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Epilogue: The traces and tracings of language ideologies

Abstract: This epilogue highlights and bundles some major points and perspectives that have been identified in the papers of this special issue and locates them in the wide field of language ideology research. By doing that, the epilogue sets out to sketch major trends in the past, present and (anticipated) future of the research field, thereby showing (sometimes hidden) traditions, achievements and challenges of language ideology research (and related fields). Particularly, the (re-)emerging interest in affectual dimensions, social positioning, institutional ideology brokerage, social inequality, and power, which are at the center of a number of papers each, are being highlighted and discussed. In a historical contextualization, the epilogue furthermore shows how these topics and interests can be traced back in the fields history and even further to long-standing engagements with language ideologies avant la lettre.

Keywords: language ideologies, metapragmatics, affect, sociolinguistics

Zusammenfassung: Dieser Epilog beleuchtet und bündelt zentrale Aspekte und Perspektiven, die die Beiträge zu diesem Themenheft durchziehen, und verortet sie im weiten Feld der Sprachideologieforschung. Im Verlauf dieser Diskussion werden einige wichtige Entwicklungen in der Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und (antizipierten) Zukunft des Forschungsbereichs skizziert, wobei auch eine Reihe von (zuweilen aus dem Blick geratenen) Traditionen, Ergebnisse und Herausforderungen der Sprachideologieforschung (und verwandter Teildisziplinen) fokussiert werden. Vor allem die (wieder-)entstehenden Interessen an affektuellen Dimensionen, an sozialer Positionierung, institutionellem Ideologiemanagement, sozialer Ungleichheit und Macht, die im Fokus jeweils einer Reihe von Beiträgen dieses Hefts stehen, werden beleuchtet und diskutiert. Im Rahmen einer historischen Kontextualisierung zeigt der Epilog weiterhin auf, dass diese Themen und Interessen sehr weit in die Geschichte des Fachbereichs und sogar darüber hinaus in eine ‚Sprachideologieforschung avant la lettre' zurückverfolgt werden können.

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Résumé: Cet épilogue met en lumière et reprend certains points et perspectives majeurs des articles de ce numéro spécial et les situe dans le vaste domaine de la recherche sur les idéologies langagières. Ce faisant, l'épilogue tente d'esquisser les principales tendances dans le passé, le présent et l'avenir (anticipé) du domaine de recherche, montrant ainsi les traditions (parfois cachées), les réalisations et les défis de la recherche sur les idéologies langagières (et les domaines apparentés). En particulier, l'intérêt (ré)émergent pour les dimensions affectives, le positionnement social, la diffusion institutionnelle des idéologies, les inégalités sociales et la question du pouvoir, qui sont au centre d'un certain nombre d'articles, est mis en évidence et discuté. Ayant à cœur de contextualiser la dimension historique de ces questions, l'épilogue montre par ailleurs comment ces sujets et ces intérêts peuvent être retracés dans l'histoire du domaine et même plus loin, jusqu'aux premiers travaux sur les idéologies langagières avant la lettre.

1 Tracing back

> What we find, however, [...] is that plus c'est la même chose, plus ça change. (Silverstein 1979: 234)

Language ideology research has come a long way in sociolinguistics. Its offspring is usually associated with the fundamental theoretical work of Michael Silverstein that set off almost five decades ago (Silverstein 1976, 1979) and that continues to provide, through its unfolding over the next decades (see Silverstein's 2023 grand synopsis), the basic framework and concepts of reflexivity, metapragmatics and (meta)semiotics for the field and a large part of contemporary sociolinguistics in general (for other seminal work, see for instance Joseph & Taylor 1990; Kroskrity, Schieffelin & Woolard 1998; Jaffe 1999; Kroskrity 2000; Gal & Irvine 2019; also cf. the surveys of Rosa & Burdick 2017; Woolard 2021; Rhodes 2023).

To be sure, however, the topic has been on the linguistic radar for much longer than that. Silverstein himself bases his work, next to Peircian semiotics, on the metasemiotic account of Jakobson (1971 [1955]; most obviously in Silverstein 1976) and on the heavily misconstrued linguistic-anthropological work of Benjamin Lee Whorf (see Silverstein 1979: 193–207 in particular). His oft (although usually in too curtailed form) quoted proposal that "ideologies about language, or linguistic ideologies, are any sets of beliefs about language articulated by the users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use" (Silverstein 1979: 193)[1], directly

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[1] What is often left out is that this is a rebuttal to the then common notion that 'scientific' rationalization is not ideological (e.g., Hall 1950; Lyons 1968: 2, 42–43). Note that the quote starts as "But I do not

draws on Whorf and his engagement with what Franz Boas (2013 [1911]: 71) termed "secondary explanations" (hence, *rationalizations*) of cultural institutions such as language (see Silverstein 1979: 195) as well as with the reciprocal interference of such rationalizations with linguistic structure and practice.

Beyond these explicitly referred (and revered) precursors, we find research on rationalizations and reflections of language and language use, although most often not under the term *language ideologies*, in many of the early works that constituted the emerging discipline of sociolinguistics, most prominently in Bernstein's (2003b [1971]) engagement with ideological construals of narrative practice ('codes') and their consequences in the educational sector (and Bernstein, for sure another heavily misconstrued scholar, has been credited by Hymes 1996 [1995]: 187 as the person who first developed a "sociolinguistic theory of ideology"); we find a plethora of experimental work on language evaluation in the socio-psychological investigation into *language attitudes* (e.g., Lambert et al. 1960), which centers an aspect that regained prominence in recent research (as we see in a number of papers in this issue; see section 2.1), namely *affect*; and even in early variationist work (particularly Labov 1972b [1963]), we are encountering discussion of the impact of language evaluation on phonetic performance. Fishman, Cooper, Ma, et al. (1968: 124, 138, 1036) even use the term *language ideologies*, as do Khubchandani (1978: 112) and, in the German context (although in a rather pejorative way), Jung (1974) – probably among other scholars.

If we go back even further in history, we can trace concepts that are not quite far away from what language ideology research is after, such as Coseriu's (1975 [1952]) triad of *system*, *norm*, and *speech*, which is to some degree reminiscent of Silverstein's (1985: 220) triad of "language structure, contextualized usage, and ideologies of language", to which we will return below. And among the contemporaries of Whorf, we can find several scholars who have also been concerned with

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address myself only to articulated beliefs that are incorrect or contemptible. I should clarify that ideologies about language, or linguistic ideologies, are *any* sets of beliefs [...]" (Silverstein 1979: 193; my emphasis), and it continues: "If we compare such ideologies with what goes under the name of 'scientific' statements about language, we might find that in certain areas the ideological beliefs do in fact match the scientific ones, though the two will, in general, be part of divergent larger systems of discourse and enterprise. We need have no conceit one way or the other, however, that automatically privileges so-called 'scientific' description, or automatically condemns native ideological rationalization." The 1979 piece as well as later work (e.g., Silverstein 1985, 2014) consequently focuses primarily on language ideologies that undergird "'scientific' description", such as "referential" and "pragmatic ideologies" (Silverstein 1979: 208). Of course, this draws on a broad or "total" (Mannheim 1997 [1929]: 68–69), hence non-pejorative notion of 'ideology', which is why Silverstein (1992: 312) can make the point that "it is no cause for concern that scientific and scholarly discourse, too, is 'ideological,' not escaping from the universe of human mental activities as these arise in conditions of sociality."

close phenomena. As is well known, Vološinov (1986 [1929]) deals with language and signs as an ideological device in general. Karl Bühler (2011 [1934]) was most interested in what is now termed (following Silverstein 1976: 33–35) *indexical presupposition* and *indexical creativity* and in what he termed the "speech appeal" (Bühler 2011 [1934]: 35). And probably the most striking account is to be found in Saussure's only posthumously published notes. Quite contrasting with what has been constructed as 'Saussure's position' in the interpretation of the *Cours* (but cf. de Saussure 1986 [1916]: 8), Saussure, "Le Maître [...] himself" (Silverstein 1992: 322), keeps on repeating that the object linguistics sets out to study cannot be delimited to a fixed entity such as the *langue*:

> [...] there is FIRST OF ALL generalization, and nothing other than generalization. Now, since generalization presupposes a *point of view* which serves as a criterion, the prime and the most irreducible entities which could concern the linguist are already a product of a covert operation of the mind. The immediate consequence of this is that the whole of linguistics comes back [...] in fact to the discussion of valid points of view, without which there is no object. (de Saussure 2006 [2002]: 8; orig. emphases)

In other words, the real object of linguistics, for Saussure, are *perspectives* on language and how they emerge into linguistic concepts ("generalizations"). As Saussure goes on to note:

> [...] the grammarian or linguist perpetually offers us an abstract and relative entity which he has just invented in an earlier section, as a concrete entity and as an absolute entity to serve as a basis for these operations.
>   A vast vicious circle, which cannot be broken except by replacing once and for all in linguistics the discussion of 'facts' with the discussion of points of view, for there is not the least trace of *linguistic fact*, not the slightest possibility of gaining sight of or of defining a linguistic fact, without first adopting a point of view. (de Saussure 2006 [2002]: 9; orig. emphases)

So, clearly, already Saussure was convinced that, as Silverstein (1992: 313) rephrased it, "all cultural and linguistic phenomena are essentially ideological 'all the way down,' [and] this calls for a re-evaluation of how we might creep up on such 'material' or 'objective' factuality as presents itself in them."

Furthermore, over the course of his reflections, Saussure proposes that it is the (perspectivized) dialectic *relationship* between different dimensions of what we conceive of as 'language' (e.g., *langage*, *langue* or *parole*) which constitutes the real problems a 'science of language' needs to tackle (e.g., de Saussure 2006 [2002]: 85–86), just like the relationship between signs, and nothing else, makes up for their meaning (Saussure's *value principle*; de Saussure 2006 [2002]: 12–14; see also de Saussure 1986 [1916]: 112–116): "So it is all a matter of relationships" (de Saussure 2006 [2002]: xiii). Silverstein's (1985: 220) likewise dialectic "total linguistic fact, the

datum for a science of language […][,] an unstable mutual interaction of meaningful sign forms contextualized to situations of interested human use, mediated by the fact of cultural ideology", springs to mind!

Now, given all these traces in our discipline's history, and in view of all the work that has been done over the last decades since language ideology research became a strand of its own, where are we standing now, and where are we heading towards? How do we trace language ideologies (and their traces)? The papers assembled in this special issue, I think, provide for a good orientation.

2 Going ahead

In consequence of the long path it has taken, language ideology research is meanwhile, undoubtedly, a broad church. Departing from the initial main interest in the dialectical relationship of structure, practice, and reflection, the field has diversified into a wide range of perspectives. For a long time, the majority of works have shifted their focus on the empirical investigation into the ways social actors use language variants in specific contexts, how this is being guided by shared beliefs of what one can 'do' with particular variants (and what not), and how diverse forms of language use are discursively negotiated and ranked into hierarchical scales (*orders of indexicality* in the sense of Blommaert 2005: 73) of sociolinguistic 'goodness' or 'appropriateness'.

More recently, and eminently inspired by Asif Agha's (2007) account, the question how language ideologies and ideologically constituted *registers of communication* emerge from (meta-)pragmatic practices has become more prominent (for a survey with focus on Germanic studies see Spitzmüller 2024). The notion of *enregisterment* (first proposed in Silverstein 1992: 320) opened a more systematic approach into how language ideologies come into being in the first place, how they are being shaped and transformed by local interaction (see Silverstein 2016; Wortham & Reyes 2020). This, in a way, has reversed perspectives from the ideology-to-practice to the practice-to-ideology direction of fit. Concepts such as *rhematization*, *erasure*, and *fractal recursivity* (Gal & Irvine 2019) have been developed to trace such processes of ideological emergence and substantialization.

Moreover, from what is called *critical sociolinguistics*, language ideologies have been more densely (re-)connected with the topics that concerned early sociolinguistics (again, cf. Bernstein 2003b [1971]): social inequality, exclusion, social profiling, and discrimination (cf. Blommaert 2005; Alim, Rickford & Ball 2016; Heller, Pietikäinen & Pujolar 2018). From this perspective, ideologies of language are no longer regarded as mere innocent institutionalizations that guide social actors, but as highly powerful (and often harmful) devices of social differentiation that call for scholarly stance-taking and intervention.

Third, in the wake of the 'multimodal turn' of social and cultural studies, the focus has been widened from language ideologies to reflective practices that concern other semiotic modes (such as graphics), media and genre, performance in a general way, as well as to the multimodal interplay of "ideologies of communication" (Spitzmüller 2012: 256, 2022; also see Gershon 2010; Nakassis 2016; Keane 2018) – a complex, though, that is not prominent in the issue at hand.

And finally, while scholars have focused for a long time on visible ("articulated"; Silverstein 1979: 193, or "display[ed]"; Blommaert 2005: 73) practices and the abstract patterns of evaluation that can be deduced from such discursive displays, we can observe a return to more subjective and 'inner' phenomena in recent years. This manifests in a renaissance of notions such as *affect, embodiment/habitus*, or *lived experiences* that are related to language ideologies, and methodically in a shift from more corpus- and discourse-oriented approaches to different forms of ethnography, including auto-ethnography, that set out to get hold of subjective perceptions and reactions (see Bucholtz & Hall 2016; Busch 2017; Busch & Spitzmüller 2021; Park 2021; see also the in-depth discussion in the paper of Erdoğan-Öztürk).

The excellent papers assembled in this issue are testament to this widening of scope, to the multi-dimensionality of the field as well as to the methodical extension that accompanies this. In what follows, I will briefly discuss this by example of perspectives that strike me both salient and enlightening in the contributions to this issue.

2.1 Phenomenology and affect

I begin with the area I mentioned last, as this concerns quite a number of papers to different degree: subjective perceptions, embodiment, emotions, and affect. Their centering in the context of language ideology research – a *phenomenological (re-) turn* of (parts of) the field if you will – is remarkable indeed.

As mentioned above, affect has been of central interest in earlier stages of research into reflexiveness, particularly in psychologically informed accounts. Language attitude research regarded affect as a main dimension of its object from the get-go (see Garrett 2010: 19–20). This has a long socio-psychological legacy (e.g., cf. Thurstone 1931). Regarding (orders of) indexicality and the construction of social inequality against the backdrop of language ideologies, the poignant anecdote of Bühler's (2011 [1934]: 39) is a strong case in point:

> It is rumored that a student in Bonn once reduced his competitor, the most foul-mouthed market woman ["das schimpftüchtigste Marktweib"; J.S.], to silence and to tears only by using the names of the Greek and Hebrew alphabets ('you alpha, you beta!'). A psychologically plausible story, because in swearing, everything depends on the tone.

In the issue at hand, the phenomenological perspective is most strongly employed in the papers of Bunk, Erdoğan-Öztürk, and Jahns. Oliver Bunk highlights the role of affect (and *language anxiety* in particular) within the complex of linguistic ideology and thereby also comes back to the interference of such ideologies with language practice and linguistic systems, the "under-researched area" of "the relation between ideologies and grammar" that figures so central in Silverstein's work but got out of scope beyond that. Bunk's empirical analysis reveals how multilingual speakers that are categorized as 'non-natives' of German, as opposed to 'monolingual' speakers of German, find themselves exposed to heightened pressure towards 'standardness' and 'correctness'. He goes on to show, however, that this pressure differs depending on the context (particularly between what is being perceived as more 'formal' or 'informal'). Language ideologies, in other words, sell differently to different social groups, and their contextual value feeds back into what is perceived as 'the norm'.

Yasemin Erdoğan-Öztürk presents an in-depth discussion of the role of affect in the case of return migrants and "the complex and dynamic identity construction processes of transnational subjects", particularly women. Employing the 'lived experience' account (Busch 2017), the author traces how her informants find themselves exposed to multiple pressures simultaneously. It is not only, as in Bunk's case, the German standard language ideology which interpellates on them (particularly in contexts marked as 'German'), it is also the perceived obligation to perform as a speaker of 'good Turkish' (and hence, a 'proper Turk') within the Turkish community that continuously haunts them. Navigating between these two 'monolingualisms' constitutes, as the author shows, an identity of in-betweenness and constant liminal dance; a dance that, as the author reminds us, is "very common in migrant communities" as well as in communities that are linguistically minorized (e.g., see Urciuoli 1996; Keim 2008 [2007]; Kim forthc.). As the empirical data reveal, this comes with affects of multiple sorts, e.g., obligation (also towards community members), embarrassment, estrangement, and shame.

The paper of Esther Jahns reminds us that such forms of affectual metapragmatics are not exclusively to be found in contexts of (outer) multilingualism and migration (although this does play a role in her paper as well). Language anxiety might also concern registers of which social actors feel having insufficient command of, particularly if such registers are associated with prestige and promise 'upwards' trajectories. Her case in point is all too familiar to us all: academic registers. Prominent biographies such as the one of Bourdieu (e.g., see Grenfell 2004) have revealed how affects of estrangement (that have been caused to no small degrees by lived experiences of language) have haunted even eminent scholars, and if we are lucky enough to haven't experienced such emotional distresses ourselves (I have, for sure), we most certainly know colleagues and students who have, or are

currently struggling with them (in case you don't, you better open your eyes and ears).

Not always is this struggle victorious. "If the teacher has to say continuously, 'Say it again darling, I didn't understand you', then in the end the child may say nothing", Bernstein (2003a [1970]: 154) vehemently warns us with regard to the primary school classroom – a warning that certainly also applies to university classrooms and lecture halls and the scholars who more or less desperately seek to position themselves therein (and sometimes, the concerned scholars might not have even tried to raise their voice in the first place). As we see here (and we will return to this), *silence* might well be the ultimate pole, and trap, of metapragmatic positioning (recall Bühler's anecdote!).

2.2 Positioning and positionality

Positioning or stance-taking is another rather new perspective in the field. Adopted from social psychology and narrative analysis (see Deppermann 2015) but with a parallel tradition in linguistic anthropology (see Ochs 1996; Jaffe 2009), this approach focuses on how interactants design their respective personae and social identities by means of evaluative practices. This comes with processes of identification and othering (Bucholtz & Hall 2005) that centrally employ indexical ties and relate to ideological 'givens'.

The already discussed papers include discussion of such processes (Bunk's interviews show how informants are faced with othering processes and 'de-Germanization', Erdoğan-Öztürk pinpoints processes of 'gendered exclusion', Jahns' paper reveals how students see themselves positioned at the margins or in silence).

In the papers discussed in what follows (by Ziegler & Angenendt, Grosser, Haukås & Tishakov, and Truan), positioning and stance get an arguably more central role, although from different perspectives. Evelyn Ziegler and Vanessa Angenendt argue that a systematic employment of stance-taking analysis, as empirically demonstrated in the paper itself, might help to tackle inherited methodical and conceptual problems of language attitude research (particularly the rather static notion of 'attitude' that underpins classic socio-psychological research and that has been criticized in more recent phases of the strand). What the paper provides is basically an analysis of *metapragmatic stance-taking* (on the concept, see Spitzmüller 2013, 2022), that is stance-taking towards a reflexive, enregistered object, *Ruhrdeutsch* in this case. The authors show how their informants construct positions not only vis-a-vis this register, but also vis-a-vis the indexical values attached to it, and possibly vis-a-vis the researchers. Such stances are bound to context (expectations), and they channel over different dimensions such as *affective* and *epistemic* stance (for both

see Ochs 1996: 410), of which the former bridges the paper to those discussed in section 2.1.

Florian Grosser's paper focuses on different layers of positioning that emerge in the research process (basically the layers proposed by Bamberg 1997): (1.) positioning among participants in (interview) interactions (including the interviewer), (2.) positioning of participants towards their own (replayed) performance, (3.) positioning vis-a-vis ideologies, and (4.) positioning and positionality of researcher and informant(s) in the context of interview replays. With the help of playback interviews, a (quite under-methodologized) technique that flourished particularly in interactional sociolinguistics, Grosser is able to tackle how positionings are not only densely bound to contexts, but that they also recursively change or thicken in recontextualization. Next to the instructive proposal for an enhancement of the toolkit of language ideology and positioning research, Grosser also puts the finger on an aspect that, despite its centrality in the classic texts (see section 1), has eluded language ideology research for some time, although it definitely needs to be put on the above list of renewed points of interest: the role and participation of researchers in the construction of language ideologies, i.e., scholarly positionality, reflexive research, and research reflection.

The methodological question how to deal with interviews and interviewees is also central to the paper of Åsta Haukås and Therese Tishakov. The paper tackles a crucial and somewhat delicate methodological issue which, at the core, is also an issue of positioning (oneself as a researcher vis-a-vis the 'researched'). Sociolinguistics has a long tradition of what we could term, maliciously, a treatment of informants as dubious figures who do not act 'authentically' (or: the way we want them to) if they are provided with too much information about what is going on. The notorious 'observer paradox' (Labov 1972a: 209; see Gordon 2012 for a critical discussion) and ensuing attempts of 'hidden' observation are testament to this, as are covert methods such as the matched guise technique of language attitudes research (see the critical assessment of Soukup 2013). As the authors show, these attempts do not only draw on probably unjustified fears, but they also reveal a lot about attempts of control, power, and authority on part of the researchers, as well as "ideologies of performativity" (Silverstein 1979: 209) that seem to frame linguistic research, with language ideology research arguably being no exception. From this, as is shown, several ethical questions arise that need to be addressed. The general point this paper makes, beyond the specific case of interviews, is eminent: If we aim to set out investigating into processes of inclusion and exclusion via language, how open do we need to be ourselves?

Quite a similar concern is at the heart of Naomi Truan's paper, which, like Grosser and Haukås/Tishakov, reflexively turns the analytical lens towards the analyst and traces the ideologies of communication (and communification, for that mat-

ter) that frame language ideology research itself. At the core lies the question who is granted *voice* (Blommaert 2005: 4–5), and who is positioned in *silence*, in the research process; so, again, who is a 'good' and 'well-behaving' – or, in terms of the ideology that keeps on haunting (socio)linguistics (cf. Bucholtz 2003): 'authentic' – subject? Truan diagnoses a systematic exclusion of 'non-natives' (whatever that might be) and 'multilingual speakers' (whoever might qualify as such) as well as of locally 'decentered' (wherever the center and the margins are) informants from language ideology studies, since these are not considered to be fully qualified informants. In other words, language ideology research orients towards the very ideologies it sets out to deconstruct, ending up in a sort of discursive feedback loop. With Foucault (1972 [1969]: 25), we could draw from this the warning that "precaution must be taken to disconnect the unquestioned continuities by which we organize, in advance, the discourse that we are to analyse". A major challenge, to be sure, when language ideologies are at stake, for if we presuppose that "there is no possible *absolutely* pre-ideological, i.e., *zero-order*, social semiotic" (Silverstein 1992: 315; orig. emphases), there is no easy way out (this is, by the way, the reason why Silverstein 1992: 314 considers ideology to be an "inherently ironic concept").

2.3 Ideological apparatuses and power

The question that has concerned language ideology research most often, how named languages or registers are (vertically) ranked or (horizontally) juxtaposed, unsurprisingly arises in a number of papers in this issue. Interestingly enough, and surely not coincidentally, this is most salient in those papers that turn to the central institutions where language ideologies are being incubated and propelled, the "ideological state apparatuses", as Althusser (2014 [1970]) prominently termed them. Hovens' and Tark's papers focus on the most classical and arguably most seminal such ideological apparatus (cf. Althusser 2014 [1970]: 136; Bourdieu 1977; Bernstein 2003b [1971]), the school (an ensuing one, as pointed out in Jahns' already discussed paper, is of course the university). Ideological apparatuses, to be sure, exert power, but they also provide subjects with anchor points for social positioning, among them metapragmatic projections, which constitute strong such anchors.

In his more methodical paper, Dennis Tark reminds us how these stratifying projections are both framing, and being maintained, in school. Stratification, thereby, provides categories of 'appropriateness' at least as far as the school context is concerned. Consequently, prescriptive school practices often do not so much circle around 'mono' vs. 'multi', but rather around some sort of language 'classiness' (the 'German only' doctrine that currently appeals Austrian education policy, for instance, certainly does not set out to prevent the children of UNO representatives in

the 19th Viennese district from speaking English in school; cf. Dirim & Mecheril 2017). The different degrees of prestige with which named languages are equipped, of course, emanate from complex enregisterment processes of which educational discourse is but one part. Moreover, as Tark points out, mere prestige or value on the linguistic market constitutes only a fraction of the picture. What also seems to matter is the eagerness to control discourse, and in fact insecurity and affect on part of the more powerful actors that go along with this eagerness. Teachers' fear of losing control when codes are getting out of command is a case in point.

A sort of language 'classiness' is also central to Daan Hovens' paper: the perceived 'proximity' of named languages (German and Dutch in this case). To be sure, 'proximity' has 'difference' as the other side of the coin – for as proximal Dutch and German might be perceived to be, they are at the same time construed as being 'different languages', 'foreign' to each other and to the other language's respective speakers. As the paper shows, the "axes of differentiation" (Gal & Irvine 2019: 19) that are employed to make visible both 'proximity' and 'distance' occur throughout 'foreign language' teaching. Again, this goes hand in hand with often deeply rooted processes of enregisterment, which do not only discursively condense 'languages' and language relations, but also (likewise essentialized) 'cultures' with which they are being associated – since, after all, "language ideologies seem never to be solely about language – they are always about entangled clusters of phenomena, and they encompass and comment on aspects of culture" (Kulick 1992: 295). In effect, then, this conditions social actors' affective stances vis-a-vis those languages (such as, in Hovens' case, the will to acquire).

3 Carving and closing

I have noted above that language ideology research is a broad church, and the papers I had the pleasure to read and comment here (one is left, but we will come back to this in a minute) have demonstrated this impressively.

Yet, how broad is the church really, and how broad do we want it to be? Also, if we stick with the ecclesiastic analogy, are there confessions to be differentiated, traditions and ensuing obligations? How open is the church portal, who is sitting where, what is supposed to be on the ambo, and what on the altar? I have proposed a rather broad and rather undogmatic scope at the outset of this comment – and thus an arguably fuzzy one, too. One could fairly raise the objection that such an inclusive account, as charming as it might be, bears the risk of blurring instructive differences, the contours of our field, and our own perspectives.

This objection is in fact dealt with in two papers, in different intensity and to different outcome. The already discussed paper of Ziegler and Angenendt, to begin

with, stresses the difference between *language attitudes* and *language ideologies* – but then it goes on to show that "expressions of language attitudes", which are at the center of more recent research (rather than the more innate 'language attitudes' themselves) are notionally not too far away from the 'articulated rationalizations' language ideology research is after, which means that the two strands seem to have somewhat accommodated. The accommodation also seems to manifest itself methodically. The approach the authors themselves decide for is a case in point, as it seems to fit, and be fashionable now in, both paradigms. Stance-taking analysis: an ecumenical approach?

The paper I haven't discussed so far, Martin Stegu's, devotes itself completely to the objection I have sketched. Stegu puts the finger straight on the wound while he puzzles about the observation how all those different "thought collectives" (Fleck 1999 [1935]) that deal with supposedly 'the same thing' (specifically [critical] language awareness research, folk linguistics, language attitude research, and language ideology research) manage to separate their respective approach so neatly while at the same time they often bluntly ignore, or dismiss, paralleling endeavors. Being all aware of the terminological ambiguities between these paradigms (that arguably also can be identified within them, however), Stegu proposes that some of the claimed differences are being constructed primarily to maintain academic claims. And he goes on to argue that this is not all to the benefit of the endeavor, as the different (and differently rooted) perspectives might well help to point out, and enlighten, the blind spots each of these strands most certainly has.

I concur. Certainly, we need to consider the eminent differences in disciplinary tradition (e.g., psychology vs. dialectology vs. anthropology vs. sociology) and the diverging methodical legacies these entail (e.g., experimental vs. ethnographic vs. distributional methods), as this might result in eminently different construals (or, according to Fleck 1999 [1935], even constructions) of the 'facts' under observation. On the other hand, however, it cannot be stressed often enough that all the strands we are talking about have been ignited in, and by, an academic context in which scholars invested all effort to bring *together* diverse perspectives to see what the mix brings about. Regrettably, the joint endeavor – under the umbrella term, *sociolinguistics* – did not last long. As we know, the temporarily common field has re-fragmented into carefully enclosured parcels, the *sociology of language, social psychology of language,* and the diversely contested claims of 'sociolinguistics proper'.

Now, what are the consequences of this fragmentation for the journey we have embarked on? Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose? And are the fragmentation and the ensuing claims on what counts as 'proper' for the better or the worse? This is all subject to a hopefully emerging discussion. Surely enough, stances on it will differ. Yet, independently from the stance one might take, I am convinced we can only learn from discussing it since:

the whole of linguistics comes back [...] in fact to the discussion of valid points of view, without which there is no object. (de Saussure 2006 [2002]: 8)

Thanks to the thoughtful selection of papers, which in fact represent apparently different points of view (and disciplinary allocations), this issue contributes to such a discussion, and hence a better understanding of what we are aiming at. And this is not the least thing one would have wished from a thematic issue.

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