



ISCH COST Action IS1306

New Speakers in a Multilingual Europe - Opportunities and Challenges

POSITION PAPER

WG2 – Language and Migration

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1.Introduction

The purpose of this Position Paper is to provide an overview of the lines of research taken by the members of the WG2 on Language and Migration during the first phase of the network, and of the key issues that were brought to the table and will need to be taken into account for the next stage of IS1306 “New Speakers in a Multilingual Europe: Opportunities and Challenges”.

This Position Paper was prepared by Prof. Martin Rojo and Dr Marquez Reiter in their capacity as leader and co-leader of WG2, respectively and as active research members of WG2. It outlines the research trajectory and activities of WG2 since the first meeting in March 2014 at Heriot-Watt University to the second meeting of the group at the Barcelona symposium held in November 2014, organised by the Open University of Catalonia.

We consider this paper represents a significant step forward for the overall project. It addresses some important issues in relation to newspearkes and speakerness given the confluence of approaches, theoretical assumptions and different methods in dialogue along the first year of collaboration. Within the COST project, the WG2 constitutes a numerous and a highly diverse

group, albeit with a common interest in language and migration across different communicative environments. Most of the members of the group had conducted research on newly arrived or on second-generation migrants, with a bilingual or multilingual profile, using different methods from ethnography to quantitative research focused on grammatical and discursive competence development. One of the main challenges of the group during the meetings and discussions was to mobilise this experience and its correlative knowledge to approach the new research object, new speakers and new speakerness. And, to take stock of the work conducted by its members to establish theoretical and methodological synergies with respect to the way in which migrant communities, locales and communicative environments have been examined in order to integrate this body of research in the development of the Action.

2. Introduction: Language shift and speakers' legitimation

In contemporary (post) industrial societies, an international division of labour has been shown to determine relationships between different regions of the world as well as the types of labour conditions within each region (Wallerstein, 1979). This world-system has historically depended on the supply of a cheap labour force in the periphery. In view of this, WG2 concentrates on contemporary diasporas and the extent to which these forces and asymmetries impact on migrants' linguistic trajectories.

Thus, one of the first issues addressed by the WG2 was to what extent linguistic trajectories are intertwined by life and specifically by migrating trajectories, and how they are mediated by speakers' social positions defined by the intersection of various social identities such as class, race, ethnicity, age, sexuality, gender. An illustration of such an intersectionality is the case of linguistic *muda* (Pujolar and González, 2013; Pujolar and Puigdevall, 2015), that is when migrants become "new speakers" of the language (or the language variety) of the receiving society at least in significant dimensions of their life. This process of *muda* or linguistic shift entails that new speakers' competences are going to be assessed within a linguistic market, different from the one in which they have been primarily socialised. Furthermore, this process also entails that new speakers' accessing of several social fields (Bourdieu 1986), such as the labour market or education, could be facilitated or restricted on the basis of the social assessment

of their competences by others, such as native speakers from the receiving society as well as other migrants.

Legitimacy was in fact the second significant issue addressed by WG2. Linguistic differences between one accent or language variety and another can become differences in symbolic capital. According to Bourdieu (1986), capital is present in three fundamental guises: (i) as economic capital, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalised in the form of property rights; (ii) as cultural capital, which is convertible, under certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the form of educational qualifications; and (iii) as social capital, made up of social obligations ('connections'), which is convertible, under certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the form of a title of nobility. In other words, the "standard" or "native" variety will be demanded and legitimate within particular social field (Bourdieu, 1998), such as the job market, service provision, trade, and the like. While, the pronunciation of a specific sound, or a particular intonation, among other linguistic devices can be seen by the participants in a community as capital and as legitimate forms in given social fields, in others they can be seen as delegitimizing resources (cf. Paz and Marquez Reiter, 2013).

New speakers are not necessarily seen and accepted as legitimate speakers by members of the receiving society. This is partly the result of the value attached to given semiotic devices in the receiving community such as the indexicality of given phonemes (e.g. /z/ in Peninsular Spanish, e.g. Marquez Reiter and Martin Rojo, 2014; Martin Rojo and Rodríguez, in press). Thus, if the "objective" linguistic differences between one language, variety or accent and another – for example, features of Moroccan Arabic intonation in Spanish-, can produce or can be used to produce differences of symbolic capital, the question that should concern us is what linguistic resources, for example, are seen as legitimate and what social actors are considered entitled to produce and circulate these socially valued resources (Bourdieu 1993, 331).

In this context, the WG2 has focused on how the process of 'becoming' a new speaker, not only entails overcoming barriers to access to the linguistic skills demanded at a multiplicity of social settings, but also to gain legitimacy as a competent and legitimate speaker, who can even pass by a native (Piller 2002). In order to understand how these processes take place and to analyse new speakers' agency in overcoming access constraints and delegitimation, linguistic

and migration trajectories have to be approached in an integrated way. In fact, linguistic processes cannot be detached from socio-political processes, being subjected to specific processes of evaluation and control in which not only their legitimacy as speakers is challenged but also their status as citizens, workers, and “good students” and so on.

Additionally, nation-states and various other institutions also develop specific forms of migration regimentation that determine what languages are required in different social fields, which “language is legitimate” and under which conditions it has to be used. Migrants’ linguistic trajectories show the impact of these policies in their reactions to follow or challenge their dictates. Immigration policies are intrinsically linked to linguistic ideologies. It’s precisely on the basis of this relation that the question of legitimacy arises. Who is a legitimate speaker? Those who are native or pass by as native, those who speak the standard variety, those who belong to the national community? We thus need to understand the ideologies that underpin processes of legitimation and exclusion, particularly the connections between linguistic ideologies and nationalism, racism or neoliberalism and how they impact on language practices in transformation. The study of ideologies and how they shape and are shaped by linguistic practices was the third issue addressed by the group. Immigrants sometimes reproduce, contest or resist dominant linguistic ideologies including nationalism, territoriality, parallel monolingualism [Heller, 2001] vs. hybridised language, linguistic purity and boundedness. The question of authenticity, legitimacy, among other components of the ideological schema of the nation-state, the relationship with the native speaker, and how these are negotiated in interaction become a key element in the understanding of new speaker’s experiences and social positioning.

2.1 WG2 aims and objectives

In view of the above, during the first meeting in Edinburgh, it was established that the WG2’s overall aim of WG2 is to examine the notion of ‘new speaker’ and ‘new speakerness’. Although the “new speaker” concept was established as the aim of study as a starting point of this research, the concept reveals itself as controversial within the group. Partially, because traditional concepts such as competent vs. deficit Arian speakers and inquisitional approaches are still rooted in migration students, but also in part because researcher hadn’t seen the need to adopt this new object of study (see next section). Beside this concept, a correlative concept, that is new speakerness, as the condition of being a new speaker, emerged from the debate and the

work developed within the network. Given the controversial nature of the concept, the leaders of WG2 proposed both concepts to be taken as research procedures in order to problematize traditional categories of speakers, and to increase our understanding of the migratory and linguistic trajectories of members of the different communities, locales and communicative environments examined by members of the group. The objectives of WG2 are to:

1. Shed light on how the diasporic and linguistic trajectories of migrants interweave; that includes the examination of how the ‘muda’ gives rise to a new social and linguistic status with effects on speakers’ self-esteem, empowerment and agency. Reflect on the extent to which the concept of “new speaker” may help to identify, and encompass the range of phenomena involved in the social and linguistic struggles over legitimacy of immigrants; and also the aspects that may be less easily connected with the concept;
2. Investigate the relationship between (lack of) legitimacy, access and social integration, including the insertion of new speakers into the (larger) labour market, education and implications for well-being;
3. Examine the process of speakers’ and language assessment and legitimating and delegitimizing moves in interactions; analyse the process of negotiation among speakers, in order to value or devalue, reclaim and challenge their legitimacy.
4. Establish the linguistic ideologies evoked in the process of assessment and (de)legitimation and ascertain the type of linguistic skills which are (de)valorized, and the impact of these ideologies on speakers’ (inter)subjectivities;
5. Map out linguistic practices and their reception in the migrants’ receiving community as well as in their own intra-ethnic communities, including an analysis of symbolic emblems of ‘otherness’ and the extent to which they are heard as such by (non) locals;
6. Explore potential policy recommendations with particular regard to issues of legitimacy and access.

2.2. Intersectional trajectories and new speakers’ linguistic practices

Once these objectives had been agreed at the end of the Heriot-Watt meeting in March 2014, they were translated into two organized panels for the Barcelona symposium, focused on two topics in which previous objectives converge: 1) new speakers' trajectories; 2) new speakers' language practices.

The panel on **Linguistic and migratory trajectories**, organised by Dr Maite Puigdevall (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Barcelona) with Dr Clara Keating (Universidade de Coimbra) as discussant, was mainly concentrated on objectives 1, 2 and 3. The focus of this panel was on immigrants and their linguistic and migratory trajectories. We assume that geographic displacement and movement of people has consequences and involves changes, many of which are language-based. As migrants adjust to a new linguistic landscape they may develop new language repertoires or experience dialect shifts. In this line, the panel contributed to a discussion of how linguistic and immigrant trajectories intertwine in the processes of becoming a new speaker of a new language (or a new set of repertoires), and focalizes on the social, cultural and political circumstances which frame and affect this process.

One of the most significant aims of this panel, -that is also a contribution to the next stage of this project- was to define "Language trajectories", as a language-based journeys taken by individuals or groups, all implying movements over time and space, both in the process of becoming new speakers, and in no longer being one. Exploring language trajectories as well migration trajectories their complexity was revealed and a deeper understanding of how they intersect with other kinds of life trajectories was achieved. These trajectories may entail learning new language repertoires (or varieties), with associated values and ideologies. Thus, migrants must also face the contrasting, even conflicting values conferred on linguistic varieties and discursive practices across spaces and generations. Through communicative practices, which have immediate impact on the public sphere, speakers are in fact transposing selves across discrete zones of cultural space and time (Bahktin, 1981; Agha, 2006; Woolard, 2013). Trajectories thus constitute a challenge for the study of different aspects involved in language learning, language use, and in the discursive representation of an ethereal realm of origin and the projected "homeland".

The panel was joined by researchers working on new speakers in migration contexts from a wide range of disciplines and methodologies, including, sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, cognitive science, cultural studies, ethnology, sociology, anthropology, communication,

education, translation and interpreting studies, among others. The presented papers showed that new speakers are “all multilingual citizens who, by engaging with languages other than their “native” or “national” language(s), need to cross existing social boundaries, re-evaluate their own levels of linguistic competence and creatively (re)structure their social practices to adapt to new and overlapping linguistic spaces (O’Rourke and Pujolar 2013; O’Rourke and Pujolar 2015). As we will refer later, while focusing on the trajectories involved in the processes of becoming a new speaker, papers on this panel also considered the extent to which the construct of ‘new speaker’ and ‘new speakerness’ can be compared, contrasted or complemented with other existing notions such as second language speaker/learner and non-native speaker.

The second panel, **Language and practices of speakerness was organised** by Dr Jürgen Jaspers and Dr Lian Malai Madsen, with Dr Max Spotti, as discussant. This panel mainly focused on objectives 3-5. The panel explored how speakerness and speaker statuses are practiced in ‘modern communicative encounters resulting from globalization and transnationalism’. In spite of increased disciplinary attention to language practices and ideologies rather than languages as distinct and bounded phenomena, most speakers continue to live and act out their identities in a thoroughly ‘languagized’ world and are constantly drawn into the use of, evaluated against, expected to be, or obliged to speak ‘languages’. Many speakers, therefore, actively seek the social credentials and professional advantages that being heard as speakers of particular ‘Languages’ can provide them with, which can be observed, among other things, in their attempts to revitalize or learn minority languages. But these practices usually depend on the fixed notions of ‘language’ that sociolinguists have been cultivating a growing suspicion against. In an international scientific world where new users of English frequently meet demands for native-like speakership including fluent writing, discussions of linguistic ownership and negotiations of competence also enter, constrain or advantage our own professional practice.

Rather than invalidating sociolinguistic attention to language practices, this implies that the legacy of ‘Language’ will continue to set the stage, that is, function as an emic beacon for much linguistic activity. In view of this, sociolinguists will have to explain, rather than merely discard as ideological constructions, the ways in which this legacy is recruited for various purposes and how this, in turn, effects speakerness and speaker identities.

The panel explored how etically observable linguistic practices are reconciled with emic ideas of ‘Language’ and the extent to which legitimizing as well as delegitimizing strategies are

made manifest in communication. In so doing, the panel problematized the advantages and disadvantages of the notions of ‘Language’ as employed for (minority) language learning and teaching as well as for speakers’ professionalization trajectories. It also pay attention to how speakers navigate their translingual or amateur explorations of (relatively) unfamiliar linguistic territories (‘crossing’, ‘stylization’) against the background of conceptions of ‘Language’.

This panel was joined by researchers on various types of speakerness in the context of migration and diaspora (including speakerness in written communication) that emerge in communicative encounters (old/new, native/non-native, serious/jocular, temporary/routine, learner/experienced, majority/minority speaker), the diverse stances of ownership, skill, recognition and authenticity they imply, and their import for the revitalization, integration, or transnational projects speakers engage in.

At the Barcelona symposium new speaker profiles and themes were observed on the basis of the presentations. These are outlined in table format in Appendix 2 and congruent with the objectives of the WG2.

On the basis of these the following key aspects were discussed:

1. The concept of new-speaker has been often examined and even criticized during the WG2 meetings, however its use as an analytic/heuristic umbrella notion has contributed to explore new ways of understanding speakers and linguistic phenomena and how they are experienced.

The coinage of such analytic has shifted our gaze away from concepts previously in use, such as native / non -native speaker. This shift has produced a correlative change in the object of study and approach. From previous interest on acquisition and competences, we have now focused on the management of linguistic resources in negotiating the assessment and (de)legitimising moves of speakers and the status of ideologies.

In this line, we do not propitiate its use as a new or added category of speaker but as a research (heuristic) procedure, which helps us to shed light on other speakers (non-mother tongue speakers) and their struggles.

2. The analysis presented in the panels and in the tables provided by coordinators show that “new speaker“ is above all an emic category, created by researchers

(see Eelen 2001). Etic categories are mainly “native” / “non-native,” and also numerous ethno-national categories (Moroccan; Spaniard), which are significantly more used by speakers when dealing with experiences of exclusion. However, even if the speakers studied do not use this term, they refer to experiences highlighted by this research on new speakers: as “natives” who are not treated as legitimate “natives”, i.e. speakers of “ethnically-marked” varieties.

3. Among the processes speakers highlight in their discourses, the negotiations of legitimacies and authenticities within their life, educational and professional trajectories stand out.
4. While researchers’ categories focused on how linguistic and communicative competence is socially assessed, on the basis of values and ideologies, speakers often reproduce linguistic ideologies that undervalued their linguistic skills. However, some discourses of resistance, challenging the idea that native competence cannot be achieved or should be necessarily achieved, were also attested. In both cases, the issue of legitimacy was at the core.
5. From an etic perspective, the legitimacy is not static or permanent, but something that has to be gained at different moments in different contexts. In their discourses, new speakers stated that once *muda* takes place, new-speakers can pass for a native-speaker and for a “local”. And, that the same happens with social status, which also changes along life trajectories (see Martín Rojo and Rodríguez, 2015).
6. Research on trajectories, life stories, shows these struggles for legitimacy, and changes in status, but also shows how speakers refer in their discourses to *mudas*, even if they do not use the term, it is easy to identify these junctures in narratives, as points of transformations in which legitimacy struggles, and correlative changes in social status are referred to. Thus, diasporic and linguistic trajectories are inextricably linked..
7. Among the conditions of possibility of this research, a general revision and problematization of some significant concepts, and approaches within sociolinguistics were flagged up:

- The problematisation of language as a code, and the emphasis on linguistic practices. In the line of Bourdieu's defence of a theory of (linguistic) *practice*, inserted within the fields of social action, rather than a theory of the abstraction that the linguistic *system* means (see also, Heller, 2007; Pennycook, 2010, among others)
- The research focus on speakers, and the analysis of agency in negotiating linguistic assessment, legitimacy, rather than on language varieties and/or resources (Pujolar, on preparation).
- The problematisation of the territorialisation of languages; Linguistic practices are dislocated from their traditional or original geographies and rerritorialised and reinscribed in new spaces (cf. Deleuze & Guattari, 1986; see among others, Blommaert 2010).

3. Tackling ontological challenges

As a result of the meetings that the group has had so far in addition to the round table held at the Barcelona symposium (see Appendix 3 for a link to video clip used for discussion) and the various technology mediated discussions the following key processes were brought to light:

1) Social valuation and indexicality

It's been observed that language is racialised. Speakers' testimonies reflect that features such as race and ethnicity shaped the consideration of new speakers as native, quasi native or non-native, as competent or not. In other words, as legitimate speakers of the language and as legitimate members of the community. Thus, pointing out that communicative competence is valorised in every social field according to linguistic ideologies and the hierarchy of the different varieties of language,, linguistic assessment becomes one of the most powerful mechanism of control and regulation of citizenship.

Monolingualism as a universal criterion for citizenship in a nation-state cannot be sustained anymore in the face of the increasing visibility of new speakers in our communities. However in the way new speakers are assessed and valued we still recognise the contradictions between the democratic commitment of modern states to citizenship rights and the restrictive homogeneous views still in place about who counts as a citizen. As a result, knowledge and the

indistinguishable use of the standard variety function as criteria of belonging to the community. In fact, the processes of categorisation and assessment are partly the result of the value attached to given semiotic devices in the receiving community such as the indexicality of given phonemes (e.g. /z/ in Peninsular Spanish), The “objective” linguistic differences between one language, variety or accent and another can produce or can be used then to ensure national membership, and to produce differences in symbolic capital.

Language is, in principle, an element that can facilitate integration: if one doesn't know a language it can be learned, and its presence or absence can be modified, unlike physical features or one's birthplace. Nevertheless, by demanding the use of local norm as an exclusive criterion (you speak it or you don't speak it), language comes to be treated as a defining feature that either immediately separates and delegitimizes, or on the contrary becomes hegemonic, erasing any trace of difference (see Moyer and Martín Rojo 2007).

The role of indexicality and the way in which language use is monitored in as much as categories are imposed on new speakers. These features are detected within interaction and play a significant role in process of assessment and stratification. In this line these linguistic features are perceived, and serve to distinguish new speakers, from other categories of speakers (monolingual, bilingual, native). These features could function as social stigma, in Goffman's terms: “first appearances are likely to enable us to anticipate his category and attributes, his "social identity" [...] We lean on these anticipations that we have, transforming them into normative expectations, into righteously presented demands. [...] It is [when an active question arises as to whether these demands will be filled] that we are likely to realize that all along we had been making certain assumptions as to what the individual before us ought to be. members of a society (Goffman 1963: 2). As a result, new speakers can manage the impressions they produce or they can try to erase these features (Martín Rojo and Rodríguez 2015). Such imposition entails the de-agency of new speakers in that they are not seen as authors (Goffman 1963) and are, as result, excluded from the group, the receiving society in general and rendered invisible. In light of this, the question of legitimacy, performance and responsibilities is pivotal in the examination of new speaker/ness. These will be addressed at the Round Table in September 2015 organised by (see 4) Dr Marquez Reiter and Prof. Martin Rojo.

2) Valuation, knowledge and governmentality

It is imperative to understand that that **these valorisations** are neither true nor false but rather what is important is to capture the way in which such assessments circulate in the discourse of the communities and how, in turn, these communities are linked to such discourses. In order to answer this question, the concept of governmentality, “the conduct of conduct” which ranges from the governing of others in all aspects of life to the governing of the self (Foucault, 1982; see also, 2000), can be useful. This concept involves the regulation of populations through multiple institutions and technologies in society. In this case, the role of **governmentality** (Foucault 2000) needs to be explored in order to understand how the production of knowledge about language leads to the normalisation of new speakers’ behaviour (Martín Rojo, 2015). These topics will be discussed at a Round table on “Political and Theoretical Implications of the Notion of New speakers” Prof. Duchene, and Dr Costa, and Prof. Duchene and Prof. Martín Rojo (Coordinators) (se 4).

As Urla (2012) notes, under neoliberalism, the logics and discourse for managing social life, -and in this case linguistic trajectories-, on the one hand, and the logics and discourse of the market, on the other, have fused (see, especially, Rose 1999). This change takes place precisely at a time where jobs have become precarious, inequality has increased and struggles for resources have increased (Standing, 2011; Fraser, 2003). In this context, the new discourses of language commodification -and the production of knowledge about languages, competencies, the market, etc. they involve- have a clear impact on speakers. Subjects respond to this pressure trying to meet market demands, increasing their linguistic competencies. In spite of all this, the linguistic competencies of new speakers and their social and linguistic status are constrained and limited by the conditions of non-native, and by ethnic and other social features. As they are reproduced by the institutions and social groups with an investment in linguistic nationalism.

3) Life trajectories, socialisation and subjectivation

In diasporic contexts, new speakers shift to/between (less) dominant languages as part of their familiarisation with other linguistic ideologies. Through their various itineraries they face inclusion, exclusion and discover ways of (de)legitimation. The way in which new speakers are socialised into this new ways will be addressed by Dr Patricia Lamarre and Dr Ana Relano Pastor in a special issue on socialisation (see 4). During successive processes of socialisation in different linguistic communities and markets, **speakers’ status** evolves within their trajectories

(see Puigdevall & Martín Rojo, proposed panel). In their life stories, the speakers recount how they have dealt with social assessment and categorisation: from being old to new speakers, overcoming delegitimised positions as “lacking competence” in the language of instruction in the first stages of their school trajectories, gaining legitimacy and, finally, becoming expert speakers and even “passing for native speakers” (Piller 2002). All these processes are shaped by a deep knowledge of the discrediting features and their impact on social inclusion and exclusion. This knowledge conducts speakers’ practices and from the moment it is internalised can be used by the subjects for understanding themselves, becoming ways of understanding of the individual and playing a key role in the construction of subjectivities. Thus, the construction of subjectivity can be grasped by analysing the discourses produced by “non-native speakers” (Martín Rojo, 2015)

4. Working together to deliver tangible outputs: governmentality, socialisation, and ??

The following academic activities have been planned for the second stage of this COST Action:

- Round table on “**New speakerness: epistemics, positioning and struggles for legitimacy in interaction**” organized by DR Marquez Reiter and Prof Martín Rojo with a view to publishing an edited collection of papers. It’s provisionally scheduled for September 2015 at the University of Surrey. Participants: Luci Nussbaum, Julia Llompart, Alex Duchene, Max Spotti, Maria Rosa Garrido, Joan Pujolar, Rosina Marquez Reiter, Luisa Martín Rojo; Panel on “New speakers trajectories and status changes” (Maite Puigdevall and Luisa Martín Rojo) in the 2nd EDiSo Symposium (Coimbra);
- Round table on “Political and Theoretical Implications of the Notion of New speakers” Duchene and Martín Rojo (Coordinators)-TBC;
- Special issue on sociolinguistics in a languagised world Jaspers and Madsen (eds) where a range of competing new concepts such as metrolanguaging, polylinguaging will be disentangled; (WG4)
- Panel for the 21 Sociolinguistic Symposium (Murcia) and Special issue on Socialisation publication: **NEW SPEAKERS’ LANGUAGE SOCIALIZATION PRACTICES: TRAJECTORIES, CONTEXTS AND FIELDS** (Organizers and eds. : Patricia Lamarre and Ana María Relación Pastor)

- Data session/workshop on data analysis, suggested by doctoral students (delivered by Jaspers and Madsen).

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APPENDIX 1 – list of WG2 members, academic affiliation and contact details

APPENDIX 2 – themes and categories from the Barcelona Symposium

APPENDIX 3 – video clip used at Round Table at the Barcelona Symposium

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