modalization through the expressions “It seems” (line 04), “(as far as I understood, I might be wrong)” (lines 03 and 04) and “(I guess)” (line 06), positioning himself as someone who does not know Butler’s theoretical discussions deeply. The participant entextualizes a whole dynamic of power in the interactions of this digital space, in which no one holds the single acceptable knowledge; everybody can contribute to meaning construction.

In the second paragraph, the reference to “story” (line 07), predicated as “concrete” (line 07), highlights a change in scale for Eduardo stops talking about general ideas and starts to present a personal account. In the narrated events, there is a discussion between two poles: Eduardo and the debaters. Eduardo cites his ideas, making them visible through the reference “man” (line 08) predicated as “victims” (line 08). In this sense, Eduardo legitimates men’s participation in the movement by understanding that the category also suffers with patriarchy.

Nevertheless, the debaters are positioned as not believing in the existence of feminist men for men, in general, would be the cause of gender inequality. Their ideas are cited by the reference to the category “men” (line 14) predicated as “responsible for the situation” (line 14). When citing these ideas, Eduardo makes use of the metapragmatic descriptors “defend” (line 08) and “deny” (line 09), positioning himself critically towards them.
Within lines 16 and 19, the reader projects a citation that was not present in the narrated events, but was constructed based on the contact he had with the debaters. In this citation, introduced by the metapragmatic descriptor “say” (line 13), there are references to “uniform” (line 14), “helmet” (line 14) and “bayonet” (line 14) predicated as “sexist” (line 14). These references entextualize D/discourse of Feminism as battle, as war. There are plenty of evaluative indexicals such as repetition of verbs in the imperative mode (“wear”, “use”, “hold”, “get ready” and “don’t you dare”) (lines 14-16) and exclamation marks; they somewhat manage to indicate a radical construction of the debaters.

The second comment is one of the many responses Eduardo received. Heloísa presents her ideas at the same time that she tries to establish a connection with Eduardo. The comment is:

1. Eduardo men can be feminist; in fact I believe they should be heterosexual. There are men that
2. proclaim themselves as pro-feminists because we always insist that the protagonist of
3. Feminism are women, but I don’t see the reason for using the “pro”, nor the reason for
4. condemning it.
5. Regarding Patriarchy > Patriarchy is a social structure, the current structure, and it is not
6. the gender that defines if you are sexist or not, but your actions, your ideas, your battles.
7. Women and men can have sexist attitudes, unfortunately, we are all immersed in this
8. culture and getting rid of it requires a lot of hard work. What we usually say in the
9. movement is that women who act in a sexist way are not less victims of the system, maybe
10. they are even more victims, because they – by themselves – contribute to the maintenance
11. of oppression. Feminism is a plural movement and these are just my feminist opinions.
12. concerning the topics proposed.

In this comment, Heloísa makes reference to the category “men” (line 01) and predicates it as “feminist” (line 01). So, the participant positions herself as someone who believes in the existence of feminist men. She even makes use of epistemic modalization by stating “I believe they should be” and marking her position of believing that men should be part of Feminism. However, through the references “the protagonist of Feminism” she makes it clear that men’s role in the movement should be either peripheral or, at least, non-central. The use of the predication “pro-feminists” is also discussed. The epistemic modalization “I don’t see the reason” indicates that Heloísa is not inclined to use such term, but is not against it as well. We can infer that, for her, the issue is not on which label should be used, but on more practical ones.

In the second paragraph, Heloísa makes reference to “patriarchy” and predicates it as a social structure, the current structure which signals her understanding that it is a strong phenomenon that includes every single individual in the world. Because of that, in line 06, she refers to “women” and “men” as possibly having “attitudes” predicated as sexist”. The epistemic modalization “unfortunately” indicates her negative position towards these attitudes and the reference to “culture” emphasizes her view that sexism is a cultural, social, structural issue.

The reference “we”, in line 07, can be understood as the category feminists, of which Heloísa feels part. From line 09 to 11, she cites the ideas of feminists. The participant makes reference to “women who act in a sexist way” and predicate them as “even more victims”. In this sense, women who reproduce patriarchy should not be excluded from the movement, but accepted – in the same way she believes men should have a space as well. In the last sentence (lines 11 and 12), she describes “Feminism”
as “a plural movement”, highlighting that there feminists who disagree with her and that her text is based (mainly, at least) on her “feminist opinion”.

The third comment is from Marcos and it answers Marília’s article directly. The comment is:

1. Man is no longer man for a while. And it is exactly because of that that today there are countless men with emotional problems, dependency, lack of self-control, etc… That is,
2. men are extremely incapable of dealing with themselves (imagine with the opposite sex) and… where does it come from? This “sickness of modern men”? From feminism, of course. […]

5. Liberty aligned with knowledge is the root, knowing about being male and female human beings can shed light to these confused minds... Minds that talk about “fighting for gender equality” but if a female chooses, I mean, chooses to be a mother, dedicate herself entirely to raising her children and taking care of the house, these same women who “fight for liberty” won’t understand. But of course. They don’t fight for liberty. But for equality, they don’t want the same “rights” or “liberties” men have, they want to BE men. (no, they are not necessarily homosexuals).

In the beginning of the comment, Marcos makes reference to “man” (line 01) and predicates it as “man” (line 01). This might indicate a deep naturalization of what it is to be a man in our society – so naturalized that a tautology is used. However, the participant signals that this sense of being a man is being lost for he makes reference to “men” (line 02) and associates it with other references such as “emotional problems” (line 02), “dependency” (line 02) and “lack of self-control” (line 02). Marcos even predicates the reference “men” (line 03) as “incapable of dealing with themselves”, emphasizing this position that men are no longer in control of the situation and entextualizing disourses of modern masculinity as fragile.

When talking about Feminism, Marcos makes reference to the movement in line 04 and predicates it as “the sickness of modern men”, indicating his position of being against feminism for the social movement would go against men. The epistemic modalization “of course” (lines 04 and 05) provides strength to his utterance as it gives readers the idea that Marcos is not talking about his opinions; rather, he is talking about facts.

In the second paragraph, the participant makes reference to “liberty” (line 06) and “knowledge” (line 06) as solutions for this sickness and also refers to “confused minds” (line 07). Which confused minds are these? We come to identify them through the citation of their ideas “fighting for gender equality” (lines 07 and 08) and, because of that, we can infer that the “confused minds” are feminist minds. Later, Marcos makes it clear that minds are also gendered minds as he makes reference to “women who ‘fight for liberty’” (lines 09 and 10) specifically – so, no men are included in this category which might signal both a sexist attitude of the participant and a position that negates the possibility of men being feminists.

In the end of the excerpt, Marcos come to identify these women again through the reference “the same ‘rights’ and ‘liberties’ men have” (line 11) and he predicates them as wanting to be “men” (line 11). “Men” appears as a predication again and the participant’s assertion may be read as an understanding that women see men as better and want to imitate them. Finally, this strong utterance is constructed through the
epistemic modalization “BE”, a verb in the present tense that provides a status of truth to what is being said.

6. Preliminary considerations

The website “Papodehomem” can be characterized by being a space full of different D/discourses, ways of living and values and, because of that, it is also a space marked by conflicts, tensions and struggles over meaning constructions. Any person can have access to its contents and any person can interact in the comments’ sections. Given the fact that the group of readers is extremely heterogeneous, several positionings and conflicts between opposite perspectives might be expected.

The comments analyzed in this study answer the question presented in the title of Marília’s article: is feminism men’s talk? This question, which aims at the circumscription of a group’s identity, is constantly recontextualized in each comment for all of them discuss the (possible) participation of men in the social movement. The answers, however, are ambivalent and have conflicting perspectives. Eduardo and Heloísa, for example, align themselves with a positioning that defends male’s participation and disregard essentialist views of gender identities. Marcos, on the other hand, goes against their position and aligns himself with the perspective that Feminism is bad for men – and society in general – and that feminists should be better informed in order to avoid proclaiming “wrong” ideas.

It is interesting to note that, throughout the conversations, the interlocutors thoroughly construct gender D/discourses. Eduardo and Heloísa make significant problematizations regarding gender binary polarization. Nevertheless, Marcos still reproduces a traditional and stereotypical view of masculinity – and, as a consequence – femininity. There are, therefore, reconstructions and deconstructions of naturalized meanings side by side.

Eduardo, Heloísa and Marcos are only three among many readers of “PdH”, but there contributions are enormous. They operate with opposing regimes of truth in their interactions, especially concerning their constructions of gender identity and of masculinity in relation to Feminism. The comments show how the interlocutors use indexical cues, trying to control how the conversation will unfold. However, it is a social practice in which nobody knows the truth, but everybody collaborates to meaning construction.

7. References


Language Choice of Chinese Dependents in Service Encounters

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Abstract

In recent years, there has been a considerable increase in the number of Mainland Chinese immigrants in Singapore. In this study, I explore how Mainland Chinese in Singapore perceive the politeness of their language choices during service encounters compared to Singapore Chinese. Through a questionnaire with ten Mainland dependents, ten Mainland students and ten Singapore Chinese participants, I found that overall, both Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese perceive their language choices similarly. However, an interesting finding is that Singapore Chinese subjects perceived Mandarin as more polite than English when addressing Mainland Chinese service people whereas the Mainland Chinese subjects felt that English is more polite than Mandarin even when addressing other people from Mainland Chinese origin. These results suggest that further research is needed in order to fully understand the factors that influence the participants’ perceptions of their language choices.

1. Introduction

Singapore is an island-nation in Southeast Asia with bilingual/multilingual citizens of different ethnicities and cultures. In recent years, there has been a considerable increase in the number of immigrants. As the growth of the local population is not able to keep up with the demand for workers, the government has increased its import of foreign labour and allowed an unprecedented number of foreigners to live on this small island-state. In 2014, foreign non-residents make up almost 30% of Singapore’s total population of 5.47 million and foreigners who have become permanent residents make up another 10%\(^1\) (The Straits Times, 2014). Despite the government’s effort to explain the economic benefits of its open-door policy and encouraging Singaporeans to be good hosts, it has been observed that some Singaporeans continue to perceive this foreign presence as a threat; these anti-foreigner sentiments are being felt by migrants as well (see Rubdy & McKay, 2013; cf. Today, 2015).

Among the foreigners in Singapore, one of the largest and most visible communities are the Mainland Chinese. There are no available official statistics on the number of Mainland Chinese immigrants but an estimate in 2008\(^2\) puts the figure at “close to one million” (The Straits Times, 2008a). Interestingly, although they share a cultural and linguistic connection to the majority Singapore Chinese population, they are the group that seems to be the subject of most contention with the semi-skilled and unskilled workers, especially those working in the service industry, bearing the brunt of this sentiment (see Yeoh & Lin, 2013). Singaporeans have lamented about the ‘Sinicization’ of public spaces and service encounters (The Straits Times, 2008b). One of the ways this negativity is expressed is through complaints about their English language skills. Other than the complaint that Mainland Chinese migrants speak Mandarin too much, there is also an impression among Singaporeans that the Mainland Chinese do not have the same politeness standards.

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1 These figures do not include foreigners who have become citizens. The number of people living in Singapore who were not locally born is presumably even higher.

2 In 2008, Singapore’s population growth was at its peak of 5.47% mainly due to the influx of non-resident migrants made up of mainly workers. Subsequently, the government took steps to slow down the growth of the foreign workforce.
It could be that these two perceptions are related: speaking Mandarin too much could also be seen as an instance of rude behaviour. Hence, this study is an attempt to understand how Mainland Chinese living in Singapore and Singapore Chinese perceive their language choices in terms of politeness, focusing on the service encounter domain. Do Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese perceive their language choices differently in terms of politeness? Does the nationality/ethnicity of the service person and the class/location of the service affect the choice of language that Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese consider polite?

2. Background

According to Fishman (1972), language choices of individuals in stable multilingual speech communities are predicted by the domains in which they occur. In other words, it is social structure that broadly determines language choice. Rubin (1968) is an example of a researcher who adopted a domain analysis. She studied Spanish/Guarani bilingualism in Paraguay. Through the device of a decision tree, she showed that language behaviours were an outcome of an ordered series of binary choices determined by the social context. She found that location was the most important predictor of language choice. Closer to the service encounter context of this study, Gardner-Chloros (1985) collected quantitative data on the use of French and Alsatian by shoppers in Strasbourg. In line with existing information on language use in Alsace and expected norms of the situation, one of her findings was that more French was spoken in stores of higher social standing.

Despite recognizing the importance of domains, Gumperz (1971) argued that people choose to use a particular language to express their identity in relation to their interlocutors. Similarly, Gal’s (1979) influential study on a bilingual region of Austria focussed on the social determinants of linguistic change in bilingual Austria. She concluded that the participant variable is more critical than the other dimensions of contexts like topic and setting. More recently, Goetz (2001) studied Dai/Chinese bilingual speakers in Southwest China and showed that social network characteristics, rural lifestyle, occupation, and place of residence accounted for language choice.

Myers-Scotton (1983, 1998) has proposed that linguistic code choices are a function of negotiation instead of situation. Conversations are governed by a negotiation principle and its set of maxims which are in turn patterned after Grice’s (1975) cooperative principle and its maxims. Although Brown and Levinson (1975) claim that speakers use conversation to preserve social relationships and to maintain “each other’s face”, Myers-Scotton argues that speakers use code choices more generally to negotiate their wants about relationships. In other words, speakers choose one linguistic variety over another based on the benefits anticipated from that choice compared to the costs.

Like Myers-Scotton’s negotiation maxims, the Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) of Giles (see Giles, et al. 1973; Giles & Coupland 1991; Giles 2009) stresses personal motivation strategy. CAT is built on the idea that speakers are motivated to lessen communicative differences between themselves and their listeners because they desire to be approved of or they seek for more effective communication.

Studies on language choice and accommodation have been conducted in Singapore. Focussing on the societal dimensions of language choice, Platt (1985) studied language use in major shopping centres and Yong (1987) examined language choice in the context of hawker-customer exchanges. Yong found that ethnicity was the overriding factor that determined customers’ language choice to hawkers (and vice versa). Platt concluded that while location tends to influence language choice, this is
sometimes challenged by other factors: class, age and ethnicity of the participants, configuration of the individual's personal verbal repertoire and by personal preferences. For example, the ethnic Malays in all shopping areas, including high prestige ones, used only Malay and did not accommodate to the language of non-Malays. This behaviour likely reflects a time period when Bazaar Malay was more commonly used as a *lingua franca* among non-Malays than it is today.

More recently, Lee (2007) studied how the Mainland Chinese in Singapore construct their identities in relation to Singapore Chinese speakers and how such negotiation of identities related to their language behaviours. One of her findings was that most of her 21 Mainland Chinese participants (who were professionals and not unskilled migrants) were "linguistically secure" in their language use and did not aspire to align fully with Singapore Chinese speakers. This suggests that some differences may be identified in the politeness norms and accommodation strategies of Singapore Chinese and Mainland Chinese living in Singapore.

A lot of research on politeness has been conducted since Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) first proposed their model of politeness. As China grows in global importance, cross-cultural and intercultural research on Chinese politeness has also increased. Written as a challenge to Brown & Levinson’s (1987) universalist approach to facework, Gu (1990) discusses the concept of politeness in modern Chinese and demonstrates that what counts as polite behaviour is often culture-specific and language-specific. He illustrates how, in a dinner invitation talk exchange where the speaker insists on inviting and the hearer declines although he would like to accept the invitation, the speaker might be seen as imposing and the hearer seen as hypocritical by a non-Chinese observer.

More recently, Kadar and Pan (2011) overview Chinese politeness from a “discursive” perspective. Analysing linguistic behaviour in unrelated and asymmetrical interactions, they argue that in contemporary China the practice of politeness behaviour that we can define as “normative” is not adhered to in many interpersonal relationships. Three service encounters taken from two large datasets recorded in two separate time spans were analysed. It was argued that when the interactants are unrelated and/or there is a power difference between them, the hearer usually does not evaluate a lack of politeness as “impolite.” This finding suggests that personal relationships and power differences may both significantly influence the evaluation of language choice politeness by Mainland Chinese living in Singapore.

As for research on politeness in Singapore, most studies have focused on the expression of politeness in Singapore English (e.g. Tan’s (1992) study of politeness in requests for information). Focussing on Singaporean Chinese politeness, Lee (2011) discusses the issue with specific examples of social interactions in Singapore. She shows that many of the norms of politeness are often not adhered to in Singaporean discourse. To illustrate this point, she provides a sample interaction between a food vendor and a customer. In this example, the customer puts up with the rude behaviour of the vendor so as to get his order. My study further explores how Singapore Chinese customers view the politeness of their language choices at different locations and towards various types of service people.
3. Methodology

The data for this study was collected over two months between October and November 2014. A short paper-based survey was administered to ten Mainland Chinese dependents, three Mainland Chinese students and ten Singapore Chinese participants. The ten students and Singaporeans have been included to compare their responses to the Chinese dependents. The language choices and perceptions of Mainland dependents could be different from Mainland students since their reasons for being in Singapore are quite different. While some in the former group might not have chosen to immigrate if not for their spouse, most of the latter are in Singapore by choice. I have also decided to include only female participants across all groups in the study as I wanted to avoid having gender as a variable in data analysis. Participants were my personal contacts. Table 1 shows the biographical variables of the participants.

Table 1. Biographical variables of participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Length of Residence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mainland Dependents</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36.4 (5.7)</td>
<td>4.3 (3.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainland Students</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23.1 (2.1)</td>
<td>1.2 (1.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore Chinese</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37.2 (10.1)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Age and Length of Residence showed in means (with SDs).

Participants were presented with different service encounters scenarios and asked to rate the choice of each language on a scale from very rude to very polite. The scenarios varied in the class/location of the service (e.g. hawker center, fast food restaurant, high-end restaurant) and the nationality/ethnicity of the service provider (e.g. Chinese from China, Singaporean Chinese, Malay). This survey design allowed me to find out whether the participants think speaking English or Chinese is appropriate in a situation and whether one is more polite than the other. (See Appendix A for a bilingual copy of the survey used.)

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3 The Singapore government allows high-salaried migrant workers to bring their family members to Singapore as well (Ministry of Manpower 2015). This has resulted in a class of dependents or “trailing spouses,” primarily wives who accompany their husbands to Singapore.
4. **Data Analysis**

After data from the questionnaires had been collected and collated, analyses with Excel and Rbrul (Johnson 2009) were performed.

Figure 1 shows the overall difference between English and Mandarin politeness ratings. It shows that English was given a higher rating overall than Mandarin by all three participant groups. Mainland dependents gave the highest rating for the politeness of English followed by Mainland students. Mainland dependents also gave the highest politeness rating for Mandarin while students gave the lowest.

**Figure 1. Overall difference between politeness ratings**

![Graph showing overall difference between English and Mandarin politeness ratings.](image)

Figures 2 to 4 show the politeness ratings given by the three participant groups for location and service person separately. They show that for the Singapore Chinese participants, Mandarin has a higher politeness rating than English when the service person is a Mainland Chinese. However, for the Mainland participants, English still has a higher politeness rating than Mandarin when the service person is a Mainland Chinese.
Figure 2. Dependents’ politeness rating by location and service person

Figure 3. Students’ politeness rating by location and service person

Figure 4. Singapore Chinese’ politeness rating by location and service person
For mixed-effect linear regression analyses with Rbrul, the dependent variable was first the rating for English and then the rating for Mandarin (1=very rude; 2=a bit rude; 3=rather polite; 4=very polite). Using separate models for the three participant groups, the fixed variables were location, service person, age (continuous), length of residence (for dependents and students) and participant number (random variable). Tables 2 to 7 show the significant constraints on participants’ perception of English and of Mandarin as polite. Finally, Table 8 shows a comparison of the results.

4.1. Rbrul results for dependents

Table 2 shows that location, service person and age were significant predictors for dependents’ perception of English as a polite language. Dependents would more likely perceive English as polite at restaurants and when speaking to Singaporean Chinese and Malays. Older dependents would be more likely to perceive English as polite too. Table 3 shows that service person and length of residence were significant predictors for perceiving Mandarin as polite. Dependents would more likely perceive Mandarin as polite when speaking to Chinese from China and Singaporean Chinese. Dependents with a shorter length of residence would be more likely to perceive Mandarin as polite.

| Table 2. | Significant constraints on Dependents’ choice of English as a polite language |
|---|---|---|
| **Location** | Log-odds | Tokens | Mean |
| Restaurant | 0.256 | 30 | 3.533 |
| Fastfood | -0.078 | 30 | 3.200 |
| Hawker | -0.178 | 30 | 3.100 |
| **Service person** | | | |
| Sg Chinese | 0.089 | 30 | 3.367 |
| Sg Malay | 0.089 | 30 | 3.367 |
| China Chi | -0.178 | 30 | 3.100 |
| **Age** | +0.036 | | |

Participant

| Std Dev intercept= 0.297, tokens = 90, mean = 3.287 |
|---|---|---|---|
| deviance | AIC | df | intercept grand mean R2.fixed R2.random R2.total |
| 102.068 | 142.962 | 8 | 1.969 | 3.278 | 0.271 | 0.259 | 0.53 |
Table 3. Significant constraints on Dependents’ choice of Mandarin as a polite language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service person</th>
<th>Log-odds</th>
<th>Tokens</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China Chi</td>
<td>0.350</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sg Chinese</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sg Malay</td>
<td>-0.450</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Residence</td>
<td>-0.105</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant

Std Dev intercept= 0.331, tokens = 90, mean = 2.611

deviance    AIC      df   intercept grand mean R2.fixed R2.random R2.total
178.912   204.483  6     3.068      2.611 0.351 0.105 42 0.493

4.2. Rbrul results for students

Table 4 shows that location and service person were significant predictors for Chinese students’ perception of English as polite. Like dependents, students would perceive English as polite at restaurants and when speaking to Singaporean Chinese and Malays. However, Table 5 shows that unlike dependents, both location and service person were significant predictors for perceiving Mandarin as polite. Students would perceive Mandarin as polite at fastfood restaurants and hawker centers and when speaking to Chinese from China and Singaporean Chinese.

Table 4. Significant constraints on Mainland students’ choice of English as a polite language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Log-odds</th>
<th>Tokens</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>0.244</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fastfood</td>
<td>-0.056</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawker</td>
<td>-0.189</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sg Malay</td>
<td>0.144</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sg Chinese</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China Chi</td>
<td>-0.222</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.033</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant

Std Dev intercept= 0.321, tokens = 90, mean = 3.256

deviance    AIC      df   intercept grand mean R2.fixed R2.random R2.total
104.029   136.556  7     3.256   3.256 0.182 0.322 0.504
Table 5. Significant constraints on Mainland students’ choice of Mandarin as a polite language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Log-odds</th>
<th>Tokens</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawker</td>
<td>0.122</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fastfood</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>-0.211</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Service person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China Chi</td>
<td>0.489</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sg Chinese</td>
<td>0.222</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sg Malay</td>
<td>-0.711</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.633</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant

- Std Dev intercept = 0.27, tokens = 90, mean = 2.344
- deviance | AIC | df | intercept | grand mean | R2.fixed | R2.random | R2.total |
- 135.644 | 166.684 | 7  | 2.344  | 2.344   | 0.477    | 0.121    | 0.598  |

4.3. Rbrul results for Singapore Chinese

Table 6 shows that location and service person were significant predictors for Singaporeans' perception of English as polite. Unlike dependents and students, Singaporeans would perceive English as polite at restaurants as well as at fastfood restaurants and when speaking to Singaporean Chinese and Malays. Table 7 shows that location and service person were significant predictors for perceiving Mandarin as polite. Singaporeans would perceive Mandarin as polite only at hawker centers and when speaking to Chinese from China and Singaporean Chinese.
Table 6. Significant constraints on Singapore Chinese’ choice of English as a polite language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Log-odds</th>
<th>Tokens</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fastfood</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawker</td>
<td>-0.223</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service person</th>
<th>Log-odds</th>
<th>Tokens</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sg Malay</td>
<td>0.262</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sg Chinese</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China Chi</td>
<td>-0.338</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant

Std Dev intercept= 0.332, tokens = 90, mean = 3.033

deviance  AIC  df  intercept  grand mean  R2.fixed  R2.random  R2.total
144.837   175.244 7  3.038       3.033       0.192       0.24       0.432

Table 7. Significant constraints on Singapore Chinese’ choice of Mandarin as a polite language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Log-odds</th>
<th>Tokens</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hawker</td>
<td>0.256</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fastfood</td>
<td>-0.078</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>-0.178</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.233</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service person</th>
<th>Log-odds</th>
<th>Tokens</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China Chi</td>
<td>0.789</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sg Chinese</td>
<td>0.556</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sg Malay</td>
<td>-1.344</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.067</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant

Std Dev intercept= 0.335, tokens = 90, mean = 2.411

deviance  AIC  df  intercept  grand mean  R2.fixed  R2.random  R2.total
142.514   173.042 7  2.411       2.411       0.722       0.085       0.807

4.4. Comparison of Rbrul results between groups

Table 8 shows a comparison of the Rbrul results for the three participant groups. All three participant groups are likely to perceive English as polite at restaurants but Mainland participants are not likely to perceive English as polite at fast-food restaurants. For Mainland dependents, location was not a significant predictor for the politeness of Mandarin. All three participant groups are likely to perceive English as polite towards Singapore Malay and Singapore Chinese service people and Mandarin as polite towards Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese service people.
Table 8. Comparison between groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent</th>
<th>English more likely rated higher for politeness</th>
<th>Mandarin more likely rated higher for politeness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Service Person</td>
<td>Other Significant Variables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Service Person</td>
<td>Other Significant Variables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>Sg Chinese; Sg Malay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Service Person</td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Service Person</td>
<td>Fastfood; Hawker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Service Person</td>
<td>Mainland Chi; Sg Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>Sg Chinese; Sg Malay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Service Person</td>
<td>Hawker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Service Person</td>
<td>Mainland Chi; Sg Chinese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Discussion

The questionnaire data on the whole suggest that Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese perceive their language choices similarly in terms of politeness. The results show that both Singapore Chinese and Mainland Chinese rated English overall higher in terms of politeness than Mandarin at all locations and towards Singapore Chinese and Malay service people. Compared to Singapore Chinese, Mainland Chinese gave higher overall ratings for the politeness of English. Mainland Chinese were, like Singapore Chinese, more likely to perceive English as polite at restaurants. This is similar to Platt’s (1985) finding where shoppers chose English in shops of higher social standing.

Furthermore, Mainland Chinese were more likely to perceive English as polite towards Singapore Chinese and Singapore Malays. According to CAT, speakers accommodate to the language of the person from whom they desire something or wish to gain approval. In this case, migrants might be converging towards the host community in order to be approved. The exploratory-choice maxim (Myers-Scotton 1983) may also come into play here. English might become a ‘safe’ language choice for service encounters involving Singaporeans since English is the lingua franca here.

On the other hand, the questionnaire results show that Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese alike gave Mandarin lower overall politeness rating than English. Although location was not a significant predictor for Mainland wives and Singapore Chinese, all three participant groups were likely to perceive Mandarin as polite when speaking to Singapore Chinese and Mainland Chinese service people.

An interesting finding is that Singaporean Chinese think Mandarin is more polite than English when addressing mainland Chinese service people. On the other hand, the mainland Chinese think that English is more polite than Mandarin even when speaking to other mainland Chinese service people.
6. Conclusion

This brief study provides a glimpse into how, compared with Singapore Chinese, Mainland Chinese would rate the politeness of their language choices during service encounters. The questionnaire data on the whole does not suggest that Mainland Chinese and Singapore Chinese evaluate their language choices very differently in terms of politeness. If Mainland Chinese migrants do in fact use more Mandarin during service encounters, it is not because they have a different perception of politeness and language choice compared to Singapore Chinese.

A bigger pool of subjects could be recruited for a further study. Qualitative methods could also supplement the quantitative method used. Questions asked through the same questionnaire or through interviews could throw some light on the reasons and motivations behind participants’ choices. Furthermore, since self-reports may not reflect actual language use all the time, observations could be carried out to collect data of actual language use at the various situations referred to in this preliminary study. More situations could also be explored.

**Acknowledgements:** This working paper was completed under the supervision of Assistant Professor Rebecca Starr whose advice and insight has made this endeavour a great learning experience.

7. References


Appendix A

Version 2, 01/09/14

Consider the following scenarios involving a service person and you. You will be asked to rate the politeness of giving your order in Mandarin and English. For each case, circle the rating you think is appropriate on the scale from “very rude” to “very polite.”

以下是你跟服务员对话的情境。请你评估你在分别使用英语和华语点餐时的礼貌程度。请针对以下各个情境在不同的选项中选择最适合的答案。

Location A: At a hawker centre
地点 A：在小贩中心

Please select 请选

If the service person appears to be from China:
如果服务员看起来像是从中国来的:

A1. If I order in Mandarin it is… Very rude A bit rude Rather polite Very polite

如果我用华语点餐，这是。。。 非常不礼貌 有一点不礼貌 相当礼貌 非常礼貌

A2. If I order in English it is… Very rude A bit rude Rather polite Very polite

如果我用英语点餐，这是。。。 非常不礼貌 有一点不礼貌 相当礼貌 非常礼貌

If the service person appears to be Chinese Singaporean:
如果服务员看起来像是新加坡华人:

A3. If I order in Mandarin it is… Very rude A bit rude Rather polite Very polite

如果我用华语点餐，这是。。。 非常不礼貌 有一点不礼貌 相当礼貌 非常礼貌

A4. If I order in English it is… Very rude A bit rude Rather polite Very polite

如果我用英语点餐，这是。。。 非常不礼貌 有一点不礼貌 相当礼貌 非常礼貌

If the service person appears to be Malay:
如果服务员看起来像是马来人:

A5. If I order in Mandarin it is… Very rude A bit rude Rather polite Very polite

如果我用华语点餐，这是。。。 非常不礼貌 有一点不礼貌 相当礼貌 非常礼貌

A6. If I order in English it is… Very rude A bit rude Rather polite Very polite

如果我用英语点餐，这是。。。 非常不礼貌 有一点不礼貌 相当礼貌 非常礼貌
如果我用英语点餐，这是。。。
非常不礼貌 有一点不礼貌 相当礼貌
非常礼貌

Location B: at a fast food restaurant
地点 B: 在快餐店

Please select 请选

If the service person appears to be from China:
如果服务员看起来像是从中国来的:

B1. If I order in Mandarin it is…
Very rude  A bit rude  Rather polite  Very polite

B2. If I order in English it is…
Very rude  A bit rude  Rather polite  Very polite

If the service person appears to be Chinese Singaporean:
如果服务员看起来像是新加坡华人:

B3. If I order in Mandarin it is…
Very rude  A bit rude  Rather polite  Very polite

B4. If I order in English it is…
Very rude  A bit rude  Rather polite  Very polite

If the service person appears to be Malay:
如果服务员看起来像是马来人:

B5. If I order in Mandarin it is…
Very rude  A bit rude  Rather polite  Very polite

B6. If I order in English it is…
Very rude  A bit rude  Rather polite  Very polite
Location C: At an expensive restaurant
地点 C: 在高级餐厅

Please select 请选

If the service person appears to be from China:
如果服务员看起来像是从中国来的:

C1. If I order in Mandarin it is…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very rude</th>
<th>A bit rude</th>
<th>Rather polite</th>
<th>Very polite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>非常不礼貌</td>
<td>有一点不礼貌</td>
<td>相当礼貌</td>
<td>非常礼貌</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C2. If I order in English it is…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very rude</th>
<th>A bit rude</th>
<th>Rather polite</th>
<th>Very polite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>非常不礼貌</td>
<td>有一点不礼貌</td>
<td>相当礼貌</td>
<td>非常礼貌</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the service person appears to be Chinese Singaporean:
如果服务员看起来像是新加坡华人:

C3. If I order in Mandarin it is…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very rude</th>
<th>A bit rude</th>
<th>Rather polite</th>
<th>Very polite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>非常不礼貌</td>
<td>有一点不礼貌</td>
<td>相当礼貌</td>
<td>非常礼貌</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C4. If I order in English it is…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very rude</th>
<th>A bit rude</th>
<th>Rather polite</th>
<th>Very polite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>非常不礼貌</td>
<td>有一点不礼貌</td>
<td>相当礼貌</td>
<td>非常礼貌</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the service person appears to be Malay:
如果服务员看起来像是马来人:

C5. If I order in Mandarin it is…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very rude</th>
<th>A bit rude</th>
<th>Rather polite</th>
<th>Very polite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>非常不礼貌</td>
<td>有一点不礼貌</td>
<td>相当礼貌</td>
<td>非常礼貌</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C6. If I order in English it is…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very rude</th>
<th>A bit rude</th>
<th>Rather polite</th>
<th>Very polite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>非常不礼貌</td>
<td>有一点不礼貌</td>
<td>相当礼貌</td>
<td>非常礼貌</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age 年龄: _____ Length of Residenc
Second Language Acquisition and Sociolinguistic Variation: 
A Study Abroad Perspective on the Use of Discourse Markers in the L2

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Second Language Acquisition & Sociolinguistic Variation: A Study Abroad Perspective on the Use of Discourse Markers in the L2

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Abstract

Study abroad has become a prolific area of second language acquisition (SLA) research and, in particular, a new stream in SLA research, specifically from within a variationist perspective, has started investigating sociolinguistic and sociopragmatic variation in the second language (L2). Combining insights from sociolinguistic variation and SLA, this contribution, which is part of an ongoing PhD research project, is based on a longitudinal analysis conducted over a time span of a semester (January-June 2015) at University College Cork (UCC), Ireland. In particular, the aim of this study is to examine participants’ use of the discourse marker ‘well’ in their oral production over time.

1. Study abroad research: An introduction

Study abroad has become a prolific area of investigation with insightful contributions to second language (L2) learners’ experiences abroad (Devlin 2014; Dewey 2007; Howard 2005, 2012; Kinginger 2004, 2011, 2013; Mitchell et al. 2015; Regan et al. 2009). This area of research was pioneered by the work of Freed (1995), which brought the attention of SLA researchers to learners’ study abroad (SA) experiences and SA learners’ linguistic outcomes. This increased scholarly interest in this discipline may be connected with the fact that studying abroad appears to be an extremely popular experience among students. Indeed, Devlin (2014) finds that “[…] in our increasingly globalised village, crossing the international and linguistic borders has become commonplace […]” (Devlin 2014, p. 1). This popularity may have been also aided by a considerable number of exchange programmes, which have allowed many L2 users to spend part of their academic studies in another country (Howard 2005).

As previously mentioned, the general focus of SA research is on learners who decide to spend a period of varying duration in the target language (TL) community, i.e. the community where the language that they may have studied at school is officially spoken. The reasons behind this choice may be linked to the so-called “folklinguistic consensus” (Regan et al. 2009, p. 20), i.e. study abroad is a desirable experience since it is thought to favour and accelerate foreign language acquisition by allowing “the instructed learner to engage in more informal acquisition in the TL community, through naturalistic contact with the L2 in everyday situations” (Regan et al. 2009, p. 20). Thus, studying abroad is believed to offer considerable opportunities to learn the TL as well as the social and pragmatic meanings of certain target linguistic features (Kinginger 2012).

However, SLA within a study abroad context is extremely complex and students’ outcomes may depend on a plurality of factors and cannot simply be ascribed to new learning context or, as mentioned by Kinginger (2011), to the intentions of the students or some of the learners’ attributes. Additionally, the experience abroad may favour the development of certain linguistic skills, whereas it may not extensively affect others. For instance, according to Freed (1995), after the experience abroad students tend to “speak with greater ease and confidence, realized by a greater abundance of speech, spoken at a faster rate and [their speech is] characterised by fewer disfluency-sounding pauses” (Freed 1995, p. 26). This is also corroborated by Lafford (1995), who claims that SA abroad students are better conversationalists compared to their ‘at home’ peers (Lafford
1995). However, with regard to structural accuracy of their L2, Freed (1995) finds that “significant changes do not take place” (Freed 1995, p. 27).

2. Variationist perspective on SLA

As mentioned in Section 1, SA proves to be an incredibly diverse learning context. This is reflected in its subsequent areas of research, which have dealt with the alleged benefits of the experience abroad under different perspectives. In recent years, a new wave of SLA research has started drawing increased attention on what is variable in the L2 (Nestor and Regan 2015), starting with the study by Adamson and Regan (1991) on the acquisition of the phonological pattern of [-ing] versus [-in] in Cambodian and Vietnamese immigrants in the United States. The interest in this new research strand has been consolidated by a wide range of studies (Bayley and Regan 2004; Dewaele and Mougeon 2004; Howard 2012; Regan 1998; Regan et al. 2009) who investigated learners’ experiences in an SA context, with particular reference to the variable features of the L2. Interestingly, the majority of the existing literature has focused on L2 French (Howard et al. 2013), and non-standard features in L2 English have not been extensively analysed despite the key role of English in international communication.

Whilst the analysis of non-standard variables is a relatively new area of research in SLA, it has been a well-researched area of study in sociolinguistics since the 1960s. Numerous studies have tackled the issue of variation in order to demonstrate that variation in language is not a marginal issue, but the choice of variants may be conditioned by different factors, both linguistic and social (Regan 2013). However, as maintained by Regan (2013), at the very beginning, the research field of “variationist sociolinguistics and SLA research developed […] with little reference to each other” (Regan 2013, p. 276), despite the fact they were both interested in speech variables, namely the interlanguage in SLA research and non-standard dialects in variationist sociolinguistics.

In fact, language is inherently variable and this applies whether we are talking about a speaker’s first, second or third language. Indeed, as Regan (2013) aptly puts it, “just as native speakers choose one variant rather than another, so do L2 speakers” (Regan 2013, p. 278). Traditionally, SLA research primarily focused on what was categorical in the language (Howard 2012), with a particular focus on developmental patterns in the interlanguage, defined by Rehner as “Type 1 variation”:

Type 1 variation manifests itself via an alternation between […] forms that conform to native language norms and […] forms that are not observable in native speech, often referred to as ‘errors’” (Dewaele and Mougeon 2004, p. 296)

Such variation is quite common in the L2 development (Howard et al. 2013) and an example of this variation can be the negative form of the verb in English, which may be expressed by learners with the correct target form, i.e. ‘don’t go’, but also with other non-target forms, such as ‘no go’ or ‘not go’.

Therefore, with the focus on developmental patterns, there was a tendency in SLA research to view learners as acquiring a monolithic target language and prestige norm varieties, frequently in a formal classroom context. However, as also mentioned by Regan (2013), L2 speakers’ experiences are far more complex and learners, especially in a naturalistic context, may be exposed to a multiplicity of varieties. SLA variationist research has begun to address this complexity and scholars have started investigating the learner’s ability to use native-speaker sociolinguistic and sociopragmatic variants
(Howard et al. 2013), which are often referred to as ‘Type 2 variation’ (Dewaele and Mougeon 2002; Rehner 2005). This type of variation is particularly interesting, as it involves choice and plays an important role in the speaker’s identity construction, self-representation in interaction and establishment of relations with interlocutors (Regan 2013).

3. Discourse markers & SLA

Unlike other variationist studies of L2 speech that show more systematic patterns of variation of the target variable (such as [-ing] versus [-in]), with regard to discourse markers (DMs), there is extreme variation in the frequency of use by L2 users (Liao 2009). In particular, as stressed by Liao (2009), the use of DMs in the L2 oral production is also a matter of choice, as learners would probably be understood anyway without using them in their oral production. Whilst the oral production of native speakers is “peppered with these expressions” (Lewis 2006, p. 43), the use of DMs seems to be a rather limited phenomenon by L2 users (Sankoff et al. 1997).

According to Liao (2009), the reason behind this trend may be ascribed to the lack of explicit teaching of DMs in classroom contexts. Instructed learners may be not able to fully grasp the value of DMs in conversation, as those items appear to them to be “usually invisible” (Liao 2009, p. 114). In fact, learners may not particularly feel the need to use those items in conversations in the classroom, as they can speak grammatically and intelligibly even without the use of DMs. However, DMs cannot be considered as optional elements. According to Fung and Carter (2007), DMs can “enhance fluent and naturalistic conversation skills [of L2 users]” (Fung and Carter 2007, p. 433). Indeed, they contribute to make the conversation less artificial (Magliacane 2015) and some markers “can never be deleted [in conversation] without radically altering the range of possible interpretations” (Rossari 2000, p. 32) of what is being uttered.

Thus, they play a pivotal role at a conversational level and their lack of presence in language learning curricula may be ascribed to other factors. De Klerk (2005), for instance, claims that their “lack of semantic denotation [...] makes formal and explicit commentary on their use fairly difficult” (de Klerk 2005, p. 1201). Beeching and Woodfield (2015) add another interesting perspective, mainly connected with their oral status. As learners in the classroom are mainly exposed to standard and prestige forms, DMs are rarely dealt with by instructors because of the stigma associated to oral features of the language (Beeching and Woodfield 2015).

In particular, in conversations, DMs mainly perform two functions:

1. they are used to help speech management and smooth interaction between speakers. Therefore, as Crystal (1988) puts it, they can be described as “the oil which helps us perform the complex task of spontaneous speech production and interaction smoothly and efficiently” (Crystal 1988, p. 48);
2. they facilitate listener comprehension because of their attitudinal function. Indeed, as Bazzanella (2006) argues, they “indicate the mood of the sentence [... and] express attitudes and emotions” (Bazzanella 2006, p. 449).

Moreover, DMs also play an important function at a pragmatic level. Indeed, an erroneous use of those linguistic items may lead to misunderstandings or cause a breakdown in communication with native speakers of a specific language, as Svartvik (1980) interestingly illustrates:
[I]f a foreign language learners says five sheeps or he goed, he can be corrected by practically every native speaker. If, on the other hand, he omits a well [italics added], the likely reaction will be that he is dogmatic, impolite, awkward to talk to etc, but a native cannot pinpoint an ‘error’ (Svartvik 1980, p. 171).

Thus, as also argued by Devlin (2014), the importance of pragmatic and sociopragmatic competence in the linguistic repertoire of a learner cannot be underestimated, as a native speaker may misinterpret erroneous pragmatic language uses as inappropriate or rude behaviour.

As DMs are not explicitly taught in a formal context, if learners acquire those expressions, they mainly do so in an informal context and through contact with native speakers (Sankoff et al. 1999). On the other hand, using DMs in L2 oral production can be a symptom of an intense contact with the TL community (Giuliano and Russo 2014) and could also be an important parameter of assessment of learners’ degree of integration in the host community, because DMs function as “an index of learners’ level of exposure to and contact with the language” (Migge 2015, p. 391). Assessing this aspect can be particularly interesting, especially from a study abroad perspective. Being exposed to larger amounts of input, learners may tend to use DMs differently in the L2 after their experience abroad. This contribution, based on a longitudinal analysis, will attempt to investigate this issue, with a particular reference to the use of ‘well’.

4. Description of the study

The study presented in this contribution is part of an ongoing and a much wider PhD project, conducted at University College Cork, Ireland, in cooperation with the University of Naples Federico II, Italy. The following pilot study has been conducted with 5 students of Italian nationality, who decided to spend a semester in a university setting in the South of Ireland. Participants were all university students, either working towards the end of a Bachelor’s Degree or at the beginning of their Master’s. Thus, in terms of age, the group was quite homogeneous. With regards to gender, informants were all women, whereas their university backgrounds and their living arrangement choices were very diverse, as Table 1 shows.
Table 1. *Ethnographic information on the participants*¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>University background</th>
<th>Living arrangement</th>
<th>Nationality of the co-tenants²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cassandra</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>Private house</td>
<td>NNS (Italian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salome</td>
<td>Modern Languages (English &amp; Chinese)</td>
<td>Campus accommodation</td>
<td>NNSs (Chinese)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gea</td>
<td>Geology</td>
<td>Host family/Private house</td>
<td>NSs (Irish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afrodite</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Off-campus student accommodation</td>
<td>NS (American) &amp; NNS (French)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venere</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Private houses</td>
<td>NSs (Irish)/NNSs (Spanish)³</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participation in this project was completely voluntary. Although all participants were aware that the study was being conducted for research purposes, they did not know what features of their oral production in English were being measured and analysed. Informants were interviewed twice: the first time within the first month in Ireland (henceforth referred to as Time 1) and then again a few days before their departure (henceforth referred to as Time 2). Interviews lasted on average 45 minutes and there was a tendency for interviews in Time 2 to last slightly longer. This difference in length may be ascribed to different factors: participants were more familiar with the project and the interviewer was not a complete stranger, as she was in Time 1.

Data were collected through sociolinguistic interviews, audio-recorded conversations using the standard ‘modules’ developed by Labov (1984) for the elicitation of spontaneous speech production. These modules, or series of designed questions, covered a wide range of topics, from university studies to cultural differences between Ireland and Italy, and topics in which students were also emotionally involved. Following the principles stated by Labov (1984), these topics were chosen to favour the production of unmonitored speech and to avoid the focus on form and conscious choice between alternants, as the speakers were aware that they were being recorded.

In addition to their participation in the interviews, students were also asked to complete two questionnaires, which were administered through an online survey system at the end of each interview. The two questionnaires provided useful information about the informants, with specific reference to their background learning experiences, expectations about their experience abroad, desired learning outcomes and degree of interaction with local people. The two questionnaires were devised considering the model of the language learner profile proposed by Freed et al. (2004) and some of the questions used by the University of Southampton within the framework of the LANGSNAP project (Mitchell 2015).

Each interview was analysed individually to assess the frequency of the discourse marker ‘well’. The occurrences were normalised (per 1,000 words) to the number of tokens of each interview, in order to favour comparability across informants.

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¹In order to preserve the anonymity of participants, pseudonyms will be used throughout this contribution.
²NNS = non native speaker, NS = native speaker.
³Venere lived for the first few weeks with Irish students and then she moved to a different private house, where the nationality of the co-tenants was Spanish.
The occurrences of this marker and its relevant function in Time 1 and Time 2 were compared to assess whether there had been any changes in their use in L2 over time. Cases of increase or decrease in the use of the marker were analysed in the light of the learners’ response to interviews and questionnaires, in order to assess to what extent their social participation and integration in the TL community may have affected the frequency of this marker in learners’ L2 oral production.

5. Some preliminary findings

As previously mentioned, this study is part of an ongoing PhD research project, conducted at University College Cork, in cooperation with the University of Naples Federico II, Italy. The data collected for this contribution are also part of a larger study (Caliendo and Magliacane, forthcoming) conducted with the specific aim of quantitatively assessing different types of stalling phenomena in L2 speech. This contribution will focus, in particular, on the use of ‘well’, which may be used in some contexts as a stalling conversation strategy. In particular, as it will be elaborated in the following sections, this marker has been selected for analysis due to its difference of use in the L1 (i.e. Italian) and the L2 (i.e. English) of the participants in this study.

5.1 The use of ‘well’

The discourse marker ‘well’ has developed historically from its corresponding adverb (Beeching 2015). Whilst the adverb has exclusively positive connotations (i.e. ‘sleep well!’) the use of ‘well’ as a discourse marker is far from expressing a whole-hearted acceptance. On the contrary, it is often used in speech to express reservation or dispreferred response in a “covert and polite manner” (Beeching 2015, p. 184). According to Schiffrin (1987), ‘well’ is a response marker indicating that what follows “is not fully consonant with prior coherence options” (Schiffrin 1987, p. 103) and its use in conversation generally implies that “the most immediately accessible context is not the most relevant one for the interpretation of the impeding utterance” (Jucker 1993, p. 435).

Fuller (2003), following Jucker (1993), outlines four functions of this marker. In this view (Fuller 2003: 28-29), ‘well’ can be:

1. A marker of insufficiency, i.e. it indicates that the previous utterance needs to be modified, qualified or reformulated.

   Example 1:
   I don’t know if I’m gonna take my Psychology final and not… well, I know I hafta take one part of it, but the second part’s optional

2. A face-threat mitigator, i.e. it prefaces a disagreement.

   Example 2:
   B: Her lips are moving too fast. That’s such a dumb commercial
   A: I’ve never seen this before
   B: Well, look at it

---

4 Examples about the functions of ‘well’ are taken from Fuller (2003, pp. 28-29). The examples have been inserted using the same conventions of transcriptions used in Fuller (2003).
3. **A marker which indicates a topic change.**

Example 3:
If you’re a dog … you have the same challenges as the rest of us … just on a different scale. (to dog) Isn’t that right, Shamus? You are a good boy. (3 second [sic] pause) **Well**, I don’t know… **well** … (3 second [sic] pause) I’m about ready to go back to sleep, almost, I’m tired

4. **A delay device,** i.e. a strategy which allows speakers to think about what to say next and bridges interactional silence:

Example 4
**Well,** um, so what year are you in school?

The use of ‘well’ by speakers of Italian nationality can be interesting for, as mentioned by Bazzanella (2006), the functions of ‘well’ in English and of its Italian equivalent ‘bene’ are quite different.

[In Italian, *bene* cannot be used as a turn-taking device, and it cannot carry out partial or complete disagreement. In cases of disagreement, Italian resorts to *be’*, which has lexicalised this particular meaning […], whereas the English *well* contains both of these opposite functions […] (Bazzanella 2006, p. 453)

5.2 **Longitudinal use of ‘well’ by the informants**

With regard to the production of ‘well’, only two informants used it after the SA experience. Table 2 shows the use of “well” by these two learners. The occurrences of ‘well’ are slightly above the frequency of this marker in the control group, as it is possible to see from Table 3, which contains information on the same discourse marker used by the control group.

**Table 2. Salome’s and Gea’s use of ‘well’**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse marker</th>
<th>Salome</th>
<th>Gea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Well</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Time 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Time 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T</strong></td>
<td><strong>R</strong></td>
<td><strong>T</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3. Use of ‘well’ in the control group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse marker</th>
<th><strong>T</strong> (average)</th>
<th><strong>R</strong> (average)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Well</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^5\) T = raw number of occurrences (tokens) in the transcriptions. R = number (rate) of occurrences per 1,000 words.
Following the model proposed by Jucker (1993) and Fuller (2003), each occurrence produced by the learners was analysed in context in order to assess the different functions of ‘well’ (see Table 4).

**Table 4. Functions of ‘well’**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Salome</th>
<th>Gea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marking insufficiency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time 1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time 2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face threat mitigators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time 1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time 2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time 1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time 2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delay service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time 2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 4 shows, ‘well’ has mainly been used by the informants as a “native like stalling phenomenon” (Lafford 1995, p. 106), that is, as a delay strategy to think about what to say next and as a speech management device to indicate a topic change or a reformulation of what previously uttered. Although both participants started using this marker more frequently in Time 2, there were no occurrences in Time 2 of its use as a face-threat mitigator.

6. Discussion

Data revealed that the use of ‘well’ became frequent in Time 2 in the oral production of only 2 participants in the study. This finding may be in line with Lafford (1995) in that “a semester is not long enough for students to rely solely on native-like stalling phenomena” (Lafford 1995, p. 106). The two students who managed to produce this marker more frequently in Time 2 were also those who claimed to have experienced frequent contact with members of the TL community, either through strong bonds with their co-tenants (as in the case of Salome) or with peers with whom they shared a lot of interests (as in the case of Gea).

It also emerged that those two students, upon completion of their experience abroad, tended to overindulge in their use of ‘well’ in comparison with native speakers. This phenomenon has been evidenced also in other studies (Aijmer 2011; Buysse 2015) conducted with participants of L1s other than Italian. The overindulgence of learners in the use of some particular markers may be explained by the fact that L2 users do not have the same wide range of DMs as native speakers do; thus, they may rely mainly on the ones they managed to acquire.

With regard to the functions of ‘well’, the analysis has shown that the two students who managed to use this marker more frequently in Time 2 did not use it to express disagreement. These results may be explained by the fact that in Italian the equivalent of ‘well’ cannot be used to express disagreement (Bazzanella 2006). Therefore, this feature of the learners’ L1 may have hindered the acquisition of ‘well’ in this particular function. Additionally, Buysse (2015) interestingly suggests that the development of this marker to express speech management functions (i.e. marking insufficiency, topic change and delay service) is in line with the conversational needs of

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6 Raw number of occurrences were considered in this table.
learners, who may be more concerned with the speech management functions rather than expressing interpersonal attitude.

7. Conclusions

This contribution has attempted to combine insights from SA research, variationist perspective in SLA and studies on the use of DMs in the L2. As previously mentioned, the use of DMs in oral speech may be considered a parameter of assessment of the degree of interaction with native speakers in the TL community. Data revealed that the SA experience was beneficial for some of the participants in the study, for whom a friendly environment at home and participation in different and varied social activities favoured contact with local people. However, despite a more frequent use of ‘well’ upon completion of the SA experience, the participants were still not able to use it in its full potential after a semester abroad.

The aim of this contribution was to present some of the preliminary findings of an ongoing PhD research project. Against this background, some limitations of this study need to be outlined. With regards to the number of learners under scrutiny, data collection was confined to only five participants, as the longitudinal nature of the project has been, under some circumstances, an impediment to a larger learner participation in the project. More data are currently being collected, within the framework of the research project, in order to corroborate the preliminary findings. Moreover, all participants in this pilot study were female. While this recruitment practice guaranteed homogeneity among informants, it prevented assessment of whether a difference in the use of DMs might be gender-bound. The above limitations can be taken as desiderata and questions for future research.

8. References


Crystal, David. 1988. Another look at well, you know... English Today 13, 47-49.


Fostering Equality and Diversity: A Linguistic Assessment of the EU Institutions and their Internal Policies

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Fostering Equality and Diversity: 
A Linguistic Assessment of the EU Institutions and their Internal Policies

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Abstract
Nowadays, European Institutions are very conscious of the principle of staff equal opportunities: EU civil servants are systematically involved in the drafting and implementation of equality policies related to the staff regulations and theirs implementing provisions. While analysing the European legal language, it appears quite clear that equality policies and action programmes are written in a way which is not cohesive and does not substantiate the content of the policies themselves. If the language of equality policies of the European Institution is targeted mostly to guarantee the principle of transparency and good administration more than focus on the principles of equality, the result of any consultation and production of policies will never be coherent with the message. The present paper analyses the context of sociolinguistic variation in EU Institutions and draws a preliminary qualitative assessment of the European Staff Regulations, particularly for what concerns the concepts of equality and diversity. This research investigates whether the written production of EU civil servants show a sense of belonging to the Institutions themselves and their political agenda in the field of equality and diversity. The research also aims to analyse the EU civil servants' language use by exploring – from a linguistic point of view - the unconscious biases which impact the production of the EU equality policies and the stakeholders’ consultation they derived from.

Keywords intercultural communication, corpus linguistics, discourse studies, EU institutions, EU equality, diversity policies

1. Introduction

The European Union as we know it was built by visionary leaders who celebrated diversity and strongly believed in the principle of equality. This very principle became a reality in October 2000, with the adoption of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union¹. Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights (FRA) presents the followings:

Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited².

Article 22 further proposes that “the Union shall respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity”³.

On 1 December 2009, with the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon,⁴ the Charter became legally binding for the European institutions and for all European Member States. Moreover, the idea that the decision making process in term of policies and legislation should involve those who are directly affected by them is part of the funding

² European Union (2000, Art. 21)
³ European Union (2000, Art. 23)
values of the European Union, as defined by the principle of solidarity and equality of the working condition set by the Schuman Declaration on 9 May 1950.5

During the last few years, European Union institutions have made great strides towards a more comprehensive principle of equality: citizens and EU public servants are increasingly involved in the drafting and implementation of policies, both at the level of internal administration and at the level of EU policies. The European Union is proactively working to involve stakeholders in the decision making processes, either civil society than EU staff members: processes have been established, methods of analysis and mapping adopted, web platforms with shared questionnaires implemented, participatory leadership processes developed and results monitored and evaluated.

Language is a social instrument: the idea that - through language use - equality and social inclusion is either encouraged, hindered, strengthened or changed is the primary focus of this research. The use of the English language in the EU institution will be analysed, as well as how the EU sociolect impacts the communication and outreach of public servants and civil society. Finally, the analysis will be focusing on how the pattern of EU sociolect can be traced in the equality and diversity policies’ inputs, checking whether the EU policy-making and outreach contains (unconscious) biases.

2. Research questions and methodology

Despite the progress made with regard to encouraging and promoting the principles of equality in the EU documentation, this research argues that the language of legal texts, policies and consultation processes found in the documents of EU Institutions is not completely cohesive with the idea of fostering equality and diversity.

The research will be developed in four different steps: first by analysing the EU policies on equality and diversity, both at the level of staff administration than in the broader European context: with regard to the internal policies the study will focus on the EU staff regulations and implementing rules on equality and diversity, for what concerns the external policies, the examination aims to assess the equality programmes and impact of the so-called “better regulation package”.6 The research will then pay particular attention to the consultations processes, by tracing the inputs received from staff members and civil society respectively: tools and methods of consultation (stakeholder open consultations, focus groups, and participatory meetings) will be examined. The following step will assess the EU civil servants’ sociolect, in particular on what are the patterns that might be traced in the use of English language inside different EU institutions: English as a second language and as Lingua Franca, multicultural interaction and intercultural communication is the focus of this evaluation. At last, the research will focus on which linguistic patterns might affect the policy making process with (unconscious) biases and lack of directness of the policies.

With regard to data collection, the methodologies and theories that will be considered in analysing the EU civil servants’ use of the English language, the EU equality policies and stakeholder consultations processes are the following: Corpus Linguistics, in the analysis of the written production of the EU civil servants: official documents and legal texts, external and internal communication; sample of stakeholder consultations. The documents which will be taken into consideration are mainly related

to equality and diversity policies and action programmes. Ethnographic research: surveys, interviews and judgement data: the aim in describing the English language use by EU civil servants is to represent predominant forms for the community of speakers; the EU sociolect is analysed in order to establish the pattern in the production of official and non-official documents. The aim of questionnaires and surveys will be to elicit information on features, pattern and inter-relation of the use of English language by the EU civil servants community across Europe. The target group will be EU civil servants (officials, temporary agents and contract agents) who serves for the Institutions in different places in Europe.

The data processing will be based on the creation of an EU corpus which will impact in the English language analysis, by setting the representative features, variety and register of the EU sociolect. With the use of multivariate and descriptive Statistics, the data recollected with the questionnaire and the surveys will be processed and observed in order to identify trends and patterns.

For what concerns the data analysis, the research will be based on discourse analysis: the social dimension of the use of the language as embedded in the social interaction and how it build the EU civil servants social realities will be analysed. Written text will be analysed using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Variation analysis might be used to identify linguistics variables of the English language, and how these are affected by social and linguistic contexts, and how this variation might impact the written production. The subject of covert translations of legal texts would also have an impact in the analysis. Computational Linguistics, and in particular sentiment analysis, might be used to analyse and assess the perception of equality policies and processes at EU level.

3. **Sociolinguistic Variation in European Institutions context**

Variable language use in the European Institutions’ could be considered from different approaches; rather relevant for the analysis is the diatopic variation, connected to the origin and geographic distribution of the EU civil servants: the European Institutions and Bodies are situated in each of the 28 Member States across Europe; while the main headquarters of the European Commission, European Parliament and Council of the European Union are in Brussels and Luxemburg, the European Agencies are seated in 23 member states. Particular attention will be given to the difference of the EU sociolect between the Commission’s main locations and the decentralized agencies’ locations.

The diaphasic variation is also being considered: the language used in the EU institutions vary through the different communicative settings, in particular with regard to the field (variation of the subject of the discourse: legal and policies text, decisions, rules and implementing procedures, communication campaigns, daily interactions etc.) and the tenor (different registry of the discourse depending on the audience, different EU style guides).

The diamesic variation entails the mode, or the production of EU documents which runs around different channels, form the EU Official Journal to internet and social media; internal communication and document production is supported by formal and informal meeting, e-mails, etc.

With regard to the diastratic variation (which entails linguistic phenomena related to social status, identity, ethnicity, gender) the European institutions are a good example of socio-cultural diversity: according to the latest Human Resources documents of the
European Commission,\textsuperscript{7} civil servants working for the European Commission are composed of a high diverse group of people, as the European Union currently employs around 33000 people from 28 different nationalities, from all different age groups.

3.1 \textit{The EU staff regulations and the principle of equality: a preliminary qualitative assessment}

The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights is a legally binding text for the European Institution themselves, and the principle of non-discrimination as set in the Charter is also defined in Article 1D of the Staff Regulation of Officials and Condition of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union.\textsuperscript{8}

With regard to internal regulations and implementing rules related to staff administration, it appears that the legal rules in the management of EU staff are still written in a language that is not completely consistent with the idea of fostering equality and diversity. A first preliminary qualitative assessment of the main human resources legislation is the focus of this chapter. The main legal basis of staff management in European Institutions is Staff Regulation. The Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union entered into force for the first time in June 1962 and has been amended 131 times till the latest version, which was adopted in January 2014. Is in this last amendments where the European Commission highlights the effort to make the Institutions’ working environment equal for all staff. For example in Art. 1d.e:

\begin{quote}
The appointing authorities of the institutions shall determine, by agreement, after consulting the Staff Regulations Committee, measures and actions to promote equal opportunities for men and women in the areas covered by these Staff Regulations, and shall adopt the appropriate provisions notably to redress such de facto inequalities as hamper opportunities for women in these areas.
\end{quote}

As well as in Art. 1e.1:

\begin{quote}
Officials in active employment shall have access to measures of a social nature, including specific measures to reconcile working life with family life, adopted by the institutions.
\end{quote}

Beside these important steps related to equal opportunities in the workplace, the language of the Staff Regulation could definitely be improved to foster equality among staff and convey this message in a more structural and comprehensive way: to support this view, I will consider the English language use of two main areas of equality and diversity mainstreaming.


3.2. Gender

The first consideration to make is that the current rules are not gender neutral. In the newly adopted Staff Regulation, Article 1c states that:

Any reference in there Staff Regulation to a person of the male sex shall be deemed also to constitute a reference of a person to the female sex, and vice-versa, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.9

As the plural form might be used in the English language, the argument for using the masculine pronoun seems to be not valid. One may speculate that this phenomena comes from the covert translation of drafting the legislation in French, although in the last years English became the main language of legislative drafting, as a robust stakeholder involvement is taking place in the processes of amending the Staff legislation. In other official documentation (e.g. the publication of Agencies Director’s Positions), the European Commission uses terms such as he/she or she/he for syntactic reasons, whether the use of the plural form might appear wrong this solution could be applied. See for example the publication, in 2015, of the call of expression of interest for the post of Director of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO).10

Other controversial wording in the Staff Regulations that could perhaps be rephrased to more gender neutral terms includes reference to chairman instead of chairperson, chairman includes a total of thirty-one times in said document. With regard to family and personal situation of the EU staff members, and in the context of granting contractual rights and entitlements, the use of terms such as marriage and non-marital partnership is also considered.

Notwithstanding what stated in Art. 1d, “non-marital partnerships shall be treated as marriage provided that all the conditions listed in Article 1(2)(c) of Annex VII are fulfilled”,11 the Staff Regulation reports nine occurrences where the term wife and seven where the term husband take place. The term marriage is used in different occasions, for example in Annex V Art 6, “in addition to annual leave, an official may, on application, be granted special leave. In particular, in the following cases special leave shall be granted as shown: — marriage of the official: four days”.12

Again, while defining that the non-marital partnership is compared to marriage with regard to the application of entitlements in the Staff Regulation, a more cohesive use of the language might reinforce the principle of equality in dealing with these different statuses and change the mind-set of the civil servants who are all affected by these regulations.

3.3 Disability

The second consideration relates to the use of the term “disabled”. For instance, Art. 55a and 76a of the Staff Regulation “disabled” is used to refer to a disabled spouse and in Articles 6 of Annex V to a disabled child.

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9 European Commission (2014, Art 1c)
11 European Commission (2014, Art 1d)
12 European Commission (2014, Art 6, Annex V)
The 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities\textsuperscript{13} refer to \textit{person with a disability} instead of \textit{disable person} to underpin that a person is not disabled but has a disability. The convention has been signed by all the twenty-eight European Member States and so far has been ratified by twenty-five. In 2010, the European Union also ratified the convention and plays a leading role in the monitoring framework for implementing the Convention among EU institutions. The definition of person with a disability in the UN Convention is as follows:

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

This wording is deemed to be fundamental to changing the mindset of people without disabilities: although the Staff Regulation takes on board this definition and includes it in Article 1d, in later articles the term \textit{disabled people} still occurs five times in the consolidated version of the text.

It also appear that the collocation of the word \textit{disable} in the staff regulation of the Staff Regulations is to terms which are related to the sphere of family ties (children and/or spouses): this might entail that no significant focus is given by the main legislative document with regard to instances where an EU staff members has a disability.

4. Conclusions

Nowadays, each European Institution is well conscious and informed on non-discrimination principles: affirmative actions in term of equality, although mostly related to gender than to ethnic minorities or persons with disability, are being implemented in different organisations.

Alongside with considerations related to legal basis, some European Institutions are proactive in dealing with the question of equality and diversity in the workplace. This guarantees equal participation and shared responsibilities in context such as internal directives and policy making. Staff committees in all institutions are consulted before the adoption or modifications to the staff regulations and its implementing rules. In view of the reform of the Staff Regulations of January 2014, Commissioner Šefčovič implemented a huge campaign of information, with the setting up of an internal forum for European Civil Servants who wanted to have a say in the proposed text.

The open question remains whether these consultations are passing a message on equality and diversity, by using a language which could substantiate the improvements in the field. The discourse around the principles of equality and diversity cannot transcend an appropriate use of language, moreover inside international organisation with a key political role in Europe, such as the European Union’s Institutions.

Language is not only a reflection of society, it is an instrument to actively build reality: language does not only reflect interpersonal behavioural patterns, but it creates and defines them: any bias in the use of language has a direct implication on equal opportunities for the civil servants and citizen of the European Union.

5. References


A Corpus Analysis of Online Communication
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Abstract
It is often assumed that speakers engaging in ELF interaction use self-repair and accommodation strategies in order to facilitate communication. Instead of orientating themselves to native speaker norms ELF speakers, they tend to negotiate meaning as the conversation unfolds, adapting their skills to that of their partners. Functional effectiveness, that is, the adequate use of communication strategies, seems to play a much greater role than grammatical accuracy in ELF conversations.

This paper analyzes ELF communication in online communities both from the perspective of linguistic properties and pragmatic communication strategies. A small corpus has been compiled over several months in order to study the morpho-syntactic elements of the postings as well as the frequency and specifics of communication strategies. This paper aims to uncover the extent to which online communication influences the characteristics of ELF interactions.

1. Introduction

This paper intends to provide an insight into the use of English as a lingua franca (ELF) in online communities, focusing on the morpho-syntactic properties of ELF communication and on the pragmatic strategies used within the Couchsurfing Community.

In the last decades there has been an immense growth of international contact, particularly due to two separate developments: the technological revolution of modern communication, and the increase of transportation and mobility (Crystal, 2003, p. 13). The increasing availability of these facilities has made communication even in the most remote parts of the world possible and has consequently provided the ideal circumstances for the development of global languages.

Up until recently, the analyses of English as a lingua franca has focused primarily on spoken data and has been carried out at the level of (a) language use, (b) sociocultural background of interlocutors, and (c) domain analysis (Seidlhofer, 2004, p. 8). Concerning the level of language, ELF descriptions have mainly focused on phonological and pragmatic features (e.g. long pauses, overlapping speech) but there have been additional attempts at describing the lexico-grammatical characteristics of ELF talk. For instance, several corpora have been compiled in order to capture these lexico-grammatical features. The English Department of the University of Vienna, for instance, compiled what is known as the VOICE corpus (Vienna-Oxford International Corpus) with the intention to analyse the morpho-syntactic properties of spoken ELF on the basis of non-native speaker communication. The VOICE corpus is primarily composed of non-native speaker data, with few examples of non-native speakers addressing native speakers; that is, its main focus is on interactions between non-native speakers of English. Research carried out on linguistic properties of ELF talk has resulted in a series of studies that focus on the repercussion of ELF on language teaching and also language acquisition (Canagarajah, 2007, Jenkins, 2000, Seidlhofer, 2004, etc.).

There are also studies on ELF talk focusing on a specific lingua-cultural background of interlocutors and delimiting the research to specific regions, such as...
Southern Africa (e.g., Meierkord, 2006). Finally, some ELF studies also concentrate on a specific domain, such as international business settings, ELF business telephone calls (Haegeman, 2002), and the use of English in academic settings (Mauranen, 2003)\(^\text{14}\). Based on the existing literature, there have been several attempts to describe a lingua franca core that would contain the main phonological, morpho-syntactic and pragmatic characteristics of ELF talk. A lingua franca core has been suggested for pronunciation (cf. Jenkins, 2000), with pronunciation being crucial for intelligibility in face-to-face lingua franca communication. Similarly, a description of its morpho-syntactic characteristics has been developed by several linguists. For instance, Seidlhofer (2004) suggests a preliminary list of grammatical items that are ‘deviant’ from native-speaker norms, yet considered unproblematic by ELF users. These are the following:

- Omission of –s in third person singular: “He look very sad.”
- Omission of articles: “Our countries have signed agreement.”
- Treating who and which interchangeable.
- Substituting bare infinitive for –ing: “I look forward to see you.”
- Using isn’t it? as a universal tag.

Mauranen (2010) also lists some of the main morpho-syntactic features of ELF talk, among these are: the “non-standard” uses of articles (e.g. of the Wilson’s disease) and of prepositions (e.g. discuss about, obsession in), regularisation of verb forms (e.g. taughted, stucked), regularisation of countable and uncountable forms (e.g. furnitures, researches), productive or non-standard morphology (e.g. irrelatively, commentated), and creative solutions (e.g. far away uncle). Part of my analysis has been to see if these features are also characteristic of the communication in a Couchsurfing website, which will serve as the basis for my empirical analysis.

An important characteristics of ELF talk is that communication partners do not orientate themselves to native speaker norms but negotiate meaning as conversation unfolds, by adapting their skills to that of their partner and to the purpose of communication (Hülmbauer et al., 2008, p. 25). Grammatical accuracy does not seem to play an important role in ELF communication: more important than formal correctness is functional effectiveness, as ELF speakers are primarily users and not learners of the language. Communication partners can appropriate ELF for their purpose without over-deference to native speaker norms (Hülmbauer et al., 2008, p.28). Negotiation and adaptation are often defined as key features of ELF talk: speakers negotiate meaning as they engage in a conversation adapting their skills and needs to that of their partners. Furthermore, it is also generally assumed that misunderstandings in ELF talk rarely occur and when they do, they are often resolved either by topic change or by other strategies, such as repetition or rephrasing (Seidlhofer, 2004, p. 11).

2. ELF in Online Communities. A corpus-based analysis

Despite the fact that there are studies describing communication activities in online communities (e.g. Schoberth et al., 2006), descriptions focus rather on the nature of intercultural interaction than on the use of English as a lingua franca. There has been little research done so far on the use of ELF in online communities. This paper aims to make up for the lack of data by giving an insight into ELF communication in Couchsurfing.

\(^{14}\) For instance, Mauranen (2003) reports on the compilation of the ELFA, i.e. a corpus of spoken academic English. This corpus contains over one million words, and is compiled by Tampere University with the aim of gaining insight towards the academic use of spoken ELF.
Although no precise definition of online communities exists, as each of them is different, an online community can be defined as a network where people communicate online with each other having at their disposal a series of interactive tools, like email, message board, chat, amongst others. As online communities often emerge to pursue or fulfill a certain communicative goal they are often referred to as ‘communities of practice’ (Hülmbauer et al., p. 28). The notion of ‘communities of practice’ can be described as mutual engagement in shared practices, participation in jointly negotiated activities and also as making use of the members’ shared repertoire (Wenger, 1998).

When analysing the properties of ELF within social networking sites it is important to consider the specifics of online communication. Internet can be considered a mixed medium, where the language output resembles both speech and writing. As Crystal (2011) puts it, “the language of the Internet cannot be identified with either spoken language or written language, even though it shares some features with both.” Furthermore, he also states that internet language shows a great tendency towards acquiring characteristics of spoken language so that internet language represents “writing which has been pulled some way in the direction of speech rather than speech which has been written down” (Crystal, 2011, p. 21).

The analysis of language use in an online community is a difficult task to undertake unless a corpus is available that reflects the use of language at a given moment in time. A corpus analysis allows for a linguistic analysis by reflecting language use at a particular moment of time and giving an insight into the here-and-now nature of the discourse (Kilgariff and Grefenstette, 2003, p.2). Prodromou (2008) underlines the advantage of corpora in language analysis. An important advantage of a corpus linguistics approach is that it ‘uncovers’ real language use and the importance of context in language analysis. A corpus analysis gives us access to the context of a situation, to the way meaning is created by the participants, also showing the relationship between them and the effect of verbal action (Prodromou, 2008, p. 11). A speech event includes the participants, setting, purpose, effect, goal and form of message as well as tone and channel since it is within these parameters that the interaction is established. A corpus analysis sheds light to both the context of a speech event and also the context a word appears in (defined as collocation) or accompanies (defined as colligation).

The aim of the analysis has been to compile a short corpus from the postings (including the title of threads) in the Vienna Couchsurfing group over a period of several months. Based on the postings I have tried to identify the morpho-syntactic properties of the ELF communication as well as the communicative strategies in the conversations.

3. ELF Communication in Couchsurfing

The Couchsurfing Online Community was founded in 2004, as an initiative to make travelling more affordable to people around the world, by offering them the possibility of free accommodation. Members of this community commit themselves to hosting travellers and might also ‘surf’ on other people’s couches for free. As such, Couchsurfing offers a cheap way of discovering the world, allowing the encounter of people from different social and cultural backgrounds. In such contexts English is most often used as language of communication.

The present analysis focuses on the Vienna Group of Couchsurfing which counts with more than 10000 members and several subgroups (as of 2013), including a variety of fields such as: language exchange, urban exploration, sports, conscious living, sustainability, last minute couch requests, and others. The members have a great variety of communication forms at their disposal. They can choose to write on the bullet
message board where they can see what other members have written and also comment on it, discuss online in various subgroups, initiate new threads or send private messages to each other.

The postings in Vienna Couchsurfing Group can be basically divided in three main groups: the one in which people initiate a certain activity inviting other members to participate, the second in which people ask for help or information either about the city or about a certain problem they are facing; finally, there are also postings on a wide range of topics, encompassing themes like religion and cultural differences. The length of the postings varies from threads containing only a few messages (e.g. 3 to 4 messages) to longer threads (e.g. one encompassing over 40 postings). While postings in the first two categories seem to be rather short and contain a great number of questions, the postings in the third category contain longer, more elaborate responses.

3.1. The morpho-syntactic characteristics of online postings

The morpho-syntactic features of ELF talk are very similar to the ones outlined by Seidlhofer (2004) and also by Mauranen (2010). Since the corpus I was working on is fairly small, the findings have a tendency character. One of the most common features seems to be the non-standard use of prepositions (sentences 1–6). Substituting the bare infinitive for the –ing in the “look forward to vb+ing” construction is also quite common (very often- looking forward to see you, yet the construction is often used correctly as well-the variant look forward+ing (without ‘to’) also occurs (sentence 7).

1. I was looking on the wrong month
2. (...) if you are interested to join me/us send me a message
3. Now we are on the Budapest! but today at the evening we’ll at the Vienna!
4. our group is full of pp who r the same with you: new in the city, no friends, don’t know what to do.
5. in order that everybody is getting confused now, just phone me if you can’t find me
6. Sorry about some private things I have to move the tour to july 21st !!!!!!!!
   we are not used to drive cars in the city
7. I’m looking forward having a fun holiday with CS spirit ;)

Also, quite common is the omission of ‘s’ in third person singular, or on the contrary, its overuse (sentence 11); sometimes ‘s’ is also used in questions (as in sentences 12-13):

8. if someone whant to join me
9. Nowadays it bring together more than 3 million people in Lille
10. Hey, Sound great!
11. (....) but cool a lot people wants to joing!
12. Does anybody of you likes to sell his/her professional camera?
13. maybe someone has some friends who works in police or T Mobile or another institution who can help?

In the Vienna Couchsurfing Group there are many Austrian members, so that cases of code-switching (switching between the languages or mixing English with German also occur (sentences 14-16)). Sometimes postings are written in more than one language, not only English (the languages may vary depending on the person’s language skills-in this case, the languages used are Spanish and Portuguese) (s.17).

14. I come vielleicht. :)
15. I have an advantage, Ich bin lateinamerikanisch!
16. @David: Ja genau, Ich weiß, ich muss entweder die deutsche verwenden. Und danke für deine Antwort.
@Jess: Thanks to you too.

17. I am travelling to Vienna in August and it would be great to have somebody to go out with and practice languages as well.
Yo voy a viajar a Viena en Agosto y seria chévere conocer a alguien para salir y platicar.
Estou indo a Viena em agosto e gostaria de conhecer pessoas e sair para conversar.

Other non-standard language use include the regularisation of uncountable forms (sentences 18–20) or verb forms (e.g. learned, or mended (instead of meant in 'what I mended'). As Couchsurfing postings very often contain requests and suggestions, past forms are not common so it is difficult to observe to what extent regularisation of past forms occur.

18. Advices for Vienna (title of a thread)

19. >>>>>>>>CLICK HERE TO JOIN THE MEETING AND TO HAVE ALL THE INFORMATIONS!<<<<<<<<<<<

20. Hope you could share with me yours experiences and some informations :)

Other grammatically incorrect forms, like the non-standard use of articles, or verbs, tense slips, etc. can also be detected, which may partly be due to carelessness (sentences 21-22).

21. anyone interesting? send me an message
22. if the keys are yours or you know who’s they are, please send me a pm.

3.2. The pragmatics of ELF Communication in Couchsurfing

Putting a question into the subject line is a common strategy in Couchsurfing. There is a great number of threads where the subject contains a question or a request (like: Fare Dodging Vienna’s transport? (asking for information), How to make friends in Wien? (seeking help as well as advice), In town this week …looking for some friends or jogging partners (request), How to get from Vienna to Adlitzgraben? (asking for information), Someone up to meet today?? (initiating an activity), I need help with moving my stuff (asking for help), etc.

By using this strategy the users immediately signal whether they need help, information or advice or if they would like to organise something or are looking for friends.. The answers to such postings are usually quite short, ranging from one line to several lines, depending on the complexity of the question at hand. Sometimes, postings offer longer answers; threads in this case usually contain from three to four-five postings.

Another important strategy is self-regulation (altering or adapting one’s behaviour to the situation at hand), characteristic of postings that contain larger discussions (posting a) is an example of seeking approval). Such postings are usually much longer with more elaborate sentences reflecting vivid talk with repetitions and also the tendency for overemphasis (postings b-c). Postings may be considered to have a dual character: communication partners seem to be open to others and adapt themselves to the situation at hand (convergent behaviour (posting d)) yet, they do not refrain from clearly stating their opinion even in a harsh manner, when necessary.

a) oh i am sorry if you or anybody else got the impression that i was talking to a special person from the thread with "never say all" and criticise them... [...] maybe i
wasn't very clear in my words... maybe you got now what I wanted to say before ;)

at least I hope so :P

b) I am Austrian, with Austrian roots and I really, really have to say that it isn't that bad...(and I am glad to have wonderful friends also from abroad) [...] 

c) As a conclusion I must say Austrians are very kind and respectful people, but for a foreigner, it may seem hard to form friendships with them at the beginning, due to misunderstandings [...] 

d) And yes, you are right, there is always "this" person and "that" person [...] And I absolutely don't want to criticize the culture, the habit or the people [...] 

Communication partners also make use of code-switching to facilitate communication. In the Vienna Couchsurfing Group, it often comes to code-switching when members involved in a conversation are Austrians. Although by switching to German they might exclude from the conversation members who could be interested in the discussion but do not speak German well, they use this strategy to simplify communication between themselves. Taking into account that this group has many Austrian members, code-switching used by both Austrians and foreigners (which can be the case too) can also be regarded as a convergence strategy, used by members to seek for approval and acceptance. Sentence e) is a good example of how the person initiating the conversation switches to German in order to seek for acceptance and at the same time states (maybe unwillingly) her belonging to the Austrian members. The postings in this group reflect a colourful language use, ranging from postings only in English or German to mixed responses, containing phrases both in English and German.

e) I think I'll offer a visit to Kahlenberg, including some Geocaching for those interested ... Bettina, hast du den Kahlenberg schon fertig abgegrast?

Concerning misunderstandings, they are mostly caused by the lack of non-verbal communication and not by different language skills. It appears that harsh angry comments not totally uncommon in online communities are also characteristic of the communication within Couchsurfing. Preece's (2000) observation that hiding behind a user name often encourages harsh and unexpected attacks, seems to be true for Couchsurfing as well. Especially in discussions on a specific topic the initial adaptive behaviour of people may alter and lead to unexpected attacks if a comment is found doubtful or irritating. The sentence below is an example of a furious attack from a person who was inquiring about dating sites but is advised to look for it somewhere else, as Couchsurfing is not a dating site. This posting (participants are all male) also shows how easily it can come to a misunderstanding: the first person (A) initiating the discussion gets annoyed with the person who is actually on his side and trying to help (F) and tells him to mind his own business. That a misunderstanding has occurred is realized and remarked by the following person (G) (the reactions to the topic range from advice-giving, support to curiosity and also amusement).

A) Give me link to austrian dating or meetings with austrian girls sites
B) http://www.couchsurfing.org/ :D
C) don't feed the trolls
D) No matter if he's a troll or not. Just post a serious reply the question is answered and that's it, the troll is defeated (in case he's a troll). Much better than posting so much crap here.
E) Google search brings up this site that lists several dating sites (....)
F) OK, so the question was not put the most eloquently, but it probably isn't nice or necessary to be condescending or engage in cyberbullying. Not everyone is a GQ model, and can easily meet or pick up girls. Why is it wrong to ask for a dating website, but it's ok to ask for restaurants, sports etc.? (...) There is nothing "sleazy" about trying to date or find a romantic partner. (...) 

A) You not admin, that decide this questions or right or not right!!!

G) F, I agree with you. There must be a misunderstanding concerning your posting on the side of A. And anyway since when do "forums" exist where only admins are allowed to post ;-) 

H) Give me link to austrian dating or meetings with austrian girls sites 

I) Anything wrong with the Ukrainian girls?

Regarding language proficiency, my findings seem to confirm the assumption that a poor knowledge of English is not necessarily a barrier to communication. The following posting contains grammatically bad English yet the message goes through, which also shows that a good level of English is not a requisite for joining the community. Although similar postings may appear they are may be due to carelessness so that postings in general reflect a good to very good level of English.

f) hello anyone have idea for cycling all good cycle route all will come just for please the sun :-) please call or send sms 0680 321 65 one eight last two number

4. Conclusion

The communication in the Couchsurfing community is multifold and resembles spoken language to a great extent. When communicating with each other, members of online communities seem to care less about "correctness" than about being able to communicate successfully, just as it has been assumed. Concerning the pragmatics of language use, adaptation strategies (simplification, code-switching and self-regulation) could often be detected in the postings. The use of English in social networking communities is highly influenced by the specifics of the online communication (e.g. the existence of harsh attacks, occurrence of misunderstandings due to the lack of visual contact, taking up roles within the community) so that in order to get a deeper insight into the topic a detailed analysis of the characteristics of online communication is necessary. A more detailed study of both ELF communication and of online communities is necessary for further conclusions to be drawn.
5. References


Attribute mining and stancetaking in a Dublin sports club

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Attribute mining and stancetaking in a Dublin sports club

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Abstract
This working paper examines realization of the offset of the PRICE lexical set in Dublin, Ireland. Data collection is achieved by means of participant observation, free recordings and interviews, all of which involve a long-term engagement with a relatively small group of individuals in a suburban sports club setting. Qualitative and quantitative analysis demonstrate how linguistic behaviour, attitudes, and sociocultural attributes contribute to the construction of local identity. Statistical results act as a heuristic to identify which social relations predict linguistic variation. These findings, in turn, provide a base for discourse analysis by developing representative examples of the discourse functions in depth. The main finding is that, in many cases, the PRICE offset is backed and lowered in interactions that are epistemic-based.

Keywords sociophonetics, stance, humour strategies, identity construction, Dublin English

1. Introduction

This paper examines realization of the PRICE lexical set offset by members of a sports club in Dublin, Ireland. Results suggest that the PRICE offset is often backed and lowered in epistemic-based discourse (i.e. in situations where speakers display knowledge, authority or expertise). I first present an overview of the context of the study, outlining important elements of the geographical area, local identities, and salient features of the sports club in question. A brief literature review outlines the important concepts such as stancetaking that underline my methodology. An attribute mining process aims to map the social space, and alignments of actors to the salient attributes that make up some of the linguistic markets that possibly contribute to the social space of Dublin 15. Analysis tests the hypothesis that the attributes interact with linguistic variation in a statistically significant way. I also review the literature about the PRICE lexical set. I conclude by discussing how the interactional identities that speakers align to and construct in talk relate to the wider sociocultural frame in which the study is situated.
2. Dublin 15 and Club Fingal

The suburban area of Dublin 15, located 10 kilometres North-West of the centre of Dublin City, has experienced constant changes since 1970. Recent population growth is in response to the increased housing demands of an expanding Dublin. The suburb is socially heterogeneous, consisting of areas that can be broadly categorised, in terms of financial means, as affluent, above average and below average to disadvantaged. Friendship groups may be formed principally through school and structured activities like sports clubs. The Gaelic Athletic Association club, Club Fingal, where I collect data, is made up of teams that play the national games of hurling and Gaelic football. In post-adolescent teams, these clubs are likely to be made up of players working in semi-skilled, skilled or professional occupations. As club involve a prominent social aspect, involvement in these practices is a part of socialization processes for many. Club Fingal foregrounds community involvement through the playing of games and activities in its social centre. As a result, it is an ideal place to observe the salient elements of social interaction and identity construction in Irish society.

I now briefly describe identity construction in Club Fingal and Dublin 15 from an ethnographic perspective, based on interpretations of observations, and speech data I collected, with some reference to secondary sources. Dublin 15 is home to areas indexed to the two dominant Dublin stereotypes, which can be interpreted as endpoints of the continua of Dublin social ideology: the “posh” and “skanger” identities. The “posh” market which is linked to affluence generally, while the former stereotype which is linked to disadvantaged areas and criminality. These are coordinates for individuals to locate themselves, with a kaleidoscope of styles in between. I focus on social life and language use in one “in-between” space, Club Fingal, rather than trying to broadly represent variation within Dublin and Dublin 15.

The “pillar” linguistic market emerged as a salient identity available to the participants. This linguistic market is positioned between the “proper” (which is loosely linked to the “skanger” stereotype), and “posh” markets. These markets are linked in different ways to background (e.g. place of birth and family heritage), association with criminality, dress style, education, financial means, places of residence and sporting choices. Both the “pillar” and “posh” markets are generally linked to the “middle class” (i.e. those of affluent or above average financial means) population of Dublin 15, but centred on different social practices. The “posh” market is generally indexed with affluent areas, and orients to practices stereotypically associated up-market social practices and aspirations: for example, dress style (e.g. deck shoes, Canterbury tracksuit bottoms), rugby, and fee-paying schools. The “proper” linguistic market is indexed to a “rough” Dublin accent, areas of relative disadvantage, criminality, certain dress styles (e.g. tracksuits and tight hair), and soccer. The practices related with the intermediary “pillar” market, which I interpret that the majority of actors in Club Fingal orient to, create distance between “pillars” and individuals orienting to the “posh” and “proper” markets. The name is based on the phrase pillar of society, which the Collins Dictionary (2014) defines as a “person who is universally respected...reliable, decent and hard-working...often engaging in voluntary work”. Individuals participating in the practices related to the “pillar” market are, or are on the way to becoming, prominent members of society. Those aligning to this market are grounded, not “posh”. They have had a good upbringing: they come from a family who have fostered “strong” and “good” values, and are not linked with criminality. They, their parents and friends who they associate with, are actively involved in the community organisations like GAA clubs.

I observed that “pillars” foreground a persona that connotes the demeanour of a “community” person through lifestyle choices such as socializing in locations that are...
imbued a “grounded” image, while also avoiding any links to criminality such as recreational drug-taking. Typical attitudes of those aligning to the “pillar” linguistic market typically include positivity toward both rural and suburban life, and local institutions such as GAA clubs. Participants generally position themselves in a liminal position between the “posh” and “proper” stereotypes. I now review some important sociolinguistic concepts in relation to this study.

3. Literature review

Sociolinguistics endorses the view that language cannot be adequately understood without taking many layers of social context (e.g. situational features) into account. The third wave of sociolinguistic studies view variation as creating social meaning. Identity is performed by adopting certain stances and aligning to salient styles. This approach differs from the first wave that views identity as essentialist, linking it to categories such as gender and class. The second wave foregrounds identity as it is constructed through local categories such as a “burnout”, and how these categories connect to the macro environment.

One approach of third wave studies in pursuing salient meanings in the social space is to mine and interpret information that possibly contributes to the negotiation of personae and styles. An inclusive approach views the social space as a collection of salient attributes that can influence linguistic variation. Close attention to the results for each separate attribute can possibly create a highly nuanced analysis. For example, Habib (2013, p. 31) used in-depth ethnographic investigation to reveal aspects of social status: the appearance of speakers, the way they dress, their lifestyles, what they own, where they live, how they were talked about in the community, and the people they most often socialize with, as some of the criteria to determine category assignment. Furthermore, responses during interviews to questions how actors regard or classify certain persons, supported and confirmed the intuitive classifications. Analysis used salient factors (including the above criteria, and other attributes such as age, gender, mother's origin, degree of contact with urban features) as separate variables in a multivariate test to explore their main effects on the sociophonetic variable use. A composite variable was statistically insignificant in the use of \([q]\) and \([ʔ]\), but the indicator of residential area emerged as statistically significant. What is important is that researchers should not test the influence of a composite variable alone, as first wave studies like Labov (1966) typically do for class, but as a collection of possibly salient social correlates that can influence linguistic variation.

Social correlates like class, for example, are not independent of other types of social boundaries. Dodsworth (2011, p. 200) suggests an interactional, relational view of the social space. Independent variables such as class, gender, age, and ethnicity are interdependent and can form a collective, statistically-convenient approximant of a more complex social space. Hairstyle and swearing can also be important indicators or “doses” (Blommaert, 2008) in a social space, for example. This aligns with Omoniyi's suggestion that all signifying, representing, and expressive codes (e.g. social groupings, dress, religion, or youth) that we “read” and interpret should be accommodated (2006, p. 13). The social meaning of variation is built into the very means by which individual speakers are connected to their closest friends on the one hand, and to the most abstract level of social organisation on the other (Eckert 2000, p. 44), with many things in between. Holistic, but potentially statistically thorough, methods consider the orientation of actors to all possible attributes that form the makeup of styles.

Attribute mining of contextual matters interprets the kaleidoscopic range of information that contribute to the adoption of personae and styles. This information can
include dress, dance, costume, religion, gender, youth, ethnicity, nation, music, talk, walk, and so on (Omoniyi, 2006, p. 18). Alongside the illustrative example provided by Habib (2013), attribute mining is also similar in a way to the vernacular culture index of Cheshire (1982, pp. 97–102) who identified attributes (carrying weapons, clothing style, job aspirations, participation in minor criminal activities, skill at fighting, swearing) that appeared to be centrally important to a boys’ peer group culture. Attribute mining involves identifying attributes that are the most salient and broadly-recognized among the individuals who participate in a study. Several researchers have applied attribute mining techniques in regard to orientation to one attribute in the social space. For example Dodsworth (2005) examined urban sprawl, Marshall (2004) urbanisation, and Miller (2008) regional identities. These researchers hypothesized that orientation to the selected attribute is an independent variable that interacts with dependent linguistic variables. Rather than examining a single attribute like studies mentioned above (e.g. urbanization by Marshall 2004), my analysis of sociolinguistic variation aims to examine the influence of a bundle or collection of possibly salient social attributes.

The attribute mining methodology used in the current study adopts elements of approaches adopted in previous studies. Salient sociocultural factors, or attributes, emerge from the ethnography (Hall-Lew, 2009), which describe the available linguistic markets in this context. Analysis then "mines" these attributes, to establish which are the most salient (Dodsworth, 2005), for the specific individuals studied in the project. These attributes form a collective approximant of the social space (Dodsworth, 2011), which acts as a heuristic to guide analysis of sociolinguistic variation. Attributes that emerge as “salient” in ethnography can be considered to be salient “commodities” that like-minded individuals use to negotiate alignment to available identities. Another important concept in relation to identity is stancetaking.

Stancetaking can index shared, culturally specific elements to draw social boundaries. Epistemic stances that convey degree of certainty serve to establish the relative authority of actors, and to situate the sources of that authority in a wider sociocultural field (Jaffe, 2009, p. 7). It is important to examine the negotiation of stance and meaning in interaction. The use of a particular stance requires a response, and adoption of a corresponding stance. Kiesling (2009, p. 191) cites the example of an actor, Pete, who adopted a very condescending and confrontational stance in a meeting. The reaction is equally forceful, which pushed him to revise the stance in succeeding turns. Pete changed his stance in reaction to the stance of his audience. Kiesling noted that there had been few attempts to code for stance in sociolinguistic analysis, and developed a useful classification of stances that typically arise in interaction (2009, p. 185). He grouped types of speech activities into larger categories that relate to discourse, information transfer and sharing (including aspects of an individual’s status), and social interaction. These categories were refined by Levon & Holmes-Elliott (2014), who split the informational and social categories between face threatening and non-face threatening contexts. The inventory of stances can include: Discourse [Clarification, Facilitator, Local context]; Informational [Expert information, Expert teaching, Information sharing]; Informational (threat) [Information question, Questioner]; Social [Gossip, Commiserating/alignment, Personal evaluation, Joking]; Social (threat) [Hedging, Personal disclosure, Challenge/confrontation]. As an example, the act of adopting a condescending attitude in a meeting is classified as a challenging or confrontational social threat. Interactions can be coded and analysed according to these classifications, with a comparison of how variables operate across different stancetaking situations. This analysis can feed into interpretations of stance accretion processes, and generally how stances are used to index available identities. Indexical connections between particular ways of speaking and identities (i.e. personae and styles to which a speaker may align)
are constructed through stancetaking moves. The exploration of such social meanings highlight the multi-faceted elements of style incorporated into language. The attributes that make up alignment to a linguistic market are composed, partly, of stances habitually adopted in communication. Stancetaking is one “commodity” in the market. Linguistic variables - the lexical set PRICE, in this case - and their variants, are potential carriers of social meaning.

I briefly review the literature about possible realizations of the PRICE lexical set, both globally and within Ireland. This lexical set is comprised of those words that has the stressed vowel /æɪ/. Wells (1987, pp. 149–150) continues it is a diphthong starting with low, unrounded or most usually centralized front [ɑɪ] realizations, though front and central variants are common. Schneider (2007, p. 1118) notes that PRICE is heard globally, and the onset may be backed, unrounded or rounded: [o], [o], [ɑ] or [ʌ]; central and raised [ʌ] or [e], fronted and raised [æ] or even [e]. The offset may move to [i], [i] or [e]. Conspicuous and widely known variants of PRICE include fronted and raised onsets in Ireland or broad AusE; backing onsets in London. speakers and in “fashionable” Dublin English (ibid, p. 1067).

In Ireland, Hickey (2007) lists variants for several varieties: Rural Northern [ɛɪ], Rural South-West/West [æi], Supraregional Southern [ai], Popular Dublin [ai] and Fashionable Dublin [ai]. He notes that the realisation of /ai/ can vary depending on whether the following segment is voiceless or voiced, and uses two lexical sets: PRICE and PRIDE. Hickey hypothesized these lexical sets were part of sound changes in progress that involve a retraction of diphthongs with a low or back starting point (the aforementioned lexical sets, along with NORTH and THOUGHT), a raising of low back vowels (CHOICE and LOT), a raising of low back vowels (CHOICE and LOT), and fronting of GOAT.

Recent research by Lonergan (2013, p. 222) suggests that inner city Dubliners of both genders have the highest and most retracted PRICE onsets, but men's realisations are much more clearly stratified. Younger speakers generally realize much more advanced onsets. Change in progress is limited to younger southside men and northside women, who have raised and backed PRICE onsets. There is little evidence of PRIDE onset retraction, but the offset of PRIDE is clearly lower and more retracted than that of PRICE in almost all subject groups. The consistency of this difference across age groups and geographical areas suggests that this is not the result of a change in progress. Researchers up to now, however, have not explored how in depth local social dynamics and identity relations possibly influence this type of linguistic variation in Dublin. The procedures outlined in the next sub-section aim to do this. Linguistic consideration must also be brought into the analytical framework. Thomas (2011) notes that typical linguistic considerations can include pitch, duration, intensity (or loudness), preceding and following phonological environment, presence or absence of stress, the position in intonation phrase, the number of syllables in word containing the vowel, and word class (noun, verb etc.). I now describe the overall methodology.

4 Methodology

I conducted fourteen interviews with playing team members between September 2012 and September 2015. Each interview lasted from 55 to 60 minutes. The style of the interviews is informal, with speech close to that of a casual conversation. Interviews begin by using a friendship network diagram, and questions which aim to explain this diagram. I then obtained information about the identities in this specific context and their salient attributes (e.g. asking “What groups do you see in this area?”).
Initial analysis was conducted on both the onset and offset of 5 PRICE and PRIDE tokens for each speaker. Results indicate that there is a lot of variation in the PRICE offset, remarkably more than the three other options (PRICE onset, PRIDE onset, and PRIDE offset). I then focused on the PRICE offset, and the data set is comprised of 160 such tokens. I processed these tokens by first transcribing them in ELAN (Sloetjes & Wittenburg 2008). I then generated a Praat TextGrid which contained all of the tokens of interest in one long sound file of one speaker. A series of Praat (Boersma & Weenink 2015) scripts were used to create a sound file and TextGrid for each token; mark the beginning and end of the target vowels; and measure F1, F2, and F3 values taken at 25% and 75% time points within the vowel. This produced raw measurements of formant values in Hertz, which I then normalized for vocal tract size, for more perceptually-accurate representation, using the Lobanov algorithm available through the online vowel normalization suite, NORM (Thomas & Kendall 2007). These tokens were then ready for statistical analysis.

Statistical analysis involved examining the correlation between variation in the PRICE offset F2, the dependent (or response) variable, and three types of predictor variables. This were 32 predictors in total, with three types of predictors: linguistic, social attributes, and stancetaking/interaction (see above), which are listed in Appendix 1. A Praat script measured maximum pitch (in Hertz, or Hz), pitch range (Hz), mean pitch (Hz), duration of the vowel (in milliseconds), mean intensity (in decibels/db), and maximum intensity (db). I also coded the preceding and following phonological environment of each token for manner, place, and presence of voicing. Other manual coding included noting if the PRICE vowel was in a stressed syllable, the position in intonation phrase, the number of syllables in word, and word class (noun, verb etc.). All individuals were observed ethnographically and scored for the collection of sociocultural attributes (e.g. “Sporting Choices” and “Attitudes toward the club”). The ethnographic details that emerge in observation and interviews were used to identify the attributes that make up some of the markets available in Dublin 15. Recordings were reviewed by the researcher, with notable extracts of the interviews and free recordings noted for further investigation. Some attributes (e.g. attitudes to criminality) were extracted from the recording transcriptions and field notes of observations, and placed in a list of possible salient attributes. If these attributes were shared by three or more actors they were considered salient, and used as an attribute to use in data analysis. The attributes were defined based on data from early stages of data collection (March 2012 to September 2014). The descriptions of these attributes were refined in later parts of data collection (February 2015 to December 2015). Individuals are assigned a score for each attribute, based on data collected in the study. The speech surrounding for each token was coded based on the stancetaking considerations (e.g. face threat, and topic), outlined in section 5 also., and coded manually. All of these codes and measurements made up a final excel spreadsheet which was used in statistical analysis in the R statistical package (R Development Core Team, 2011). The following outlines the important results, and describes an illustrative example of discourse analysis results.
5 Results

Statistical analysis examined the relationship between variation in the PRICE offset F2, the dependent (or response) variable, and the three types of predictors (or independent variables). From the 32 predictors in total, 9 predictors were selected by the least angle regression (LARS) analysis in the best fit model for a linear mixed effect model (LMER) analysis. The social attributes selected where ‘attitudes toward individuals not typically associated with the ‘pillar’ market’, ‘occupation of father’, ‘education level of mother’, and ‘where they lived in formative years’. The interaction/stance variables of ‘stancetaking’-collapsed from the stancetaking categories of Kiesling (2009) to two variants: discourse or epistemic) where ‘face-threat dimension’, and ‘direction’ (e.g. toward an in- or out-group). The two linguistic predictor selected where ‘pitch range’, and ‘the number of syllables in the word’. The results of the LMER indicate that the two significant predictors of variation in the PRICE offset are the interaction/stance variable, or stancetaking [p = 0.00877], and the social attribute variable, or ‘attitudes toward individuals not participating in the pillar market’ [p = 0.021758].

The use of certain variants can be better understood by looking at the practices which speakers value, participate in and identify with (Drummond and Dray, 2015). These practices are relatively stable configurations of socio-cultural relations (gestures, clothing, language etc.) in which identities are performed. Based on this, I decided to integrate ‘attitudes toward individuals not participating in the pillar market’ issues into general interpretations, and focus on stancetaking issues for the focus of discourse analysis procedures. I analysed the scatterplots of all tokens of PRICE offset for each speaker, with colour coding for the stancetaking predictor (information vs. discourse), and symbol coding for the lexical item. For example, see Figure 1 for LiDub107 tokens: the four most backed and lowered tokens involve an epistemic-based stance.

![Figure 1](image-url) Scatterplot of all PRICE tokens of LiDub107, with coding for stance and lexical item

Three of the tokens occur in a discussion of the training system of a club team, where LiDub107 provides much detail about the winter training regime: a situation where LiDub107 assumes epistemic status.
An analysis of these scatterplots for all speakers led me to discover that many of the epistemic based tokens were also backed and lowered. I then selected a number of these tokens, as they were representative examples of a larger number of similar tokens, for in-depth discourse analysis. My purpose is to draw extensively from the most revealing examples, so as to clearly outline the discourse functions of the PRICE offset variant. Space does not allow for an in-depth examination here, but I present one example below, and then summarise discourse analysis-informed interpretations below. Backed and lowered tokens of the PRICE offset appear in quoted speech that indicates the authority of another party.

Excerpt 1: The underlined “all right” token is backed and lowered.

FOD: But do you not think that sort of thing could be implemented with the club team and worked better? If the captain just got and said “Here listen lads, what are we going to do this year?” Or does that have to come from the manager?

LiDub103: I don’t know, see this is, like our captain wouldn’t be, well one he probably wouldn’t have the knowledge to do that. It’s not something that your man just came across and said “Do you know what I will start doing this sports psychology stuff.”

FOD: That’s true, yeah.

LiDub103: He’s working with international companies, like that’s his job. So, it’s not, and like even I’d know enough of his stuff that I probably could go and tell it to the club lads, but coming from me like, it’s not, if somebody else comes in and he’s saying, like he’ll tell us like he’s worked for Coach Calapari in America, he’s worked with Jack O’Connor, he’s worked with Barack Obama and stuff and we’re like “All right this guys the real deal.” As opposed to me saying “This guy told me this.” Coming from somebody, like he’s telling us stories and these guys are world famous people that he’s worked with. Then I wouldn’t have the same insight into what, I’d understand what he’s saying but I wouldn’t necessarily understand it to the point where I could explain it to somebody else.

In Excerpt 1, LiDub103 discussed what is like being involved in an elite GAA team, who recently recruited sports psychologists to aid preparation. He has mentioned that has benefited him personally greatly, and has discussed what this has entailed. I then enquired if this sort of preparation could be implemented with the club team. He starts off to reply in a hedging way, but soon asserts his opinion by expressing the opinion that he, and other individuals involved with the club team, do not have the knowledge to lead such an enterprise. With an admission of this by the researcher, LiDub103 then goes into detail of the extensive experience of the psychologist, and how this holds credibility amongst the team. In relating the general opinion of the team “All right this guy’s the real deal”, he emphasizes the difference between his own knowledge and the knowledge and expertise of the psychologist. At the same time, he is asserting his own epistemic rights relating to the reality of the operations of a club team. LiDub103 informed the interviewer that his assumptions (about how sports psychology can be applied in club teams) are false, and how he has a better understanding of what will work within a team. By doing this he outlines his knowledge of how sport psychologists operate, and the assumption
that LiDub103 will not get respect from the group of players in question. He thereby infers that he holds substantial knowledge of club teams, while the interviewer does not.

In this excerpt, the identities invoked are that of the psychologist, the identity of the club player not able to assert himself on a team, and the identity of someone who is familiar with club team operations, but realizes the boundaries of this knowledge. He manages these interactional identities by both emphasizing his insight, and lack of expertise at the same time: for example see “like that’s his job...”, and “I wouldn’t have the same insight.”

Moreover, by voicing the opinion of the team as a whole “All right this guy’s the real deal”, he imparts his knowledge about the feeling about the team regarding the sports psychologist. The message is softly spoken but emphatic: ‘No I don’t think that your suggestion will work’. He explains in detail the reason, with the voice of others (the team), as the holders of expertise and knowledge about the situation. This is an illustrative example of a situation of a speaker, LiDub103, using the linguistic cue of a backed and lowered PRICE variant to emphasize epistemic rights. By nature this speaker is a humble character, but when challenged about his position of knowledge of GAA matters, he responds with backed/lowered tokens, which is in contrast to the rest of his PRICE realizations.

Interpretations based on the data include that there are three main discourse functions of backed and lowered PRICE offset tokens: inferring a position of knowledge, expertise or authority, quoting other authoritative positions, and asserting authority on a conversation. Further analysis can deal with representative examples of these discourse functions in detail.

6. Discussion

The working paper highlighted some of the salient sociocultural relations that individuals align to and construct in speech. Most of the selected backed and lowered tokens are found when (a) individuals are adopting positions of authority and knowledge, and (b) where individuals are discussing practices which they have shown to value, participate in & identify with: Club Fingal practices. It is not possible to emphatically state that this realization is indexed to those aligning to a certain socioeconomic grouping, or an abstraction like the “pillar” linguistic market. The GAA club however, as ethnographic observation suggests, is a place for likeminded “pillar”-like individuals (prominent members of society) to gather and interact. When individuals are engaging in moments of identity display and relational identity development - displaying their level of involvement, knowledge and position of authority about GAA club practices - they tend to back and lower their PRICE offsets. It is in the previous sentence that I infer the links between the macro - the larger sociocultural frame of being an active member of a GAA club in suburban Dublin, operating within the social space that includes the “skanger”, “posh”, and “pillar” linguistic markets - and the micro: intraspeaker language variation. I interpret, based on the data, that a backed and fronted PRICE offset is one of the linguistic resources available to speakers to construct interactional identity. I argue that the negotiation of styles can be achieved by mining possible salient factors that can contribute to identity construction, and using both quantitative and qualitative techniques to highlight which factors are foregrounded in speech data.

This may be one Possible future research directions are investigating which other type of linguistic resources are available to speakers, and the relevant indexical fields. A perceptual experiment may also be able to clarify the social salience of variants in question.
7. References


Appendix 1

The full list of linguistic considerations, social attributes and interactional/stance variables are as follows:

(1) **Linguistic considerations**: Preceding/following Manner and Place, (non)-Coronal, non-Voicing, pitch max fO (Hz); f0 range (Hz: f0max – f0min), f0_mean, duration (msec), intensity_mean and max (decibels/db), stressed syllable (Y/N), Position in intonation phrase, Number of syllables in word and intonation phrase; Word class.

(2) **Social attributes**: ["Attitudes" (toward: the club, criminality, individuals not typically associated with the ‘pillar’ market, rural life, suburban life); “Background” (Birth heritage of parents, Education level of parents, Involvement of parents in community, Occupation of parents, Secondary school attended, Where they lived in formative years); “Lifestyle choices” (Fashion, Friendship Networks, Involvement in the club, Occupation, Sporting Choices, Where they socialize, Recreational choices).

(3) **Stancetaking/Interaction variables**: Stancetaking (Kiesling 2009: Discourse, Informational, Social); Face-threat dimension (developing Levon & Holmes-Elliot 2014, Face threat to others, Reacting to a face threat, Doing a Positive Face Strategy etc.); Topic (Family/friends, Club-County, social etc.), Delivery (relaxed – intense/animated); Direction (toward outside [e.g. other club/group] –inside, others etc.); Orientation (Derogatory – Complimentary); Organization (temporal place in interaction).
Speaking French without an Accent: Ideologies About Phonetic Accommodation among Cameroonian Immigrants in Paris

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“Speaking French without an accent”: ideologies about phonetic accommodation among Cameroonian immigrants in Paris

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Abstract

This article describes some of the social issues of phonetic accommodation among Cameroonian immigrants in Paris, through the analysis of their ideologies about the practice of *whitisage*, a neologism which refers, according to the subjects, to the act of "speaking like a White person" or in other words, "speaking French without an accent". This practice is a form of accommodation which consists in adapting one's way of speaking toward a non-Cameroonian interlocutor by imitating his or her accent. By describing both the social functions and the ambivalent meanings of this language practice, I show that if it can be valued as a form of adaptation and a sign of open-mindedness to others in a new socio-cultural environment, it can also be perceived, in some contexts, as a form of assimilation and rejection of one's identity. I argue that the negative values associated with *whitisage* must be related to the socio-historical circumstances in which this social practice appeared as a psychological and cultural consequence of the power relationship between the Black colonized and the White colonizer.

Keywords language ideologies, language and migration, accent, style-shifting, language and colonization, race and ethnicity.

1. Introduction

Migration is a key moment in the life of an individual, since it causes the subject to be confronted by new spaces of socialization and thus to incorporate new social and linguistic habits, which has consequences on the organization of his or her language repertoire. Thus, I studied the case of thirteen 25-year-old French-speaking Cameroonian immigrants, who have lived in France for about ten years. Confronted by a new "linguistic market" (Bourdieu 1982) when they arrived in France, where the standard Parisian accent is the legitimate accent, they had to adapt to their new sociocultural environment by modifying their ways of speaking. In this paper, I describe some of the social issues of their practice of accent accommodation through the analysis of their ideologies about the practice of *whitisage*. This neologism refers, according to Cameroonian people, to the act of "speaking like a White person", which subjects in this study interpret as "speaking French without an accent" -- or more precisely, approximating the Standard French accent (see Telep 2015). My paper presents data which has been extracted from interviews based on ethnographic fieldwork in a panafrican association. First, I define the practice of *whitisage* as a form of phonetic accommodation as well as its main social functions. Secondly, I present my hypothesis on the socio-historical and political origin of this practice, which must be a psychological and cultural consequence of the power relationship between the Black colonized and the White colonizer. Finally, I describe the ambivalent pragmatic values speakers can attribute to this practice in the migration context, in relation to its historical background, and the ambivalent positionings they can adopt towards their own practice of *whitisage*.

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1 As “sets of beliefs about languages and linguistic practices” (Silverstein 1979, p. 193), language ideologies constitute “a mediating link between social structures and forms of talk”, enabling us to reflect upon the ways actors organize their social life and interact with others through language (Woolard and Schiefflin 1994, p. 55).
2. “Whitiser, c'est parler comme un Blanc\(^2\)”: definition of the practice of whitisage and description of its social functions.

The practice of whitisage can be defined as a form of accommodation which consists of adapting one's way of speaking toward a non-Cameroonian interlocutor by imitating his or her accent and thus erasing one's own foreign accent (cf. Giles et al. 1991). Therefore, it can be perceived not only as a necessary language strategy in order to be integrated in the host society, but also as a strategy to hide the "stigma\(^3\)" (Goffman 1963) of a foreign accent, which can be socially unfavorable for the speaker. It is a strategy of convergence, “whereby individuals adapt to each other's communicative behaviors in terms of a wide range of linguistic-prosodic-nonverbal features including speech rate, pause phenomena and utterance length, phonological variants, smiling, gaze, and so on” (Giles, et al 1991, p. 8). Communicative acts of convergence aim to reduce interpersonal differences between the interlocutors while reducing their language differences. In other words, they show the speaker's desire for social integration or identification with the others (cf. Giles, et al 1991).

Thus Yohan, one of the speakers I interviewed, described his own practice of whitisage:

1. “Yohan: whitiser c'est forcément parler comme un Blanc on parle tous avec notre accent + + on parle tous avec notre accent moi je parle avec mon accent + mais quand tu parles avec les Français et que tu veux être dans la même longueur d'ondes + c'est-à-dire quand il parle avec ses aigus et ses trucs tu veux aussi parler comme lui

Suzie: [rires]

Yohan: [rires] obligé + c'est systématique + si tu veux avoir une conversation avec lui

Suzie : se mettre au même niveau

Yohan: se mettre au même niveau + comme tu ne pourras jamais parler comme un Chinois + ou comme tu pourras jamais parler comme un Anglais + mais quand tu vas vouloir discuter avec lui + tu vas vouloir t'aligner à sa façon c'est-à-dire euh + s'il marque des pauses tu vas vouloir faire les mêmes pauses que lui pour que il te comprenne tu vois […]

Suzie: mais du coup pour toi whitiser ça : + ça veut dire modifier l'accent enfin :

Yohan: oui + c'est modifier l'accent + là tu peux plus + tu peux pas avoir forcément ton accent + quand tu veux essayer de parler comme l'autre + voilà + c'est comme un commercial + tu t'imagines un Camerounais il arrive il quitte le Cameroun il arrive ici il est commercial il va se mettre à parler le français + et ben il est obligé d'adapter sa voix

Suzie: mnh

Yohan: sinon tu vas voir que comment + les gars vont pas te comprendre + puisque si tu entends un Camer + va au pays + tu entends un Camer parler + ben je suis pas sûr que + je te dis + c'est-à-dire enregistre + et tu viens tu fais parler ça à un Français + et tu lui demandes si il comprend.”

\(^2\) Whitiser means “speaking like a White person”.

\(^3\) Goffman (1963) defines stigma as “the phenomenon whereby an individual with an attribute which is deeply discredited by his/her society is rejected as a result of the attribute.” This attribute can be a physical, psychological or moral characteristic, or any other attribute such as “race, nationality or religion” (Goffman 1963, 6). Stigma is not an essential attribute, but a relational one, because it stems from a social process of differentiation and stigmatization by the others: “stigma is a process by which the reaction of others spoils normal identity”.

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Translation:

“Yohan: « whitiser » means necessarily speaking like a white person people speak with their own accent + they speak with their own accent I speak with my accent + but when you speak with French people and you want to be on the same wavelength + that is to say when they speak with their high pitched voices and their things you also want to talk like them
Suzie: [laugh]
Yohan: [laugh] that's inevitable + systematic + if you want to talk with them
Suzie: to put yourself on the same level
Yohan: to put yourself on the same level + you will never be able to talk like a Chinese + you will never be able to talk like an English man + but when you want to talk with them + you want to align yourself to their ways that is to say euh + if they do pause in the conversation you want to do the same so that they can understand you see?
Suzie: then for you « whitiser » means changing your accent
Yohan: yes + it means changing your accent + then you can't anymore + that's inevitable you can't have your accent + when you want to try to speak like French people + that's it + it's like a salesman + can you imagine a Cameroonian coming then he's leaving Cameroon he's coming here he's a salesman he's getting to speak French + so he has to adapt his voice
Suzie: mmh
Yohan: otherwise you will see that's how + guys won't understand you + because if you hear a Cameroonian + go to Cameroon + I am not sure that + I'm telling you + that is to say record that + and then come and make a French person listen to it + and ask him if he or her can understand.”

The subject describes here the practice of *whitisage* as a necessary behaviour, a social constraint for the speaker: the use of the adverb *forcément* (‘necessarily’) and of the adjective *obligé* (‘inevitable’) expresses here at the same time the necessity of this behaviour and the high degree of certainty by the subject; the use of the adjective *systématique* indexes a generalized behaviour among the community, which is part of the group's interactional norms. First, the speaker utters a definition which is equivalent to a behavioral maxim for the community (“*whitisage*4 necessarily means speaking like a White person”), and proposes a justification for this behaviour: indeed, he describes this practice as a form of mimetism of the interlocutor's language (“speaking like the others”) and as a way to identify with the others. The repetition of the verb *vouloir* (“to want”) shows that this identification is also presented as a speaker's wish and therefore, as a personal choice. Then, the subject describes the practice of *whitisage* as a form of alignment towards the interlocutor's way of speaking, whatever his nationality, French, Chinese or English. This alignment is not a perfect imitation of the others’ ways of speaking, but it has a social function: it enables speakers to “be on the same level” as their interlocutors. The reference to the Chinese speaker indexes that the subject, who is responsible for computer production in a famous French bank, conceives the practice of *whitisage* as a necessary communication strategy in a globalized space in which business relationships with China are crucial. This social and strategic dimension of the practice of *whitisage* is, after that, more explicitly conjured up with the salesman who arrives in Cameroon. Thanks to this example, the subject draws an implicit link between the social position of the speaker who, as a salesman, practices a profession characterized by a strong relational dimension, and the need to adapt his or her

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4 This French verb is a neologism derived from the noun *whitisage*.

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language. After this example, the subject explains the fact that this person has to *whitiser* by giving another argument: language accommodation is the key for a successful communication between French and Cameroonian speakers. Indeed, French people may have difficulties understanding the Cameroonian accent.

In this extract, we can find the two main motives described by Giles, et al. (1991) to explain the strategy of accommodation:

- **Speakers seeking “communication efficiency”:** like Yohan, every speaker said many times, that when they arrived in France, their interlocutors had difficulties understanding their accent, so they had to modify it in order to be understood and to communicate efficiently. Here, Yohan explained that he had to “adapt” his Cameroonian accent in order to be understood by his interlocutors and to imitate their intonation (“high pitched voices”) and pauses.

- **Speakers seeking “social attractiveness”:** the practice of *whitisage* enables the speakers to align themselves with the others and to put themselves on the same level, to be their equals. Thus, by speaking “French without an accent”, the speakers can erase the stigma of their foreign accent, which can be socially unfavourable to them in some contexts.

If most of the speakers, like Yohan, insisted upon the necessity of “speaking white” with non-Cameroonian people in some contexts, they often assigned ambivalent pragmatic values to this practice. Nevertheless, in order to understand the meanings assigned to this practice by its speakers, it is necessary to take into account not only the social and historical circumstances in which this practice appeared, but also the meaning of the reference to the racial category “White” in the name and in the definition of the practice of *whitisage*.

3. **Hypothesis on the appearance of the practice of *whitisage*:** a psychological and cultural consequence of the colonial power relationship.

Because of the reference to the racial category “White” in the speeches of the speakers, I have been led to assume that this practice must be a psychological and cultural consequence of the power relationship between the Black colonized and the White colonizer. Like every racial category, “whiteness” (and its opposite, “blackness”) is a historical and social construction, which was created in order to legitimize and maintain power structures and socio-economic systems based on the exploitation of the labour force during slavery and colonization (cf. Ndiaye, 2008, p. 35). Thus, the sociologist Albert Memmi, in his *Portrait of the colonized* (1973), described the attitude of the colonized who tried to imitate the White colonizers’ behaviour, their way of dressing and their way of speaking, in order to escape from their lower social position (Memmi, 1973, p. 152). This process of imitation resulted from the colonial ideology, which constructed a “mythical portrait of the colonized” totally opposed to the idealized portrait of the colonizer, in a dialectical relationship “ennoblement of the colonizer – lowering of the colonized” (Memmi, 1973, p. 109; my translation).

Frantz Fanon (1952) described a similar attitude among people from Martinique: “In a group of young West Indians, those who speak well and have a good command of the French language, are extremely feared; you have to beware of them, they are almost a White person. In France, we say: speaking like a book. In Martinique: speaking like a White person” (Fanon, 1952, p. 34; my translation). Here, we can find the exact definition of the word *whitiser* which is used among the Cameroonian community. According to Frantz Fanon, “speaking like a White person” for someone coming from
Martinique to France consisted in imitating the pronunciation of the French [r]. Fanon explained that this imitation of the “White” resulted from an “inferiority complex” among the Black colonized people, urging them to take the French language and culture as a model. Imitating the language of the “White” allowed the colonized to rise up the social ladder and get a privileged position among the community. According to Fanon, whose analysis deals with the situation in the French West Indies (Antilles), this behaviour could be seen in every population who had been colonized (Fanon 1952, pp. 38–39; my translation).

Thus, different indexical values are ideologically associated with the racial category “White”: modernity, superiority, civilization and social success, are some of the most important. Therefore, the social meanings of the practice of whitisage are deeply related to the historical construction of the “White” and to power relationships. Nevertheless, the relationship between the category “White” and the practice of whitisage is not a direct one but an indirect one: indeed, linguistic “variables are associated not with the categories themselves, but with stances and characteristics that constitute those categories” (Eckert, 2008, p. 453). That is to say, linguistic choices index attitudes, stances, activities and attributes that in turn are associated with particular social categories (cf. Ochs, 1991). Thus, if the practice of whitisage can allow speakers to express their identification with their white-skinned interlocutors, it also allows them to index various interactional positionings. Indeed, speakers do not “speak white” only with people who have a white skin: the racial category “White” does not index only the skin colour of the interlocutor, but also social attributes and stances which are ideologically associated with this category. Therefore, people can “speak white” with a person who has not a white skin but who has, according to them, at least one attribute ideologically associated with the “Whites”, whatever his or her skin colour. Thus, many speakers explicitly told me that they “speak white” with me, despite my Cameroonian origins and my black skin, because I speak with a standard French accent due to the fact that I was born and raised in the suburb of Paris. My academic position, as a Ph D student in linguistics, which associates me with the norm of academic language, may also contribute to their choice. Moreover, the practice of whitisage among Cameroonian people is another good example of this indirect indexicality: it is judged highly pejoratively by Cameroonians because it creates an unequal relationship between the interlocutors, which evokes indirectly the unequal power relationship between the White colonizer and the Black colonized. Thus, it can be perceived by the interlocutors as a lack of respect toward them or as a form of contempt from the speakers.
4. The ambivalent pragmatic values of *whitisage*: adaptation or assimilation?

As Bourdieu (1977) explained, “[t]he structure of the linguistic production relation depends on the symbolic power relation between the two speakers, i.e. on the size of their respective capitals of authority (which cannot be reduced to specifically linguistic capital)” (p. 22). Thus, power relationships between social groups partly frame interactions and have to be taken into account for the analysis of language practices. In the case of *whitisage*, the knowledge of the historical context when the practice of imitating the Whites’ language appeared can help us gain a better understanding of the reasons why speakers assign ambivalent values to this practice. Indeed, if it can be valued as a form of adaptation and a sign of open-mindedness to the others in a new socio-cultural environment, it can also be perceived, in some contexts, as a form of assimilation and rejection of one’s identity. Therefore, because of its pejorative values, some speakers refuse to give the name *whitisage* to their own practice of phonetic accommodation. This is the case for Christian:

2. “Christian: [...] à l'école c'est différent parce que quand je suis avec mes potes + bon moi mon habitude c'est que je garde ma voix et tout + mais quand je suis seulement avec mon prof + parce que tout est c'est à mon avantage qu'il me comprenne en fait + s'il me comprend pas on peut pas échanger tu vois + donc je ne change pas ma voix enfin je me mets pas à whitiser + mais soit je baisse mon débit de parole + soit carrément je change ma façon de parler tu vois

Suzie: donc tu whitises + est-ce que tu considères que tu whitises quand tu fais ça ou pas ?

Christian: non + non whitiser c'est vraiment profond hein c'est parler comme EUX + moi je parle pas comme eux je baisse ma voix ++ avec toi j'aurais pu whitiser + me dire que bon voilà je suis j'essaie de parler comme les Français mais tu vois non + ça c'est whitiser + tu vois + je vais baisser mon débit de parole je vais garder mon accent.”

Translation:

“Christian: at school it's different because when I'm with my mates + my habit is to keep my voice and so on + but when I am alone with my teacher + because everything is + it is in my advantage that he understands me in fact + if he doesn't understand we can't discuss you see + so I don't change my voice I mean I don't start "speaking white" + but either I lower my speech rate + either I totally change my way of speaking you see

Suzie: so you speak white + do you consider that you speak white when you do that or not ?

Christian: no + no speaking white is really deep huh it means speaking like THEM + I don't speak like them I lower my voice ++ with you I could have spoken white + I could have thought well I am I am trying to speak like the French people + but no you see + that is speaking white + you see + I will lower my speech rate I will keep my accent.”

Christian describes how he can adapt to his interlocutors and change his way of speaking, and especially his accent, depending on his interlocutors: the baker, his teacher, his friends or myself. Nevertheless, while other respondents categorized this stylistic versatility as a form of *whitisage*, Christian refused to categorize his own practice like this: three times, he denied the fact that he “speaks white”, while recognizing that he is used to significantly changing the way he speaks according to his interlocutor,
especially by modulating its “speed”, making it faster when he speaks with his friends than when he speaks with me for example. Then, he adopted a contradictory positioning: while denying that he “speaks white”, defining the practice of whitisage as the act of “changing [his] voice”, he admitted that he could change radically the way he talks (the adverb “completely” indicates the radical nature of this change). Then, this apparent contradiction was thrown away by the more precise definition of “whitisage” which he proposed to explain his refusal to classify these practices as forms of “whitisage”: “no + no ‘speaking white’ (‘whitiser’) is really deep huh + it means speaking like THEM + I don’t speak like them I lower my voice.” The extreme change in his way of speaking would be to “lower his voice”, which means for him, to speak in a deeper and softer voice (he performed this act of “lowering his voice” while uttering this part of the sentence). By refusing to “speak white” (whitiser), he takes up an identity positioning: he expressed his refusal to be identified with the “White” or with the “French” people. Thus, he indirectly identified himself as a foreigner or at least as an “other”, and opposed an implied “We”, that of his ethnic group, to “Them”, that is to say, to the “White” people or to the “French” people, social groups from which he wants to distinguish himself. This extract shows that depending on the different interactional positionings and on the multiple identifications that the subject takes on in the course of the interview, the definition of whitisage and the choice of categorizing one’s practice of accommodation as a form of whitisage will vary from one subject to another.

Besides the refusal to categorize their own practice of language accommodation as a form of whitisage, many speakers pejoratively judged the practice of whitisage among the Cameroonian community. For instance, Daniel angrily criticized the behaviour of Cameroonians who « spoke white » with him when he went back to Cameroon during the holidays:

3. “Daniel: après aussi moi ce qui me dérange des fois + [à Corinne] peut-être que toi tu as aussi vu ça + c’est quand tu rentres au Cameroun + y en a parce que ils savent que tu viens d’Europe
Corinne: ouais ils changent leur façon de parler
Daniel: ils + ils essayent de prendre l’accent français + tu dis mais mais + toi tu :
Corinne: on se calme
Daniel: toi tu es : + tu as quel problème en fait + […] tu es chez toi tu t’adaptes à quoi à qui + tu t’adaptes à quoi + hein tu t’adaptes à quoi + moi gars j’ai vécu ici hein tu veux t’adapter à moi ? + tu as des problèmes toi tu es fou ou quoi?”

Translation:
“Daniel: and then me too what bothers me sometimes + [to Corinne] maybe you have also seen that + it is when you go back to Cameroon + there are some people because they know that you’re coming from Europe
Corinne: yes + they change the way they speak
Daniel: they + they try to have the French accent + and you say but + you you :
Corinne: take it easy
Daniel: you are : + which problem do you have actually + […] you are at home what and who do you want to adapt to + huh what do you adapt to + guy I used to live here do you want to adapt to me ? + do you have problems are you crazy or what?”

5 Corinne is a friend of Daniel. She is also Cameroonian, and at the time of this interview she was still a member of the panafrican association in which I carried out my fieldwork.
The insistent repetition of the question “What do you adapt to?”, of its variants (“What and who do you want to adapt to?”; “Do you want to adapt to me?”) and the use of the other rhetorical questions introduce a dialogic speech featuring the confrontational discussion with “the Other”. These questions also express the pejorative judgment that Daniel made about these practices: indeed, he pointed out their absurdity and he interpreted them as a symptom of a psychological problem among his interlocutor (“Do you have problems? Are you crazy or what?”). Through this example, we can understand that the category “White” and the practice of whitisage which is associated with it do not index the interlocutor’s skin colour but his knowledge of Europe, which stems from his long stay in France and confers a high symbolic capital on him. Because he went to Europe, Daniel was identified by his interlocutor as an “Other” to whom a privileged social position was assigned. This position, which made him equal to the “Whites” and excluded him from his peer group, created an asymmetrical relationship between the two speakers.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to describe language ideologies about the phonetic accommodation of French-speaking Cameroonian immigrants in Paris. Drawing on a discourse analysis of three excerpts taken from my corpus of interviews, I argued that the definitions and the values assigned to the practice of whitisage by these immigrants depend largely on many different factors, such as the subject’s own practice of accommodation or the different groups he or she wishes to identify with. Moreover, the subjects describe themselves as competent speakers who can use their language resources actively in order to adapt to their interlocutor without “assimilating” with “the other”. Thus, they lay the emphasis on their agency and their capacity to switch purposefully into different accent varieties. Nevertheless, if speakers have some latitude in their practice of accommodation, their agency is partly constrained by socio-historical power relationships between African people and French people, and by the value hierarchies of language varieties in the French linguistic market.

6. References


According to the anthropologist Zambo Belinga (2003), who describes an “obsession with Europe” among his interviewees, going to Europe, and particularly to Paris, is highly valuable for many Cameroonians and is perceived as an index of social success (Zambo Belinga 2003, p. 31): in Cameroonian people's representations, “travelling to Paris is analyzed as an achievement” (ibid, p. 23; my translation).


Language Planning Policies and Migration: A Case Study on Meshks Deported from Georgia in 1944

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A Case Study on Meskhs Deported from Georgia in 1944

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Abstract

In this paper I attempt to analyse the issue of Meskhs deported in 1944 from one of the linguistically and ethnically diverse regions of Georgia, Samtshkhe-Javakheti, within the framework of language planning policies which had led to the deportation. First, I discuss historical background of the deportation and the assimilation politics during centuries conducted by Turkey (Ottoman Turkey, 16th c.), the Tsardom of Russia (19th c.), and the Soviet Union (1921–90). I elaborate on historical sources and specialist literature concerning this case in order to identify the circumstances for their forced migration. I point out how a language shift, together with changing religious practices, could lead to a change in the self-identification of the Meskh people, as well as the perception of their identity by others. Second, I discuss repatriation of Meskhs to Georgia and their integration to the Georgian society from different points of view. By analyzing data (interviews, oral histories), I point out that one important factor of their difficulties of integration is Georgian language competence, or knowledge of Georgian. I associate different levels of language competence linked to their place of living, age, gender, and economic condition.

Keywords Meskhs, Meskhetians, LP policies, Migration

1. Introduction (What happens when people meet?)

Most scholars contend that “diversity” becomes socially significant when people from different backgrounds meet each other. These differences are often based on racial, ethnic, religious, linguistic or national origin (Uslaner, 2010). Different communities participate in the formation society of a country. According to Gordon, the structure of a sub-society implies these levels: Self > National origin > religion > race > nationality. (Gordon, 1964, p. 27). In recent decades, diversity got a rather negative meaning as it has led to more conflicts and less trust in a society. As a consequence, the cohesion of a society cannot be established, which is harmful for a State generally. For instance, Putnam’s research on societies in the US shows that inter-racial trust, trust of neighbours, and even trust of one’s own race are lower in more ethnically diverse neighbourhoods (Putnam, 2007). But Uslaner challenges these viewpoints and argues that the main reason of lower levels of trust is residential segregation rather than diversity (Uslaner, 2010, p. 415). I follow Uslaner’s perspective and attempt to describe the case of Meskhs in connection with diversity and integration conceptions. Other issues which will be discussed concerning the Meskhs are assimilation and identity change; the reasons of formation of a new subsociety.

The core expressions of historical and participational identifications could be language and religion. “With a person of the same [religion] but of a different ethnic group, one shares behavioural similarities but not a sense of peoplehood. With those of the same ethnic group but of a different [religion], one shares the sense of peoplehood but not behavioural similarities” (Gordon, 1964, p. 55).

In comparison to sociolinguistic standpoint, an individual’s choice of a language and way of speaking is not just a reflection of who they are, but makes them. In other words, people's (or individual’s) choices allow them to make themselves (Joseph 2009, p. 10). No matter, the choice is voluntary or it is forced by someone or the condition
where the speaker is. Language choice is one of the core factors to express one's attitudes, likes, dislikes, social status, etc. In discussing this phenomenon, we might go back to Humboldt who claimed that a group's cultural values, knowledge and beliefs are encoded in the semantic and grammatical spheres of a language (Underhill, 2009, p. 70).

First I will discuss the identity change of Meskhs and their deportation from the historical perspective and then I will attempt to analyse the repatriated Meskhs' integration process to the Georgian society.

2. What the Name Tells Us?

The name Meskhetian or Meskhs and tells us a great deal about their identity. This name is used for the indigenous population of the historical region in the South of Georgia. Nowadays, some parts of the territory are under the governance of Turkey. According to Georgian administrative division, the region is currently called Samtskhe-Javakheti. Using various terms regarding Meskhs in scholarly literature might be evidence of different viewpoints on the identity of the people: Muslim Meskhetians, Meskhetian Turks, Ahiska Turks, Akhaltsikhe Turks, Deported Meskhetians, Meskhs (as used in Georgian historically). A wide range of historical sources and documents confirm that a vast number of the deported population from Meskheti in 1944 were ethnic Georgians, but the formation of their identity (or as some scholars argue, identity crisis) resulted from many factors since the 16th century, when the Ottoman empire appeared on the geopolitical scene in the Caucasus region and tried to impose hegemony over the region and Georgia, in particular. It was a prerequisite to start the consistent assimilation of the inhabitants of the region. Assimilation refers to changing one's historical identification and participational identification. Hence, Georgian nationality was identified with Orthodox Christianity. We could recall examples from the history of Georgia of that time when individuals sacrificed their lives for Christianity.

Gradually the population's religion was changing from Christianity to Islam. Islamisation of the population may seem to be a kind of acculturisation (Anania, 2008). The key reasons for changing religious beliefs were: 1. economic benefits to converted inhabitants; and 2. political privileges for Meskhetian nobles (Khaukhchishvili (ed.), 1942, p. 726).

Islam spread a new and different language among Meskhs. The language code-change turned out to be a logical consequence of change of religion as Georgian language gradually lost its spheres of functions. For political relationships, Meskhs needed Turkish. As the government was Turk, cultural relationships were embodied within the religion. Georgian historian Vakhushhi Batonishvili, writing in the 18th century, pointed out that in Meskheti, “[n]obles spoke Georgian to their friends, while Turkish was spoken at the official banquets and meetings” (Khaukhchishvili (ed.), 1942, p. 12; Lomsadze, 1975, pp. 295–296). The last level was language change in houses, in everyday life.

Individuals' language choice often seems to be a result of a language planning policies (Nahir, 2003, pp. 423-448). Language planning policy is usually a part of politics involving nations on a whole or particular groups (speech communities) conducted by institutions and authorities (Hymes, 1972; Lewis 1972).

As D. Hymes pointed out, the origins of the associations between particular codes and situational factors lie largely in the cultural and social history of the speech community – in particular, in the distribution of power (Hymes 1972, p. 54). For code-choice systems to be fully understood, they must be viewed as having a number of
interacting elements. Such systems are linked to the culture and history of the speech community, which, indeed, can be seen as a realisation of manifestation of the systems. One part of the system consists of the non-consensual elements: language-planning policy and language competence. Another part is certain codes that may be expected in certain sets of circumstances (Hymes, 1974, p. 55). These often cluster into “domains” (Fishman et al., 1975) such as schooling, the neighborhood, religion and home. LPP agencies have specific intentions: what they want to get as a result. There could be more than one goal and these might be categorized as major goals and minor goals (Nahir, 2003, p. 425). What could have been the major and minor goals of those Empires that invaded the Georgian territory of Meskheti? In the case of the Ottoman Empire, the core intention was the spread of their religion as a guarantee to integrate in cultural and political areas of occupied people (Khaukhchishvili, 1942, Anania, 2008).

The next stage of their assimilation started when Tsarist Russia came on the scene in the Meskheti region. By that time the name Meskhs was considered as the name of belonging to their region not with a sense of being a part of Georgian nationality (Khaukhchishvili 1942, Anania 2008, Lomsadze 1975). I could conclude that Ottoman Turkey managed Cultural, Structural, Marital (not common) and identificational assimilation of the population.

The main goal of the Tsarist Russian Empire, on one hand, can be understood as the consolidation of the different ethnic groups based on the language as consolidation marker (e.g. unification of Meskhs with the Turkish speaking population in the Turkish or Tatarian language groups). On the other, the Russians wanted to divide communities in order to avoid threat from united ethnic groups in colonized regions (Tcitchinadze, 1912; see also the criteria of the census conducted by Russian empire in 1897). For this purpose, after establishing their occupation of the Caucasus, the Russian officials (Uslar, Klaproth, etc.) had described and analysed the languages and peoples in the region (Klaproth, 1812/14; Uslar, 1879-1896). The language and ethnic classifications provided by these scholars led to the language policy of Russian empire, e.g. the differentiation between Abkhazian and Abazian by P. Uslar conditioned their socio-linguistic statuses as distinct languages. As a result separate alphabets were created, which was, finally, followed by identity change. According to linguistic researchers in the 20th century, Abkhasian and Abazian can be qualified as dialects of one language (Lomtatidze, 1975; Chikobava, 1978, 2008). Nowadays, neither sociolinguistically, nor linguistically Abasian and Abkhasian could be classified as dialects.

Meskhs were unified with other Muslim peoples under two groups: Azeris and Turks (in 19th century they called them Tatars and they did not distinguish various Turkic groups living in the region). The authorities of Russian empire only divided Turks and Tatars. Religious and ethnic diversity had been somewhat simplified in the region of Samtske-Javakheti. But the situation had been changed since 1829 after the war between Russia and Ottoman Empire (1828-1829). In accordance with the treaty of Adrianople between Russia and Turkey, Armenian refugees (12000) from Erzurum were settled in Meskheti (Adrianople Treaty of 1829; Kerner 1937; Georgian Soviet Encyclopedia, 1984) sabchota entsiklopedia ). At the same time, some of the Muslim population voluntarily emigrated to the territories under the jurisdiction of Ottoman Turkey (Adrianople Treaty of 1829). There were also other ethnic groups in Meskheti: Tarakamas, Kurds, and Duhobors—ethnic Russians segregated by their Religion beliefs who migrated to the region. If in the past diversity was expressed in religion and language, now migrations conducted by Russia resulted in the multi-ethnicity of the region.
If we compare the data of ethnic group numbers by years, we see how number of Georgians reduced and at the same time number of Turks and Tatars increased:

1880: Georgians - 22429, Tatars - 16400; Armenians - 49590;
1897: Georgians - 18664; Tatars - 18942; Armenians - 47683; Turks - 24433;

(Rashin 1956; First All-Russian Census, 1897).

This is significant as the National census of Russian Empire carried out in 1897 was classified by mother tongue of the population (First All-Russian Census, 1897). That is a very important point as, for the authorities, a distinctive factor appeared in the language and language choice of an individual. According to the census, almost 30 per cent of the population identified Turkish (Turkish and Tatar) as their mother tongue (First All-Russian Census, 1897). Only in third place is Georgian. Hence, if previously religion was a key distinctive sign for the society, by 1897, it became language choice. It is worthwhile to point out one linguistic phenomenon. Ethnic groups identified each other according to their religion although the names were ethnic. In this way, Orthodox Georgians were called Georgian; Catholic Georgians were called French; and the Gregorian population was associated with Armenians even though they had Georgian origin. All Muslims were identified as Tatars no matter they were Azerbaijani, Turks, Tarakamas or other Turkish ethnic groups. This phenomenon led to be reflected in official documents (regarding surnames, ethnicity) and as a result defined even the self-identity of the segregated groups. Muslim Meskhs called themselves Yerli or Binali (local in Turkish). They tried to distinguish themselves on the one hand from other Georgians and on the other hand from migrant Muslims. The next step was a unification of the Yerli (Muslimized Georgians) and Turks. They shared the same religion and language (Beridze, Kobaizde 2005, p. 58).

G. Lomsadze noted Georgian language was a symbol of Christianity for Muslimized Meskhs and attempted to avoid its using (Lomsadze, 1975, p. 80). As he noted in the 19th century, according to the German traveler Karl Koch, Muslimized Georgians apologized for having Georgian as their spoken language (Koch 1855 as cited in Lomsadze, 1975, p. 82). Koch’s informant in Klarjeti told him, “My grandfather was Christian. My father and I have been enlightened by Mohammed’s light; however, we still speak ancestors’. It is truth that it is a sin to speak the language of infidels, but what can we do, God gave us this language” (Lomsadze, 1975, p. 82; Beridze & Kobaizde, 2010, p. 59). Besides its religious distinction, Christianity became the symbol of Russian Empire, as a new conqueror. That accelerated the strengthening of Islam among Muslim population in the Caucasus region, in particular in Meskheti.

With the annexation of the Georgian democratic republic by Soviet Army in 1921, there begins a new stage of Mekshs’ history. The Treaty of Kars was signed by representatives of revolutionary Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin and first president of Turkey Mustafa Ataturk, splitting Meskheti respectively between the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic (Georgian SSR) and the soon established Republic of Turkey (Trier, et al. 2011). The main motive of the linguistic Policy of the Soviet Union was to provide education resources for the ethnic minorities.

The process of establishing secondary schools in local languages other than Russian was reflected in the life of Muslim Meskhs in the following way: Under the permission of the Soviet authorities, Azerbaijanian schools were established in Samtske-Javakheti. The teachers were recruited from Azerbaijan and the schools were specifically intended for the Turkish-speaking community of the region (Bochoridze, 1992, pp. 80–95).
Accordingly, as a result of the above mentioned circumstances, Muslim Meskhs which in the past were considered as Georgians in the 1939 Soviet census identified their ethnicity as Azeris (All-Union Population Census, 1939). A similar Soviet population census was organised in 1944 before the deportation of the Meskhs. According to the “archival materials, in 1944 the majority of the Muslim Meskhs identified themselves as non-Georgians" (Putkaradze, 2005, p. 45).

3. “Why us?”

I will now try to define all historical circumstances which led to their forced migration in November, 1944. Almost 100,000 people were forced to migrate to Central Asia in one day (Bougai 1996, p. 143 cited in Trier et al., 2011, p. 12; Putkaradze, 2005, p. 20).

The history of a deported man describes the processes more dramatically:

“We were living with our own lives, and then they came. The railway did not come to us and they constructed the railway for us. Older locals were working on it. We did not know whether it was built for our deportation. They forced us to work and then forced to leave our houses. The authorities knew the intention but they did not tell us. People who heard got ready somehow. One day military came with a gun; says: don’t move! Why we were chosen, nobody explained.

Some people left the cattle tied. They promised we would be returned from Tbilisi and nothing happened to the cows in a day... and soldiers would keep an eye on them. Yes, The kept! We had been traveling for a month How many people died and were thrown from the train, what could have done, the dead were making a stench. They chose only us. Armenians, Georgians were left. I don’t know what he [Stalin] thought, why he made such a decision. People blame L. Beria but I don’t know.” (Putkaradze 2005, p. 22)

Though their migration was widespread during the Soviet era, some Meskhs managed to settle in the Caucasus, near Georgia (in the republics of the North Caucasus and Azeribaijan USSR) (Trier et al., 2011, p. x). The Phergana pogrom in Uzbekistan in 1989 led to the resettlement of nearly 90,000 Meskhs from 1989 to 1991 mainly to Azerbaijan, Russia and Ukraine, as well as the regions of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (Trier et al., 2011, p. 53, Modebadze, 2010, pp. 80–81). The most complicated problem concerned the refugees in Krasnodar Krai of Russian Federation (Trier et al., 2011, p. 84). Their Soviet passports were denied by Russian authorities and they were left without the citizenship of any country (Trier et al., 2011, p. 84). As a result, they were considered “illegal migrants” (Donald (ed.), 2006, p. xxi). About 11,500 Meskhs moved to the USA from Russia’s Krasnodar Krai (Trier et al., 2011, p. 90; Bilge 2011, p. 3, p. 7). In addition, 35,000 Meskhs dispersed in wide range of former Soviet republics were allowed to move to Turkey (Trier et al., 2011, p. x-xi). Hence, the perspectives of the assimilation are much more complicated and multifaceted than simple discussion of host and migrant societies.

In the Soviet era the deported Meskhs who were registered with different nationalities (Turks, Azeris and Caucasians, but not Georgians) by local Soviet authorities were dispersed into two language schools: Turkish and Russian ones (Modebadze, 2010, p. 95). Russian had become a lingua franca for them like for all people living in the USSR. In this environment, generations have grown up. Consequently, when we debate their identity we should take into account these circumstances. Sociolinguistically, they are described as bilinguals, trilinguals, multilinguals on the one hand, depending on the linguistic conditions they have had to
live in, and on the other, as maintenance Georgian language users, even as a second language.

It would be very interesting to examine the language planning policies conducted during those years towards Meskhs, but because of the lack of relevant and sufficient data to analyse complicated conditions, my discussion will be limited with the issues concerning the repatriated Meskhs in Georgia and their Georgian language competence. According to the international responsibility taken by Georgian government in 1997, the repatriation of those deported people in 1944 must have started. By 2012, Current Citizenship Total number of applicants was 8,900 persons (including children). See Table 1.

Table 1. Applications by Current Citizenship (cited in Trier et al., 2011, p. 44).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citizenship</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>5,389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stateless</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,841</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conforming to relevant data, the number of those who wish to return to Georgia is much less than a total number of the migrant Meskhs throughout the world. To date, only about 1,000 persons have returned from 1964–2012. They are living in different regions of Georgia (see Table 2).

Table 2. Repatriates’ settlement by the regions of Georgia (provided by Kikvidze, 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All households</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achara</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tbilisi</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ozurgeti</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samtredia</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akhaltsikhe</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abastumani</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gori</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khashuri</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Only a few families were able to settle in Samstkhe-Javakheti, which is considered their homeland. The main reason of the fact that they have not returned to those places where they lived before the deportation is the settlement of other inhabitants migrated from other part of Georgia (ethnic Georgians and Armenians) by the Soviet authorities in 1940s.

4. Where Do We Go Now?

In this part, I discuss some issues concerning the return of Meskhs and their integration process with Georgian society within the framework of language competence. In cases of return migration, there comes an issue of whether returnees retain the same values as they should have had before emigration (Cerase, 1974; Cassarino, 2004). Most of the returned Meskhs do not know Georgian at all or spoke very little, despite the prerequisite which was set by Georgian government (Modebadze, 2010, p. 171-172; Kikvidze, 2013). Moreover, their Georgian is different from standard Georgian, as they have only preserved the remains of Meskhetian dialect of the Georgian language. Returning to the linguistic environment which they had belonged to before poses the opportunity for the language revival. Among the functions of LP language revival is defined as the attempt to turn a language with few or no surviving native speakers back into a normal means of communication in a community (Nahir, 2003, p. 428). The most famous examples of this LPP are towards Hebrew and Irish languages (Wright 1996, Myhill 2004, Zenker, 2014) Scholars also cited these cases when they talk those exceptions while ethnic group remains its identity without language proficiency (Beridze & Kobaidze, 2010, p. 53-54).

Despite these facts, Nahir explains:

“The number of language revival attempts has been small. Certain conditions must be met before the desire to revive a language exists: there must be an old language to be revived and a direct historical or cultural affinity with the historical nation whose language is to be revived. These conditions involve a rare combination, which severely would require certain additional conditions, involving an almost unprecedented combination.” (Nahir 2003, p. 434).

But there has been almost nothing done from the side of Georgian government in terms of language revival policy. As we know, language competence coincides with the integration process (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1999, pp. 42-55; Daoust, 2000, p. 436; Paulston, 2003, p. 395), therefore Meskhs problems within the integration are framed by the unsystematic LP policies of the Georgian government. Here are some examples: in the 1990s, the particular program was worked out by the Georgian government. According to the program, the repatriated Meskhs were allowed to enroll in the Georgian Universities without passing any exams or studying the Georgian language at the time. Since 2005, after the establishment of the United National Exams (UNE) this program has stopped (Changes in the Law of Higher Education, 2005) as in accordance with new regularities Georgian language and literature became obligatory subject to enter the universities.

Since 2007, there exists the second language program for the language minorities in Georgia (Decree #841 2006). The program provides the courses of Georgian language in order to prepare the ethnic minorities for the united national exams (Decree #841 2006). The Meskhs are also allowed to take part in this particular program. The different NGOs (Vatan, Khsna, Union of Georgian Repatriates, Toleranti, and others) were providing various educational courses (language acquisition courses among them) to the target group of the population (Toleranti, 2011). However, these particular unsystematic courses of language acquisition are not effective, because the
age and cultural peculiarities of the target group are not taken into the consideration (Tabula, 2012). Since 2013, the Georgian language short courses for repatriate adults and children of preschool age have been commenced under the support of the Ministry of education (Kikvidze, 2013). Within the frames of the project, classes are offered in Akhaltsikhe, Ianeti, Nasakirali, Abastumani with the request of the deported Meskhs.

If we compare place of residence and language competence, we will see that Meskhs settled among the host society (mainly local Georgians) are integrated better than ones who live separately (Collection, 2013; Kikvidze, 2013). Another project conducted by the international organisation ECMI gives evidence of interrelation between segregation and mistrust of societies (ECMI 2012, pp. 26-30). The best Georgian is spoken by the Meskhs who settled in 1980s in Nasakirali and who live together with the locals, though there still remains the tendency to segregation (Kikvidze, 2013; Putkaradze, 2005; Trier et al., 2011; Sumbadze n.d.).

Those ones who resettled in the village of Ianeti (Samtredia district) live separately from the local residents (Putkaradze, 2005, p. 33-45). The nearest secondary school is at a distance of 8 km. It is hard to get to school because of the lack of transport. Besides the school, the children cannot communicate within the Georgian language environment. That is why they finish school and their Georgian language acquisition is still poor. The Meskhs name the subjective reasons why they are not able to gain knowledge (Collection, 2013; Putkaradze, 2005, p. 33-45; Sumbadze N.D.): 1. Economic pressure (though this seem more Because of the pure economic conditions Meskhs could not afford to get higher education); 2. The tradition (the female members of the traditional families obtain only the basic education, because they are not allowed to work, even in case of existence of the job opportunity); and 3. Some of the Meskhs anticipate the integration that is perceived as a change of their identity. We can conclude that the lower the segregation is, the higher the Georgian language competence is.

5. Conclusion

After analysing the case of deported Meskhs from historical perspective, I could conclude that political changes in the region led Meskhs to change the religion, consequently it caused language-shift. Georgian was no longer considered their first language. These factors conditioned their identity crisis. Furthermore, multiple migrations of Meskhs and their scattered settlement around the world have deepened the crisis as besides their self-name (Meskhs, Meskhetians, Ahiska) and common history they do not share much.

Concerning the repatriated Meskhs as it was mentioned above, they face problems within integration. The main question seems to be the knowledge of the State language, which still remains unsettled due to nonexistence of long-term integration policy by the Georgian authorities. The revival of Georgian among Meskhs has not been succeeded. Segregation between repatriated Meskhs and local society caused the LLP leads to mistrust and discriminate each other. Consequently, returnees might be forced to a new emigration as it happens in case of Meskhs: most of the Meskhian men work in Turkey as seasonal migrants. In addition, there are few applicants who want to return to their homeland - Georgia. Finally, I remark that the reason of their difficulties in adaptation and integration seems to be two-face: educational services provided by the government of Georgia and Meskhs fear of losing their traditions and self-identity by integration.
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Following the White Paper Trail: A Brief History of Attitudes to Swearwords through Film Classification Archives (BBFC: 1912-2012)

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Following the White Paper Trail: 
A Brief History of Attitudes to Swear Words through Film Classification Archives 
( BBFC: 1912-2012) 

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Abstract

Working in archives is not only the privilege of historians, and diachronic studies in linguistics are not only made of old books and ancient dictionaries. Contemporary archives can serve as a key to understanding how languages themselves evolve, as well as to grasp how attitudes towards language may change across decades. Film classification in the UK has often been seen as an old-fashioned, strict institution that dictates language use in films. However, this opinion is primarily based on the fact that language policing is a part of the British film classification process since the creation of the British Board of Film Censors in 1912 (nowadays called the British Board of Film Classification, BBFC). Censoring “swear” words has always been a part of this process, nonetheless, this does not mean that people’s attitudes and practices towards swearwords have always been the same. Thus, contemporary archives in this sense may serve as a valuable source of information concerning the evolution of film examiners’ attitudes towards language.

Following that trail, the recent discussions on “fuck” appearing in 12–rated films (such as Juno, The King’s Speech) do not appear odd after all: indeed, the word “fuck” was limited to X-rated films back in the 1970s. Through the film classification archives, we can see that this results from a century of administrative habits, cultural norms and censorship history. The appearance of swearwords on screen is not just about directors, scenarists and actors refusing to wash their mouth, but also about examiners accepting not to wash their ears, either following or sometimes preceding the audience attitudes towards those swear words. Film examiners have their own way to classify language. For example, there is a clear evolution from censoring language to classifying it, that is, giving language degrees that matches different audiences; but this only becomes clear towards the 1980s. So this article aims to deconstruct the prejudices towards film classification, to give it back its complexity by avoiding to make it only a product of cultural norms and so, to understand the role of examiners in the evolution of the type of language accessible to audiences across the UK.

1. Introduction

“It is found that the dialogue far more emphasizes the situation than is the case with titling [...] therefore, the BBFC had to take more rigorous actions to ensure ‘damaging’ topics were not presented on the cinema screen, and a new list of prohibited issues was drawn up in 1931” (Lamberti (ed.) 2012, p.19). Among those prohibited issues, there were questions raised about the reinforcement of violence because of the presence of vocalized words, and also, about the linguistic content of those words: it was requested to delete some of them such as “bum, strumpet, harlot”. The two last words “strumpet” and “harlot” are dated today; but, in the censorship carried by the BBFC (British Board of Film Classification, the institution in charge of the classification of films in the United Kingdom), you can still find some equivalents such as “bitch or twat”. As the language criterion carries on through the 20th century until today, feeding the lines of the film examiners, we may wonder: how was this criterion shaped, and furthermore, how did it shape the viewpoint of current examiners on language in films?
In order to answer this question, a brief introduction to film classification is required: indeed, this article is based on British film classification between 1912 and 2012, but we need to clarify the change of vocabulary which occurred during this period (from censorship to classification) first, as well as the kind of content we are going to study and the sources which will enable us to build our corpus of data. Once this is done, we will go through three different archival periods: from 1912 until 1933, the BBFC reports give us the importance, and the first form the language criterion took at the beginning of film classification; from 1931 until 1949, the Observations on Scenarios give us an insight on two particular script censors; and from 1950 until 1990, the BBFC film files enable us to witness the second to last transformation of the language criterion. We will conclude on the contemporary BBFC and see that, even though the language criterion was shaped through time by the evolution of social and cultural norms, it was also shaped by the evolution of the BBFC itself. Moreover, the way that criterion was defined shaped the viewpoint of modern examiners and partly explain the slow transition of that criterion from censorship to classification.

2. Introducing Film Classification

Censorship is often presented as embedded in the culture to which it belongs. As Laurent Garreau (2009, p.16) presents it, “There is a tendency that has never changed: the issues of censorship and interdiction are firstly issues of territories and boundaries”. Each country has its own culture of censorship, and the censorship or classification of films does not deviate from this feature. Though I agree with this first assumption, I would like to argue that it is not the only predominant element, especially if our goal is to explain the gigantic gap that exists in terms of film classification between two countries. To give you an example which surprised me when I first started this research, in France in 2012, 82.7% of the films classified by the CNC (Centre National du Cinéma) were Universal against 10.2% in the United Kingdom. Hence, my hypothesis was that the evolution of the institutions themselves and not only the differences in terms of national cultures, were the driving force. In other terms, and more specifically for my topic here, such a “classification gap” could not have been created by the single fact that British and French examiners consider the same films differently under the light of two distinct cultural spectra.

2.1. Film Classification? Film Censorship?

Classifying films is deciding whether or not the film is suitable for the screen, and then, if suitable, deciding to which age category it belongs. On the other hand, censoring films means deciding whether or not a film is suitable for the screen, and then, if not suitable, deciding which parts should be cut, modified or if the whole film should be banned. In the first case, the censorship is economical and is applied indirectly to the film as classification reduces the number of people – especially, young people – who are allowed to go and see the film. In the second case, the censorship is applied directly on the film itself: hence, it concerns the entire future potential audience of the film.

However, the aim of both methods is the same – protecting the audience – and both of them were practised by the same institution. Indeed, in 1912, the issue was to match the claims from the audience, from the State and from the Film Industry itself. The audience and the State were asking for a control imposed on the films, while the Film Industry was looking for a single instance of control, as it was facing multiple

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1 Original text (French): “il est une tendance qui ne change jamais: les questions de censure et d'interdiction sont d'abord des questions de territoires et de frontières”.

Proceedings of the 6th Sociolinguistics Summer School, 4-7th Aug. 2015
censorships at multiple levels. Since the enactment of the Cinematograph Act (1909), local authorities had the power to censor the films in order to give licenses to cinemas while using this pretext to control film content. By 1912, as Robertson (1985, p.4) states, “local authority pressure on film content was sufficiently strong for the film industry to fear the imposition of central government censorship, as local authorities wished”. So, in order to counteract this pressure, the Film Industry proposed the creation of an institution independent from the Film Industry, but also independent from governmental authority. Thus, those elements triggered the birth of the British Board of Film Censors (known since 1982, as the British Board of Film Classification).

2.2. Norms of censorship: Criteria

In order to fulfill its mission, the BBFC, since its creation, adopted a certain number of criteria, that were published every year from 1912 until 1932. After 1932, the list was only sent to the studios. It is only 60 years later that the BBFC started to define its criteria again in annual reports. These lists included some criteria that are well-known even today regarding violence, sexuality, religion, matters of State, military and colonial issues, etc. Those criteria do not exist without norms: those of the culture (and period) in which they are embedded, and also those which define the way the administration works. Talking about norms here is fundamental: films are cultural objects. So the film classification boards rely on cultural norms (that is to say, social expectations) to censor/classify them. Hence, the norms used by the BBFC are prescriptive (according to M.-L. Moreau's (1997) typology): they define the type and style of images, language, stories, etc. that should or should not be seen or heard on screen.

But institutional norms are added to those cultural and social standards. Indeed, in 1912, the BBFC is a newborn institution, that needed to define its status. We have seen earlier that the BBFC was created in a time of conflict between local authorities and the Film Industry. So, as Robertson (1993, p. 5) points out, there were four levels of censorship: “within the BBFC, within the production companies themselves, at the local authorities, and from extra-parliamentary critics and would-be censorship reformers” and the BBFC had to establish its legitimacy in this particular context.

In order to clarify, we can say that, on one hand, cultural norms refer to all the criteria to censor or classify films that match with the norms of a majority of people within a given society. For example, the polls show that swearing is still an issue in Britain. It explains why there are so many debates about a “fuck” in a 12-rated film, even nowadays. On the other hand, institutional norms refer to the aims that do not match with the norms of a majority of people, but which care about the protection of the institution itself, and of the interests of a smaller group of people (e.g. the Film Industry).

Here, our question regarding the norms inhabiting the BBFC is: does the attitude of the BBFC towards swearwords follow the attitude of the audience, or are there other norms that we have to take into account to explain the slow transition from censoring to classifying swearwords, and especially from censoring according to a fixed list of forbidden words to classifying while analysing the context of those same words?

2.3. Sources: In the archives

Unfortunately, the archives of the BBFC were destroyed during the Second World War. Only the remaining documents detained by the National Archives, and the Observations

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on Scenarios kept at the BFI (British Film Institute) Archives enable us to understand what was happening at the BBFC from 1912 until 1945. The third set of documents which allow us to know the state of film classification after 1945 are the examiners' reports, kept for each film submitted to the BBFC.

The archives are not a neutral material, as Coeuré and Duclerc warn us (2011, p. 79). They are elements that were chosen to be kept, classified and in the end, selected by the researcher. Thus, in the National Archives, film classification is seen mainly through documents given to or circulating within the Home Office. But, the main documents at stake here are the thirteen BBFC annual reports, which contain the lists of exceptions made to the films submitted each year. Those lists can be found that on eleven of them, as from 1932, the BBFC decided to deliver these exceptions only to the studios: these reports date back to 1913, 1914, 1919, 1921, 1923, 1925, 1926, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, and 1933. These documents give us a vision of the BBFC as a whole: the reports state the decisions taken by the examiners, but there are no traces about the internal debates that may have occurred.

On the contrary, the Observation on Scenarios (BFI) give us an insight into the machinery behind film censorship from 1931 until 1949. The reason for scenarios examination was technical: with the arrival of more and more talkies on screen, there were difficulties to execute the cuts demanded by the BBFC. Thus, the Trade asked for a pre-examination of the scripts and scenarios in order to solve those technical problems (Robertson 1985, p. 53). There were two main script censors – almost the only ones during the whole period: Colonel J.C. Hanna, and Miss N. Shortt, later Mrs Crouzet. Mathews (1994, p. 51) notes that their comments are full of their own prejudices and each defended their own hobby-horses. Though this is certainly true, their remarks give us an idea of the BBFC criteria and preoccupations during that period, as well.

The third and last group of archival documents which will be used for our analysis are the examiners' reports on the films from 1950 until today. Those documents, more and more formal through time than the observation on scenarios, were the basis for the classification decision: there were at least two examiners watching each film, and thus, taking a first decision of classification; a decision that was then validated by the BBFC Secretary, save in some very rare cases.

Now that the elements of context are defined, the content of those archival documents will enable me to analyse their content and support two arguments concerning language in films. Firstly, the censorship of dialogues has never just been the censorship of words; bad words are not just swearwords. Secondly, the study of that particular criterion enables us to understand how film classification works, and more precisely, how it has evolved through time.

3. From censoring to classifying language

“If, in the moral sphere, the unofficial position of the Board introduces an obstructionist degree of conservatism and orthodoxy, in the political field it introduces a more sinister element. The present position of the Board of Censors is illogical. The conduct of such work by a private and privately salaried body has no rational justification; it is only a pragmatic expedient to meet, without legislative revision, a situation created by laws the effects of which were not foreseen when they were passed” (Montagu 1929, p. 11).

This criticism is just one late example of what the situation of the BBFC was: a private body, independent from the State and the Trade, but only supported by the latter at the beginning. The British Board of Film Censors was created at the initiative of the film
industry in 1912, and essentially financed by the Kinematograph Manufacturers' Association.

3.1. 1912–1933: Establishing BBFC's legitimacy

As presented earlier, during these years, the BBFC was publishing regular reports with rules intended for the film industry. Those rules had a particular format: a list of the exceptions taken to the films submitted to examination, except for the list of rules of the 1914 and 1915 reports.\(^3\) The first references to language appear in the report of 1919. T.P. O'Connor, BBFC President, edited a new rule: no more words or phrases in the nature of swearing within the sub-titles. But this was not the only reference to language in this report\(^4\):

“2. Unauthorised use of Royal Names, Public Characters and well-known members of Society. 3. Inflammatory political sub-titles. 4. Indecorous and inexpedient titles and sub-titles. 5. Sub-titles in the nature of swearing. 30. Reference to controversial or international politics. 47. Salacious wit. 67. Suggestion of incest”.

The report defines clearly what was “language” in the minds of the examiners at that time: bad language was not just swearwords, but also implied certain political and sexual references. What we can see, especially with exceptions 2 and 67, those were clearly embedded within a particular cultural and political context.

As Trevelyan notices (1973, p. 43):

“[T]his remarkable list should be preserved for posterity since it shows what less than fifty years ago were the public attitudes that were reflected in the censorship of films, and also some of the ingredients of American films that were leading to public criticism in the United States, criticism that led to pressures from the Roman Catholic Church and the Women's Organisations which resulted in the film industry having to protect itself by setting up what was first called 'The Hays Office.'”

Indeed, some of the exceptions taken show clearly the pressures the BBFC was facing: for example, “1. Materialisation of the conventional figure of Christ” or “34. Antagonist relations of Capital and Labour and scenes showing conflicts between the Protagonists”. This last exception also reminds us that, though the criteria were essentially defined by moralistic, political, etc. pressures applied to the BBFC, the examiners were also inhibited by the same social fears as the rest of the British society. Thus, showing conflict or crime was believed to influence the audience, especially the youth at that time. And this is not such an archaic attitude, as the same concern was raised recently about another media: video games.

3.2. Talkies: analysing script (1931–1949)

Through the first 40–50 years, one element had a lot of weight and instilled a particular tradition within the BBFC: personal norms. In regard to the scenarios, one observer was

\(^3\) See Trevelyan, 1973: pp. 34-35.

\(^4\) National Archives: HO 45/11191 (1918–1923). BBFC Report, 1919: the numbers quoted here are the original ones from the report.
a colonel and the other one a young lady, who married in the meantime: Colonel J.C. Hanna, and Miss N. Shortt, later Mrs Crouzet were almost the only observers during the whole period. Both of them had standards that can be defined as related to their own preferences. Miss Shortt cared very much about the image of the medical profession, and swearwords, while the colonel did not hesitate to criticize any scenario where the vocabulary used by the military characters wasn’t perfectly matching reality.

The documents they were writing are called the observations on scenarios. When sound was synchronised with images, one of the main problem was how to keep synchronisation when you have to cut? And simply, how to cut without butchering your work? Hence, from 1930 until 1949, these same two people almost always did the observations: they are thus caught in between institutional standards (the rules of the BBFC) and their personal backgrounds.

Thus, we can find that type of comment: for example, for the scenario of *Excess Baggage* (by H.M. Raleigh (Book) submitted by Nettlefold Productions) they wrote that

"From start to finish the story is a mad and irresponsible comedy, quite funny situations and harmless throughout. There are a certain number of swearwords in the book which might well be omitted in the film dialogue, but otherwise there is nothing to object to from a Censor's point of view. Mrs Shortt considers it would be undesirable to show a Bishop in these ludicrous surroundings and the producer was informed".5

The whole paragraph oscillates in between a critical attitude towards the theme of the film, a Censor's viewpoint and warning, and a personal preference which is clearly quoted as being Mrs Shortt's.

This is just one example among many others, which show the kind of work behind the observation on scenarios. However, though we suggested that the criteria were shaped in the early period because of the pressures the BBFC was subjected to while trying to build its legitimacy, here the context is completely different, and we can easily see it through the question of language. Swearwords were not introduced on screen because the examiners were becoming more liberal, but because the production industry, discreet until then, was showing bolder features. For example, in 1938, *Pygmalion*, adapted on screen by George Bernard Shaw himself, was submitted to Mrs Shortt and Colonel J.C. Hanna. Despite the observations made by the two BBFC examiners, the production chose to carry on and it passed with “bloody”. In the 1930s, the case of *Pygmalion* can seem quite isolated. On the contrary, it is the beginning of a new means of pressure towards a more liberal policy towards language.

### 3.3. 1950–1990: The long road from censoring to classifying language

Indeed, the success of a play was guaranteeing its success as a film submitted to the examiners: the Trade had a new means of negotiation. This tendency was confirmed by the 1960s, which brought a first evolution: bad language became more present on screen (see films like *Billy Liar* (1963) or *Up the Junction* (1967)). The evolution of that criterion was also reliant on the more liberal attitudes towards the other criteria: in the 1920s, a man and a woman, even married, were not to be seen in bed together on screen. During the 1960s and 1970s, as John Trevelyan, BBFC Secretary, noted (1973, p. 179), stronger swearwords started to appear in films rated 18 (X at that time).

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5 Film submitted on 15.3.33. Passed Universal. No deletions. (BFI Archives, Observation on scenarios).
But the road from censorship to classification was still long, as the case of mouthed words demonstrates it. If a word is mouthed but not heard, should it be censored? The examiners answered positively to that question: their solution? Redubbing the words when there was a doubt. For example, in *The Man Who Would Be King* (John Huston, 1975), for one reel, the word “bugger” was re-dubbed, because it sounded like “fuckers”. This case of mouthed swearwords goes on even later, which makes an examiner ask in 1987: “New presumptive rule? if mouthed “fucks" and "cunts" over-dubbed then they are acceptable at PG? This was certainly – and sensibly – the case with Crocodile Dundee”.

Besides, that period benefited from the use of classification tables, where examiners had to rate every criterion before rating the film as a whole. This is how we know that swearwords were an important criterion: if that criterion alone was rated 18, the whole film was classified 18 as well. Hence, if there was a mouthed “piss-off” in a film, it confirmed the rating of the film: that was the case for *Carry on Cleo* which was passed PG in 1988 for that same reason (video format).

The establishment of tables, and thus, of an institutionalized practice of classification led to the constitution of the current classification system and the introduction of clear degrees of language (mild bad, moderate, strong): indeed, the system was developed through the years and more age categories were created. The examiners, facing more possibilities, had more choices, which also constrained them to justify more and more precisely each of their decisions. This explains why “fuck” was contained firstly within a rule: during the 1970s, it was found only in X films, then during the 1980s, progressively, it appeared in 15-rated films. Nowadays, the examiners have the possibility to justify its presence, even in 12A films.

So, as we have seen, this is undeniable that criteria are shaped by cultural and social norms/pressures, but, from 1950, it also becomes clear that the evolution of the Board itself (new practices of classification, new categories) shaped those criteria. And in the case of the language criterion, we can even add that it shaped the viewpoint of modern examiners: the habit of having clear, unalterable rules made it difficult for the examiners to take into account the context of the film. The first films which benefited of that new way of classification are *Juno* (Jason Reitman, 2008) and *The King’s Speech* (Tom Hooper, 2010), in which occurrences of “fuck” were considered acceptable at 12A thanks to their “non-aggressive, non-directed at any characters” context.


The BBFC has always been an independent institution, without any official status, contrary to the local authorities, which also had powers of censorship over films. The BBFC was never meant primarily for the protection of children. What triggered the creation of the BBFC, as we have seen, was the will from the film industry to protect itself from the costs of any legal procedures.

According to the examiners, the evolution of the attitudes to swearwords follows the attitudes of the audience towards bad language. However, through this brief study, we have been able to see that a criterion is shaped by cultural and social pressures, but also by institutional pressures: as we can see within the reports of the examiners, during a long time there were defined, established rules they had to follow (for example, the “no fuck” rule until the 1970s). But at the same time, those criteria created habits of

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7 See BBFC website for more details: http://bbfc.co.uk/
classification, which explain why the transition from censorship to classification was so slow.

These remarks can be put in perspective through another system of classification we have already mentioned: the French film classification system. Indeed, this idea that the classification is shaped by the institution itself and that those practices determined the viewpoint of present examiners works here, as well. Contrary to the BBFC, the CNC is a State institution where the Trade had its place, almost from the very beginning. Hence, the pressure for more liberal criteria occurred within the commission of classification itself. This could be a first explanation to the “classification gap” we noticed in the introduction.

5. References

Akan in Accra: Towards the Formation of a New Variety

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Akan in Accra: towards the formation of a new variety

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Abstract
The paper discusses some linguistic processes observed in the speech of second-generation Akan migrants in Accra compared to the speech of those in the indigenous areas of the language. It is observed that the second-generation migrants display a lot of variability which can be associated with linguistic processes in new dialect formation described in the literature (e.g. Trudgill 1986 & 2004, and Kerswill & Trudgill (2005). These include using variants with origins from different varieties of Akan, levelling out geographically and demographically minority variants, and creating inter-dialect forms. However, in addition to these, they also use variants which, may be as a result of imperfect acquisition, and there are also instances of inter-language forms. Another significant observation is the use of English borrowings without assimilating them into the phonological system of Akan as it is usually done in the indigenous areas. These observations are indicative of the fact that though Akan occupies a privileged position in Accra, the linguistic situation in the capital has its effects on the language, displaying mainly some processes in new dialect formation, and other language contact phenomena.

Keywords  Akan, Accra, second generation migrants, variation, new dialect formation

1. Introduction

Ghana, a West African country, is a very linguistically heterogeneous country with a vast range of indigenous languages. One cannot be certain about the number of languages in the country because there is no census data explicitly for language. However, Dakubu (2005a) states that there are approximately 50 distinct non-mutually intelligible indigenous languages spoken in the country. These languages include Akan, Nzema, Gâ, Dangme, Ewe, Kasem, Gurunne, Dagaare, and Gonja. The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS, May 2012) indicates that out of the total population of the country, the Akans constitute 47.5% of the total population. However, this figure includes L1 speakers of other languages like Nzema, Sehwi, and Ahanta, who are classified as Akans in such reports. Agyekum (2012) refers to Akan as used by the GSS as ‘ethnographic’ Akan to differentiate it from the ‘linguistic’ Akan, which constitutes those who speak the mutually intelligible varieties of Akan as L1. Yet the ‘linguistic’ Akan, as a single variety, no doubt, has the largest number of speakers in the country with mother tongue speakers of about 43-45% of the total population of the country (Osam 2003, Guerini 2007, Kropp-Dakubu 2005a and Kropp-Dakubu 2009). The ‘linguistic’ Akan is grouped into two broad categories: Fante and Twi. The Twi variety has sub-varieties which include Akuapem, Asante, Akyem and Kwawu. Fante also has sub-varieties such as Gomua, Ekumfi, Nkusukum, Iguae, Breman, and (sometimes) Agona (Osam 2003). The differences in these varieties are mainly at the lexical and phonological levels.

Accra is the capital and the most urbanized city of Ghana, and as a result, very linguistically heterogeneous due to migration from all parts of the country and beyond to Accra. Though Gâ is the indigenous language of Accra, Akan, a migrant language with different varieties as noted above, has become the lingua franca in Accra (Dakubu, 2005b; Essegbe, 2009). This puts Akan in a privileged position in the capital; however, the linguistic situation of Accra has its effects on the Akan variety spoken by the Akan migrants in Accra. This paper, therefore, discusses some linguistic processes observed
in the speech of second-generation Akan migrants in Accra compared to what is spoken in the indigenous areas of the language in the context of language contact phenomena.

2. Methodology

2.1 Informants

I have approached this study by collecting linguistic data from elderly and young female informants in the indigenous areas of the language, specifically Asante and Kwawu varieties, and second generation female migrants in Accra from the same linguistic background, through conversational interviews. The elderly informants in the rural communities, who are less mobile and have little or no formal education, are between the ages of 60 and 76. The use of this category of informants in the rural communities was motivated by the traditional dialectology model (Chambers & Trudgill 1980), which considers older men, who are less mobile and uneducated as those who speak the “pure” variety of the language. However, elderly females were considered in this study because the migration pattern in the Ghanaian contexts indicates that women are significantly less mobile than men (Reed, et al. 2010, p. 771 and Awumbila 2008, p. 18). Therefore, if one is looking for the “pure” regional variety, then it would be better to consult an elderly female than male. The second generation female migrants in Accra are of the same year group and educational background as the young informants used in the indigenous areas, i.e. they have senior high school education and are between the ages of 16 and 22. Two different linguistic neighbourhoods were considered in Accra: Akan dominant neighbourhood and less Akan dominant neighbourhood. Restricting the type of informants, especially in Accra, in this manner, was to enable me to control and monitor the variations that will discovered in the speech of the second generation migrants. The informants in the rural communities were used as controls for the second generation migrants in Accra.

2.2 Linguistic variables considered

Thirty-one lexical variables, which have different variants in different varieties of Akan, were considered.

2.3 Data collection

The data was collected through conversational interviews using picture-naming task. The conversations were recorded and transcribed.

3. The discussion of the data

The linguistic processes observed in the speech of, especially, the second generation migrants in Accra for the lexical variables selected for investigation involve those that result from contact between linguistic subsystems such as “mixing variants from different varieties of Akan”, “inter-dialect forms” and “leveling”. These processes can be identified with linguistic processes found in new-dialect formation as documented in the literature (Trudgill 1986; Trudgill 2004). Furthermore, we also find borrowing, especially of English words, and interlanguage forms, which are some of the linguistic consequences of contact between different linguistic systems (Winford 2003; Kerswill 1994). In addition, the second-generation migrants also used variants which typically do not belong to any of the traditional varieties of Akan (though their sources can be traced to one) and neither are they inter-dialect forms. In discussing these linguistic processes, we will
distinguish between the potential contexts in which a process could take place, and the actual realizations. Every item in which at least one informant applies the process under consideration in the variant she uses is considered a potential context where the remaining informants—both informants in the rural communities and the second-generation migrants in Accra—could have applied that process.

3.1.1. Linguistic processes from contact between linguistic subsystems: Mixing of variants from different varieties of Akan

Dialect mixing is defined as the coexistence of features with origins in the different input dialects within the same community, usually because speakers have different dialectal origins (Kerwill and Trudgill 2005). The informants in this study, especially the second-generation migrants, used variants with origins from different varieties of Akan. The potential contexts and actual realization of mixing of variants from different varieties of Akan by the group of informants in the different linguistic contexts is presented in table 1.

Potential contexts: $17 \times 24 = 408 - 354 = (54+2-2) = 54$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual realizations</th>
<th>*KwRC</th>
<th>KwAD</th>
<th>KwAnD</th>
<th>ASRC</th>
<th>**ASAD</th>
<th>**ASAnD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variant from other varieties of Akan</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other variants $^9$</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*There was intra-individual variation (+2)
** One informant could not identify an item (-2)

Table 1: Potential contexts and actual realizations of variables which the informants mixed in variants from different varieties of Akan

From Table 1, it can be concluded that the Kwawu second generation migrants (KwAD & KwAnD) and the Asante second generation migrants living in neighbourhoods in Accra where Akan is dominant (ASAD) used more of the variants from different varieties of Akan. For instance the second generation migrants used variants such as [moko], [ekutu], [esikyire], and [saafii], which are the Fante variants for ‘pepper’, ‘orange’, ‘sugar’, and ‘key’, respectively, and [asanka] ‘earthenware bowl’, [akongua] ‘chair’ and [frot] ‘stew’, the respective variants in the Akuapem variety, are also used by some of these informants. It must be pointed out that [frot] is also the variant in Fante for ‘stew’. Furthermore, the Asante second generation migrant mostly used [brodo] ‘bread’ and [tapoli] ‘small pestle’, which are the variants in the other Twi varieties: Akyem, Akuapem and Kwawu. This notwithstanding, there are also instances where the Kwawu second generation migrants used [mfrsnt], [ntrwra] and [boofre], which are the respective variants in Akyem for ‘window’, ‘garden-eggs’ and ‘pawpaw’, and [ntma], a typical variant in Asante for ‘cloth’. It is worth pointing out that [boofre] is also a variant in Asante. This is an indication of the mixture of the various varieties of Akan in the Akan variety spoken in Accra. However, this is to be expected due to the fact that the speakers of these varieties can be found in Accra. The informants

$^8$ KWRC: Kwawu rural community
KWAD: Kwawu second generation migrants in neighbourhood where Akan is dominant
KwanD: Kwawu second generation migrants in neighbourhood where Akan is less dominant
ASRC: Asante rural community
ASAD: Asante second generation migrants in neighbourhood where Akan dominant
ASAnD: Asante second generation migrants in neighbourhood where Akan is less dominant

$^9$ “Other variants” in the calculations in the potential contexts and actual realizations of a linguistic process represent all other variants used by the informants with the exception of the linguistic process under consideration.
in the rural communities have fewer of these variants. In fact, those in the Asante rural communities did not use any of these variants at all. However, there are a few instances where the informants in the Kwawu rural community, especially the young, used variants with origins from different Akan varieties. This development in the speech of the young Kwawu informants is attributed to influence from the current Kwawu generation who travel to other communities to attain secondary and tertiary school education, and also borrowing variants from their neighbouring Akyem communities.

The mixing of variants with origins from different varieties of the same language as were realized among the second generation migrants in Accra is one of the processes in new-dialect formation (Trudgill 2004). Millar (2008, p. 242) notes that mixing represents the initial linguistic state of a newly settled territory. The author further states that the pioneer generation, largely adults, on their arrival in the new settlement will mainly adhere to the linguistic patterns of their place of origin. Therefore, the first native speakers (i.e. the second generation migrants) will inevitably grow up hearing a considerable range of different forms of the imported language. As a result, the children's language will contain a mixture of variants originally from different dialect areas, as we observed in the speech of these second generation migrants.

### 3.1.2. Inter-dialect forms

Inter-dialect forms are forms which were not actually present in any of the dialects contributing to the mixture that arise from the interaction between them (Trudgill 2004, p. 86; Trudgill 1986, p. 62). There are occasions where the second-generation migrants used variants that can be described as inter-dialect forms. Table 2 presents the potential contexts and the actual realization of inter-dialect forms by the group of informants in the different linguistic contexts.

| Potential contexts: 10 x 24 = 240 – 182 = (58+1-1) = 58 |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Inter-dialect forms | KwRC | KwAD | KwAnD | ASRC | *ASAD |
| 0 | 10 | 14 | 0 | 7 |
| Other variant | 40 | 30 | 26 | 40 | 34 | 33 |

*There was intra-individual variation (+1)  
** An informant could not identify an item (-1)

*Table 2: Potential contexts and actual realization of variables which the informants used interdialect forms*

As we can observed from Table 2, the inter-dialect forms were exclusively used by the second generation migrants with none of the informants in the rural communities using any of these forms. However, it seems that the Kwawu second-generation migrants used more of these variants than their Asante counterparts. Taking a critical look at the types of the inter-dialect forms used by these informants, we can isolate forms, which are basically between Twi and the Fante varieties. An example of this is [ekutuo] which is a combination of the Fante variant [ekutu] and the Asante and Akyem nominal suffix /-o/. Other examples of this category of inter-dialect forms include [meko] and [ekonwə], which applies the phenomenon in Fante where /e/ occurs before /i/, /u/, /o/, the environment where the Twi varieties have /æ/ (Dolphyne 1988), in [meko] and [ækonwə].

Secondly, inter-dialect forms between individual varieties such as Asante and Fante, Kwawu and Fante, and Akuapem and the other Twi varieties, can be identified. For instance, there is the variant [ankteetwadɛ], which uses the Fante /e/ instead of /æ/ as explained above, in the Asante variant [ankæketeetwadɛ]. This process is also applied...
in the Kwawu variant [ædwarz] to develop the inter-dialect form [edwarzs]. Furthermore, [ɪntama] which is the Akuapem variant [ntama] with a vowel prefixed to the initial nasal consonant, a phenomenon which occurs in the other Twi varieties (Akyem, Asante and Kwawu) is also used. These notwithstanding, there are also the inter-dialect forms [edwart] and [edwarb], which apply phenomena from three different varieties: Fante, Kwawu and Akuapem. The form [edwart] is the Kwawu variant [ædwarz] which uses the Fante /e/ as the nominalizing prefix together with the Fante and Akuapem nominalizing suffix -ɪ, instead of their respective /æ/ and -ɪɛ, as it occurs in the Kwawu variant. Again, [edwarb] applies the Fante /e/ and the nominalizing suffix [-bra], which typically occurs in Akuapem, in the Kwawu variant [ædwarz].

The development of inter-dialect forms is noted as one of the key processes in new-dialect formation (Trudgill 2004, p. 86). Trudgill, et al. note that in a dialect mixture situation, large numbers of variants from different dialects involved in the mixture will abound. As time passes and focusing begins to take place, the variants present in the mixture will begin to be subject to reduction. This will take place as a result of accommodation between speakers in face-to-face interaction, which may also lead to the development on intermediate or hyperadaptive or other inter-dialect forms which were actually not present in any of the contributing dialects (Trudgill, Gordon and Lewis 1998, p. 37).

3.1.3. Levelling

Dialect levelling refers to the gradual erasure or loss of the differences that have traditionally distinguished very local or highly regionalized varieties of a language (Meyerhoff 2006, p. 236), and it occurs in the initial and the second stages in the process of new-dialect formation (Trudgill 2004, pp. 89 & 109; Kerswill 2002, p. 19).

Dyer notes that in the process of levelling, regionally restricted, stigmatized and minority forms lose to the supralocal, majority forms (2002, p. 109). It was realized in this study that there are cases where some of the second-generation migrants applied dialect levelling in the variants they used for some of the lexical variables selected for investigation. There are some Akan variants, which about 50% or more of both the Kwawu and the Asante second generation migrants used, and therefore levelled out other variants which can be described as demographically or regionally restricted variants. A critical look at the data indicates that these variants, which the majority of these informants used are majority variants in the sense that they are used by the majority of the different Twi varieties. As a result these variants may be commonly used among the Akan migrants in Accra. Hence, the second-generation migrants used these variants even when there is a different variant in their native variety for the particular variable in question. For instance, the Asante variety has the variants [ra], [pãanu], [abomu], and [intma], for “small pestle”, “bread”, “stew”, and “cloth”, respectively. Nonetheless, a higher percentage of the Asante second generation migrants used the respective variants [tapoli], [brodo], [frɔɛ], and [intʊma], which are the variants used for these variables in the other Twi speaking communities such as Kwawu, Akyem and in some cases Akuapem. Secondly, the elderly informants in the Asante community used [amæko] and [mæko], which have vowels prefixed to the initial nasal consonant of [mæko], the variants used by the majority in the Twi communities including Asante because the young informant in the Asante rural community also used this variant, for “pepper”. For that reason, [maeko], the majority variant, is what is used by the majority of the second-generation migrants. Similarly, the elderly informants in the Kwawu community used [adamɛdwa] and [akentennwa] for “kitchen stool” and “table chair” respectively. My investigation shows that, with the exception of Asante, these variants
also exist in the other Twi speaking communities: Akyem, Bono, and Akuapem, but they are mainly used by the elderly. The current generation in these communities, however, will generally use the generic term [akonnwa] or [ækonnwa] for both variables, and sometimes add some adjectives to qualify them. As a result, a higher percentage of the Kwawu second-generation migrants also used [akonnwa], the variant used by the majority for both variables and the demographically minority variants [adamsdw] and [akentennwa] are levelled out. Furthermore, there are some variants which are common to all the Twi varieties and these include [gyeene] “onion”, [safua] “key”, [sapo] “sponge”, [praie] “broom” and [womma] “long pestle”. Consequently, almost all the second-generation migrants maintained the use of these variants in Accra. In Table 3, I present these majority variants and the percentage of the different group of informants that used them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAYORITY VARIANTS</th>
<th>KwRC (%)</th>
<th>KSGM12 (%)</th>
<th>ASRC (%)</th>
<th>ASGM13 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small pestle</td>
<td>[tapoli]</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>87.5*</td>
<td>62.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread</td>
<td>[brodo]</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>87.5*</td>
<td>62.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stew</td>
<td>[froie]</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloth</td>
<td>[intuma]</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>62.5*</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepper</td>
<td>[mæko]</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen stool/Table chair</td>
<td>[akonnw]</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>62.5*</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onion</td>
<td>[gyeene]</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>87.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key</td>
<td>[safua]</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>87.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponge</td>
<td>[sapo]</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broom</td>
<td>[praie]</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long pestle</td>
<td>[womma]</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*There are intra-individual variation

Table 3: Lexical variants used by the majority of the second generation migrants

It can be concluded from the above discussion that the variants that are retained by these second generation migrants are those used by the majority of the Akan varieties and therefore has the potential of being heard in many conversational contexts in Accra. The variants used by the minority are accommodated out. These findings confirm what has already been observed in previous dialect contact studies. Britain and Trudgill has noted the non-haphazard nature of the reduction process and stated that in determining who accommodates to who and therefore which forms are retained and which are lost, demographic factors involving proportions of different dialect speakers present will be vital (1999, p. 246). It is has been observed that usually the form that survives the levelling process is the form which occurs in the majority of the contributing dialect (and therefore used by the majority of the population), and the regionally restricted, stigmatised, and the minority forms in the mix lose out (Trudgill 1986, p. 101; Britain & Trudgill 1999, p. 246; Torgersen & Kerswill 2004, p. 24, and Trudgill 2004, pp. 89–93). This is what we see in the speech of the second-generation migrants in Accra with regards to the variants they use for these lexical variables.

The reduction of variants in this way, as seen among these informants, has been explained in the literature as resulting from the mechanism of short-term and long-term

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10 It should be pointed out that the Akuapem variety will use [akongua]/[ækongua] and [akentenga] for ‘kitchen stool’ and ‘table chair’ respectively.
11 The variants in Akuapem for ‘key’, ‘sponge’ and ‘broom’ are [saf], [sapw], and [prai] respectively.
12 Kwawu Second Generation Migrants
13 Asante Second Generation Migrants
accommodation between speakers in face-to-face interaction (Trudgill 1986; Trudgill, Gordon, & Lewis 1998, p. 37; Britain & Trudgill 1999, p. 245; Torgersen & Kerswill 2004, p. 26). Britain & Trudgill state that when mutually intelligible but distinct dialects come into contact, linguistic accommodation occurs. When this contact is long-term, the accommodation can become routinized and permanent through the process of koineization (1999, p. 245). Kerswill further notes that when people speak different varieties as in a new settlement, the dialect differences are likely to be exploited consciously or passively as part of accommodation. This can explain the mechanism behind the survival of the majority forms in a koine: there will be more acts of accommodation involving the adoption of majority forms rather than minority variants simply because there are more conversational contexts in which this can take place (2002, p. 20).

3.2. Linguistic processes resulting from contact between different linguistic systems: English borrowings

Borrowing consists of the introduction of single words or short idiomatic phrases from one language into the other, occasionally without, but most often with, phonological and even semantic changes in the borrowed items (Gal 1979, p. 79). In the data I worked with, there were cases where the informants used English words for some of the lexical variables with different degrees of phonological assimilations into the phonology of Akan. However, in most cases, the forms of the English words were retained (at least in the sense of Ghanaian English pronunciation, see Torto (2013)) without any form of assimilation into the Akan phonological system. In Table 4, I present the potential contexts and the actual realizations of English borrowing by these informants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential contexts: 20 x 24 = 480 – 334 = 146 + 35 =181</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*KwRC  *KwAD  *KwAnD  *ASRC  *ASAD  *ASAnD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full assimilation 14  0  0  13  0  0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial Assimilation 4  4  5  2  5  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No assimilation 4  30  34  0  37  30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akan variant 62  52  53  70  46  51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*There was intra-individual variation (+35)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: The potential contexts and actual realizations of borrowed English words with different degrees of assimilation into the Akan phonological system.

We can see from Table 4 that both informants in the Kwawu and Asante rural communities (KwRC and ASRC) have English borrowed words which have been assimilated into the phonology of Akan. However, the second-generation migrants did not use any of such variants. From the data, I concluded that forms such as [bokiti]/ [bakɛti], [towuro]/ [taaworuo], and [pleeti]/[pleɛti]/ [prɛti], which are fully assimilated into the phonology of Akan, were exclusively used by the informants in the rural communities. On the contrary, the second-generation migrants (KwAD, KwAnD, ASAD, & ASAnD) did not use any English borrowed words which have been fully assimilated into the phonology of Akan, as we saw in the rural communities. Furthermore, the speakers used more English borrowings without any form of assimilation than can be observed in the rural communities. Examples of these words include “bucket”, “towel”, “plate” and “silver”, which were fully assimilated into the phonology of Akan by the informants in the rural communities, with the exception of a few young informants in the Kwawu rural community. However, it is worth noting that the use of partially assimilated forms, such as [boo] and [tomatoes]/ [tomatoes], cuts across both informants in the rural communities and the second generation informants in Accra.
3.2.1. Interlanguage forms

Kerswill (1994, p. 6) notes that alongside switching and borrowing, the migrants’ speech has some of the features of interlanguage, the characteristic imperfect production by people in the process of acquiring a second language. The author states that perhaps the most significant claim in the study of second language acquisition is that an interlanguage, though variable and restricted, is a self-contained system different from both the speakers L1 and L2. Apart from the inter-dialect forms we have already discussed, the second-generation migrants also used a few variants which can be described as interlanguage forms between Akan and Gâ. These forms are [frɔ] and [sikre], the variants some of the migrants used for “stew” and “sugar”, respectively. The form [frɔ] originates from the combination of flɔ and frɔɛ, which are the respective variants in Gâ and the Akan for “stew”. Secondly, [sikre] is created from sikli and asikre, the variants in Gâ and the Akuapem variety respectively, for “sugar”.

All these processes attest to the linguistic situation of Accra and the language varieties available to Akan migrants in particular, and the residents of Accra in general.

3.3. Non-traditional Variants in Akan

The data also reveal usages of variants which typically do not belong to any of the traditional varieties of Akan though their sources can be traced to one. Examples of these variants include [naadʊwa] “garden-eggs”, [bɔfɪɛ] “pawpaw”, [tōá] “bottle”, [sumwe] “pillow”, [mako]/[mɔkɔ] “pepper” and [akonnya]/[ækonnya] “chair”. Table 5 presents the potential contexts and the actual realization of the use of variants which do not belong to any of the traditional varieties of Akan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential contexts: 14 x 24 = 336 – 306 = (30 +6) =36</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variant with L2 influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KwRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variant with L2 influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other variant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Intra-individual variation (+6)

Table 5: Potential contexts and actual realization of variables which informants used variants which typically do not belong to any of the traditional varieties of Akan neither are they interdialect forms

There is a significant relationship between the use of variants which do not belong to any of the traditional varieties of Akan and the group of informants in the different linguistic settings. The second-generation migrants used more of the variants which do not belong to any of the traditional varieties of Akan. However, it seems that the second-generation migrants who live in neighbourhoods where Akan is less dominant used more of these variants than those living in the neighbourhood where Akan is dominant.

4. Conclusion

The linguistic environment in Accra has an effect on the Akan variety spoken by the second-generation Akan migrants in Accra. The speech of these second-generation migrants displays some linguistic processes found in new dialect formation. In addition, there are other contact-induced language phenomena also taking place, which include
borrowing and inter-language forms. The migrants also used variants which typically do not belong to any of the traditional varieties of Akan. Therefore, I conclude that a new variety of Akan which has some characteristics of both new dialect formation and other contact-induced language phenomena is being formed in Accra.

5. References


Guerini, F. 2007. Multilingualism and language attitudes in Ghana: A preliminary survey. A paper presented at the International Symposium of Bilingualism (ISB6) which was held at the University of Hamburg (Germany), from the 29th of May to 2nd of July 2007.


