

IS1306 “New Speakers in a Multilingual Europe: Opportunities and Challenges”

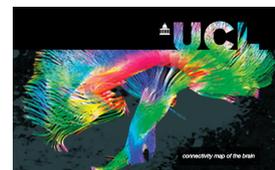
Workshop

The Phonetics and Phonology of New Speaker varieties across the lifespan

Bronwen G. Evans & Gisela Tomé Lourido

Dept of Speech, Hearing & Phonetic Sciences, University College
London, London, UK.

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Recent increases in complex international migration patterns have led to increasingly diverse communities, particularly within large urban centres, such as London (e.g., Vertovec, 2007). However, multilingualism is not just limited to urban communities, nor is there just one kind of multilingual. There are so-called 'traditional' bilinguals who acquire both languages simultaneously from birth, but there are also sequential bilinguals who acquire one language then another (e.g., home then community language in the case of immigrant communities; McCarthy et al., 2014) and those who acquire their language later in life, e.g., as a result of moving for work (e.g., Drummond, 2012) or for sociocultural reasons (e.g., Tomé Lourido & Evans, 2015). Acquisition itself also takes many different forms; speakers may acquire their languages in formal (school, community programs, revitalization projects) or informal (home) settings, in childhood or in adulthood. One language may even displace another, e.g., in the case of *neofalantes* in Galicia or second-generation immigrants (O'Rourke & Ramallo, 2015).

The study of such non-traditional bilinguals or 'new speakers' has quite rightly received much attention, particularly in terms of identifying and examining similarities and differences between new speaker profiles and practices across immigrant and minority language communities in Europe (O'Rourke et al., 2015; O'Rourke & Pujolar, 2015), but also in studies of language revitalization, language planning, and language attitudes (see e.g., Nance, 2015 for a review). Much less is known about the phonetics and phonology of new speaker varieties, yet such work has the potential to provide a novel perspective on fundamental questions in speech processing. For instance, previous work has shown that there are limits to phonetic learning for both second language learners (e.g., Iverson et al., 2003; Flege et al., 1999) and unbalanced bilinguals (Pallier et al., 1997; Antoniou et al., 2012). However, it is also clear that social factors such as motivation, attitude, likely play a role in learning (e.g., DeWaele, 2007). New speakers, who are often highly motivated to acquire their new language, e.g., for cultural reasons, thus constitute an ideal population to investigate this question.

In our meeting we aim to develop a coherent research plan that combines phonetic methods with socially-situated data, and which, through combining our various skills, expertise & datasets, will enable us to better understand the complex relationship between variation & change, speech perception & production and social context. That is, studying new speakers will enable us to put social context into a central position in models of speech processing that aim to understand;

- whether cognitive representations mediate between production and perception or whether they are specific to one domain
- how flexible such cognitive representations are over the lifespan
- the consequences of flexibility in speech perception and production for language change
- how indexical information is stored and used in speech processing

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