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Plenaries

R is for Rural: phonologically constructing the rural Other in Southern England

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In 2011, Michael Woods argued that “rurality is ... a social construct ... an imagined entity that is brought into being by particular discourses of rurality that are produced, reproduced and contested by academics, the media, policy-makers, rural lobby groups and ordinary individuals. The rural is therefore a ‘category of thought’” (2011:9). In this paper, I show how, through a circuit of the emergence, circulation and reproduction of ideological discourses (Phillips, Fish and Agg 2001), Southern English rurality is constructed and reproduced through the strategic deployment in TV, in film, in song and in other media of **rhoticity**, the realisation of non-prevocalic /r/ in words such as ‘farm’ and ‘car’.

Rhoticity is a rather rapidly obsolescing phonological characteristic of the English rural South-West (and, appears today to be more robustly preserved in the area’s larger urban areas, such as Bristol). In other areas of the rural South of England, such as East Anglia, it died out well over a century ago (Ellis 1889). Despite the waning use of rhoticity in the South-West, however, comedians, film-makers, and dramatists still routinely recruit rhoticity to phonologically construct the peripheral ‘South-West’. Characters that we are urged to read as from this area, especially old ones in pastoral occupations, especially those without a long formal education, are routinely portrayed with rhotic accents. These deployments are, furthermore, also deeply classed – the rhotic are blue-collared, not white.

The ideological circuit has led to the association of rhoticity as being *iconically* rural. Rhoticity has, therefore, been deployed to construct *any* such older, less educated rural character, wherever they come from in the south of England and whether or not their character comes from a part of England where rhoticity can still be found. Examples from TV drama, comedy, film, and the internet will be used to demonstrate how a recessive consonant is put to work to construct and disseminate ideologies of the countryside, ideologies which erase rural linguistic diversity. Such constructions of rurality as these, broadcast regularly into people’s living rooms, strongly shape how people ‘see’, and, ‘hear’, the countryside, despite contestations from academics and from those in the rural South itself.

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Chronotopes of Dialect Style

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To the extent that they are heard as regional at all, regional ways of speaking index places. But they rarely index place alone. Using or stylizing a regional way of speaking may call up what literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin called a “chronotope.” Davidson (2007), quoting Bakhtin, defines a chronotope as “an ‘intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships’ that is ‘always colored by emotions and values’ (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 83 and p. 243).” This is to say that a language or dialect can index a conceptual world located in time as well as in space, with associated sets of characters related to each other in particular ways. For example, when Americans hear a posh British accent, we may think not just of England, but of the England of the BBC television program “Downtown Abbey,” the England of the late 19th and early 20th centuries when people who spoke that way lived in manor houses in the countryside and had armies of servants.

In this paper, I describe how Pittsburghese, the regional dialect of southwestern Pennsylvania as it is imagined by local people, has been associated over time with three different chronotopes: the “golden age” (working-class Pittsburgh in the 1950s and 60s), the “timeless local” (“authentic” Pittsburgh, temporally located in the present but with the values and habits of the past), and the “contemporary other” (the post-industrial working class, located at the margins of the “real” Pittsburgh of today). I show how these complexes of time, place, characterological figure, and value have shaped how Pittsburghese is represented in a variety of media. More generally, I suggest that the idea of the chronotope may be useful to people interested in the relationships between language and place in Denmark and elsewhere.

Standardization as sociolinguistic change – a comparative study of three traditional dialect areas

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The aim of the project *Dialect in the Periphery* is to advance our understanding of language standardization in contemporary society by tracking the significance of variation in people's everyday lives. We do so by presenting a large-scale comparative study of three different rural speech communities – Northern Jutland, Southern Jutland and the island of Bornholm – within the same nation state.

By studying trajectories of language standardization across different geographical places and communicative contexts, we demonstrate how linguistic variation, which appears to diminish more or less uniformly at a national level, is used in myriads of creative ways in local communities. In this manner we argue that even though language standardization may seem as a uniform movement (from a macro perspective), in fact it takes on very different routes when studied and compared at a micro level.

The quantitative variationist measures demonstrate different, but clear, patterns of standardization at the macro-level of language use. We complement this type of analysis with ethnographically informed studies of the linguistic practices, ideologies and socio-historical aspects of local linguistic variation and change. In doing so, we adhere to the notion of sociolinguistic change (Coupland 2009, 2014, 2016), which means that we do not see linguistic change and social change as distinct processes, nor as a reflection of each other, but as integrated processes. In this manner, we approach standardization both at the level of language use (e.g. Maegaard et al. 2013, Jensen & Maegaard 2012, Monka 2013) and ideology (e.g. Irvine & Gal 2000, Lippi-Green 1997, Milroy & Milroy 1999, Kristiansen 2009).

We argue that we obtain new insights through the comparative design of the study. By diving into a hyper-standardized linguistic society from three different venture points, we can nuance our understanding of change processes and decipher their varying elements and local dynamics. In the presentation we will show the different variation patterns, and offer explanations on why they look so different.

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Language and ‘the local’: How language indexes identity in an insular community

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As geographically isolated entities, island communities are often portrayed as linguistically conservative and homogeneous. It is certainly the case that insular communities have exhibited similarities in the preponderance of certain linguistic forms. For instance, an allophonic split in the MOUTH and PRICE lexical sets – otherwise known as Canadian Raising – has been found in several insular (and isolated) varieties of English. This includes the varieties found on Martha’s Vineyard (Labov 1963), St. Helena (Schreier 2010a), Tristan de Cunha (Schreier 2010b), the Falkland Islands (Britain & Sudbury 2008), and Mersea Island in Essex, England (Amos 2011).

However, whilst similar raising splits found across insular locations may reflect parallel dialect contact phenomena – combining variants from different inputs and reallocating them according to “natural phonetic tendencies” (Trudgill 1986:159; Britain 1997) – I argue that the precise patterns found (and their trajectories) also depend upon the peculiarities of place which give meaning to the forms in situ. My data comes from an analysis of MOUTH and PRICE on the Isles of Scilly, a group of islands off the south-west coast of England. As Amos (2011) has observed, the allophonic split is much less common for MOUTH than for PRICE. However, on Scilly, we find a raising pattern for MOUTH that is more resilient than the raising pattern for PRICE. I hypothesise that the trajectory of the pattern is a consequence of the different social and regional qualities indexed by these variables and the interaction of these meanings with local ideologies about Scilly and its speakers. That the trajectory of these variables may be affected by their social meaning, and that this meaning is linked to a specific place, demonstrates the need to consider the dynamics of location when studying language variation and change. Furthermore, my data suggests that islands are not necessarily sociolinguistically bland; they can exhibit delicate patterns of change, the analysis of which can add to our more general understanding of sociolinguistic phenomena.

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Language and place - Linguistic variation in urban and rural Denmark

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The aim of the LaPUR project is to develop new empirically based insights into ‘place’ as a sociolinguistic factor by making an in-depth examination of the relationship between speakers, language use and place in two different parts of Denmark. The cases in point are the mono-ethnic rural surroundings of Bylderup in Southern Jutland and the multiethnic suburban neighborhood of Vollsmose west of Odense, both of which are areas with a strong sense of local history and identity as well as rich linguistic resources in terms of traditional dialect and urban multilingual speech styles. Building on the large and growing body of research within social sciences, particularly human geography, on place and belonging, we theorise ‘place’ as locus in time and history, and accomplishment of social practice.

In the talk, we present results and conclusions from both sites pertaining to the impact on the study of linguistic variation of social and structural factors of place (historic, demographic, and socio-economic) as well as phenomenological factors (conceptualizations of place, sense of place and self-representations).

The different historical and demographic structures that condition the local contexts of Bylderup and Vollsmose are mirrored in the stratification of the local linguistic landscapes in terms of inter-individual variation, the use of features associated with traditional dialects of the areas and multi-ethnic speech styles. In Bylderup, dialect (‘Southern Jutlandic’) is used on a daily basis among young people, although ethnographic informed fieldwork show vast variation among individual speakers which appear to relate to e.g. gender, local orientation and attachment and plans for future education. In Vollsmose, only a few features associated with the regional dialect (‘Funen’) are used; sometimes in combination with features associated with multi-ethnic speech styles. Here, variation also relates to degrees of local attachment, gender and future orientation.

Applying qualitative, ethnographically informed as well as quantitative measures, the LaPUR project accounts for the status and use of (traditional) dialect in the two locations. Thus, relating local language use to speakers’ senses of attachment to their places, we argue that languages, speakers and places are linked in a historically conditioned relationship with impact on the linguistic landscapes of localities.

Papers

Identity and place: The changing role of Swabian in modern Germany

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The concepts of identity, time and place have long pitted dialectology and sociolinguistics at opposite ends of the methodological spectrum. Traditional dialectologists have concentrated on homogeneous groups of speakers – typically elderly, rural men, who have spent their entire lives in a single location – as the ‘true dialect speakers’. Sociolinguists have sought orderly heterogeneity and the ‘authentic speaker’ – "the ‘ideal’ informant with all of the ‘right’ social characteristics that suit the analysis to be conducted" (Britain 2016:217). More recent research points to the role of ‘dialect identity’ – the “positioning as a user or non-user of the local dialect” (Johnstone 2016:51) – and ‘place-identity’ – the use of local/regional dialect forms in innovative and strategic ways Coupland (2001) – as pivotal factors in dialect usage.

This paper presents the preliminary results of a 35-year panel study with ten Swabian speakers from Schwäbisch Gmünd who were interviewed in both 1982 and 2017. Twelve Swabian linguistic variables, covering phonological, morphosyntactic, and lexical levels of the grammar, provide a rich palette for speakers to index different dialect identities. Features that reflect a positive Swabian identity are being retained, while others that are stigmatised are receding in favour of the standard language. Indices of Swabian identity and mobility have been developed to show how local identity and residential and professional mobility influence speakers’ choice of dialect variants over time. The findings from this research offer new understandings in dialect retention/attrition and show how identity and a sense of place play a vital role in our understanding of language change.

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Language practices at the margins of society on the periphery of Cape Town

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The aim of this study is to analyse what effects urban planning has on language practices in Cape Town, especially in the periphery of the city. Cape Town is a highly dynamic, rapidly growing city whose outline is fashioned by its distinct topography and the city design of different governments over time. In other words, the central and coastal, and hence most desirable areas are those where the most affluent, predominantly White population lives, while the underprivileged (Black and Coloured) masses live in the outskirts of the city. The latter are increasingly pushed to the periphery of the city perimeter due to an ongoing rural-to-urban influx and gentrification. This study is based on data collected through recordings and observation following an ethnographic sociolinguistics approach. The analysis undertaken is geared towards accounting for which factors have an influence on language practices in the physically and socially marginal areas of Cape Town. However, the investigation not only focuses on linguistic constraints, but also on social meaning, indexicalities and style. Results show that space is, indeed, a crucial factor in language variation in Cape Town. On the one hand linguistically separating the central from the peripheral areas, whereas the physical periphery mostly coincides with social marginalisation, characterised by spatial segregation, poor infrastructure, social housing, lacking public transport and gang wars over turf. On the other hand, these characteristics also create micro-zones within the periphery in which particular language practices predominate (and are used for identity work). This paper aims to propose novel ways of how to factor in the complex social and spatial realities of emerging cities (in the Global South) in sociolinguistic research.

Dialect and Placemaking in the Periphery of the Dutch Language Area

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In this paper we ask ourselves: how does one construct local identity through language practices and how does awareness of linguistic local identities arise? Both questions concern the process of enregisterment that reveals a linguistic repertoire with specific linguistic features and is indexical for interactions of socially situated speakers in specific places (Agha 2003).

We present case studies from three former industrial cities - Genk, Heerlen, Tilburg - in the periphery of the Dutch language area. For Heerlen and Tilburg we analyze the mediated hybrid language practices of artists, the Getske Boys resp. the Braboneger. The most important hallmark of their performance, is the parody of enregistered manners of speech of certain stereotypes, Italian immigrants and former coal miners by the Getske Boys and ‘white men’-practices by the Braboneger (“Brabant-negro”). While parodying these stereotypical local identities, our subjects enlarge and ridicule enregistered language features and the associated cultural identities.

One of those features is /sj/ for /s/, in parodic performances indexical for lower class speech style in Heerlen, especially associated with former mining industry. That same feature /sj/ nowadays is also indexical for youth speech styles in Genk, another former mining city with a large minority of Italian immigrants. As such, /sj/ is used in advertisements, reality soaps and rap performances to identify with Genk. Moreover, the speech styles at hand are indexical for large cities by their hybrid character of both dialect and Dutch.

Our three case studies illustrate how a place is created as a physical space with a meaningful context: the local is thus (re)produced by certain social practices, including the determination of local linguistic identities. Our three places are constructed as cities in the periphery: identifiable as culturally and linguistically deviant from the center but at the same time hybrid and diverse.

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Differences in language attitudes and practices among teenagers in a peripheral community

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In many minority language contexts, the ideal balance between protecting ‘traditional’ speakers and creating or facilitating ‘new’ speakers is difficult to negotiate and often contentious. In the Irish context, much recent qualitative research has focused on new speakers, providing much-needed analysis of a group that has historically been neglected in linguistic research. However, studies in various contexts (e.g. Heller, 2006; Frekko, 2009) indicate that minority language education can favour middle-class ‘new speakers’, whose linguistic practices are likely to be closer to the those favoured by educational institutions, meaning there is a need for qualitative research among young traditional speakers at a time of great change in rural Irish-speaking (Gaeltacht) areas, which are peripheral geographically, socially and linguistically.

Based on ongoing ethnographic fieldwork in an Irish-medium Gaeltacht secondary school, this paper draws on data from classroom observation to discuss the challenges faced by students caught between the purist ideologies endorsed in education and language planning and the hybrid language practices more usual in their community. Specifically, it examines the contrast between the attitudes and practices of students in their first year at the school (aged 12-14) and those in their penultimate year (aged 15-17). Teenagers are, as Eckert (1997) and others have noted, particularly concerned with identity work and language is an important tool in the construction of identity at this life-stage. Language policy is a contentious issue in the community the school serves at present, as initiatives are introduced on a local and national level to counter the decline of Irish in the Gaeltacht. Such tensions are seen especially clearly among school-going teenagers and this paper examines how the practices and beliefs of these two groups of teenagers reflect both more general and widely-acknowledged age-related patterns of language use and ideologies among teenagers and the ongoing changes in language policy in the community, which affect the two groups differently.

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From 'Mid-Atlantic' to 'Bermewjan' – constructing belonging through performance speech in (post)colonial Bermuda

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This paper examines the parodic linguistic practices used by white residents of Bermuda, and explores ways in which these practices are linked to questions of belonging, national identity and authenticity in an unusual socio-political island context.

Bermuda, a 21-square-mile British Overseas Territory in the North Atlantic, is a site of much debate over national identity and belonging. What constitutes real 'Bermudian-ness' is a focal point of sharp disagreement on the island, which hosts a large number of wealthy white immigrants employed in the offshore international business sector. This disagreement is usually between black and white groups, owing to the island's colonial history and current demographic makeup.

Exaggerated and highly theatrical linguistic performance appears to be one way in which white residents of Bermuda with otherwise 'peripheral' local status attempt to resolve this tension. They appear to bolster their 'Bermewjan' credentials by way of 'phono-opportunities' (Coupland 1985; see also Schilling 1998, Johnstone 2011), demonstrating knowledge of – and the capacity to produce – forms enregistered as stereotypically Bermudian (see Agha 2003).

Drawing on data from sociolinguistic interviews conducted in 2016, this paper examines the behaviour of one linguistic feature among one black and one white group of Bermudian men over the age of fifty. The acoustic analysis of the MOUTH vowel, one of the most heavily stereotyped sounds of Bermudian English, is used as a window onto the dialect parodies observed in the white group. In combination with contextual analysis, and in light of social conditions in Bermuda, phonetic findings suggest that this linguistic practice is not only a performance of the local, but also a performance of race, and closely linked to the complex identity politics of contemporary Bermudian society.

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When ‘dialectality’ is normality. Preliminaries for an exploration of linguistic behavior in social media in Norway.

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The fact that Norway has one of the highest levels of Internet penetration worldwide, and additionally a very high degree of mass digital literacy, makes digitally mediated language use in Norway an extremely interesting object for sociolinguistic investigation. Besides, Norway is widely known as a comparatively *diffuse* speech community with an extensive tolerance of linguistic variation. Despite this situation, online linguistic practices have so far been given limited scientific attention in Norway.

This paper outlines a research project that aims to explore the vast amount of textual utterances in social media in Norway from a sociolinguistic perspective. One focal point will be how processes of normalization and conventionalization might take place in social media within the rather particular sociolinguistic climate of Norway. Recent studies have shown that ‘dialectality’ is still a prevailing cultural model among young Norwegians (cf. Hårstad 2010). This involves a strong general expectation of linguistic conduct that corresponds with the individual speaker’s (ascribed) local belonging. Any significant mismatch between linguistic practice and affiliation to a place might compromise the individual’s authenticity and thus be socially disapproved. We have several indications that this also applies to written online contexts, but exactly how the ‘dialectality’ is displayed and negotiated is still largely unexplored. This paper will clarify how the study of various meta-pragmatic activities, such as self-correcting, correcting of others, and explicit metalinguistic remarks, might give us insight into how individuals continually orient toward different co-occurring norms of language use. As Blommaert (2010) states, contemporary sociolinguistic societies enclose multiple layers of normativity, a so-called polycentric organization of normativity, and this project aims to establish whether a similar polycentricism can be discovered in Norwegian social media.

Perceptual hyperdialectalism: a case study in Shetland dialect

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When a variety is subject to intense dialect contact and the subsequent threat of dialect death, one possible outcome is hyperdialectalism, where speakers become ‘hyperlocal’ and overproduce features of their variety (e.g. Trudgill 1986, Wolfram & Schilling-Estes 1995, Britain 2009).

Hyperdialectalism is attested in production data in Lerwick, Shetland, a previously relic dialect area which may be obsolescing (Smith & Durham 2011). Here, I examine how hyperdialectalism manifests in Likert scale (1-5) grammaticality judgments for a number of syntactic variables in this variety (e.g. 1-2):

1. Can’n she come too?
2. *What can’n she do?

The findings highlight the importance of dialogue and contextualising Likert scales, especially in situations of change.

When presented with an obsolescing variant (1) in contexts where it would not traditionally be accepted (2), older Shetland speakers give ratings of 1-2, signalling the structure is not acceptable. Younger Shetland speakers, on the other hand give mid-range ratings, suggesting it is more acceptable. However, younger speakers frequently state they would not use these variables, instead citing older family members or ‘more rural’ speakers as potential users. These younger speakers’ ratings thus contradict existing literature on sociolinguistic perception (Drager 2011, Carrera-Sabaté 2014, Lawrence 2017), where older speakers are more cautious or overcompensate.

I suggest when given the opportunity to be a linguistic ‘gatekeeper’ through judgment tasks, younger Shetland speakers’ permissiveness arises from ‘linguistic insecurity’ (Labov 2006:318). Taking their additional comments into account, I suggest their mid-range ratings function as ‘acts of identity’ (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985), with participants attempting to justify their position as in-group members based on their ‘knowledge’ of the variety (Coupland 2007) – ‘knowledge’ which may not be accurate. In grammaticality judgments, then, I argue ‘hyperdialectal’ patterns do not necessarily reflect hyperdialectal usage, but perceptual hyperdialectalism, which has similar properties – e.g. loss of contextual effects.

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From an endocentric close to an exocentric open community Sound changes in a West Cumbrian peripheral community

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Communities differ – among other things – in their geographical position, their sociodemographics and their economic possibilities. All of the factors are interlinked and are subject to change which can have repercussions on the linguistic choices in the speech community. Andersen (1988) distinguishes between four different community types according to attitudes and how permeable the communities are for diffusing features:

endocentric open or close and exocentric open or close. However, community dynamics can change and might influence attitudes and communication in the community. Hence, Andersen's community types cannot be seen as fixed for individual communities.

This presentation focusses on linguistic developments in Maryport, a peripheral community of 11,000 on the West coast of Cumbria. I discuss that socioeconomic changes – the closing of the mine and many local factories – in the 1980s had an effect on the attitudes and communication patterns of the community. Before the 1980s, the community could be described as a close-knit community with the majority of people working in Maryport. However, these community structures broke open when people had to find work in surrounding towns. What is more is that over the years a feeling of resignation due to deprivation set in.

Based on a spoken corpus of Maryport English, I conduct an apparent-time study of two sound changes: the loss of taps and the increase of T-glottaling. I discuss how the breaking away of close-knit ties and the deprivation have led to the increase of dialect contact situations and the accelerated willingness to accept non-local norms into the local speech. I argue that before the 1980s, the community could be described as geographically peripheral and self-contained (endocentric close) while the socioeconomic changes influenced the linguistic development of the community in the way that Maryport now needs to be described as a community which is not protective of local norms (exocentric open) anymore.

Language, Politics and Place in Northern Ireland: the impact of political stance on intonational variation in Belfast English

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This paper proposes that in Northern Irish English (NIE) there is an interconnection between phonological features indexing political identity and geographical place. In formal speaking situations, supporters of a united Great Britain have been found to adhere to norms associated with Standard Southern British English (SSBE), and thus with the political centre of Southern England (Lowry 2002). Advocates of a united Ireland, on the other hand, make use of linguistic features associated with traditional NIE varieties, such as the sociolinguistically salient rise-plateau intonation contour.

Declarative intonation patterns are rich sites of sociolinguistic variation, both cross-dialectally (Warren 2016) and in NIE specifically, where the rise-plateau constitutes an iconic index of linguistic belonging (Cruttenden 1997; Hickey 2004). Here, I examine the speech of student members of Belfast political unions, anchoring the presentation in the use and realisations of different types of declarative intonation: NIE rise-plateaux, SSBE falls, and the less geographically-bound uptalk rise (Grabe et al. 2005; Levon 2016).

Examples of declaratives from sociolinguistic interviews will be used to argue that the NIE intonational inventory is undergoing linguistic change, and that young NIE speakers do not limit themselves to the fall/rise-plateau dichotomy when positioning themselves sociolinguistically. As intonational norms in the linguistic centre of Southern Britain are shifting — SSBE declaratives are now often realised with rising intonation (Levon 2016; in press) — the oft-reported distinction between NIE rises and SSBE falls is blurring.

Instead, I will show how young NIE speakers produce dialectally atypical high rises and low-range rises, which I interpret as hybrids between uptalk and NIE rise-plateaux. In this way, I will argue that intonational variation constitutes a fruitful way to map out the reimagining of local identities on Britain's political and linguistic periphery.

Identity construction through dialect pop: song texts, narratives and social media posts

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This paper compares how place-making is achieved in online and offline contexts through analysing the linguistic practices of the dialect pop band De Hûnekop (“The Dog Head”) from Fryslân, a rural province in the north of the Netherlands. De Hûnekop constructs Fryslân in various ways. For instance, their logo is a skull which eyes are formed by the geographical shape of Fryslân and a water lily leaf (seven of such leaves characterize the Frisian flag); they usually sing in Frisian varieties; and their lyrics deal with the daily life of the Frisian working class and the Wâldpyk. Wâldpyk (“forest chicken”) is the nick name for persons inhabiting the eastern part of Fryslân, called the Frisian Woods.

While some songs construct a Wood-Frisian identity through singing about the rough life of the Wâldpyk, other songs construct a Frisian identity, for example through exaggerating the differences from Dutchmen who (want to) belong to the Randstad, the political and economic centre of the Netherlands.

So, while in offline contexts the band members of De Hûnekop construct a (Wood-)Frisian identity, my research question is whether they also construct a belonging to Fryslân and in particular the Frisian Woods on social media. Spoken Frisian is characterized by rich variation (Stefan, Klinkenberg & Versloot, 2015) and several linguistic features distinguish Wood Frisian from other varieties. While the official (written) standard for Frisian is not frequently used in everyday writing (Ytsma, 2007), Frisian in all its varieties has gained presence on social media (Author et al., 2016). Through deviating from the norm, social meaning is created on social media (Sebba, 2012), and also De Hûnekop succeeds in constructing their (Wood-)Frisian identity and place-making to Fryslân and the Frisian Woods through their orthographic practices.

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Roads to regimentation: place, authenticity and the metapragmatics of naming

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The dialectic facts of indexicality embody much contention. As Bachelard (2014[1964]: 228) notes, the shifters ‘here’ and ‘there’ easily ‘become tinged with aggressivity’. Read in a general way, this suggestion points to the affinity of struggles over space with struggles over language. Even the most entrenched, most emblematic sociolinguistic qualities of a place – potentially indexed in a familiarly authentic ‘here’ – are achieved as momentary outcomes in durable symbolic battles. This paper explores this relationship. It focuses on the language ideological arguments that often saturate exchanges over the spatial facets of emblematically ‘local’ language. More precisely, it discusses the struggle over road naming in Älvdalen, a rural area in western central Sweden. From 2001 to 2010, residents challenged local authorities over their perceived erasure of road names in Övdalsk, the non-standard form of Scandinavian used in Älvdalen. The exchange centred on the perceived contrasts between Övdalsk and standard Swedish, as well as the political entitlements tied to these contrasts. Throughout this, at times heated, process of symbolic differentiation (see Gal 2016), the texture and authenticity of the ‘here’ constituted central stakes. The naming of roads, and the reflections upon this process, served to animate, regiment and contest the ‘authentic’ linguistic and spatial texture of Älvdalen. Drawing on post-Austinian theories of language (i.e. Bourdieu, Harris, Kripke, Silverstein), the present paper engages with these articulations and, accordingly, with the metapragmatic – dialectic – production of place.

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Making it local: /h/ variation in Stoke-on-Trent’s pottery industry

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The absence of syllable-initial /h/ has been described as “the single most powerful pronunciation shibboleth in England” (Wells, 1982: 254). Despite being a long-standing stereotype of working class, uneducated, lazy and deficient speech (Mugglestone, 2007), /h/-dropping remains common in dialects of England, and while it is “marked socially, it is the norm geographically” (Beal, 2010: 21).

Stoke-on-Trent, situated in the North-West Midlands, has historically been an /h/-dropping area (Orton et al. 1978), with the feature still recognised as common locally (Leach & Montgomery, 2013). Using oral history data from 26 speakers who lived in Stoke-on-Trent in the early 20th century and were employed in its world-famous pottery industry, my thesis has examined language variation by macro and micro social categories and within individuals. This paper examines variation in /h/ usage in these speakers, a mixture of males and females aged between 58 and 91.

The results demonstrate variation in /h/ usage according to linguistic factors, local social factors, and individual-speaker topic factors. Linguistically, /h/ varies according to word stress, word class and preceding segment (as previously observed in, for example, Bell & Holmes, 1992). Socially, most speakers in the dataset do not articulate initial /h/, aside from those in jobs held in high esteem (management), those which are outward-facing (administrators), or those who worked away from the majority of workers on the factory floor (designers). This pattern may reflect the well-established indexical link (Silverstein, 2003; Johnstone, 2010) between /h/-retention and higher social standing (Wells, 1982, p.253) although, in the Potteries, the distribution of /h/-dropping seems to distinguish specific industrial roles that are non-manual (and conducted away from the factory floor environment), and more manual occupations. Additionally, I explore the interaction between /h/-dropping and topic among speakers with lower levels of the phenomenon.

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Perceptions of urbanity and its social meaning in metropolitan France

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A variety that is on the societal margins and has concrete connections with peripheral city zones, banlieue French reflects an appropriation of 'outsider' status and appears to occupy a significant space in wider French society's linguistic imaginary. Set against a strong national standard, for some listeners, it carries connotations of youth, migration, socioeconomic disadvantage, poor levels of education, even delinquency; in short, it is heavily stigmatised. For speakers of the variety, on the other hand, it may hold prestige and index affiliation with a local peer group.

Capturing just what constitute this emergent variety's defining features has proven difficult for researchers, since the majority of phonetic features that characterise it are already present in extant French varieties (cf. Conein & Gadet 1998), and since the emergent urban vernacular is itself heterogeneous, present across regional boundaries and social groups. Nevertheless, the variety is conceived of as a singular entity in media representations.

This paper discusses the social meanings of contemporary urban vernacular (CUV) French as they are perceived by non-users of the variety. It presents a qualitative analysis of focus group responses to a number of CUV French stimuli which contain traits identified in the literature (Paternostro 2017; Hornsby & Jones 2013) as typical of the variety. Participants are asked to form a mental image of the speakers in the stimuli, placing an emphasis on demographic traits, but emotional states and personality traits are also elicited. The idea of 'urbanity' in accent is explored, the variety being stereotypically urban, but sharing features and intersecting with regional accents. Using this data, we can question the extent to which potentially conflicting identities are perceived in the naturally occurring stimulus clips: whether, for example, a 'banlieue' and a southern identity are compatible or co-tenable within a single speaker.

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Explaining dialect change in rural Sweden

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As in many European countries, the traditional dialects of Sweden are leveling towards the standard, more or less rapidly (e.g. Auer 2005, Kristiansen & Coupland 2011, Monka 2015, Nilsson to appear, Pedersen 2005, Røyneland 2005, Sandøy 2004, Sundgren 2002, Svahn & Nilsson 2014, Thelander 1979). For this study, the dialect change in two very similar locations (but in separate dialect areas) have been compared – Edsbyn in Southern Hälsingland and Torsby in Northern Värmland. Both locations are quite typical Swedish rural villages: There are approximately 4,000 inhabitants in both locations and there are schools, shops, health care facilities, work opportunities and other community functions making it possible to live a whole life in these locations without having to commute elsewhere.

The linguistic analyses were conducted by investigating how much of the traditional dialect used in the mid-20th century is still in use by 20 speakers in each location. This was done by analyzing speakers' realizations of some 50 traditional dialect variables. The results show that while the Edsbyn dialect is leveling towards the Swedish standard quite rapidly, the Torsby dialect is stable. Why, then, are dialects in two such similar locations changing with different speed? One explanation has to do with the informants' local identity. For example, informants in Torsby report more positive attitudes towards their dialect and village than the Edsbyn informants do, and in our presentation we will discuss linguistic choices in relation to identity work and belonging (Ahmed et al 2003, Anthias 2002, Anthias & Pajnik 2014, Löfgren 1996, Taylor 2009).

In this interdisciplinary study, theories and methods from dialectology and sociolinguistics are combined with ethnological and historical research in order to explain the reasons behind dialect change in two demographically very similar locations.

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Bidialectalism and place(s). On the ideological constraints on bidialectal language practices

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The defining feature of bidialectal speakers is their ability to switch between codes that index different places. In this paper, I discuss how ideological notions about the relationship between language, place and identity constrain Norwegian bidialectal speakers' language practices and contribute to their understanding of bidialectalism as sociolinguistically controversial. A recent project centred on Norwegian bidialectal speakers (van Ommeren 2016) shows that many of them seem to consider their practice of switching between varieties as abnormal in some way. For example, they both describe and illustrate switching between different dialectal modes in performative displays of identity, but some of them go to great lengths to avoid exposing that they are bidialectal to all but a few trusted members of their family.

The paper will provide an overview of the characteristics of Norwegian bidialectals' language practices and an analysis of the participants' narratives about how their codes are tied to specific geographical areas and of their experiences of being a bidialectal in Norway. Drawing on Irvine and Gal's (2000) concept *fractal recursivity*, I demonstrate that Norwegian bidialectals' notions of the markedness of bidialectal switching are linked to how they relate the codes in their repertoire to different places and – more specifically – to their individual conceptualization of an ideological dichotomy between centre and periphery.

The paper is based on an analysis of interview recordings with 12 Norwegian bidialectal speakers supplemented by recordings of conversations between five of these and members of their family. Among the methodologies applied is that of narrative analysis.

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How /r/ became American: The interaction of place and social characteristics in the enregisterment of American English in the nineteenth century

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Why were the speech patterns of the largely rural and economically and politically less powerful West adopted as a standard or ‘general’ American English rather than those of the major urban centers of the American North-East coast? Discussing this question, socio-linguists and historical linguists often focus on the presence or absence of post-vocalic /r/ and explanations often rely on the (changing) prestige of (non-)rhoticity, but differ with regard to its causes and its relation to place: Some consider regional differences in attitudes towards British norms and innovations to be crucial (Bailey 1996: 106; Labov 2006: 296), while others emphasize attitudes towards other ethnicities and resulting perceptions of regions as “ethnically contaminated areas” (Bonfiglio 2002: 8).

In my paper, I propose an approach to investigating the role of place in the historical development of the social evaluation of (non-)rhoticity in the nineteenth century which rests on the theoretical and methodological framework of enregisterment (Agha 2003, 2007, Silverstein 2003, Johnstone et al. 2006). My quantitative and qualitative analyses of nineteenth-century newspaper articles reveal the temporal development and regional distribution of metadiscursive activity surrounding /r/ and show that non-rhoticity is linked to ‘southernness’ and ‘blackness’ and the characterological figure of the Eastern ‘city dude’ who is ridiculed for his attempts to imitate British fashions and speech. Rhoticity, by contrast, is linked to the figure of the Western farmer and cowboy who is constructed as the embodiment of essentially American qualities and values. All in all, this study shows that in nineteenth-century America (non-)rhoticity indexes places and social characteristics which interact in complex ways and provide the basis for the creation of the indexical link between rhoticity and ‘Americanness’.

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The Revaluation of Andalusian via Salient Variables

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In the last 30 years, there have been ongoing debates about the supremacy of Castilian as the national and official language of the Spanish state. Galician, Catalan, and Basque have been the major contestants of Castilian within their respective “Comunidades Autónomas” (Autonomous Communities). However, slowly but steadily there seems to be an increasing awareness of the distinctiveness of the Andalusian dialect with regards to the notion of Standard Spanish. In the globalisation of ideologies about languages and what they consist of, the processes of a changing conceptualisation of dialects and the contestation of their subsumption under the roof of a standard language have to be examined more closely as there is evidence for a differentiation between speech, place, and language and speech community and, thus, a reconfiguration of constructed language borders. In the case of Spain, carrier of metalinguistic discourse – e.g. newspapers, television, radio etc. – contribute to the debate by negotiating the role of the languages in public life. Andalusian, however, seems to have played only a minor role as it was traditionally considered a dialect of Spanish. In the era of mass communication and mass media, a reconceptualization seems to be going on that constructs a more autonomous role of Andalusian as the people’s own way of talking, which does not necessarily have to lead to a separation of Andalusian from Spanish, but it has definitely already lead to an increasing awareness and revaluation of Andalusian (Narbona 1998). A growing number of Andalusian TV channels, newspapers, and other media draw on specific salient phonological and morphosyntactic units of Andalusian in order to highlight both its distinctiveness from Spanish and its ‘natural’ connection with Andalusia and Andalusian culture. One’s own way of speaking is thus connected with a specific and identifiable place that are both the expression of an essentialised Andalusia and its inhabitants. This goes hand in hand with distancing the naturalised way of talking in Andalusia from the discourse generated and diffused by the Spanish language authorities such as the Real Academia Española (Royal Spanish Academy) about the unity of the language throughout the Spanish-speaking world which aims at reducing language variation at all cost and at keeping at bay tendencies of emancipation and differentiation of dialect-speaking groups (Paffey 2014: 47ff.). These processes can best be described and explained with the help of the theories of enregisterment (Agha 2007: 190ff.) and ordered indexicality (Silverstein 2003), by which the use of language variation is systematically linked to different abstractions of extra-linguistic notions such as identity or ideology and their (semi-)conscious employment in the performance of these categories. Both concepts were connected to Labov’s (1972) taxonomy of indicators, markers, and stereotypes by Johnstone et al. (2006) in order to create a framework within which the different levels of usage of specific salient language units could be accounted for. In the talk, I would like to explain this framework shortly and apply the above-mentioned concepts to Andalusian in order to come to a more nuanced understanding of the rapid change of language ideologies and language conceptualisations in Spain within the last 30 years as research in this field has been very scarce. Additionally, I would like to demonstrate how linguistic variation is appropriated by the speakers in order to construct a differentiable identity as well as language community. In order to do so, I will analyse metapragmatic public discourse (Youtube videos, commodified language on t-shirts, etc.) which I have collected as part of my dissertation. The main finding is that both the Andalusian identity and the Andalusian variety of Spanish are actively revaluated in public discourse via salient variables.

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Negotiating local identity through stylised linguistic practice: Performing Cornishness with Anglo-Cornish dialect lexis

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Using Payton's (1989) 'model of dynamic phases of peripherality', this paper presents the first attempt at marrying variationist sociolinguistics with Cornish studies. More specifically, this research triangulates a range of methodologies to explore the relationship between ideology, language, and society in the Cornish town of Redruth. Payton's interpretive framework describes a structural paradigm which inflicts Cornwall with an enduring, yet dynamic, peripheral condition. Cornwall's constitutionally anomalous and ambiguous position as not quite a nation yet much more than a county is a 'fundamental tension' among its population (Deacon 2007: 2). Ethnographic observations suggest that orientations towards Cornwall's geo-political status is a dimension where locally meaningful linguistic variation is manifested. Using a novel methodological framework to elicit lexical variants on a stylistic continuum, local forms were employed most frequently in a formal speech style (see Sandow and Robinson forthcoming). This inverted stylistic distribution suggests that speakers are using their sociolinguistic repertoire in order to perform 'Cornishness' and strategically broadcast a locally oriented ideological stance which is often not found in their vernacular speech style.

The mid-Cornwall town of Redruth is emblematic of Cornwall's historical overreliance and overspecialisation on the mining industry. During Cornwall's boom years it was the richest square-mile in the world, yet it is now suffering a dual social and economic paralysis which can largely be attributed to the town's peripheral condition. This collective experience generates solidarity across the population through shared adversity. For those who reject a stratified and indexical semiotic system dictated by a dominant centre, i.e. the south-east, the Anglo-Cornish dialect is a conduit through which speakers can perform their local identity. By considering the complex social matrix that exists in Cornwall, one can begin to understand the social meaning of the Anglo-Cornish dialect and its role in a much broader semiotic system of meaning making and identity construction.

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Sense of place, everyday mobility and linguistic variation

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In recent years, sociolinguists have urged for a more nuanced approach to the connections between place and linguistic variation, taking into consideration language users' sense of place as well as place factors in a broad sense, rather than seeing places as mere 'containers' of language (Britain, 2002; Johnstone, 2011). Linguistic features might serve as indexes of socio-geographic orientation (Eckert, 2008; Johnstone, 2010). Sociologists point to the importance of mobility – as practice, as meaning and as potential – in the ever-emergent relationship between people and places (Adey, 2009; Cresswell, 2006). Mobility is also of crucial importance with regards to patterns of contact between speakers. Thus, a study of the connections between sense of place and linguistic practice must take mobility into account (Britain, 2013; Milroy, 2002).

In this paper, I present an ethnographically based study of the relationships between socio-geographic orientation, everyday mobility and linguistic practice among 73 adolescents in two different settings – a rural and an urban one, respectively. I thus compare two kinds of places which have traditionally been the target of different research traditions, applying the same methodological and analytical approaches to both places.

The paper will demonstrate how patterns of mobility shape patterns of contact and interaction between speakers, potentially feeding into speakers' current and future socio-geographic orientation. Furthermore, norms and practices regarding mobility feed into speakers' sense of their own ability to move, i.e., their *motility* (Kaufmann, Bergman, & Joye, 2004; Young, 2005 [1980]). This in turn plays a role in their linguistic choices. Overall, the paper argues that all temporalities must be taken into account in a study of the relationship between language, place and mobility: Speakers' place- and mobility history, current place- and mobility practices and imagined future place are all central to their socio-geographic orientation and thus all potentially feed into their current linguistic practice.

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Heterogeneity in a rural place – Planetary urbanization and the role of economic orders in the creation of homogeneity and diversity

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In this presentation, I give insight into a ‘peripheral’ context that is characterized by linguistic diversity. The presentation is based on an ethnographic study on indexical functions of language in a multilingual village in Belize in which tourism and fishing represent the main means of income.

I give an overview of the ‘sociolinguistic economy’ of the village, the diverse linguistic repertoires of its inhabitants and the social discourses that accompany them. I then focus on one aspect, namely the addition of ‘Kriol’¹ and ‘English’ to the local repertoire of the village that previously was dominated by ‘Yucatec’ and ‘Spanish’. This addition has been caused by economic activity, resulting in contact with national administrative policies and international trade, and eventually causing immigration and the development of tourism. The local economy – including its increasing linguistic diversity – can be accounted for by what human geographers refer to as *planetary urbanization*, a process where even remote places have become part of a global system in which all spaces are subsumed under the processes and logics of urban capitalism, in which the ‘hinterlands’ “become the ‘back office’ in service to the needs of urban society” (Brenner and Schmid 2014).

Thus, rural places may be linguistically diverse, irrespective of their demographic size. The example illustrates that economic conditions, leading to particular social formations, are co-responsible for linguistic diversity and, for that matter, linguistic homogeneity. A ‘planetary’ perspective on socio-economic orders may help us to understand why some places are more homogenous than others, which contributes to an understanding of how homogeneity and heterogeneity interact with the production of centrality and peripherality.

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¹ I use names for these codes as used in the discourses of the inhabitants of the village, here focusing on the discourse side only and not on the villagers’ actual translingual practices.

Rural versus Urban

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Denmark is continuously described as a nation about to break in half with an affluent, politically and culturally prestigious centre centring around Copenhagen, the Danish capital, on the one hand, and, on the other, a poor, desolate, bleak and deviating rural part often referred to as “Udkantsdanmark” (“Outskirts Denmark”). This presentation addresses how adolescents living in a small, rural town in West Jutland use linguistic resources to navigate and take position in relation to these large-scale social structures of unequal power distribution.

It shows how the young speakers (re)activate, align with and discard ideological perceptions of rural and urban Denmark in employments of stylised linguistic features associated with Copenhagen speech and the local, traditional West Jutlandic dialect. Both registers are stigmatised in the adolescents` everyday speech, but analyses demonstrate how the adolescents exploit and create social meaning potentials indexed by the two registers in social interactions, and how the two registers carry significant interactional load.

The presentation builds on a large ethnographic study carried out among 66 adolescents in and out of school (Schøning 2017). The data consists of 95 hours of audio-recordings, including self-recordings conducted by the adolescents of mundane social activities. Detailed microanalyses of stylised Copenhagen speech and traditional, local dialect forms reveal how the adolescents ascribe high social status to the former and low social status to the latter. Thus, the overall picture is one reproducing urban Denmark as a powerful and prestigious centre, whereas rural Denmark is continuously disempowered.

Schøning, Signe (2017): *Rural versus Urban. Styling social position among rural Danish youth*. PhD thesis, University of Copenhagen.

Performing dialect in front of the world André Rieu and the politics of languageculture

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This presentation will focus on language use and place-making by examining the jocular languagecultural practices of André Rieu, the worlds' King of the Waltz. Performing in the tradition of the *Stegeiger*, Rieu's verbal entertainment is almost as important/appreciated as his musical. With his reflexive language Rieu always uses these verbal intermezzo's to position himself in, what is stereotypically considered, 'the Dutch periphery'. The empirical basis for this presentation will be Rieu's annual *Vrijthof Concerts* in Maastricht, the capital of the Dutch province of Limburg. Each summer, tens of thousands of people find their way to Maastricht: locals, other Dutch, and foreigners, in particular.

With Rieu becoming a global celebrity, the latter increasingly makes up the largest part of the audience. In 2013, as a consequence of this development, Rieu chose to add English as a second language next to 'Maastrichts' in his performances. Since then, as will be demonstrated, the performative power of Rieu's local language use has been growing: Even the utterance of a minimum of words will authenticate Rieu as 'from Maastricht'. Building on Woolard's insights on 'significance of the authentic voice' that 'signals about *who* one is, rather than *what* one has to say' (2016), I seek to understand the alignment of 'Rieu as an authentic speaker from Maastricht' with *what* has to say and *how* he does that in order to convey a metacommentary to the world on stereotypical Dutch perceptions on dialect, Limburg and Rieu as peripheral.

Variation in the pronominal ditransitive in British English Twitter messages

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Recent research (Gerwin, 2013; Siewierska & Hollmann, 2007; Yáñez Bouza & Denison, 2015) uses historical and contemporary corpora to quantify diachronic and spatial distributions of variants of the ditransitive in British English. Each study focuses on ditransitives with two pronominal objects, where internal factors are reduced primarily to the choice of pronoun and verb type. Three variants are attested, a prepositional dative (PDAT - 'send it to me'), a double-object (GTD - 'send me it') and an alternative double object construction (TGD - 'send it me'). Corpus evidence reveals the pronominal TGD as the most frequent variant until the 19th century, when the PDAT gained preference. The pronominal GTD, now considered canonical, only emerges in the 20th century. Agreement over the broad geographical distribution of the ditransitive is based primarily on maps drawn from the Survey of English Dialects (SED), but comprehensive frequency data is lacking (Yáñez Bouza & Denison, 2015, p.248).

The current project uses detailed frequency data drawn from Twitter which is mapped according to GPS coding. This map shows remarkable crossover with the SED maps, demonstrating both the stability of the geographical distribution over time and the amenability of "interactive written discourse" (Ferrara, Brunner, & Whittemore, 1991, p.1) to the expression of dialect. Using statistical tests for difference, contiguous regions are grouped by the relative probabilistic frequencies of each variant. Approximately 1500 data-points cluster into three distinctly patterning broader regions: (A) Scotland and North East England; (B) The Midlands and North West England; (C) The South and East England. The study highlights a problematic tendency to "lump together" large, linguistically diverse regions and treat them as one entity (Siewierska & Hollmann, 2007, p.97) and the results have implications for dialect geography, dialect syntax and recent approaches concerning regionally sensitive probabilistic approaches to grammar (Bresnan & Ford, 2010).

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Language, place, and (un)belonging at a derby soccer match in Maastricht (the Netherlands)

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On Ascension Day 2017 (May 25), a soccer derby was played in Maastricht, the capital city of the Dutch province of Limburg. *MVV* soccer club of Maastricht faced *Roda JC* soccer club from Kerkrade there. Maastricht borders Belgium whereas Kerkrade borders Germany, both in the far southeast corner of the province while the distance between the cities is thirty kilometres. *MVV* aimed at being promoted to the Dutch premier league while *Roda JC* fought against degradation to the Dutch first division. The riots during half time between fans of both sides were illustrative of the excitement of the match. During the *MVV* fans' gathering in Maastricht's city centre as well as during the match, the dialect of Maastricht was used to address *MVV* players and fans, while Dutch was used to address players and fans of *Roda JC*, even though the dialect of Maastricht is easily intelligible for *Roda JC* fans.

The topic of this paper is how the fans of *Roda JC* were constructed by *MVV* fans as being Germans as shown in visual and audio-recorded data. This paper analyses how these fan practices during the soccer match produced centralisation and peripheralisation dynamics based on language practices in south-Limburg (Cornips et al. 2016). More specifically, these language practices and power dynamics constructed *Roda JC* and its fans as unbelonging to (cf. Christensen 2009) and out of place (Thissen 2017) while, simultaneously *MVV* and its fans were put forward as belonging (cf. Antonsich 2010; Yuval-Davis 2006) to Maastricht, Limburg, and the Netherlands.

We will analyse how *Roda JC*'s and Kerkrade's unbelonging and foreign image can be understood from the broader historical, socio-economical and linguistic context. Two key factors are at stake: the coal mining past of Kerkrade and its oddly perceived Ripuarian dialect that is also spoken in neighbouring Germany.

Copycats dom shouf Comparing MAT/PAT replications in Danish and Swedish multiethnolects

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In the contact scenarios of today's multiethnic Europe, complex factors interact with the 'feature pool' (Mufwene, 2001), rendering unique adoption-rejection patterns in each community (Cheshire, Kerswill, Fox & Torgersen, 2011). These factors include social conditions, substrate languages, diachrony and stylistic domain. They challenge any researcher who, firstly, attempts to inventory linguistic features, and secondly, asks why certain features spread while others do not.

Nonetheless, a comparative study of Danish and Swedish multiethnolects might offer an opportunity to control for some of these factors. Denmark and Sweden share a number of linguistic, political, and sociocultural commonalities. Moreso, many of their migrants hail from the same countries.

To control for stylistic domain, this analysis compares 'matter and pattern' replications in Danish and Swedish hip hop (aka MAT/PAT; Matras & Sakel, 2007) because hip hop is the broadest media platform for urban multiethnolect in Scandinavia today (see Brunstad, Røyneland & Opsahl, 2010). This study examines 40 'hit' songs from 2012 to 2017 (23 Swedish; 17 Danish). All artists are of migrant heritage, and 'hits' are defined as >100,000 YouTube views per year.

A MAT example is amus (Somali, shut up), and a PAT example is låt hatarna hata (English, let the haters hate). Results show that Swedish songs have nearly twice the number of MAT replications than Danish (Swedish: 371 types, 782 tokens, corpus size 9207; Danish: 199/461/9742). The Swedish data also has 33% more PAT replications than Danish (Swedish: 40/64/9207; Danish: 29/60/9742).

I present an inventory of replications and offer an explanation for the differences. Where Sweden and Denmark do differ is in their national cultural histories and in migration patterns: Sweden has had earlier and higher rates of migration than Denmark. This offers some explanation for the MAT finds whereas the PAT finds remain more enigmatic. Potential reasons are discussed.

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Vienna and Graz – Cities and their influential force

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International urban language studies have already emphasised the importance of viewing cities as highly dynamic linguistic entities that give essential impulses for levelling processes that point in the direction of a linguistic continuum within urban areas (e.g. Cheshire et al. 2011). At the same time recent examinations tackle the questions whether distinctive linguistic differences between the urban and the surrounding rural areas can be stated or whether urban areas influence the agglomeration areas, insofar as linguistic innovations tend to start in urban centres and spread out to the more rural locales (e.g. Chambers/Trudgill 1998). However, most of these studies either choose a more variationist or a more interactional sociolinguistic perspective.

Within our project, which is a subproject of the special research program German in Austria funded by the Austrian Science Fund, we use an integrative model where variationist linguistic and interactional conversational methods are systematically combined.

The talk will offer an overview of our project and of the multiple methods of data collection that are used to create an extensive corpus that will cover the horizontal as well as the vertical spectrum of linguistic variation. Based on preliminary sample analyses of grammatical phenomena, we will offer first insights into some observed tendencies and argue that specific markers of different varieties on the dialect-standard-axis are merging and leading towards a change in linguistic space. In addition, the talk will discuss whether supposed differences of observed urban-rural distinctions of linguistic features are more a question of register choice than of locality and therefore, results in urban vs. rural research depend on the chosen methods of data collection and the concrete settings.

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New prosodic features in the periphery of Aarhus

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Through “a friend of a friend of a friend”, I have gained admission to observe and record young people’s everyday interaction in six different communities along the outer ring road of Aarhus, a smaller city serving as regional capital in Jutland, Denmark. The speakers, age 15-18, have all lived their entire life in Aarhus and all speak Danish as a first language, for some with immigrant parents in addition to colloquial use or passive knowledge of their parents’ mothertounge. Initial analysis of the data show phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical variation similar to previous studies of ethnolects in North European urban settings.

Taking a structural variety approach, this presentation present audio examples and provide an initial acoustic and functional analysis of specific prosodic features which occur frequently in all six Aarhus communities, while, based on comparable corpora of Danish talk-in-interaktion (samtalegrammatik.dk), are not found in the general local variety.

The presentation will compare findings to previous structural descriptions of similar prosodic features by Bodén (2010) and Hansen & Pharao (2010). More recently Madsen & Svendsen (2015) have described intonation from a practice approach as a mean for stylization of speech. Examples from the Aarhus recordings, however, occur mostly in non-stylized speech practices, and rather the phenomena seems to serve a language internal function.

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The role of Wellerisms in construing imagined village communities

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A prototypical Wellerism consists of a quotation, a verb of saying plus a presumed sayer, and a specification of the situation in which the quotation was said: *"I stand corrected", said the man in the orthopedic shoes*. Wellerisms are humorous and used by speakers to avoid taking responsibility for taboos given in the quotation: you can swear with a Wellerism by putting the swearword in quoted voice.

The third part of the Wellerism is often said to be mandatory: *"I see", said the blind man*. But studies of Wellerisms in the rural communities in Swedish-language Ostrobothnia in Finland show the importance of the third part as reflecting the values and history of the community at large.

Here I want to further stress the importance of the third part. In our late modern society where the sons and daughters of what was once a farmers' community have moved out, only coming back for holidays. But the Wellerisms remain, and they are still used both within the village community and outside it. Why cling to old sayings which are very often xenophobic and chauvinistic, reflecting ways of thinking that no one in the community would stand up for?

The village as a place, as an imagined community is retained even if you move out. The situation specifications in Wellerisms create a sense of belonging that is reserved for the traditional local population in the village – in the same way as migrants to the rural areas see the dialects in the villages as the responsibility of the traditional local population.

A detailed analysis of the situation specification in some 200 Wellerisms paints a picture of a typical rural community cauched in a humorous kind of expression, typically used also to express one's dissatisfaction with political decisions.