

Language Vitality in the World of Englishes

A workshop convened by Tan Ying Ying,
 jointly organized by
Linguistics and Multilingual Studies, NTU
 and the *Johannesburg Institute of Advanced Studies, South Africa*,
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NTU President's Office Global Dialogue and
 the *Centre for Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS), CoHASS NTU*.

Day 1 (15 March 2018)	
0900-0920	Registration + Morning coffee and snacks
0920-0945	Opening Remarks 1) <i>KK Luke</i> , Chair of School of Humanities & CLASS Director, NTU 2) <i>Kristen Sadler</i> , Director, NTU President's Office Global Dialogue
Thinking Vitality	
0945-1030	Language Endangerment and Loss: Lessons from Asia <i>Salikoko Mufwene</i> University of Chicago, USA
1030-1115	Is the loss of language vitality a result of linguistic injustice? <i>Tan Ying Ying</i> Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
1115-1200	Vitality misconstrued? – the case of Arabic(s) <i>Ivan Panović</i> Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
1200-1315	LUNCH
“Englishizing” the World	
1315-1400	Linguistic/language diversity and the spread of English <i>Matthias Brenzinger</i> University of Cape Town, South Africa
1400-1445	The vitality of contact languages, with a focus on English-lexified ones <i>Nala Lee</i> National University of Singapore, Singapore
1445-1530	English-speaking vs French-speaking in Cameroon: from colonial imposition to ethnicity substitution <i>Emmanuel Ngué Um</i> University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon
1530-1700	Networking session + Afternoon tea (Venue: Staff Lounge)

Day 2 (16 March 2018)	
Viewing Vitality from Africa	
0930-1000	Morning coffee and snacks
1000-1045	Revisiting the role of economy on Language Vitality: Perspectives from Sub-Saharan Africa <i>Cécile Vigouroux</i> Simon Fraser University, Canada
1045-1130	The vitality of multilingual repertoires among urban South African students: A survey study <i>Susan Coetzee-Van Rooy</i> North-West University, South Africa
1130-1215	The influence of English on written Afrikaans: linguistic effects and potential implications for other languages of Africa <i>Bertus Van Rooy</i> North-West University, South Africa
1215-1330	LUNCH
“Living” Languages in Singapore	
1330-1415	What the continued existence of Singlish tells us about language vitality <i>Lionel Wee</i> National University of Singapore, Singapore
1415-1500	The linguistic vitality of young people in Singapore <i>Kingsley Bolton & Werner Botha</i> Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
1500-1530	TEA
Understanding Vitality through Identity	
1530-1615	Understanding Identity Through Interactions: Language choice and strategies in a dynamic multilingual context <i>Ng Bee Chin & Francesco Cavallaro</i> Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
1615-1700	Identity loss in English(es) <i>Morwesi Sitto</i> University of Johannesburg, South Africa
1700-1745	Discussion for publication & closing

Language Endangerment and Loss: Lessons from Asia

Salikoko S. Mufwene

University of Chicago

The received position in language endangerment and loss (LEL) has been inspired by the fatal experience of indigenous languages in the Americas and Australia, which were colonized on the settlement model and where the Indo-Europeans have become the (overwhelming) majority populations and the Natives have been reduced to very small demographic minorities. These continents also consist of polities where the dominant Indo-European populations, such as in North America north of Mexico, have set up new assimilationist socioeconomic world orders that have first marginalized the Natives and then allowed them to be included on the condition of assimilating culturally to the dominant majority. In this process, they had been preceded by the European immigrants who did not belong in the economically and politically dominant European populations and by other non-indigenous populations. Through accommodating those controlling the new socioeconomic world order, each one of these populations wound up losing their heritage language.

The colonization of Africa by Europeans has not produced the same effects linguistically and in other aspects of culture, though there is a sense in which the world has Europeanized during the last half millennium, in various ways and to varying extents. Pursuing the same comparative approach as in my earlier work on LEL, I wish to adduce the contact history of Asia to bear on our understanding of the subject matter. Central to my considerations are large polities such as China, India, and Indonesia, though smaller territories will receive some attention to. Let me withhold my conclusion till the Workshop.

Is the loss of language vitality a result of linguistic injustice?

Ying-Ying Tan

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Robert Phillipson's (1992) theory of linguistic imperialism claims that the use of English is inherently imperialistic, and has created injustices for speakers who have lost their mother tongues in a bid to switch to English; and this in turn, has led to language shift and language death, therefore resulting in a decline of language vitality. *Linguistic justice*, according to Phillippe van Parijs (2011), is defined as the condition in which the languages of linguistic groups are accorded official recognition, and that the speakers do not suffer from social, economic, and dignity inequality on the basis of their language. Contrary to Phillipson, Van Parijs, in his model of linguistic justice, proposes that having everyone speak English is in fact the way to redress linguistic injustices. How do we reconcile these two seemingly contradictory ideas? Should we, when looking at linguistic justice, consider consequences such as language loss and language death? In a bid to answer these questions, this paper seeks to provide a view of from Singapore, based on sociolinguistic data elicited from over 400 Singaporeans, to show how language communities perceive and understand their rights to language, their conceptions of language loss, and to consider if the conditions to linguistic justice have been met.

Vitality misconstrued? – the case of Arabic(s)

Ivan Panović

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

To talk about Arabic at a workshop dedicated to language vitality may seem to be off-topic. After all, Arabic is the fifth most widely spoken language in the world. Status-wise, as the official or a co-official language in twenty-seven sovereign states, it is topped only by English and French. It is a national, or an officially recognized minority language in at least six other countries. And it is a liturgical language for nearly two billion Muslims around the world. Despite all that, discourses of its endangerment abound. First and foremost, among Arab intellectuals.

To be fair, paradoxical though it may seem, this fear for Arabic is not completely unfounded. For it is not (spontaneously and daily, that is ‘natively’) spoken Arabics the defenders of ‘Arabic’ fear for; it is one specific variety: the one that has no ‘native speakers’ but has been ideologically elevated above all the vernaculars to the point of becoming sanctified. It is the variety most often described by western Arabists as a somewhat simplified and ‘modernised’ descendant of ‘Classical Arabic’ and is thus labelled ‘Modern Standard Arabic’ – a contested designation for what the traditional Arabic linguistics, as well as the ideologically fuelled linguistic imagination, usually call *اللغة العربية الفصحى* (‘the most eloquent Arabic’). It is the variety whose status as a lingua franca of the Arab world has been eroding, not only because this function is increasingly being performed by another lingua franca (English), but also because of the rapid vernacularisation and concomitant emergence of the so-called ‘white dialect’ (*اللهجة البيضاء*).

I present this discursive framing of Arabic as ‘being endangered’ by tracing its historical trajectories, identifying its main tropes, and deconstructing its major fallacies. I develop my discussion within a broader context of the current economic constellations and educational policies in the Arab world, and analyse the ongoing sociolinguistic change against the background of the recent socio-political developments and turbulences. By exemplifying how the discourse of ‘endangered Arabic’ is often predicated on unreflected upon, taken-for-granted premises of the ideologies which the defenders of Arabic purport to oppose, I aim to re-situate the whole issue of ‘vitality’ as it pertains to Arabic by refracting it through the theoretical lens which frames language as a practice rather than a system. In doing so, I focus on youth literacy practices and draw my examples from Egypt, Morocco and Kenya.

Linguistic/language diversity and the spread of English

Matthias Brenzinger

University of Cape Town, South Africa

Only recently English developed into a major threat to both, linguistic as well as language diversity. Linguistic diversity here refers to typological and conceptual variation among languages, while Language diversity is constituted by the figures of speech varieties considered to be distinct languages, currently roughly 6,000.

English plays a major role in the processes often referred to as globalisation, such as the spread of a world economy and Christianity or the expanding trends to consumerism. English in these global spheres causes the disappearance of “non-conformist” concepts and with that the rapid shrinking of conceptual diversity, such as for example in sacred domains or spatial orientation. In contact setting in which English is the nationally dominant language, English replaces many ancestral languages.

At the same time English is also the basis for newly evolving languages and with that also contributes directly to the increase of numbers of languages.

The historical dimension of linguistic/language diversity

The languages of the world are testimonies of the creativity of individuals and communities, but in addition past power structures have shaped the present distribution of languages.

For by far most part of the human history, humans were hunter-gatherers. Very few languages spoken today are rooted in this most distant human past. By far most of the currently spoken languages diversified from a few proto-languages over the past 12,000 years or so. Back then, pastoralism and agriculture became new modes of livelihood and language communities grew in size. Migrations of larger groups of people had a major impact on the diversification of genetically related languages. For example two-thirds of the roughly 2,000 African languages belong to a single phylum of genetically related languages, namely Niger-Kordofanian. The largest branch of this super family - spoken all over the southern half of the African continent - consists of 500 or so Bantu languages. Their origin is in central part of the continent and linguistic diversification from a Proto-language began less than 3,000 years.

English, the rescue of language diversity

English plays not only a vital role in the documentation of threatened languages; it is also often employed in revitalisation efforts as an intermediate language in the production of language teaching and learning materials for ancestral languages.

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Finally, English is essential for the development of multilingual alternatives in education and national communication, in order to counter the monolingual ideologies imposed by the dominant nations of the “first world”.

The future of linguistic/language diversity

In a globalised world with only few world languages, local linguistic identities are increasingly seen as a matter of spiritual (mental health) as well as socio-economic survival (land claims, language titles).

However, languages that are considered to be a burden for the economic and social progress of and by their speakers will be abandoned in favour of English and other more promising languages. Ancestral languages have to receive economic and social value, so that their speakers find good economic and cultural reasons for maintaining their languages.

The vitality of contact languages, with a focus on English-lexified ones.

Nala H. Lee

National University of Singapore

This paper provides an up-to-date report on the vitality statuses of contact languages, comprising pidgins, creoles, and mixed languages. It addresses the notion that these languages do not feature as predominantly in the discussion within the field of language endangerment and loss, and provides reasons for why linguists should be concerned about the potential loss of these languages. The Language Endangerment Index is used to establish the levels of endangerment of 97 pidgins, creoles and mixed languages. The Index, utilized in the Catalogue of Endangered Languages (www.endangeredlanguages.com) assesses languages for their levels of endangerment, regardless of how little information there may be about a language, unless there is no information available at all. The assessment is based on four factors, including intergenerational transmission, absolute number of speakers, speaker number trends, and domains of language use. A language assessment that is based on more factors is awarded with a higher certainty score than a language assessment that is based on less factors. For pidgins, creoles and mixed languages not featured in the Catalogue, relevant social information on the Atlas of Pidgin and Creole Language Structures (apics-online.info) is utilized. The assessment shows that out of the 97 contact languages represented, nothing is known about the vitality of three. These are the pidgins, Barikanchi, Gibanawa, and Settla. One language is safe, but only with sixty percent certainty, this language being Seychelles Creole. 10 languages are dormant, including Ndyuka-Trio Pidgin, Chinese Pidgin English, Chinese Pidgin Russian, Pidgin Hawaiian, Eskimo Pidgin, Bungi, Negerhollands, Batavia Creole, Berbice Creole Dutch, and Copper Island Aleut. The remaining 83 languages surveyed are at various levels of endangerment. After subtracting the number of safe and dormant languages, as well as the number of languages for which there is no vitality information available, the proportion of pidgins, creoles and mixed languages that is at some level of risk is 85.6%. This means that the risk of endangerment for pidgins, creoles and mixed languages is twice as great as the risk of endangerment for all the world's languages, considering that there are approximately 3,154 endangered languages that are at some level of risk (see www.endangeredlanguages.com), out of a total of 7,099 languages in the world (see Ethnologue). In addition, this paper highlights in particular, the circumstances of English-based contact languages. While the discourse establishes English as the chief threat to less-dominant languages, this paper will also demonstrate that there are various English-based contact languages that exist at different levels of vitality—the implications of which will be discussed.

English-speaking vs French-speaking in Cameroon: from colonial imposition to ethnicity substitution

Ngué Um, Emmanuel

University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon

Cameroon has English and French as the two official languages, as a result of historical coexistence between two former colonial masters in the territory. During the colonial time, both languages were official in two distinct territories, Western Cameroon with English, and Southern Cameroon with French. In 1961 after independence, the two territories evolved into a federal republic. Eventually both states united into one in 1972, a situation which has prevailed till the present time. In spite of the two states having been united for close to half a century, English-speaking and French-speaking profiles remain salient markers of identity demarcation in the country, to the extent that, at the national scale, these acquired identities tend to override indigenous ones. As a matter of fact, families whose members are split across the borders of both linguistic territories would sometimes be more faithful to their colonial identities than to their primary, indigenous identities. This situation has been exacerbated for the past 15 months over what has come to be known as the Anglophone crisis which evolves around claims for linguistic rights by English-speaking Cameroonians. In a bid to settle the crisis, the government have initiated a number of allegedly repair measures aiming at putting both official languages on a par, as opposed to perpetuating French domination as felt by English-speaking citizens. Instead of the colonialist divide being a leverage to reactivation of ethnic identities and restoration of pre-colonial socialization networks across ethnic groups, the desperate quest for artificial unity is currently a national reason for concentrating the bulk of financial and human resources into the promotion of official state bilingualism, to the detriment of indigenous languages. It will be my contention in this talk that ongoing government's attempt to reinforce official English/French bilingualism, though it might boost individual's proficiency in the two official languages, would not only widen the existing divide, but is utterly spelling the demise of indigenous identities and languages. I will further argue for an exact opposite approach, namely one whereby ethnic identities are valued, and cross-ethnic integration achieved through restoration of inherent Africa's multilingualism. I will suggest that, only if primitive identities are fully restored, valued, and promoted, would future generations of Cameroonians feel free to embrace third-party identities, rationally and without passion.

Revisiting the Role of Economy on Language Vitality: Perspectives from Sub-Saharan Africa

Cécile B. Vigouroux

Simon Fraser University, BC, Canada

The role of economy on language vitality has remained under-examined in linguistic scholarship despite linguists' long engagement with the latter. For instance, in the wake of the decolonization process of the former colonies of the Global South, the relationship between language and economy was addressed through the lens of economic development, with Le Page (1964) and Fishman (1966) emphasizing the negative relationship between the two. According to them, the more linguistically diverse a country was, the less economically developed it would be. (For similar conclusions, see also Haugh 1967 and Pool 1972, *pace* Djité 2014.) Work done by Chaudenson (1992, 2001) and Mufwene (2001, 2005) has drawn our attention to the ways in which economic practices, along the *population structure* and the *speed of population growth* can affect language evolution such as in the case of Creoles in plantation settlement colonies. Other works have shown how socioeconomic marginalization helps maintain the vitality of minority languages, especially in multilingual countries where the mainstream, modern economy from which many are excluded operates in the former colonial language, as in the case of Sub-Saharan Africa (Batibo 2005, 2008; Mufwene 2016, 2017; Lüpke & Storch 2013; Esegbey et al. 2015).

My paper adds another layer to the above literature. I analyze the spread of Lingala, a vehicular language in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Congo among non-Lingalaphone citizens of these countries who migrated to Cape Town, South Africa. Traditionally, the literature on the attrition and loss of heritage languages among the migrants has attributed these processes to pressure from the host population. Little attention has been directed to socio-economic dynamics that can promote the adoption by the migrants of one of their own national languages as their new lingua franca (and sometimes even as a vernacular). In the case of the DR Congolese migrants in Cape Town, I examine how and why many have adopted Lingala over other national lingua francas such as Swahili or Kikongo and for some, English, the dominant language of the main economy in the host country. Among the questions I wish to address are the following:

- What counts as valuable (social, cultural and linguistic) capital in informal economies?
- What role(s) does language play in informal economy?
- To what extent are the linguistic markets that regulate informal economy different from those of formal economy?
- How is language used as a resource in creating and sustaining connectedness in informal economy?
- What are the underlying mechanisms for sustaining informal networks?
- What is the role of language in maintaining those networks?
- In what ways do informal and formal economies intersect?
- What types of knowledge and language practices regulate access and participation in formal and informal economies?
- What forms of capital are transferable, which ones are not?

The vitality of multilingual repertoires among urban South African students: A survey study

Susan Coetzee-Van Rooy
North-West University, South Africa

The current world context is dominated by an intensified pattern of migration. These migration patterns advance the complexity of societies that are described as superdiverse (Vertovec, 2007). One of the elements of superdiverse societies is the magnification of multilingual repertoires, especially in urban settings that attract migrants. Scholars like Aronin and Singleton (2012: 33) describe the expansion of multilingualism in current superdiverse societies as “the new linguistic dispensation”. In these contexts, “sets of languages” (Aronin & Singleton, 2012: 43) perform communication, cognition and identity functions. In superdiverse current contexts, the traditional study of the vitality of endangered languages (Romaine, 2007) and the study of ethnolinguistic vitality (Bourhis, Giles & Rosenthal, 1981; Yagmur & Ehala, 2011) should broaden its focus to monitor the vitality and dynamic configuration of multilingual repertoires.

The aim of this paper is to use data from a survey study to investigate the vitality of the multilingual repertoires of South African students in the Vaal Triangle region across a period of 5 years (data collected in 2010 and 2015). The focus of the paper will be on exploring the potential of markers from a language repertoire survey to provide an indicator of the vitality of multilingual repertoires among the participating students. The main research questions are: (a) how important is being multilingual to the participants in 2010 and 2015; (b) how many languages do the participants believe that a South African should know in 2010 and 2015; (c) how many languages do the participants report to hold in their language repertoires in 2010 and 2015; (d) what is the “shape” of the languages in the repertoires of the participants in 2010 and 2015; (e) if one compares the size and the shape of the multilingual repertoires of the participants in 2010 and 2015, what trend is observed in terms of the vitality (strength) of the multilingualism reported by the participants in terms of size and shape?

In conclusion, the paper hopes to provide an approach that could be used to study the vitality of multilingual repertoires in current urban South African contexts.

The influence of English on written Afrikaans: linguistic effects and potential implications for other languages of Africa

Bertus Van Rooy

North-West University, South Africa

English has asserted itself as dominant language of international publishing, but more so in the domain of academic writing and less so in other domains where other languages maintain a share of the market, such as fiction, newspapers, magazines, and popular non-fiction. This world-wide phenomenon also plays itself out in the microcosm of South Africa, where English is the dominant language of academic publishing, Afrikaans is losing ground to English, and other languages have in many ways not yet got off the ground. In other avenues of publication, however, Afrikaans retains a stronger position, while there is limited, but some, publishing activity in other languages, especially as far as newspapers, popular magazines and fiction is concerned.

Authors writing in languages other than English are constantly exposed to reading text in English, which raises questions about the influence this has on the development of academic and other published writing in these languages. This presentation considers the case of Afrikaans, which may be instructive of what happens to languages that come under the influence of English and where English may threaten the maintenance of some of the specialised functions. A number of morphosyntactic variants are explored at the level of stylistic choice within different publishing registers, to establish whether Afrikaans is becoming more like English, or whether, as might be expected from a world Englishes perspective, English becomes more like other languages in the local ecology to the extent that it becomes indigenised. From the perspective of the vitality in a world Englishes contact situation, the question is whether Afrikaans academic and published writing shows the maintenance of a tradition that has been building since the early 20th century when it came into use as written language, or whether it is giving up its linguistic identity in favour of adopting stylistic and register choices similar to English, and if so, which English: a local South African one, or an average global published variety. Behind this question is implicitly the question of what happens in the minds of text producers when they are exposed more often to reading in another language than the language in which they intend to write in.

What the continued existence of Singlish tells us about language vitality

Lionel Wee

National University of Singapore, Singapore

It is the year 2018, 18 years after the Singapore government first launched the Speak Good English Movement (SGEM). The SGEM is a campaign that was initially aimed at eliminating, then later discouraging but, by 2018, had become resigned to simply tolerating the use of Singlish by Singaporeans.

In 2018, Singlish not only continues to exist, it might even be described as flourishing. Singlish circulates on YouTube videos, and is used in Singaporean novels, films and plays. T-shirts, mugs and various other accessories and merchandise are sold with Singlish words and phrases printed on them. There was also a publication, some three years earlier, in 2015, of a coffee-table book *Singaporelang – What the Singlish?* by the Singaporean photographer Zinkie Aw. Aw's book features 40 photographs, each providing a visual depiction of a Singlish phrase. According to Aw, the book is therefore a kind of 'Visual Singlish Dictionary' (Aw 2015). Just two years earlier, in 2016, an update to the Oxford English Dictionary had seen the inclusion of more than five hundred Singlish words and phrases from Singapore. And in 2017, Gwee Li Sui, a vocal critic of the government's anti-Singlish stance, published *Spiaking Singlish: A Companion to How Singaporeans Communicate*. Thus, despite repeated attempts by the government to eradicate Singlish from Singapore's sociolinguistic landscape, the language appears to be doing very well.

The continued existence of Singlish raises questions such as the following:

How did Singlish come to (for now at least) defeat the Singapore government's efforts at eradicating it? How did it happen that Singlish is today not only still around but thriving? And more generally, what can this tell us about language vitality?

I suggest that at play in the very public debates about Singlish are different understandings of what Singlish is. Singlish has been called 'Colloquial Singapore English' by its supporters. It has even been called 'broken English' by both its supporters and detractors. There are, however, different connotations to the use of the adjective 'broken' at play. Supporters use 'broken' to mean 'unpretentious' and 'authentic'. Detractors equate 'broken' with 'ungrammatical' and 'unacceptable'. But for two of its most prominent detractors (Singapore's first and second prime ministers), Singlish was not only 'broken English', it was a linguistic plague that threatened the wellbeing of the entire country.

Singlish is best understood as an assemblage of linguistic and non-linguistic resources (Wee 2018). It is a 'multiple object ... enacted at different moments and sites' (Fariás 2010: 13). The relations between different ways of assembling Singlish and, hence, different ways of constructing its relationship to phenomena such as standard English, commodification, and class are in actuality ideological stances that serve different agendas in the Singlish controversy. Arguments about Singlish rely on different notions of Singlish even if the disputants themselves don't always seem

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to appreciate this fact. This is critical to the language's vitality and it is also the reason why it is hard to eradicate.

The linguistic vitality of young people in Singapore

Kingsley Bolton and Werner Botha

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

This talk will report on ongoing research concerning the linguistic abilities and practices of university students in Singapore. The data for this project have been collected through social media and internet forums, in order to survey students across Singapore's six universities. The main aims of the project have been: (a) to gather detailed information concerning the language backgrounds of students and their use of English in higher education, (b) to investigate their knowledge and use of other languages, and (c) to research the disjuncture and linkage between styles of informal communication and those of formal academic discourse. The results of this research include both quantitative and qualitative data, including both macro-level survey results concerning young people's linguistic repertoires, as well as micro-level data illustrating the complexities of language contact and code-switching. Whereas the data generally suggest that the acquisition of minority languages has generally diminished greatly in recent decades, the notion of 'vitality' in the Singaporean context might be currently more creatively conceived with reference to multilingual language contact and complex practices of language alternation, code-switching and code-mixing.

Understanding Identity Through Interactions: Language choice and strategies in a dynamic multilingual context

Ng Bee Chin and Francesco Cavallaro
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

This study explores the Accommodation Theory in a multilingual context. The general assumption is that speakers who are invested in achieving a harmonious outcome in communication are usually motivated to converge to their interlocutors in language choice and strategies (Giles et al. 1973, Giles et al, 1987). Accordingly, bilingual speakers who expend more effort in accommodating to the interlocutor in a speech event are likely to be evaluated more positively. Many earlier studies mainly focus on intergroup accommodation using evaluative judgement. These studies typically focus on bilinguals whose loyalty is clearly grounded with one language and not with both. Despite the fact that the Accommodation Theory in its many facets has been explored extensively in the west, it has never been studied in Asia where plurality of identity is often a norm (Cavallaro and Ng 2014). The backdrop for this study is Singapore which provides an interesting contrast to Canada due to the difference in the bilingual profiles of the speakers. This study focuses on evaluating language choice and strategies in a multilingual context consisting of different subgroups of bilinguals who share one common language (English), which is also commonly accepted as the lingua franca. This presentation will discuss the results from a series of separate studies on the use as well as evaluations of accommodation strategies within and across three ethnic communities (Chinese, Malay and Indians) in Singapore. The first study is an anonymous street survey focusing on accommodation strategies. The second study is an evaluation of pre-recorded interactions in a sales context. The third study looks at within language stylistic variation in a sales context. The findings indicate across group differences in accommodation strategies. Different ethnic groups perceive the speech events differently with the Malay participants reacting more negatively to divergence in in-group members and Chinese participants being more accepting of in-group divergence. The findings indicate the interplay of in-group and out-group expectations as well as the importance of social norms in the Singapore context. These observations are discussed in the context of formation of language attitudes and identity in bilingual Singaporeans.

Identity Loss in English(es)

Morwesi Sitto

University of Johannesburg, South Africa

Moscovici's social representation theory proposes that people are born into social representations and that these symbols are produced and communicated through interpersonal interaction to make meaning within groups and between individuals. "Representations [are] rooted in language and culture because they are the work of collectivity, [and] cannot be entirely conscious" (Moscovici 1993:40). Social representations that are ingrained in us, such as language and culture are becoming contested as the world is faced with a new type of colonisation, i.e. globalisation. The use of English(es) as exclusive languages of 'global progress' implies that indigenous languages are stumbling blocks to globalisation which must be removed to guarantee success.

Globalisation, a new form of colonialism, and its use of English(es) at the cost of other languages may be one of the key factors driving group and individual identity loss, producing social representations of assimilation with its decimation of other languages. Languages link people to their history, roots and origins, through untranslatable tales, stories and song in indigenous languages. While researchers accept that cultures evolve and languages in tandem with them, the forcefulness and pace with which English(es) impose themselves on indigenous people leaves little room for self-directed reconstruction of culture in this new global setting.

The process of acculturation (Berry) has not ever been on the terms of indigenous people each time the social representations of conquerors and the conquered have met. Colonialism, very early on set out to strip people of representations of their collective identity, including symbols such as their cultural names, clan names, names of tribes which are idiosyncratic to the language of these cultural social groups. In many instances these attempts were largely successful in the imposition of the languages of colonial masters.

While the world acknowledges diversity's importance in driving innovation, building intercultural trust and reducing group think, the representations of globalisation do not drive this at a macro level where it is needed most to help individual processes, and instead produce a 'cultural straightjacket' (Howarth & Andreouli 2016). There is ample space in the world for diverse languages, which South Africa is a small testament to, albeit not perfect, with eleven official languages enshrined in the constitution, which can be used in various mediums for decolonised and inclusive instruction.

Globalisation processes need to harness and actively foster mutual respect by creating spaces that allow for and hold sacred the equal footing of all languages. This can be done by recognising the autonomy and agency of people's processes of incorporating different social representations of their language with that of English(es), until these enjoy salience to their identity. As Hogg and Reid (2006:19) point out: "a diversity of opinions, viewpoints, and identities, which is associated with more bumpy communication, often produces better group decisions." Indigenous languages can thrive alongside English(es) provided a process of group and individual re-identity in relation to social representations of language is allowed in this global setting. All languages can and should

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enjoy the space to develop, grow and thrive by allowing cultural groups to exercise their agency during the acculturation process, without the assertion of English(es) over the lives and rights of other indigenous languages to continue.