

HiSoN summer school
14-21 July 2019
Lesbos, Metochi Study Centre

Abstracts and readings

Peter Trudgill (University of Fribourg)

The Historical Sociolinguistics of Greek

Greek has the longest recorded history of any European language, and sociolinguistic factors have been relevant from the very beginning. Dialect-contact and language-contact were involved in the growth of the Hellenistic koiné; and in more recent centuries contact with Albanian, Slavic, Turkish and Rumanian in the Balkan *Sprachbund* has been of considerable significance. The centuries-long growth and then disappearance of diglossia over the past two millennia also requires sociolinguistic discussion. And the formation of Modern Standard Greek, and its relationship with Greek dialects, has been heavily involved with issues of nationalism which can only be fully understood from a historical sociolinguistic perspective.

People might like to look at at least one of the following; and those who are not familiar with the Greek alphabet might like to rectify this before the course begins.

Colvin, Stephen. 2014. *A brief history of Ancient Greek*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Clogg, Richard. 2002. *A concise history of Greece*. Cambridge University Press.

Horrocks, Geoffrey. 2014. *Greek: a history of the language and its speakers*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Mackridge, Peter. 2009. *Language and national identity in Greece 1766–1976*. Oxford University Press.

Nuria Yáñez-Bouza (University of Vigo)

Normative linguistics and 18th-century English: Insights from historical grammars and pronouncing dictionaries

The development of the English language in the 18th century has often been investigated in relation to the process of standardisation, and in particular to the stages of codification and prescription. A combination of social, cultural, and economic factors led to the rapid growth of language consciousness and an acute need for establishing ‘correct’, ‘proper’, ‘elegant’, and ‘polite’ English. Grammars, dictionaries, rhetorical treatises, and usage guides became then a valuable commodity. From the perspective of historical sociolinguistics, these works are not only sources for the norms of present-day written and spoken standard English, but they also stand as evidence of usage, variation, and change. This course will thus be concerned with normative linguistics in 18th-century Britain, addressing theory as well as method. We will contextualise the ideology of standardisation and the descriptivism-prescriptivism continuum, and explore evidence from two strands. Regarding written English, we will survey the main approaches to the study of historical grammars and discuss the potential influence of the prescriptive tradition on language use with a wide variety of case studies. As for spoken

English, we will illustrate the value of pronouncing dictionaries as rich and reliable evidence of lexical diffusion and change in historical phonology.

- Auer, Anita & Victorina González-Díaz. 2005. Eighteenth-century prescriptivism in English – A re-evaluation of its effects on actual language usage. *Multilingua* 24(4), 317-41.
- Beal, Joan C. 2009. Pronouncing dictionaries - I. Eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In Anthony Paul Cowie (ed.), *The Oxford history of English lexicography. Vol. II: Specialized dictionaries*, 149-75. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Nevalainen, Terttu & Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade. 2006. Standardisation. In Richard M. Hogg & David Denison (eds.), *A history of the English language*, 271-311. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tieken-Boon van Ostade, Ingrid. 2006. Eighteenth-century prescriptivism and the norm of correctness. In Ans van Kemenade & Bettelou Los (eds.), *The handbook of the history of English*, 539-57. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Yáñez-Bouza, Nuria. 2016. Early and Late Modern English grammars as evidence in English historical linguistics. In Merja Kytö & Päivi Pahta (eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of English historical linguistics*, 164-80. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Yáñez-Bouza, Nuria, Joan C. Beal, Ranjan Sen & Christine Wallis. 2018. 'Proper' *pro-nun-[/hə-]*hun in eighteenth-century English: ECEP as a new tool for the study of historical phonology and dialectology. *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities* 33(1), 203-27.

Juan M. Hernández-Campoy (University of Murcia)

Stylistic variation in historical sociolinguistics: Motivations, mechanisms and patterns

Recent studies have stressed the consubstantial nature of style to sociolinguistic variation, currently becoming a major focus of scholarly work within the field. Given its omnipresence in language production, style constitutes an essential component of speakers' sociolinguistic behaviour for the transmission of social meaning and positioning in interpersonal communication, enjoying a central position in the connotative correlation of *social*, *linguistic* and *stylistic* variation. This fact legitimated the distinction between *inter-speaker* (social) and *intra-speaker* (stylistic) variation. While everybody would agree that intra-speaker variation is a phenomenon conditioned by extralinguistic factors, the resources and mechanisms for reflecting its presence in language production and effective social meaning have been associated with different linguistic theories trying to account for its nature and functioning. The aim of this course is twofold. Firstly, the exploration and illustration of the main different theoretical models developed to account for the nature, motivations and mechanisms for the use and effect of style-shifting in social interaction: Audio-monitorisation, Audience Design, Script Design and Speaker Design. Secondly, the application of the tenets and findings of contemporary sociolinguistic research to the interpretation of linguistic material from the past, where intra-speaker variation had not been given the same attention as inter-speaker variation and change until very recently. Fortunately, the current prolific research output in Historical Sociolinguistics is reflecting the growth of interest in style within the field, highlighting the role of new genres and text-types (travel accounts, court records, recipes, diaries, letters, etc.) as materials worth studying for intra-speaker variation. The analysis of linguistic patterns across styles is crucial for both the (socio)linguistic description of languages and for the development of cross-linguistic theories of use and change in present and past speech communities. After all, linguistic variation and change interact in complex ways with patterns of stylistic variation,

since the diaphasic range of a given language is one of the most sensitive sociolinguistic symptoms of social change and differentiation.

- Auer, Anita. 2015. Stylistic Variation. In A. Auer, D. Schreier & D. Watts (eds.), *Letter Writing and Language Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 133-155.
- Eckert, Penny. (2012). Three Waves of Variation Study: The Emergence of Meaning in the Study of Sociolinguistic Variation. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 41: 87-100.
- Hernández-Campoy, Juan M. (2016). *Sociolinguistic Styles*. Malden/Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Hernández-Campoy, Juan M. & García-Vidal, Tamara. (2018a). Persona Management and Identity Projection in English Medieval Society: Evidence from John Paston II. *Journal of Historical Sociolinguistics* 4(1): 1-31.
- Hernández-Campoy, Juan M. & García-Vidal, Tamara. (2018b). Style-Shifting and Accommodative Competence in Late Middle English Written Correspondence: Putting Audience Design to the Test of Time. *Folia Lingüística Historica* 39(2): 383-420.
- Pahta, Päivi, Minna Nevala, Arja Nurmi & Minna Palander-Collin. (eds.)(2010). *Social Roles and Language Practices in Late Modern English*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Palander-Collin, Minna, Minna Nevala & Arja Nurmi. (2009). The Language of Daily Life in the History of English. Studying how Macro Meets Micro. In A. Nurmi, M. Nevala & M. Palander-Collin (eds.), *The Language of Daily Life in England (1400-1800)*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1-23.
- Sairio, A. 2017. *Bluestocking Corpus: Letters of Elizabeth Montagu, 1730s-1780s*. Helsinki: University of Helsinki (<http://bluestocking.ling.helsinki.fi/>).
- Schiegg, M. (2016). Code-Switching in Lower-Class Writing: Autobiographies by Patients from Southern German Psychiatric Hospitals (1852–1931). *Journal of Historical Sociolinguistics* 2(1): 47-81.
- Tieken-Boon van Ostade, Ingrid. (2005). Of social networks and linguistic influence: the language of Robert Lowth and his correspondents. *International Journal of English Studies* 5(1). 135-157.
- Voeste, A. (2018). The self as a source. A peasant farmer's letters from prison (1848–1852). *Journal of Historical Sociolinguistics* 4(1): 97-118.

Markus Schiegg (FAU Erlangen)

Language history and linguistic flexibility 'from below'

Traditionally, language historians were interested in the story of printed languages and often adhered to a teleological view towards the unification processes of modern standard languages. The more recent concept of language histories 'from below' (Elspaß 2007) implies a radical change in perspective from a 'bird's eye' to a 'worm's eye' view. This entails two aspects. Firstly, it focuses on the language use of those 95% of the population who had been ignored so far, the lower-class writers. Secondly, its starting points are texts which are as close to actual speech as possible, such as private letters. In order to find out about the linguistic competence and the 'linguistic flexibility' (Schiegg 2018) of these writers, we need a comparative perspective both on their informal and more formal texts.

This course first traces this major shift in perspective in language historiography from a theoretical point of view and discusses the methodological difficulties in finding and working with the data needed for language histories 'from below'. Thereby, we read and analyse copies of 19th-century handwritten letters of uneducated writers from different countries, such as English paupers in psychiatric hospitals and German emigrants to America.

- Elspaß, Stephan (2007). 'Everyday language' in emigrant letters and its implications for language historiography – the German case. *Multilingua* 26: 151–165.
- Schiegg, Markus (in press). Factors of intra-speaker variation in nineteenth-century lower-class writing. *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*.

Esther-Miriam Wagner (Woolf Institute and University of Cambridge)

Sociolinguistics of Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic letter writing

This seminar will give an introduction to Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic sociolinguistics and the relationship between language change and the transformation of religious and social identity as attested in the sources of the Cairo Genizah and the Prize Paper Collections, focussing on issues such as confessional dialects, use of alphabet, code-switching, and vernacularisation. We will also address a number of other issues regarding communication strategies on inter-communal and intra-communal levels: do Arabic interlocutors belonging to religious communities on the periphery of power tend to use more regional and vernacular forms with one another? How important is the role of geographically mobile community members, such as merchants, for the introduction of progressive language forms? And, who are the protagonists setting linguistic standards?

- Milroy, Lesley and Sue Margrain. 1980. Vernacular Language Loyalty and Social Network. *Language in Society* 9 (1): 43–70.
- Parkes, Malcolm. 1973. The literacy of the laity. In *The Mediaeval World*, eds. David Daiches & Anthony Thorlby, 555–577. London: Aldus Books.
- Sharma, Devyani. 2011. Style Repertoire and Social Change in British Asian English. *Journal for Sociolinguistics* 15 (4): 464–492.
- Wagner, Esther-Miriam. 2017. The socio-linguistics of Judaeo-Arabic mercantile writing. In Esther-Miriam Wagner, Bettina Beinhoff and Ben Outhwaite (eds.), *Merchants of innovation. The languages of traders*, 68–86. Berlin: de Gruyter Mouton.
- Wagner, Esther-Miriam. 2018. Judaeo-Arabic Language or Jewish Arabic sociolect? Linguistic terminology between Linguistics and Ideology. In Lily Khan (ed), *Jewish Languages in Historical Perspective*, 189–207. Leiden: Brill.
- Wagner, Esther-Miriam and Magdalen Connolly. 2018. Code-switching in Judeo-Arabic documents from the Cairo Geniza. *Multilingua* 37/1: 1–23.

Simeon Dekker (Universität Bern)

Voices on birchbark: Everyday communication in medieval Russia

In this seminar, we will explore the major role that writing on birchbark – an ephemeral, even 'throw-away' form of correspondence and administration – played in the vibrant medieval merchant city of Novgorod and other cities in the Russian Northwest. Birchbark literacy was crucial to the organization of Novgorodian society; it was integrated into a huge variety of activities and had a broad social basis; it was used extensively by the laity, by women as well as men, by villagers as well as landlords. In particular, we will

(a) examine letters that illustrate the 'orality factor' in birchbark communication. They show that, even as a written medium, birchbark letters could be 'spoken' and 'heard'; moreover, this oral aspect was not trivial but rather a central part of the communicative events, which influenced the form and meaning of the texts themselves;

(b) investigate the key role of the messengers in the communicative event. The messengers are sometimes mentioned explicitly in the birchbark letter but, even when they are not, internal evidence often shows that they could be more than disinterested conveyors ('letter bearers'); rather, they were frequently active participants in the entire written transaction, from start to finish;

(c) analyse so-called 'communicatively heterogeneous letters'—letters in which several persons are addressed individually, in ways that are unexpected, judging by the information in the opening formulas.

Dekker, Simeon. 2018. *Old Russian Birchbark Letters: A Pragmatic Approach*. Leiden: Brill.
Schaeken, Jos, 2019: *Voices on Birchbark. Everyday Communication in Medieval Russia*.
Leiden: Brill.

Donald Tuten (Emory University, Atlanta)

Koineization in the history of Spanish: Explanatory possibilities and challenges

In most accounts, koineization is understood to be a process that occurs when speakers of mutually-intelligible varieties or dialects come together during settlement of new towns, colonies or frontier zones. Through processes of accommodation/alignment, speaker-learners – particularly those of the second and third generations – acquire and create a new variety characterized by a) mixing of features of contributing varieties, b) selection of majority features, and c) modest simplification, or reduction in inventories of units and rules. Spanish is a variety of Romance that developed over centuries of repeated territorial expansions, colonization and mixing of speakers of diverse varieties of Ibero-Romance. Consequently, the model of koineization has contributed to our understanding of a number of key changes that characterize the historical development of this language, and of particular varieties of it. In this course, we will first explore some explanatory possibilities of the model: how it has been used (or might be used) to account for a number of changes in the history of Spanish. We will then consider some challenges to use of this model: how koineization can be understood to interact with other processes of change and how the impact of cultural factors may lead to changes not predicted by the existing model.

Readings TBA