Language and Social Change
When is change?

• Getting away from a stadialist perspective.
• Change as an infinitessimal series of infinitessimally small events.
• Consider change in light of course themes:
  – Reproduction
  – Categories
  – Indexicality
  – Stylistic Practice
  – Authenticity
  – Pejoration
  – Appropriation
Language Life Cycles

Pick a Dialect
*una granda filə a kanta bene/plane

‘a big girl sings well’
How did French become a language and the rest dialects?

- France wasn’t just there to begin with - it had to be constructed.

- The construction of a common standard language - French - was central to the construction of France.

- This involved codification, regulation, both of the spoken and written language.
  - French got standardized - that is, a relatively invariant dialect was created
  - French got grammars and dictionaries
  - French got enforced - required in documents, and administrative functions, etc.
A common linguistic variety can serve to unify a nation in two ways:

– As a lingua franca, facilitating communication across the entire population.

– As indexical of nationhood, of (a particular) common origin.
Power …

• Elites can sustain themselves by hoarding access to communication. In pre-revolutionary France, schools in the countryside were discouraged:
  
  – Depriving peasants of the standard and the literacy that goes with it keeps their voices local.
  
  – Keeping peasants limited to the local, hence on the land, keeps the cities fed.
  
  – Keeping peasants from different places from speaking diverse varieties keeps them from uniting (a strategy that was used extensively in the slave trade).
Language Shift

After the French revolution, in the interests of participatory democracy, universal education was instituted - above all to give everyone access to French and to literacy in French.

This had its own abuses.

French was promoted as superior to ‘patois’, denigrating not only non-French dialects, but linguistic variability, and the cultures - even the minds - associated with non-French dialects.
..the biggest weapon wielded and actually daily unleashed by imperialism against that collective defiance is the cultural bomb. The effect of a cultural bomb is to annihilate a people’s belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves. It makes them see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement and it makes them want to distance themselves from that wasteland. It makes them want to identify with that which is furthest removed from themselves; for instance, with other peoples’ languages rather than their own.

Language Shift

• Usually involves languages with unequal power ("H and L").

• Diglossia – creates a linguistic division of labor in which the two languages are used in unequal domains.

• This (along with other factors) results in the pejoration – and eventual death – of the less powerful language.

Language Shift & Indexical orders

Language shift involved the replacement of the local variety by French situation by situation:

school
businesses
church
the street
the café
the home

French and “patois” come to index oppositional meanings based on:
education
Wealth
urbanity
intimacy

Changing soundscapes
Borrowing: French words came to index progress, global knowledge, refinement

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Borrowing</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>tracteur</td>
<td>tractor</td>
<td>trat:yr</td>
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<tr>
<td>fourchette</td>
<td>fork (hurko)</td>
<td>fursheto</td>
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French words came to sound “finer” than the Gascon equivalents

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<td>menton</td>
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Which led to pejoration

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<td>grangeo</td>
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<tr>
<td>chiffon</td>
<td>rag</td>
<td>peyot</td>
<td>chifun</td>
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</table>
Béziers 2007

Constructing ethnicity
Indexical inversion?
Coming full circle: Is it Gascon?

- *f">h  French [fœ], Gascon huk
- *n> ø/V_V  French [lyn], Gascon [lyo]
- Affirmative particle *que
Language Shift

Shifting functions
Shifting indexicalities
Another Language Life Cycle

• Arabic is a language continuum
  – Classical Arabic as a unifying language
    • lingua franca
    • sacred language

• North Africa was colonized, mostly by French
  – French became the language of globality, finance
  – Postcolonial: French and Arabic as standards
    • Arabic indexes cultural, religious authenticity, masculinity
    • French indexes European culture, inauthenticity, femininity

Gendered Patterns of Language Shift

In traditional Arctic culture, men engaged in ice fishing, polar bear hunting, and seal hunting – activities that took them far from home and into considerable danger. While women went out into the tundra to hunt eggs and berries, they stayed fairly close to home, and their major activities involved processing the products of the men’s hunt, curing the skins of the bears and seals and making clothing and structures from them.

1. Mike: Kavialuq caught **maklaar** (bearded seal) at Friday.
2. Tom: Did they go out Friday?
3. Mike: Kavialuq and Ned’s dad.
4. Evon: Cikigaq?
5. Mike: Ned’s dad.
7. Mike: Who’s Cikigaq?
8. Tom and Evon: Ned’s dad.
9. Mike: Yeh. Cikigaq caught **maklaar** (bearded seal). You know when we go down, we go that way? I mean, that this way? And then, there was a **maklaar** (bearded seal) right there. **Issuriyagaq** (one-year-old spotted seal), Ernie said took ’em, and then . . . We were shooting that one, and then they went that way. And they xxx this way, and then they shot it. It went “**Qrr ch:** . . . **vvuu tksh;**” on the second one. Almost/ sink./
10. Evon: /Was it in/ the water? Under water? When they harpoon it?
11. Tom: Evon-am **pugtangainarnartuq** (never let it pop up)
12. Evon: Neh, it was gonna **kit’aq** (sink) it was like this, its back, very big, and it was going down. First it went like this “**ch:**” /staying on the water/.
13. Tom: /And then it was/ it was floating.
14. LTW: Hmm.
15. Mike: **Tegullruan**? (Did you take it with your hands?)

   Clevedon, UK: Multilingual matters
Tok Pisin in New Guinea

- People coming back to villages from migrant work, introducing cosmopolitan status.
- Missionaries Introducing hierarchy
  - Buying labor
  - Church hierarchy
  - Pejoration of native culture
    - ‘Satan is in the bush’

Social change and Cajun language ideology

1921 legislation established English as the only official language in Louisiana, converting the educational system from French to English. Cajun way of life was heavily stigmatized

1960s - Cajun Renaissance: Cajuns’ socioeconomic status has risen significantly.

1997 survey: Preservation of French not considered vital to the survival of the Cajun community

78% did not believe that having French as a first language was important to being Cajun

58% said it was not important to live in a Cajun town or even to live in Louisiana

Young, French fluent people identified more strongly as Cajuns than the older generation did.

For a small number of people, mainly younger people who knew no French, joie de vivre was the only attribute they associated with being Cajun.

Closed networks - most friends live in town

stronger tendency for women to have open networks than men

Most people over 60 have French as their first language.

All young speakers have English.

In older generation, girls stayed in school while boys worked on the farms.

In the tourist age, ‘outdoorsy’ Cajun culture is in the hands of men


el trabajo del campo no lo saben ‘field work they don’t know it’

el trabaju del campu no lo saben

[u] = 0 ..............................  [o] = 4
% apical /r/ in Montreal
Individual changes in % dorsal /r/

Was this man born a Yuppie?

![Image](image.png)

- **Rhotacization**
  - Male Yuppie: 0.45
  - Male State: 0.55

- **Interdental**
  - Male Yuppie: 0.05
  - Male State: 0.05
Personae:
The doctor, the son, and the gay diva

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<tr>
<td>Barbecue</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>49 ms.</td>
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<td>p=.010</td>
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Variation and Social Change

- People change as they go from minute to minute, situation to situation, day to day, and through life.

- These changes are embedded in, and can bring about, social change.
Styles and Registers

• Style makes locations in the social landscape observable.

• Stylistic practice is an ongoing process that shifts the landscape as people make imperceptible and perceptible social moves.

• Once a style is widely recognized, becoming a broadly consensual location in the social landscape, it might be called a register.
Register

• “a linguistic repertoire that is associated, culture-internally, with particular social practices and with persons who engage in such practices”

• “a coherent complex of linguistic features linked to a situation of use .... which draws on cultural images of persons”
Enregisterment

- The process by which a linguistic repertoire COMES TO BE associated, culture-internally, with particular social practices and with persons who engage in such practices.

Linguistic change as change in signs, not just form

A sign is ... 
Something that stands for something, to someone in some capacity (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)
Something that stands for something, to someone in some capacity.
Creak

Two very different personae

Mara Liasson

Sally Herships
Sally Herships is an award winning journalist who's been making radio for over a decade. She's produced or reported for BBC World Service, NPR, WNYC, Studio 360, has put in many hours at Radio Lab and is a regular contributor to public radio's Marketplace. Sally's work has been presented at UnionDocs Center for Documentary Art and she's taught radio workshops at NYU, Smith College, Feet in Two Worlds, Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls and many other places. Her investigative project "The Five Percent Rule" was awarded the 2011 Third Coast Radio Impact Award and best Prepared Report for the 2011 Front Page Awards from the Newswomen's Club of NY and was an IRE finalist. Sally teaches Writing for Radio at Sarah Lawrence College. When she's not making or teaching radio she enjoys sitting around, daydreaming, and drawing supermodels, robots and cats for sohosally.com
Zoe Chace

• “this new generation of NPR reporters is big on the uptalking and the vocal frying and every other vocal vice you can think of, but I was actually thinking about her accent proper, uptalking notwithstanding.”

• “It's not an accent, it's her actual voice. It grates like cheese. Her accent is generic, inoffensive Eastern Seaboard.”
Herships

Policing the Police 2013

Blackberry 2011

Product Liability 2012

Spare Chair 2014
it's okay its Blackberry Ten is late
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## Pitch differences from Policing

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# Pitch differences from Policing

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<td>.17</td>
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The experiment

He says (Blackberry)

He says (Policing)

Terence Jones

Please listen to this recording of a radio commentator, then go to the next page to give your evaluation of her style of delivery.

How authoritative does this person sound?

Not at all authoritative | Slightly authoritative | Reasonably authoritative | Very authoritative

This person sounds
Turkers’ Age by Decade
Terence Jones age p=.0003
Middle Americans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
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<tr>
<td>Blackberry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terence Jon</td>
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\[ p = .0001 \quad \text{n.s.} \]
Coastal

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Age p</td>
<td>.062</td>
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</table>
Coastal

p = 0.001
Age p = 0.0079
Policing age: $p = 0.0620$
Policing: over and under 40

\[ P = 0.0216 \]
Under 40

- Blackberry
- Policing
- Terence Jon
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Blackberry</th>
<th>Policing</th>
<th>TerenceJon</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Over 40</td>
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Personae

• Change is what makes language viable for human life.
• Social change, like linguistic change, must take place in small enough increments to maintain interpretability.
• Changes in personae constitute small and immediately accessible social changes.
Indexical Obsolescence

• The young are leaders in both social and linguistic change.
• The new personae they construct constitute new distinctions in the social order.
• These distinctions are less interpretable to people who do not participate in the new social order.
• Older people are likely to interpret stylistic changes in terms of an older social order.