

**Hans Van de Velde, Nanna Haug Hilton & Remco Knooihuizen  
(eds.): Language Variation – European Perspectives VIII**

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The book under review contains thirteen papers from the International Conference on Language Variation in Europe (ICLaVE). The first edition of ICLaVE took place in Barcelona in 2000, and the tenth edition, organized by the Fryske Akademy, was held in Leeuwarden/ Ljouwert (the Netherlands) in June 2019. The papers were selected following peer-review from a total of twenty papers submitted. The editors selected the papers based on a wide range of language varieties, geographically ranging from Dutch-Frisian contact varieties in Leeuwarden to English in Sydney, Australia. The selection includes traditional quantitative and qualitative approaches to different types of linguistic variables, as well as state-of-the-art techniques for the analysis of speech sounds, new dialectometrical methods, covariation analysis, and a range of statistical methods. The papers are based not only on data from traditional sources such as sociolinguistic interviews, speech corpora, and newspapers, but also on hip hop lyrics, historical private letters, administrative documents, and re-analyses of dialect atlas data and older dialect recordings. The chapters are representative of the broad range of topics and approaches that find a home at ICLaVE. They are included in the book in order of distance of the geographical area under investigation to the conference venue in Leeuwarden. Two of the chapters are based on plenary lectures by Tamminga and Versloot.

Chapter 1 deals with the volatile linguistic shape of ‘Town Frisian’/‘Town Hollandic’ by Arjen P. Versloot (Universiteit van Amsterdam). His paper offers a historical sociolinguistic account of bilingualism in the province of Fryslân, with particular attention paid to the contact variety known as Town Frisian. Tracing back the origin of different features in this variety to particular Frisian, Dutch or Hollandic varieties is hampered by the close similarities between these varieties as well as by centuries of subsequent contact and change. A feature associated with Frisian today may well stem from 16th-century Hollandic or may have been associated with (L2) Dutch when Town Frisian was formed. Versloot suggests ways to solve this puzzle for Town Frisian and warns against back-projection of present-day data onto situations of historical contact-induced change.

In Chapter 2, Rias van den Doel and Adriaan Walpot from Universiteit Utrecht delve deeper into the attitudes towards non-native speaker accents of English in Europe. Their survey of Dutch and French speakers of English shows that attitudes towards own-accented English tend to be more negative than those towards other-accented English. They argue that this ‘acceptability deficit’ occurs irrespective of

proficiency, and that it may not be conducive to efficient communication in English as a Lingua Franca.

Chapter 3 by Kerri-Ann Butcher from the University of Cambridge revisits vowel merger and distinction patterns in East Anglian English. The MOAN and MOWN vowels, traditionally distinct in the variety, are merging in apparent time, whereas the MOAN and GOOSE vowels, traditionally not clearly distinguished, are changing in opposite directions. These developments are linked to dialect contact resulting from counter-urbanisation in the area.

Chapter 4 covers Rasmus Puggaard's study of voice onset time in a large corpus of traditional dialect recordings from Jutland (Denmark) in Universiteit Leiden. It shows that short VOTs, commonly associated with the northern part of the peninsula and with /t/ only, are found across Jutland and for all fortis plosives. The regional variation described in the study may, in part, be attributed to dialect contact patterns, but the statistical modeling suggests multiple continua of variation.

The contribution by Janet Fuller from the University of Groningen (Chapter 5) gives an analysis of terms for ethnicity in newspaper texts about national belonging in Germany. The term Biodeutsche(r) 'bio[logically] German,' particularly indexes an ongoing focus on ethnic descent as a prerequisite for Germanness. However, simultaneously the term is often used mockingly, undermining this traditional focus and opening the door to more inclusive discourses.

In Chapter 6, Karen V. Beaman from the Universität Tübingen investigates whether lectal coherence enables or inhibits linguistic change. Using phonological and morphosyntactic data from two varieties of Central Swabian German, she proposes a model based on covariation, implicational scaling, and the mathematical lattice theory. The model suggests that more coherent lects are more resistant to change.

Chapter 7 contains Rachel Byrne's study of attitudes and linguistic behaviour of adolescents in Merseyside (England) from the University of Liverpool. Speakers from the Wirral use a fronted realisation of the NURSE vowel, though not merged with SQUARE, to index their identities as being from Merseyside rather than from Liverpool. Interview data suggests that they are overtly aware of local and class associations of this feature, which they use to position themselves variably along these two dimensions.

Chapter 8 provides a study by Nathan J. Young from the Centre for Research on Bilingualism at Stockholm University, an in-depth study of the first-person pronoun *benim* (a Turkish loan) in the Swedish multi-ethnolect of Stockholm. Young presents a syntactic and socio-pragmatic overview of the use of this loan by its predominantly male users in the Swedish hip-hop scene and proposes an evolutionary trajectory

involving second-language acquisition and earlier self-aggrandising pronouns in the Stockholm working-class vernacular.

In Chapter 9, a new dialectometrical method is proposed by Clément Chagnaud, Guylaine Brun-Trigaud, and Philippe Garat from Université Grenoble Alpes and Université Côte d’Azur. They use multidimensional statistical analysis of linguistic atlas data from Occitan to find clusters of lexical areas: sets of lexical items from the same semantic domain often pattern similarly geographically. The spatial patterns discovered in this way do not match traditional dialect boundaries but follow watershed regions or historical administrative divisions instead.

Chapter 10 presents the historical sociolinguistic circumstances of the development of the Basque relative pronoun *zein* ‘which’ is the paper’s topic by Dorota Krajewska and Eneko Zuloaga from the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU. An analysis of letters and documents from the 16th to 19th centuries suggests that *zein* is a calque (or loan translation) from Romance languages by highly literate bilingual writers.

In Chapter 11, Nicole Vassalou, Dimitris Papazachariou, and Mark Janse from the University of Patras and Ghent University consider the diachronic change in the vowel systems of two communities of Mišótika Cappadocian speakers in Northern Greece. The degree of change since the early 20th century differs between these communities due to the amount of dialect contact. In both communities, however, dialect contact, and therefore linguistic change, is led by male rather than female speakers – which is not typically found in language change from below (see Labov 2001).

Chapter 12 provides a plenary lecture by Meredith Tamminga (University of Pennsylvania) about the leaders of language change: macro and micro perspectives. She deals with the questions about who leads language change that has been central to sociolinguistic literature for decades. More recent work on covariation between simultaneous changes questions whether broad, generalized change leadership exists at all. Using data from Philadelphia, she shows that covariation patterns fluctuate over time. These fluctuations are not random but appear to be tied to the overall diachronic shifts in the community. However, she also suggests that predicting individual differences in covarying changes is not as simple as operationalizing the traits that have been captured in qualitative descriptions of particular leaders. Furthermore, she proposes that reconciling these results requires distinguishing between individual leadership in Labov’s “saccadic” sense and the broader structure of how innovations covary within the community as a whole.

Finally, in Chapter 13, James Grama, Catherine E. Travis, and Simon Gonzalez from the University of Duisburg-Essen and Australian National University offer a real-time diachronic overview of changes in five English diphthongs by speakers of

different ethnic backgrounds in Sydney. While there are few ethnic linguistic differences in Sydney today, the patterns of change differ between groups, especially Chinese Australians, showing a different adoption of changes in progress.

This review concludes with some remarks.

1. Language variation studies have a vibrant diversity that can appeal to readers interested in this kind of study.
2. The subject matter explored in this book series is language variation, defined as either variation between related varieties of a language (also known as dialect variation, microvariation, or intrasystemic variation) or ‘inherent,’ quantitative variation (also known as individual variation). This refers to any variation in any component of language, such as phonetics/phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics.
3. Topics to be covered include: variation as well as change at the level of speech communities (Labovian sociolinguistics); language convergence between standard and regional varieties and between regional varieties; dialect supralocalisation – loss of distinctiveness at the local level; dialect contact – causes; linguistic effects, such as koineisation; dialect divergence; the study of the variation and identity of languages; social psychology and variation; the study of standard–regional standard–dialect alignments, and the change in these alignments; the study of standard varieties; using nonstandard variants and social styles; standardization and destandardization; typological differences between related language varieties.
4. The purpose of this series is to investigate empirically linguistic variation and its description, explanation, and interpretation structurally, socially, and cognitively. Among the subjects covered by the series are sociolinguistics, contact linguistics, dialectology, historical linguistics, theory-driven approaches, and anthropology/anthropological linguistics. There is an emphasis on linguistic aspects, linguistic interaction, as well as the interaction between linguistic and extralinguistic aspects – not on things like language ideology, policy, etc.
5. There is a wide variety of work in this series, ranging from descriptive/data-oriented to more theory-oriented (both formal and functional). With respect to historical variation, the emphasis is on processes of language change instead of the outcomes of such processes. Monographs, themed collections of articles, and reference works in relevant areas are part of this series of peer-reviewed publications.
6. Regarding the whole format, every chapter of this book employs different formats for tables and graphs, and there is no consistent style for Tables and Figures. However, it is a delightful book for readers interested in vibrant diversity of

language variation studies. Best of all, the book can be downloaded at no cost, thanks to a generous subsidy from the Netherlands government.

## References

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