Variation and Change in Postcolonial Contexts

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Edited by

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Section V: Variation and Change in New Media

PREFACE

The present volume addresses recent issues concerning language change and standardization as a result of language contact in postcolonial settings. The authors are experts in several areas of specialization, and they were asked to elaborate on those aspects of language variation and change that characterize the emergence of new varieties in specific geographical areas. The areas represented are North America, Africa, Asia and the insular areas of Australia, Trinidad and Tobago.

The contributors adopt different, though interrelated, research procedures ranging from linguistic diagnostics and related methodologies to the most accredited interpretative theories on the evolution of New Englishes. Since new media represent some of the most frequently used channels for conveying new linguistic habits as well as new languages, we have included a specific section of the volume on the use of emerging varieties of English in new media. A special focus has also been given to those new varieties of Philippine and Nigerian English spoken in a non-canonical post-colonial context represented by the city of Turin in Italy. The result is a collection of studies that illuminate issues of language variability from different perspectives with the aim of contributing to the long debate on language contact, diversification, speciation and standardization.

We have organized the book by regions, starting with North America (Section I), Africa (Section II), Asia (Section III), and Insular Areas (Section IV), with a final section for New Media (Section V). Each section begins with a short introduction and summaries of the chapters that follow. We are pleased to present these chapters as a free-ranging exploration of issues on a common and increasingly important theme, the linguistic consequences of contact in postcolonial situations. Each chapter brings to the fore local issues, and we feel that the amalgamation of overlapping methods, contexts and results provides a kind of colloquium that enriches our understanding beyond the individual parts.

—The Editors

INTRODUCTION

POST-COLONIAL CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE

RITA CALABRESE

Terminological issues: Why "postcolonial"?

The term 'postcolonial' has originally been adopted in literature concerning variation primarily referring to those varieties of English which developed as a consequence of the colonial expansion of the British Empire. In the present book, the term applies to both "canonical" and "emerging" varieties of English which have resulted from new contact situations including those determined by globalization as well (see Section V in this volume). Therefore, the prefix "post" here is intended not only in its historical meaning, but more broadly as a term implying "change", "differentiation" and "divergence" from a given language input along with "convergence" on a given set of linguistic features characterizing new linguistic habits by a group of non-native English speakers. This perspective also welcomes an essentially Labovian view since it assumes that "language change entails young speakers innovating or at least adopting new features" (Kerswill 2010, 230).

The broader view also encompasses the so-called "postcolonial varieties" or "New Englishes" from a second language acquisition perspective and as such studies them as "contact varieties". The number of labels used to refer to these varieties requires a brief survey of the several classifications adopted in the literature on varieties of English as in the next section.

Classification of varieties of English

Varieties of English can be classified according to different parameters/variables ranging from historical, geographical, political and language acquisition criteria.

Historical criteria look at the expansion of English beyond its borders in terms of subsequent diasporas chronologically definable. Jenkins (2010, 6) gives a comprehensive account of the different migratory movements firstly towards the New World and secondly to Africa and Asia starting from early 17th century as follows:

- The first diaspora (from early 17th century) involved the Puritans' migrations from England and the deportation of slaves from Africa to North America, Australia, New Zealand and determined early new mother-tongue or L1 varieties of English, also labelled as "new Englishes"[1]

- The second diaspora (from late 18th century) resulted in the stable colonialisation of both South Asia and Africa which had started from early 17th century and 15th century respectively and in the emergence of L2 varieties of English, known as "New Englishes".

Following the *geographical* path traced by people's movements throughout different territories, it is possible to derive models like those proposed by Kachru (1988) and Algeo (2001) and presented again by Siemund (2013, 9) which combine spatial localization with linguistic characterization:

1. English in England
2. English in the originally Celtic-speaking lands
3. The English of North America
4. The 'settler' Englishes of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa
5. The Englishes (largely non-native) of South and Southeast Asia
6. The Creole Englishes of Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific.

The non-native Englishes of South and Southeast Asia and the Creoles of Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific have a special status in the above classification because of their typological implications determined by the degree of contact between the substrate and the superstrate languages which will be discussed further. The delimitation of geographical areas sometimes overlaps with political borders which conveniently help identify regional varieties below the national level (e.g. Somerset English, Scottish English, Toronto English) as well as at the national level (e.g. British

[1] The widespread use of the plural form "Englishes" has become a recognized convention which stresses the diversity to be found in today's English with "no single base of authority, prestige and normativity" (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008, 3).

English, Canadian English, Australian English, Nigerian English, Indian English discussed in the present volume). In turn, both political and geographical criteria tell us something on the status of the varieties characterized by specific linguistic features and different contexts of acquisition which have definitely shaped the nature of English as first, second or foreign language. From this perspective the concept of national identity loses its weight as a driving force responsible for the development of new linguistic features /dialects. Rather, that force is to be found in natural, mutual accommodation, hence the sense of identity relies upon it and is chronologically subsequent to it (Trudgill 2010, 188). As matter of fact, in a general Communication Accommodation Theory new varieties emerge initially through individual acts of linguistic adjustment performed by speakers in a specific social context where degree of contact, social group boundaries, linguistic ideologies and social identity formation play a subsequent crucial role (Kerswill 2010, 232). According to Trudgill (2009) the major typological split among varieties of English lies in fact between high-contact and low-contact varieties of English. Among the former, characterized by processes of simplification, he mentions the non-standard urban varieties in the British Isles and colonial varieties of North America, Australasia and South Africa along with shift varieties like Irish English and non-native L2 varieties like Indian English, standard Englishes and creoles. As low-contact varieties characterized by processes of complexification, Trudgill identifies the traditional dialects of English located in the British Isles and North America. His claim is based on overall coding strategies consisting in inflectional coding of grammatical information as a complexifying strategy and analytic or zero marking as a simplifying strategy. In this context differential language-acquisition abilities and processing strategies of young learners as opposed to adults play a crucial role in structural changes of languages and their varieties: simplification will occur in short-term language-contact situations involving adults, whereas complexification will develop in long-term co-territorial contact situations involving childhood bilingualism (Trudgill 2010, 23).

A recently published collection of studies (Szmrecsanyi and Kortmann 2012) on linguistic complexity in the field of World Englishes and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research has re-opened the debate concerning the traditionally conceived dichotomy of *creole/simplicity* and s*tandard/complexity*. Over the years, two main approaches have prevailed to objectively assess linguistic complexity, namely the *absolute approach* which defines complexity in terms of the number of parts in a system and their mutual connections and the *relative approach* which explains complexity in relation to language users and their processing and learning

efforts (Szmrecsanyi and Kortmann 2012, 10). According to the former approach, a grammar is judged to be more complex if it has more marked phonemes, more syntactic and morphophonemic rules, more cases of suppletion and allomorphy. The latter considers that speakers often simplify their native language for specific social purposes in contact situations as well as adult language learners regularly adopt simplifying strategies to avoid irregularities and to increase transparency. Starting from the assumption that the understanding of comparatively simple variance (i.e. language-internal complexity variation) is a preliminary step towards the analysis of comparatively complex variance (i.e. cross-linguistic complexity variation) in varieties of English, Szmrecsanyi and Kortmann (2004 and 2012) have developed a research program which combines methodologies and interpretational approaches adopted in the study of large-scale cross-linguistic variation with the analysis of language internal variation. In their global synopsis of morphological and syntactic variation in English, Kortmann and Szmrecsanyi (2011) describe 46 varieties of English (variably distributed among L1 and indigenized L2 varieties along with English-based pidgins and creoles) in terms of presence or absence of 76 non-standard morphosyntactic features. Using Principal Component Analysis, they assign each variety of English a coordinate in two-dimensional principal component space (Figure1, dotted boxes indicate group memberships).

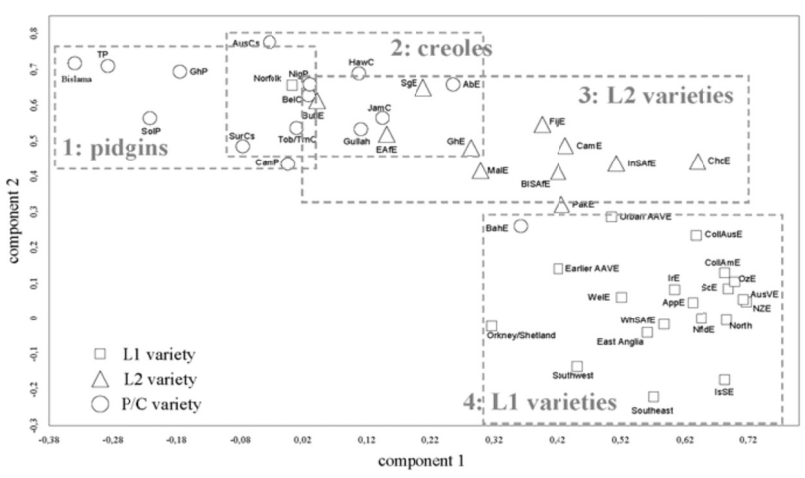

Fig. 1. Visualization of principal components of variance in the 76 × 46 database.

The results of the satellite-view statistical analysis show that the

> 46 varieties cluster very nicely according to whether they are L1 varieties (represented by squares), L2 varieties (represented by triangles), or English-based pidgins and creoles (represented by circles) –and indeed better than geographically. Thus variety type turns out to be the better predictor of overall similarity or distance between individual varieties than the world region where they are spoken.

The vertical axis (Component 2) represents a given variety's degree of analyticity resulting in a wider use of invariable periphrastic structures, whereas the horizontal axis (Component 1) indicates increased morpho-syntactic complexity (Szmrecsanyi and Kortmann 2012, 16). However, from these results it must not be concluded that intensive language contact necessarily leads to simplification processes (ib.19). As a matter of fact, complexification processes are observable among contact languages as well as contact varieties.

Variation and change in postcolonial contexts: a review of research literature

The study of linguistic variation has a long tradition that finds its turning point in the comparative studies carried out by the Neogrammarians and early work/research on contact languages dating back to 19th century. Other research fields based on philological constructs emerged motivated by the need to mediate between different languages and cultures. In his preface to *An Anglo-Indian Dictionary*[2] published in 1885, George Clifford Whitworth wrote that "the term 'Anglo-Indian' would properly designate something which, originally Indian, has been specially modified by something English"--further specifying "but popularly it is applied to English persons residing in India and to things pertaining to them" (ib.vii). The *Dictionary* therefore "should contain all those words which English people in their relations with India have found it necessary or convenient to add to their own vernacular, and should give also any special significations which pure English words have acquired in India" (Whitworth 1885, vii). Whitworth's words anticipate the main focus of later studies on contact varieties, namely the socio-cultural setting in which such varieties function. As stated by Ferguson (1959)

[2] The dictionary had the meaningful subtitle *A glossary of Indian terms used in English, and of such English or other non-Indian terms as have obtained special meanings in India.*

> Descriptivists usually prefer detailed descriptions of 'pure' dialects or standard languages rather than the careful study of the mixed, intermediate forms often in wider use. Study of such matters as diglossia is of clear value in understanding processes of linguistic change and presents challenges to some of the assumptions of synchronic linguistics.

Over the past thirty years the interest of linguists in diatopic variation has been polarized around specific issues within well defined research areas: due to the work carried out by Braj Kachru the study of New Englishes has become part of mainstream Sociolinguistics, focusing on the characterization of the spread of English "viewed in terms of three concentric circles representing the types of spread, the patterns of acquisition and the functional domains in which English is used across cultures and languages" (Kachru 1985, 12). Major studies first carried out on individual creoles have provided a unifying framework in the field of Contact Linguistics when post-creole continua were identified e.g. in Jamaica (De Camp 1971) and Hawaii (Carr 1972) giving rise to important assumptions on the common origin and development of these varieties and their classification as proper varieties of the superstrate language. In line with Sridhar & Sridhar's (1986) plea for an integrated approach, more recently Mesthrie & Bhatt (2008) have called for extensive studies aiming to bridge the paradigm gap between studies of Second Language Acquisition (SLA generally focused on individuals) and New Englishes. For a long time these two lines of linguistic research have been treated as two different and unrelated areas mainly because of the "linguistic taboos … to establish these New Englishes as full-fledged varieties with the potential to develop endonormative and local standards and norms [not to] be conflated, with the error-focused description and analysis of foreign language learners' output as a deviation from an exonormative norm" (Mukherjee & Hundt 2011, 1f). However, both branches have to do with four related questions concerning codification, innovation, de-Englishization and non-native creativity (Kachru 1985, 17). As a matter of fact, from a variationist perspective, those concepts acquire a functional-specific meaning that leads to a cline of "acceptability" and "creativity" depending on their specific context and function of usage. Taking into account cognitive factors underlying contact language phenomena such as code-switching, code-mixing, and isomorphism (one form-one meaning to maximize transparency) enables us to find the shared basis of underlying acquisition phenomena which effectively relate those SLA studies to research on New Englishes. However, the fundamental difference between the two groups of studies is that the former is based on individual learners' interlanguage as the developing competence in a second or foreign language aiming at a

target-like language proficiency/acquisition. The latter instead pertains to "aggregates of people" (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008, 157) who would use their interlanguages in specific domains and communicative contexts through the creation of new structural, lexical and pragmatic norms. Therefore, in postcolonial contexts, substrate influence is not evidence of a failure to learn target language constructions, but rather the choice from a "pool of variants" on the ground of harmony with L1 constructions (ib.).

The following account of research literature on language variation and change restates the dynamic framework proposed by Chambers (2004, 128) who in turn referred to Croft's dynamic paradigm (Croft 1990, 258f). This model unifies all three types of variation defined as *cross-linguistic* (mainly concerned with typological issues), *intralinguistic* (mainly pertaining sociolinguistic and language acquisition processes), and *diachronic* (concerning historical linguistics matters).

Language contact, typology and universal markedness: Internal and external factors in variety formation

Past literature looking at contact "tended to assume uncritically that contact was always the source of new features registered in particular languages" (Hickey 2010, 1). Language contact has been so far invoked especially to account for irregularities in the correspondences revealed by the comparative method but not as the cause of regular changes that lead to language speciation. More precisely, Thomason (2001, 62) distinguishes two major categories of change. The first type includes changes that bring no structural modification to the source language, and the second one affects more profoundly the latter leading either to typical interference features or to a complete shift to the new language. As matter of fact, changes are not necessarily replacive. Depending on the effects they have on language structuring, changes can be classified as 1. additive when they introduce new rules or units to the current system, 2. subtractive when they involve loss of variants and, 3. reinforcing or weakening current variants. It is also worth noting that a cline of contact is often observable due to underlying differences in the degree to which languages in contact influence each other.

More recent research has however tested current hypotheses on the interrelationship between language universals and language variation and given rise to new challenging theories on contact varieties. The notion of "vernacular universals**"** (Chambers 2004) seems to limit the supposed tendency towards the *absolute creativity* of these varieties relying on the identification of universally shared features across varieties of English

around the world[3]. In particular, this notion postulates the direct origin/source of such features in universals of language development, specifically in the context of new dialect formation. Therefore, they can be "identified partly in terms of their social patterning, in so far as there are regularities in the way they are socially embedded" (Chambers 2004, 128). Along with the concept of universality of individual features implied in this theory a similar hypothesis has been proposed supporting the idea of "the universality of conspiracies of morphosyntactic features" and strategies for coding certain types of grammatical information which can be identified for individual types of varieties in any language" (Kortmann & Szmrecsanyi 2011, 265). This hypothesis would contribute to identify types that rather than being characterized by individual features "all conspire and jointly instantiate an overall coding strategy which is constitutive of the variety type" (ib.). This assumption would also converge on Labov's idea of "clusters of properties" and their "intermediate combinations in terms of discreteness, abstractness, grammatical conditioning, and social conditioning" which combine together to bring about linguistic change (Labov 2010, 542)[4]. The challenging search for general principles underlying language complexity is achieved by these theoretical models with varying degrees of strength and certainty and in relation to the properties of human physiology and psychology in a measurable way (ib.600f). A further challenging issue would be to show that both internal and external motivations for language change are needed in any full account of language history and of synchronic variation (Hickey 2010, 31).

Further approaches to language contact are also emerging based on a view of language as the practice of communicative interactions and of grammatical categories as triggers of language processing tasks (Matras 2010, 66). The resulting *koiné* would emerge from the loss of distinctive features in favour of features with a high degree of mutual intelligibility and high prestige in everyday communication (Noonan 2010, 58). As a matter of fact, spoken language proves to be the area of language where the major changes emerge and then stabilize through exposure to and imitation of firstly model speakers and secondly, model written texts with the consequent emergence of new language standards (Deumert & Vandenbussche 2003, 456). Contact between speech and written language would lead to the emergence of new spoken norms and a new written standard which combines structural and lexical elements of two different linguistic

[3] Recurring features are, for instance, levelling of irregular verb forms, multiple negation, or copula deletion.

[4] In Labov (2010) such description is used to explain the regularity of sound change.

systems (Haugen 1972, 57). One of the main issues to be addressed will therefore be the clarification of the historical interactions and language contact phenomena occurring between pre-existing language standards and the emerging standard language which makes the process of standardization a special type of language change within a more general theory of language contact (ib.).

In recent years an effective theoretical approach to language variability and change is emerging which assumes as a primary source of language diversification around the world population movements and contacts (Mufwene 2007). Under this view all causes of change even the so-called internally-motivated changes (ib.65) in any language result from mutual accommodations among speakers in a continual process of competition and selection which changes patterns of variation in a speech community. The hypothesis on the deep interrelation between variability and social dynamics or language variability and social structure has a fairly long history even though "until the advent of sociolinguistics, there were no concentrated attempts at discovering the social significance of linguistic variation" (Chambers 2013, 6). In 1981 Romaine (5-7) pointed out the close interrelation between social dynamics and domains of grammar：

> Syntax is the marker of cohesion; therefore, individuals try to eliminate alternatives in syntax. In contrast to syntax, however, vocabulary is a marker of divisions in a society (cf. for example, Bright and Ramanujan1964); and we may find individuals actively cultivating alternatives in order to make more subtle social distinctions. […] According to Labov, social and stylistic variation presuppose the option of saying the same thing in different ways, i.e. the variants of the variables have the same referential meaning, but are somehow different with respect to their social and stylistic significance.

In Mufewene's (2001, 2005) theory of language ecology and evolution the emergence of contact varieties can be regarded as a series of selective actions from "a pool of linguistic variants" from different language backgrounds and experiences available to speakers in a contact setting (Schneider 2007, 22). The "natural" selection of specific features as stable elements of the new variety depends on both extralinguistic and intralinguistic factors such as the nature of the linguistic input elements, typological similarities between the languages involved in the process of competition and selection as well as the influence of social determinants (Schneider 2007, 23). However, assuming that the external influence is the only cause of change in which every specific ecology of language use determines its local evolutionary trajectory (Hruschka 2009) gives only a partial perspective of the matter. A new, though controversial, theory on

the formation of colonial Englishes has been proposed by Trudgill (2004, 1-3) in a deterministic view of language change and gradual variety differentiation. In particular, he supposes the combination of six factors to explain the differences between colonial Englishes and British English, which can be briefly outlined as follows:

1. Adaptation to a new physical environment
2. Linguistic changes in the mother country
3. Linguistic changes in the colony
4. Language contact with indigenous languages
5. Language contact with other European languages
6. Dialect contact determined by the different geographical and social origins of the settlers

In relation to factor 2 in particular, Mukherjee and Gries (2009) note that "the input variety of British English is a diachronically changing reference point" (ib.34) so that "for any comparison of a New English variety with its historical input variety a diachronic corpus of the native variety is needed" (ib.35). Earlier studies have in fact shown that in some varieties of English features typically associated with them can be traced back to colonial English spoken by masters to their slaves (Poplack & Tagliamonte 2001). The emphasis on the continuation of vernacular traits at new locations is the basis of the so-called "retentionist hypothesis" (Harris 1984). Such retentions may cause problems in establishing genetic relationships according to the family tree model and isolating the effects of contact. This is an important aspect generally neglected in research on second language varieties but is emerging in recent approaches as an important factor (value system of a society and its indigenous culture) in the development of ESL as a variety not meant as entirely identical with the target language.

A recent approach to the evolution of Post-colonial Englishes has been proposed by Schneider's Dynamic Model (2003, 2007, 2011) which builds upon the assumption that such emerging varieties have typically followed "an underlying, fundamentally uniform evolutionary process caused by the social dynamics between the two parties involved in a colonization process" (Schneider 2011, 113). The evolution is characterized by language negotiation and accommodation phenomena from the perspective of group identity formation. The model assumes five developmental stages with specifically social and linguistic implications:

1. Foundation
2. Exonormative stabilization

3. Nativization
4. Endonormative stabilization
5. Differentiation

Leitner (2010, 27) says, "These phases define a path from the transplantation of (a range of) dialects (by large or small numbers of speakers) into novel environments where they mix as a result of interaction (= dialect contact) and are in contact with indigenous and or other migrant languages". The Dynamic Model can be compared to Trudgill's new-dialect formation theory in the first two stages in which feature selection and diffusion occur, later followed by minority variants leveling and consequent norm focusing and stability (Trudgill 2004, 83-89). The stabilized form gradually turns into a local, non prestigious form which then will undergo a process of endonormative stabilization as well as final differentiation. Schneider (2007, 92) argues that it is not primarily the occasional occurrences of "well-known" distinctive features "that attribute its uniqueness to a variety; it is the subconscious set of conventions regulating the norm level of speech habits, of what is normally done and uttered, the 'way things are said' in a community". In this view, innovations as well may be derived occasionally from the speech of individuals because of internal conditions, but then spread to the entire community for external reasons (ib. 99). The label linguists give to a variety often correlates with the function of that variety in the community in which it emerges and the extent to which users of the variety tend to converge on a series of norms (Trousdale 2010, 93). The formation of a new variety involves therefore not only changes in norms, but a steady process from relative absence of norms followed by focusing, namely the reduction in the number of variants (especially phonemes and morphemes) with consequent simplification of phonological and morphophonemic complextity or *koineization* to the re-emergence of norms (Kerswill 2010, 230f). The initially competing and then co-occurring forces which characterize the pidginization and standardization processes respectively are outlined in Table 1.

PIDGINIZATION	STANDARDIZATION
1. Reduction in function 2. Cross-linguistic influence or contact-induced changes 3. Simplification as regularization 4. Increase in transparency	1. Convergence 2. Reduction of linguistic variants 3. Syntactic elaboration/expansion 4. Social symbolism of standard norms

Table 1 Strategies of the pidginization and standardization processes

The overall process has been effectively explained and synthesized by Leitner (2012, 251):

> Having adapted to new environments, native varieties […] need to integrate new ethnic varieties that develop after first generation settlements [and] to create a new balance between speech and public writing which narrows the gap […] and makes writing open to expressions of speech. Second language English (in the traditional former colonies) is more concerned with the conflict between the heritage and the demands of globalization.[…] Some of the varieties concerned develop stable rules of their own, which show marked differences from any of the native varieties. Some of them develop away from another and as they do that, they create powerful new epi-centres in pluricentric English.

Internal and external factors in variety formation- A number of language/cognitive phenomena represented in Table 1 can be seen as governed by "universal laws of onto-genetic second-language acquisition and phylogenetic language shift" (Schneider 2007, 89). Linguists generally tend to distinguish between intralinguistic and extralinguistic factors when discussing principles underlying change and evolution. Conditions which are purely internal to language depend on speech production, perception, and processing, whereas extralinguistic conditions include factors determined by language use in historical and sociolinguistic settings. Some of them can be explained by speakers' simplification strategies aiming to increase the economy of speech production in language contact situations which leads to the omission of inflectional endings, copulas, articles or overgeneralization such as the extension of plural endings to mass nouns, the progressive marker to state verbs and invariant tags to tag questions. The role and nature of the superstrate along with the substrate pressure constitute an important issue in the study of new variety formation. In particular, from a diachronic perspective it is of utmost importance for the characterization of the superstrate to recognize its intermediaries. In fact, the British arriving to colonies came from different parts of Britain and different educational backgrounds. Moreover, the local British community is seen to be expanding to what Schneider (2007, 37) defines as "British plus": a community of speakers "seasoned with the additional flavor of the colonial experience which those who stayed 'home' do not share". As a result, "new locally born generations of British children develop a hybrid cultural identity" (ib.). The cross-cultural language contacts trigger important changes in the linguistic system of English as used by both communities, the native settler community and the indigenous one, firstly on the lexical level and later in the syntactic and morphological systems mo-

tivated by the need to refer to things belonging to the local environment along with a process of language convergence necessary and functional to "mutual negotiation" and intelligibility between two communities whose shared variety is a second language for some and a first language for others (ib.45).

This assumption points out the so-called "paradigm gap" between SLA theories, mainstream linguistics and research on New Englishes discussed in the next paragraph. The integration of these apparently different paradigms into a more comprehensive theoretical framework would have the effect of creating a new field of research for testing current linguistic hypotheses on the interrelationship between language universals, language variation and creativity and SLA theories. The purpose of this unifying research procedure would have therefore the immediate effect to reveal the underlying functioning of universal processes of LA which interact with both universal sets of linguistic principles and language-specific sets of parameters. Starting from the generative assumption that an "individual's internal (I) language is a set of parameters acquired by the interaction of UG [Universal Grammar] and the visible data (External (E) language tokens)" (Matras 2010, 66f). Changes may occur in the parameter settings of different stages of L as well as differences in/between dialects/varieties of the same language across time, geographical and social space. As a consequence, the speakers of Creoles use parametric values of their own grammar in assigning a value to the parameters of the language they are creating/ being exposed to.

Under this view, contact phenomena would be considered as arranged on a continuum from the most automatic (like interference/transfers/errors) to the most conscious ones produced for stylistic and creative purposes. All are, however, functional in the sense that they are the product of language processing in goal-oriented communicative interaction (Hickey 2010, 7ff.). Therefore change in certain structural categories is associated with the task-oriented function of these categories, i.e. "with the way they support language processing in discourse [… and] in this respect contact phenomena are seen as enabling rather than interfering with communicative activity" (ib.). The crucial question concerning transfer of items from one system to another leads to two important considerations concerning: 1. The basic distinction between systemic and non-systemic elements; 2. How borrowings of linguistic items made on an individual level spread throughout an entire community. Systemic elements can be explained by the distinction between grammatical category and its exponents, i.e. some languages borrow grammatical categories but not the manner of expressing them in the source language (ib.). Non-systemic elements are single

words and phrases, pragmatic markers and sentence adverbials that do not necessarily require integration into the system of the substrate language and can be picked up by adults in a contact situation and therefore accommodated without any degree of restructuring. The term accommodation acquires a special role here since it has been recognized not only as peculiarly characteristic of any individual, but also as the main triggering force inducing spread of linguistic change from an individual to an entire community (see above examples from Trudgill, Labov, Chambers). Language structure is

> a largely mechanical system, out of the reach of conscious recognition or adjustment by its users […]. Therefore our efforts to change language consciously must be confined to higher-level stylistic options: the selection of words, and the construction of phrases and sentences within a narrowly limited set of choices. […]. A broader approach will carry us into the ways in which language structure fits into our social needs (Labov 2010, 604-5).

These different approaches seem to converge on a model of linguistic change involving diverse perspectives that can be termed as typological, variationist (both synchronic and diachronic), cognitive and population-based. In conclusion, two major predictors seem to emerge from the discussion on contact-induced change which become also relevant to internal explanations of language change: universal markedness, and degree of integration within a linguistic system.

Rita Calabrese

SECTION I

NORTH AMERICA

CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE IN CANADIAN ENGLISH

J.K. CHAMBERS

In North America, English has taken varying forms depending on different factors which include regional, social, and ethnic backgrounds of its speakers. In this section, we will take a closer look at Canadian English with particular reference to the speech communities in Toronto.

The linguistic situation characterizing Canadian English (CanEng) makes it emblematic of the different directions a language may take with respect to its "root-language" as a consequence of different historical events that shape its structural properties despite the historically attested common origin.[1]

Over the last decades, there has been a growing interest in the description of Canadian English especially focusing on phonological variants (Canadian Raising, Canadian Shift) and other typical features characterizing speech (discourse tag *eh?*). However, in almost all descriptive approaches to CanEng the synchronic perspective of such descriptions predominates with respect to insightful diachronic analyses of evolution of CanEng. In particular, the main critical issues have been concerned with the composite nature of CanEng which has frequently been depicted as a blending of British and American English speech patterns and variously described as an endonormative variety even though not yet stabilized and autonomous.

It is also worth noting that most evidence of Americanization or diffusion of American norms in most literature on CanEng is based on isolated phonological and lexical items retrieved from questionnaire surveys rather than systematic investigation of the inherent variability of natural speech data, without considering the linguistic constraints and social meanings associated with variant usage in the Canadian context.

[1] Leitner (2012, 133) considers Canadian English as a "third path" along with British English and American English.

When looking back at past literature in the field, Lighthall (1889) represents one of the earliest attempts to identify different regional and social varieties of English within the country.

The identification of distinct regional dialect regions has not, however, been prominent in the study of CanE, apart from two general exceptions, i.e. the island of Newfoundland (along with Labrador) and Quebec English, which constitute separate dialect areas along with more distinct dialect enclaves. A recent national survey carried out by Boberg (2010) has highlighted the regional fragmentation of CanEng characterized by phonetic and lexical isoglosses tracing specific dialect areas (Newfoundland, Quebec, Ontario and West). As such "subtle differences" can be heard in Ottawa, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver, they present a challenge to the conventional view that CanEng is geographically homogeneous over the vast territory extending from Vancouver to Ottawa (Boberg 2008, 150) as well as to the Loyalist Base theory (e.g. Chambers 2009, 71-3) which interprets the apparent homogeneity of central and western CanE in terms of westward expansion (Dollinger and Clarke 2012, 460). According to this view, Ontarians (themselves Loyalists) were among the first to settle western communities and set the speech patterns, in accordance with the founder principle "those who come and settle first have linguistically more input in the koinèization process" (Dollinger 2012, 460). But the biggest problem of many existing studies of CanE is their middle-class basis which hardly considers the rural/urban split (ib.).

Another potential source of heterogeneity in CanE is the influence of L2 speakers and the development of ethnic varieties. For instance, data from Montreal reported in Dollinger and Clarke (2012, 460) would place Canada in Phase 5 of Schneider's Postcolonial English model (2007), and contribute to classify CanEng as a variety characterized by high linguistic diversification. As a matter of fact, well-established communities, such as Italians, have developed features of their own, but it seems that outside of Montreal other communities continue to assimilate features of general Canadian speech patterns.

CanEng can be said to be originated from different waves of migration (see Chambers in this volume) that far from being easily identifiable from a linguistic perspective, make it even more difficult to determine with any certainty what specific features the varieties of English spoken by these groups would have displayed.

It is, however, easier to characterize the speech of the immigrants who came in the first half of the nineteenth century from the British Isles. They would have spoken regional varieties from all over Great Britain and Ireland with northern and western (Irish) varieties better represented than the

southeastern varieties on which modern Standard British English is based (Boberg 2010, 244). It seems most likely that the formative period of CanEng, during the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, was characterized by a mixture and levelling of regional varieties of English from Ireland, Scotland and England as well as northeastern American colonies. The historical outline presented so far inevitably crosses/matches with theoretical assumptions necessary to explain the evolutionary path of CanEng might have followed towards its linguistic differentiation and identity (Chambers 2012). The relation of settlement history and linguistic variation, the connection between ethnic differences and national identity, and the processes of convergence vs divergence all have vital relevance for Canada (Görlach 2003) and should be therefore further investigated with renewed methodologies.

The historical perspective is in fact the approach adopted by Chambers in his contribution demonstrating how both past and recent changes are moving inexorably toward completion on the same timeline in the historical framework in which his analysis of Canadian variants can be set.

Casagranda's study shows how the French language has contributed to language change within the Canadian variety and investigates how lexical variation can be considered as a marker of identity and one of the strategies adopted by speakers to convey the plurality of languages and cultures of Canada.

Parascandolo presents the preliminary results from a case study of variation in the verbal system of Italian speakers who live in the Greater Toronto Area.

The contributions in the present section can variably be read as addressing the two main issues that have characterized research on Canadian English so far, namely autonomy and homogeneity of the Canadian variety.