

SLX₁₅

SOCIOLINGUIST ESSEX

The 15th Postgraduate Conference in
Sociolinguistics

Organizing Committee:

Andrea Pizarro Pedraza

Amanda Perryman

Ariel Vázquez Carranza

Wangchuk Rinzin

PROGRAMME

TIME	AUTHOR AND TITLE
9:00–9:30	<i>Registration and Opening</i>
9:30–10:00	ARIEL VÁZQUEZ CARRANZA Reverting and upgrading: turn-initial-‘no’ in conversation CHARLOTTE
10:00–10:30	CORBETT An Analysis of Everyday Conversation based on the work of John Heritage
10:30–11:00	ANDREA PIZARRO PEDRAZA Emotional Basis of Taboo and Euphemism: a proposal for a cognitive sociolinguistic study
11:00–11:30	COFFEE BREAK
11:30–12:00	LEFTERIS KAILOGLOU TBA
12:00–12:30	ATHINAKI EFFROSYNI Is Gender a Factor in Our Interactions?
12:30–13:00	CHRYSO HADJIDEMETRIOU Kormakiti Maronite Arabic and Cypriot Greek in contact: The use of the voiceless uvular fricative [χ] in the Kormakiti Maronites’ Cypriot Greek
13:00–14:00	LUNCH BREAK
14:00–14:30	NAJLA AL-GHAMDI A sociolinguistic investigation of Gahmdi dialect in Saudi Arabia.
14:30–15:00	DEANA CAREY Down the <i>Rowerd</i> and Other Places: A Study of Breaking in Colchester English
15:00–15:30	JENNY AMOS Oh Boy! An analysis of the diphthong /ɪʊ/ in Mersea Island English
15:30–16:00	COFFEE BREAK
16:00–16:45	BEATRIZ DE PAIVA TBA
16:45–17:00	<i>Closing</i>

Social Event (6pm onwards)

REVERTING AND UPGRADING: TURN-INITIAL-‘NO’ IN CONVERSATION

Ariel Vázquez Carranza

University of Essex

Using the methodology of conversation analysis, this research on naturally occurring Mexican Spanish talk-in-interactions examines the actions performed by the deployment of turn-initial ‘no’ in conversation. It turns out that this phonological independent ‘no’ is neither a disagreement marker nor a rejection particle. Three actions were observed in the data: In the first place turn-initial ‘no’ is deployed to return to an issue that was previously mentioned in the conversation. Secondly, this sequential marker is used to resume an action that was previously abandoned in the talk. Finally, turn initial ‘no’ is deployed to upgrade an assessment in second position and by this inserting epistemic rights in the matter at hand.

Ariel is a 1st year PhD student at Essex under the supervision of Dr. Rebecca Clift. His area of interest is Conversation Analysis.

AN ANALYSIS OF EVERYDAY CONVERSATION BASED ON THE WORK OF JOHN HERITAGE

Charlotte Corbett

University of Essex

Using the work of John Heritage this paper uses CA to examine naturally occurring conversation between two friends. In particular it analyses epistemic rights in first position assessments and oh-prefaced responses in second position. The paper concludes that as the interaction is taken of two friends they are more likely to produced affiliative actions to promote social standing and solidarity rather than using disaffiliative ones.

Charlotte is a 3rd year undergraduate student at the University of Essex. She is interested in Conversation Analysis

EMOTIONAL BASIS OF TABOO AND EUPHEMISM: A PROPOSAL FOR A COGNITIVE SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY

Andrea Pizarro Pedraza

Centro de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales – Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas

In many communicative situations it is revealed that Language and Emotions are tied. Cultural studies have paid great attention to this question (for an overview, Harding & Pribram, 2009), but less has been done from a linguistic-based perspective. Sociolinguistics deals with emotions indirectly but not as a central cause for variation, and Cognitive Linguistics has focused only on the study of the specific semantic fields of emotions like anger (Kövecses, 2000) ignoring that the emotional load can be present in every word (Wilce, 2009). I argue here that both perspectives could be fruitfully combined so that Language and Emotions were tackled from a Cognitive Sociolinguistic point of view.

The phenomena I focus on for my research are taboo words and euphemisms as they are a central example of the role of the Social in the bidirectional relation of language and emotions. The taboos are certain behaviors that are dangerous for the community and thus socially forbidden through symbols inspiring the emotions of fear, disgust or shame, as shown in some classic works (Frazer, 1890-1922, Freud 1913-14, Steiner, 1956). The words that name these behaviors fall themselves into the category of taboo words, they are therefore socially marked. However, the existence of inconvenient realities and their taboo words doesn't imply that the need to communicate about them disappears. The linguistic tool that allows

this apparent paradox is the euphemism, a non-offensive substitute for a taboo word (Trudgill & Hernández Campoy, 2007). It can be uttered at every linguistic level, but its basic rhetoric tool is the metaphor. My hypothesis is that the lexical field used for the metaphorical substitution is socially determined. Considering the fact that the emotional education varies within the society, that would mean that different social identities avoid differently the emotional load of taboo words.

I illustrate these theoretical proposals with the semantic study of the emotional load in some examples of *menstruation* and *abortion* in contemporary Spanish, studying the latter mainly through media and institutional texts the day of the approval of the new Law of Abortion in Spain, on March 2010. This allows me to argue as well that taboo words and euphemisms are of great importance in the manipulation of emotions in discourse, and thus in the creation of identities and the direction of conducts, with great social implications, as the “emotional hegemony” (Jaggar, 2009) is settled through language.

Later on, I intend to prove this in oral texts with informants of Madrid. As there is no existing corpus adequate to study the lexical variation within the taboo field of sex and sexuality, I will create one with face to face interviews that I will collect in the next months.

Andrea is a visiting student at the University of Essex, her area of interest is the relationship between social factors, language, and emotions.

Lefteris Kailoglou

University of Essex

TBA

IS GENDER A FACTOR IN OUR INTERACTIONS?

Effrosyni Athinaki

University of Essex

A great number of researchers made an attempt to show that gender can play a role in someone's conversational behaviour in his/her interactions such as Deborah Tannen (1996), Jenifer Coates (2004), West and Zimmerman (1975). But does gender determines someone's conversational behaviour or are there some other factors contributing in our conversational act? In one of my previous assignments on overlaps and interruptions, although previous researches showed that men are those who mostly interrupt and overlap, after the recording of a mixed-sex conversation (2 men-2 women) a woman was the person who interrupted more than all of the participants. As a consequence the fact that someone is a man or a woman might not be important in our conversations. Whether or not gender can be a significant factor in our interactions will be established through the transcription of recordings of Greek-Cypriots Essex University's students' friendly conversations, female and male. The conversations will be recorded in a couple of weeks and the results right after the transcription so the present research is still in progress.

References:

Coates, J. (2004) *Women, Men and Language: A Sociolinguistic Account of Gender*.

Differences in Language, Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 3rd edition.

James, D. and Clarke, S. 'Women, Men and interruptions: A Critical Review' In Tannen, D. (edr.) (1993) *Gender and Conversational Interaction*, Oxford University Press, pp. 231-280.

Tannen, D. (1996) *Gender and Discourse*, Oxford University Press.

Effrosyni is doing an MA in Applied Linguistics and Intercultural Communication at under the supervision of Dr. Rebecca Clift.

KORMAKITI MARONITE ARABIC AND CYPRIOT GREEK IN CONTACT: THE USE OF THE VOICELESS UVULAR FRICATIVE [χ] IN THE KORMAKITI MARONITES' CYPRIOT GREEK

Chryso Hadjidemetriou

University of Essex

The present study focuses on an outcome of the contact between Kormakiti Maronite Arabic (KMA) and Cypriot Greek (CG) in the Cypriot Greek of Kormakiti Maronite Arabic speakers in Cyprus. The outcome of contact in the phonological system of the Cypriot Greek of the KMA speakers refers to the use of the voiceless uvular fricative [χ], a sound not found in the phonemic inventory of Cypriot Greek and possibly transferred from KMA into the CG of the bilingual speakers.

The study draws information from sociolinguistic interviews with bilingual Kormakiti Maronites where some speakers alternated between a voiceless velar fricative, [x], and a voiceless uvular fricative, [χ]. The [χ] variant does not occur in monolingual CG speech. The speech of 35 KMA speakers was analysed in order to investigate [χ] usage. For each of the 35 speakers, 75 tokens were transcribed. Only 6 of the 35 speakers transcribed exhibited usage of [χ] in noteworthy percentages. The analysis revealed that the sound

does not depend on the phonological environment in which it appears. There are instances where the variant appears word-initially (e.g. [^lχ ari], *grace*-FEM.ACC.SG), word-medially ([^li χ amen], *had*-1.PL), or as in a consonant cluster ([^lni χ tan], *night*-FEM.ACC.SG).

An auditory test was also employed to assess whether native speakers of Greek would be able to distinguish [χ] from [x] as the alternation appeared in the data collected. For this purpose, native speakers of Greek were asked to listen to four extracts from a recording with one of the speakers who exhibited the [χ]-[x] alternation. After the speakers listened to the recordings, all of them were able to identify the lexical items in which [χ] occurred, and those in which [x] occurred. Additionally, four linguists were consulted and they were also able to distinguish between the two sounds.

The occurrence of this variant in the Cypriot Greek of KMA speakers is possibly due to transfer from KMA into CG due to its relative similarity to the CG [x]. According to Major (1994) when structures present in an L1 and L2 exhibit similarity, it is more likely that interference phenomena will be observed. As in the case of the CG [x] and the KMA [χ], there is little phonetic difference, which explains the occurrence of both variants in the CG of some bilingual speakers.

References:

Abrahamsson, N. (1994). Some observations of child-adult differences in second language pronunciation. In *Scandinavian Working Papers on Bilingualism* 9: 1-15.

Hadjidemetriou, C. (2009) *The consequences of language contact: Armenian and Maronite Arabic in contact with Cypriot Greek*. Unpublished PhD Thesis: University of Essex, Colchester, UK.

Major, R. C. (1994). Current trends in interlanguage phonology. In M. Yavaş (ed.) (1994), *First and second language phonology*, Singular Publishing Group, San Diego, pp. 181- 204.

Chryso concluded a PhD in Sociolinguistics under the supervision of Dr. Enam Al-Wer, and graduated from Essex last year.

A SOCIOLINGUISTIC INVESTIGATION OF GAHMADI DIALECT IN SAUDI ARABIA

Najla Al-ghamdi

University of Essex

This sociolinguistic research aims to fill a gap in Arabic sociolinguistic. It studies two Arabic dialects namely, Ghamdi dialect and Makkan dialect, Saudi dialects. It investigates the changes which occur in Ghamdi dialect as a result of contact with Makkan dialect. Basically, such contact between these two dialects, Gahmdi and Makkan, happened because of Ghamdis migration from their homeland Al-Baha, south western region of Saudi Arabia, to resettle in makkah city, the holy city. To the best of my knowledge, there is no sociolinguistic work has been done on Ghamdi dialect which was the strong motive behind my interest to conduct this research. In the transcription and analysis level, I used Prochazka's descriptive book (1988) as a guide, where he described some linguistic features of Ghamdi dialect. In this study, I chose seven linguistic variables; five are phonological variables and two are morphosyntactic variables. Age, gender and education will be the social factors that I will use to interpret the language changes.

The data were collected in four months in Makkah city. The participants were 58; 31 females and 27 males. Their ages ranged from 14 years old to 75 years old and they are from different educational levels starting from illiterate people to PhD holders. I interviewed the participants and recorded them by a digital recorder. I used the software ELAN in the transcription level, which helped me in recognizing the slight differences between variants, e.g. the variable (aw) has three variants [aʊ] which is wide diphthong and [ɔu] which is narrow diphthong and [o:] long vowel.

The calculation level of my study is not approached yet; therefore, I will present an outline of my results. In addition to that, the cultural and personal difficulties that I faced in my data collection trip will be presented as well.

Najla is in 2nd year of her PhD studies, under supervision of Dr. Enam Al-Wer. Her area of interest is language variation.

DOWN THE *ROWERD* AND OTHER PLACES: A STUDY OF BREAKING IN COLCHESTER ENGLISH

Deana Carey

University of Essex

This study analyses breaking in Colchester English. Breaking occurs when a speaker breaks the syllable by inserting a schwa [ə] before the following consonant thus *road* [ɹɔʊd] will become “*rowerd*” [ɹɔʊəd]; *down* [daʊn] will become “*dowern*” [daʊən] and so on.

It is a dying feature and thus the focus is on older speakers. It is the first study of this kind to be made of this dialect feature and therefore its results are not only interesting in their own right but also form the basis for further research into unmarked sociolinguistic territory.

As well as the two social dimensions of age and gender relating to the use of the variable being analysed, a number of phonological environments and other linguistic constraints are also examined.

Findings from this study reveal that, as expected for a dying feature such as breaking, the older participants used the feature more frequently than those speakers from the younger age group. Also that women use the feature more than men overall, yet the gender difference is less marked in the younger age group. In terms of linguistic factors there appears to be a similarity in patterning to that of vowel lengthening described in Aitken's Law and breaking occurs more frequently where the preceding vowel is the CHOICE vowel and the following consonant a /ð/.

Deana is a 3rd year undergraduate under the supervision of Dr. David Britain. Her area of interest is Sociophonology.

OH BOY! AN ANALYSIS OF THE DIPHTHONG /ɔɪ̯/ IN MERSEA ISLAND ENGLISH

Jenny Amos

University of Essex

This paper presents a quantitative analysis of the diphthong /ɔɪ̯/ in Mersea Island English (MIE). This vowel was categorised by Wells (1982) as the CHOICE vowel and this lexical set has been derived from three different sources:

1. Old English /ɔi/ - e.g. boy, oyster, noise
2. Old English /ui/ - e.g. oil, boil (v), join
3. Middle English /i/ - e.g. groin, hoist, employ

Wells (1982:209) notes that the items deriving from Old English /ui/ lowered and centralised in some dialects leading them to become

merged with the PRICE vowel - for example *boil* and *bile* developed as homophones in some dialects.

With respect to Mersea Island, historical evidence from sources such as Ellis (1889), show that this split was still active in the area under investigation, as well as other parts of Essex. Indeed, regarding MIE, historical data show that this lowered PRICE variant appears to co-exist with a more centralised and rounded [ɘ̞ɔ̞] variant in the traditional form of the dialect.

Therefore, this paper compares historical data sources with present-day data collected through sociolinguistic interviews conducted with native Islanders, lending a real time perspective to an otherwise apparent time analysis.

The results of this analysis show that the historical split, mentioned above, has receded almost to extinction in this dialect, in overall favour of the standard [ɪɔ̞] variant. However, it seems that the traditional [ɘ̞ɔ̞] form is still being preserved in older generation speakers and, to a lesser extent, the younger generation speakers, particularly with respect to the lexical item *boy*.

Jenny is in 3rd year of her PhD studies under the supervision of Dr. Wyn Johnson and Dr. David Britain. She is interested in dialect variation and phonological modelling.

Beatriz de Paiva

University of Essex

TBA

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