

LINGUACULTURAL SPACES

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Family Language Policy Impacting Children's Identity Construction: A Case Study of Saudi Academic Sojourners in the UK


Repatriation readjustment processes for sojourners upon returning home after a long-time absence has not been extensively explored, particularly for Saudi sojourners who are accompanied by their children in the United Kingdom (UK). This absence may have some serious implications, particularly for children's loss of their first language and assimilation into the host country's culture due to transnational movement processes and their attendance at British English schools. Based on previous literature that has focused on sojourner children, the loss of a first language and culture may potentially contribute to repatriation readjustment difficulties, which might isolate the children from their home country's community, due to inadequate language, developing an unfamiliar context to the home country and/or a different way of life.

To mitigate children's first language loss and to facilitate their integration into their home country's community, the focus of the study is to examine family language policies with regards to their children's first language maintenance and the role that such policies may play in children's first language proficiency and identity construction. I will focus particularly on the role that first language maintenance/loss, as a result of family language policy, may play in children's identity construction and facilitate the children's integration process into their home country's community upon returning. The population of the study will be Saudi sojourner parents and their children (five families comprising a parent and at least one of their children), who live in the UK temporarily for the purpose of studying. The research will be ethnographic in nature, which will use interviews and observation methods.

First, the children will be interviewed to identify how they are able to negotiate their bi/lingual and bi/cultural identities, to identify any identity conflicts between the children's host and home countries' language and cultures. Furthermore, I will use a participant observation method of family interaction, whilst also conducting interviews with the parents to identify their family language policies with regards to their children's first language maintenance. Finally, a questionnaire will be used to identify the children's and parents' demographic information and children's languages background.

The significant implication of the current study is to provide a suggestive way to mitigate the negative impacts of children's language barriers upon returning home, and language maintenance's/loss's role in children's identity construction by

focusing on their family language policy to maintain the children's first language. The results from the study may lead to recommendations for Saudi sojourner parents to focus on their children's first language during their sojourn stage, and not to wait until returning to their home country to develop it, which, based on previous studies, will negatively impact the children's social relationships and identity constructions. This will also be valuable for the government to prepare the parents and children both before and after their sojourn experiences to enhance the continuation of the first language.





Constructing 'voice' in women's writing on the Scottish Gender Recognition Act reforms

Scottish Gender Recognition Act (GRA) reforms have caused intense discussions in the media. The GRA dictates how transgender people can obtain legal recognition of their gender identity. Introducing self-declaration - to replace the existing lengthy process requiring medical diagnoses - has been debated for potential implications on women's rights. This is part of a wider context of political polarisation (Pearce et al., 2020:678). GRA reform has also caused a rise in trans-exclusionary feminism in the UK, as well as returns to sex-based definitions of womanhood (Hines, 2020). Belonging and inclusion are negotiated in these media discourses as trans women go through the process of becoming integrated into our mainstream cultural understandings of womanhood. Nevertheless, harmful discourses can also create adverse social environments. Curiously, 'women's rights' has become a tool and conceptual barrier against trans rights, as the two are often falsely dichotomised. A linguistic issue arises here of who can speak for women's rights. Combining Critical Discourse Studies with narratology, I will study how women writers (both cisgender/transgender) construct womanhood in their texts. I will present here on my analytical approach, specifically how I plan to study gender identity as a process of ongoing negotiation between participants in a social group. I will utilise the theoretical concept of 'voice' (Bartlett, 2012) to explore how writers construct and legitimate womanhood in their texts, alongside the notions of dialogism (Bakhtin, 1986) and intertextuality (Kristeva, 1980), to account for the heterogenous nature of this. Tracking Scottish GRA reform across five years, from first consultations in 2017 to the introduction of the bill in 2022, I will study how media discourses around this have progressed, especially how women writers can effectively claim a space for themselves in these discussions. My focus is on how hegemonic discourses are reconfigured, finding the opportunities for trans-inclusion.

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The erasure of nature: An inclusion or exclusion in the UK news reports

As human civilization has expanded, animals, plants, and the environment, three fundamental components of nature, are gradually vanishing and deteriorating nowadays. Physically, nature drifted away from human society, and a new epoch “Anthropocene” has come (Steffen et al, 2011). Meanwhile, the connections between humans and nature have transformed sharply over the several centuries: animals, plants, and the environment are mediated by various artificial manufactures, such as videos, cartoons, zoos, aquariums, arboretums, goods, recordings, and languages (Berger, 2009). These artificial forms of nature vary in the different degrees of vividness and concreteness to depict real nature. Video can be considered as the most vivid for two-dimensional presentations and language as the most obscuring for lacking physical attributes (Stibbe, 2012). In this sense, this tendency shows the marginalization of nature, which is considered as “erasure” (ibid, 2015).

In language, erasure is “a form of exclusion and marginalization, particularly in relation to identity categories” (Baker & Ellece, 2011, p. 40), which encompasses not just the complete erasure, but also different degrees of erasure, ranging from the most explicit to the most implicit. The hierarchy of erasure reflects a systemic absence of certain groups of social actors in the discourse (Stibbe, 2015). For the linguistic representations of nature, the outcome of “negative” erasure could have unpredictable consequences for readers’ cognitions, because language establishes reciprocity in the connection between people’s perception and cognition - language’s effect (Abram, 1996).

Therefore, this paper will explore how nature is represented and erased in the UK news report, comparing with two types of discourse - Greenpeace discourse and business discourse. Employing corpus-based approaches and transitivity analysis, it explores how different UK medias represent nature and their features compared with the two contrastive discourses. It aims to reveal the connections between these textual representations of nature and how they change human behaviours and social practices.

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Analysis of Exclusive Language in Advertisements: Fairclough's 3-D Model

Advertising companies use different strategies to sell their products, attract buyers and compete with other companies in the global market. In doing so, advertisements often go wrong consciously or unconsciously because they contain exclusive language which is culturally inappropriate, promotes consumerism, and influences and exploit our behavior. The current ongoing study aims to present an analysis of exclusive language underlying selected advertisements, in form of billboards, videos, and social media posts. For this purpose, the content of 5 advertisements for Faiza Beauty Cream, Barkat Cooking Oil, Telenor, Molty foam, and Careem has been selected for discourse analysis in the present study. The objective of this study is to investigate the role of exclusive language in advertisements in the promotion of discrimination, racism, consumerism, and the stereotypical depiction of gender. In this qualitative study, I aim to employ Fairclough's (1993 and 2013) 3-Dimensional Model: description, interpretation, and explanation as a theoretical tool to identify gender objectification, interpret the multi-layered meaning, and highlight problematic language in selected advertisements. The study also gives some examples of inclusive language in advertisements that receive positive feedback from the public on social media as inclusive language in advertisements is all about respect. It is free from words or practices which reflect prejudices, or stereotypical views of a specific gender, group, or culture. It is expected that the results of this study would help readers and employees of the company identify exclusive language, reflect on their communication and replace exclusive language with inclusive language to celebrate diversity and inclusion in the workplace and society. It is aimed that the study would leave a company's employees and buyers feeling accepted and respected.

Keywords: Diversity, Inclusivity, effective advertising, discrimination, and gender-neutral

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An overview of the Scots revitalisation

Scots is a language that 1.5 million people are able to speak, according to the 2011 Scotland census. Yet, despite a high number of speakers, Scots is classified by UNESCO as 'vulnerable'. While it has not attracted as much attention as Scottish Gaelic, there is an in-progress revitalisation process being undertaken for Scots. This presentation intends to address what is ongoing in the revitalisation of Scots. I will first tackle language endangerment and one of the responses to it: language revitalisation. Then I will present the Scots context in Scotland and will focus on what is being done to revitalise Scots on different scales: macro, meso, and micro levels. Overall, this presentation will contribute to having a better comprehension of the dynamics of language revitalisation in the case of a language that has long been underexplored in the debates around minority language support.

Keywords: Scots, Language revitalisation, Endangered languages, Minority languages

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Discourse analysis of language values, beliefs and ideologies that shape language policy choices for education in Aruba

Aruba is a small island state in the Caribbean just off the coast of Venezuela with a Dutch colonial heritage that has a diverse society, where most people are quadrilingual and use a combination of Dutch, Spanish, English, and the local language Papiamentu daily in a dynamic and fluid way for a variety of purposes to co-construct meaning. Despite this rich translingual environment, Aruban education is still based on a monolingual policy with Dutch as the language-of-instruction (LOI), which has been criticized for more than a century for multiple reasons, especially for the poor educational output and missed learning opportunities for a large part of society. However, the transition to one (or more) alternative inclusive policies and practices that consider the sociolinguistic context of the learners and their families seems to be obstructed by conflicting language values, beliefs and ideologies that shape the language choices made, both by national decision makers and by families who bypass the national educational policies by engaging in transnational (monolingual) online education.

The present research analyzes the language values, beliefs, and ideologies in both policy documents and in (group) interviews with (former) policy makers, language policy influencers and the current younger generation of (future) parents to create a deeper understanding of how these values have shaped and are still shaping language choices in families and national policies.



Travel as a process of identification with a new culture: Alexandra David Neel and Isabelle Eberhardt

The present thesis will be a journey around Peregrination as conquest or liberation of oneself in female travel writers' works, where the writers Isabella Bird, Alexandra David-Néel and Isabelle Eberhardt will serve as examples. Indeed, women's desire to access freedom, independence, and to conquer their identity by traveling and writing was very much evident during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Nomadism seems to redistribute the identity cards; this allows these three writers to escape a predetermined destiny of European women. Since traveling appears to be the only solution to reach the liberation of the Self, this thesis will aim to understand if this identity process works. How does the appropriation of another culture allow the liberation of the Self? In others words, they had to adapt to another way of life, to another culture in order to be able to redefine themselves.

The appropriation of the geographical and cultural space is done in particular by learning another language. Indeed, Alexandra David Neel does not hesitate to learn Tibetan and even to disguise herself as such to live among them. Isabelle Eberhardt does the same and leans Arabic. For her it's a way to access the Other and have a more authentic relationship, far from the orientalist representation made by Europe. Isabella Bird for her part uses an interpreter and therefore depends on him for her relationship with others and for her inclusion with the Japanese.

These different relationships to the language and to integration into a new culture will allow us to make a comparative analysis and to highlight the notions of intellectual, cultural and linguistic nomadism.

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Audio Description Translation for Comic books: A Case study on X

Audio Description (AD) translation, by converting visual and verbal-visual texts into imagery audio descriptions, is a type of multimodal translation that provides visually impaired readers and audiences with access to visual texts. This media access service has been comparatively matured for audiovisual performances such as films, TV programs and theatrical performances, but its application in comic books and graphic novels is not significant enough to satisfy the demand for accessible popular cultural products. Apart from the lack of attention in the academia, in real-life practice, only a very small number of describers currently provide AD comics or similar materials, such as Shifrin (non-profit individual activist) and GraphicAudio (commercial podcast brand), and readers with visual impairment have to turn to unsatisfactory alternatives such as audio comics¹, comic scripts, comic reviews, "jiangmang" [retelling a comic book story with personal comments and opinions, a popular practise in China], or Braille comics, a less economic and often limited choice. This paper intends to expand the research on AD comic translation with a case study on X from GraphicAudio, an AD adaption of action superhero comics from Dark Horse. By focusing on the key points of interpreting visual language identified by McCloud, this paper makes an attempt in identifying the unique challenges of translating comics into AD and concludes GraphicAudio's translating decisions with Vinay and Darbelnet's translation methodologies, hoping to provide experience and guidance for future practices.

¹ *Audio comics are motion comics with only their dialogues subbed, and the lack of visual description are not particularly viable for visually impaired readers.*

Keywords: multimodal translation, audio description, comics, accessible aids for visually impaired readers

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Analysis of Infusing Cultural Diversity in English Textbooks for Lower Secondary Level in Pakistan: A Case Study of New Oxford Modern English

The problem of culture inculcation, in English language acquisition and teaching has gained utmost importance in the 'World Englishes' scenario along with the themes of Globalization, acculturation, foreign culture supporting the ideas of the amalgamation of learner's local and target cultural and overall world culture as a whole. There are two concepts regarding cultural projection in English language textbooks learning and teaching i.e. students' local culture should be represented or merely the reflection of the target culture or the countries where English is spoken as a native language should be presented. In Pakistan, exposure to the English language is mainly mediated through the utilization of English textbooks. What kind of knowledge and education is related to culture and whose cultures are reflected in these textbooks appear as a critical and sensitive problem because culture is closely related to both language and thought. With this in mind, the current research attempts to dig out how Pakistani cultural diversity and whose cultures are reflected in lower secondary school English textbook 3rd edition of New Oxford Modern English for grade 7 by using the model presented by Byram i.e. intercultural communicative competence model (ICC) through content analysis. Pedagogically, instructors are expected to design such language stuff with cultural sensitivity to the inclusion of other cultural aspects and values that might not be accomplished in the textbooks.

Keywords: cultural representation, inclusion, English textbooks, content analysis

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Performing Speaker-ness: Multilingualism(s) at Instagram's Café de Flore

Sociolinguistics have often commented on the relationship that exists between multilingualism and the settings which play host to multilingual exchanges. The fraternal pillars of 'place' and 'space' collide in this paper, which offers a critical inquiry of multilingualism at one geo-localisation ('geotag') on the social media platform Instagram. As a premise, it has been suggested that individual social media sites offer platform specific-affordances, and that users of social media can capitalise on the opportunities created by the platform in tandem with their linguistic resources to perform multilingually for themselves or others (Kallen et al., 2020; Leppänen et al., 2012; Deumert, 2014). This theory will be extended as we consider how a number of dynamic, mutually-influenceable processes might be at work in these multimodal, 'networked' contexts (boyd, 2010; Dovchin and Pennycook, 2018). For the purposes of this inquiry, Instagram is described as a heterogenous, low-stakes 'simulator'-environment wherein individuals can perform on a continuum of multilingualism. While recent scholarship examining language use on social media platforms has noted that a cacophony of 'ludic' practices and theatrical behaviour combine to produce a great 'spectacle of multilingualism' (Deumert, 2014; Blackwood, 2019), this paper considers what might sit opposite a performative stance on such a continuum. Gathering data from the Café de Flore geotag on Instagram, I propose a close-reading of different multilingual practices and question how notions of speaker-ness, belonging and ownership can be extended to new online contexts riddled with new stakes. To conclude, this paper submits that a de facto, pejorative reading of networked multilingualism as 'performative' may be dismissive of social media users who are seeking to integrate new linguistic communities and who may themselves constitute a new iteration of the 'new speaker' (O'Rourke and Pujolar, 2013).

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Distinctiveness, History, and Identity: Manx Gaelic in the Linguistic Landscape of the Isle of Man

This article focusses on Manx Gaelic, the autochthonous Goidelic Celtic language of the Isle of Man. Like many regional minority languages across Europe and elsewhere, Manx underwent linguistic obsolescence in the 19th and 20th centuries. In more recent times, Manx has undergone revitalisation, which has increased speaker numbers. The revitalised Manx speaker community is made up entirely of New Speakers, who acquired the language through means other than transmission in the home (McLeod and O'Rourke, 2015: 152).

As a result of its revitalisation, Manx's presence in the Isle of Man's linguistic landscape has increased. Research on the linguistic landscape is still in its relative infancy. The term 'linguistic landscape' is credited to Landry and Bourhis (1997), who define it as "refer[ing] to the visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region" (ibid.: 23). Moriarty (2014: 497) describes the linguistic landscape as an "ideologically-charged construction of space and place", meaning that the study of the linguistic landscape sheds light on and constructs beliefs about language within a community.

Manx can be seen in the Isle of Man's linguistic landscape in multiple ways, including on official government signage and documentation, private homes, place names, and on products in retail contexts. This paper discusses the perceptions of New Speakers of Manx concerning the language's representation in the linguistic landscape of the Island. The data, in the form of sociolinguistic interviews and ethnographic observation, were collected as part of linguistic fieldwork in the Isle of Man for the author's PhD thesis. It provides an important exploration of how minority language users respond to their language's representation in the public space.

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Identities in change in postcolonial contexts: the case of Namdeutsch in written communication

The German speech community in Namibia is very vital despite its 20,000 speakers, and speaks an informal variety of German called Namdeutsch, which is characterised by strong language contact between German, Afrikaans, English and Bantu languages (Zimmer 2019; Wiese et al 2017). It is an uncoded variety but is present in texts that contribute to the creation of the language model (Ammon 2016), such as the newspaper *Allgemeine Zeitung Namibia* (AZ). Namdeutsch has its roots in the colonial period: Namibia was in fact a colony of the German Empire, whose aim was to create a territory with a German population, culture, and language. At that time, the official language was German, but due to the South African hegemony, language policies changed, with Afrikaans and English becoming the official languages (Hess 2002). Only with the independence of the colony English became the only official language. German was in fact excluded as a language to contribute to the unification of the nation because of its historical connotation. Over the years, the German language has therefore determined power relations (Calvet 1977), those between missionaries and natives, between colonisers and colonised, exiles and returnees, so that the identity of this community has undergone various changes depending on the historical moment taken into consideration. Starting with a presentation of the status of German in Namibia, the paper will highlight the identity relations that this language has delineated over time focussing on the intertextual dynamics of Namdeutsch. Thanks to a discourse analysis approach and a quantitative analysis based on a corpus consisting of 583 collected articles from AZ, the contribution will conclude with an identification of how the adopted language instances determine the identification in discourse (Kresic 2006) of the German speech community in Namibia and to what extent this informal variety occurs in this written media.

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A multimodal discourse analytical approach to media literacy: A case study

Media Literacy has been defined as “as a form of critical literacy” (Buckingham 2003, p. 38) which focuses on the skills to analyse, evaluate and critically reflect upon media contents.

Media Literacy is increasingly of topical interest following the proliferation of mobile devices and the rise of social media, given that media consumers - particularly young adults - can now easily “consume, produce and disseminate media messages often involving multimodal representations which incorporate text, images and sound” (Lim et al. 2011, p. 169). Unfortunately, the rapid spread of multimodal contents in new media is not always accompanied by users’ awareness of the framing of their perceptual experience by such representations (Entman & Usher 2018), to the point that they contribute to include or exclude certain groups of people from what the audience perceives as closely related rather than unrelated categories.

The ability to critically analyze mediated multimodal texts have clear parallels in the field of multimodal literacy (Lim, et al. 2011, Lim et al. 2015). Multimodal literacy features different approaches which aim to enable lay viewers to understand how multimodal texts trigger mechanisms of identification with the symbolic world represented in multimodal texts.

Drawing on the tools of multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2006, Baldry & Thibault 2006), this study presents preliminary findings from an MDA-based workshop on Media Literacy held at an Italian middle school. A questionnaire was designed in order to assess the degree to which students were able to identify the narrative style (Remley 2017) of a 1-minute video shared on YouTube, as well as to understand how verbal and non-verbal resources work together to address the viewers and let them identify with the subject. Students were asked to complete the questionnaire both before and after the video was analysed in plenary, and their answers were then compared. Results show that, although students initially indicated that their emotional involvement was mainly triggered by images and sound, they failed to recognize the persuasiveness of the advertisement, which they assessed as “informative”. Findings have relevance for pedagogical practices, as well as for the development of bottom-up approaches in multimodal discourse studies.

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Southern perspectives on the value of English across Northern and Southern space

English is a global language, in the sense that “globally it is the most common language in multilingual repertoires” (Jenkins, 2015, p. 72). As such, English resources are generally seen as highly valuable mobile resources worldwide, since “English is [often] known to everyone present, and is therefore always potentially ‘in the mix’” to be used in lingua franca communication (Jenkins, 2015, p. 74, original emphasis). In the former British colony Uganda, for instance, English is an official language. English “seems to dominate all formal communication” and “is [...] believed to be the solution to the complex multilingualism in Uganda, with the ability to unite Ugandans with diverse linguistic backgrounds” (Nakayiza, 2016, p. 75; Schmied, 2008). In the northern European country Norway, on the other hand, English is not an official language. Still, English is an important language in people’s lives, being taught from year one in primary school to provide “the foundation for communicating with others, both locally and globally” (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020, p. 2).

Against this macrolevel backdrop, findings from ethnographic interviews with two English-speaking Congolese refugees in Norway with long transits in Uganda are presented. Are their experiences across spaces included in discourses on the macrolevel value of English? Preliminary findings indicate that in Uganda, the participants experience that English resources can function as exchangeable linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991) in all fields, except the bazaar. In Norway, the participants experience a value difference between having English resources and using English resources in interpersonal communication. English resources thus seem to have varying values in different fields across spaces. As such, this paper reports microlevel findings that complement, and sometimes even complicate and contest, macrolevel perspectives on the value of English globally.

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Construction of transnational communicative spaces among the Bangladeshi migrant youth in Venice (Italy)

This paper is based on the project of my PhD research, which is dedicated to the linguistic integration and communicative spaces of globalised migrants in Italy. The subcorpus selected for this paper consists of data regarding participants of Bangladeshi origin living in the city of Venice, in Northern Italy.

Unlike many classical migration theories may suggest (based for example on simple push-pull-relations), migration processes by far exceed simple passages from one area A to one area B, followed by an integration or assimilation process of the migrant in the area of arrival. In fact, globalised transnational migrants construct new spaces of interpersonal relations in which communication plays a central role. This paper will show different patterns of spatial construction processes, both regarding the material as well as the digital world. In this, processes of identification and integration in (often manyfold) communicative spaces will be analysed. These processes also include processes of identity construction - especially of the Bangladeshi migrant youth - which are influenced by different socio-geographic poles, such as Bangladesh, Italy and the Bangladeshi diaspora.

The data presented in this paper includes interview extracts taken from conversations with Bangladeshi youngsters living in Venice and social media contributions of the same group. For the sake of analysability within the scope of this paper, of all social media data I collected I chose to examine videos uploaded to/available on YouTube. The topics of these videos include e.g., posts on the social life of the Bangladeshi community as well as more playful videos like flash mobs. The analysis of the data will be based on ethnographic, sociolinguistic and semiotic research paradigms.

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