

"Ich höre gern diesen Dialekt, erinnert mich an meine Urlaube in Kärnten ... ": A survey of the usage and the popularity of Austrian dialects in Vienna

John Bellamy (Manchester)

A survey of over 200 Austrians was undertaken in Vienna to investigate the extent to which they say they use dialect. They were asked if they speak dialect and if they do, in which situations they would switch to using predominantly *Hochsprache*. The responses have been analysed according to age, gender, birthplace (in Austria) and occupation to find out if the data reveals underlying correlations, especially to see if there have been any developments of note since earlier studies (for example, Steinegger 1995).

The same group of informants were also asked about their opinions of Austrian dialects in general and this paper details their answers along with the reasons behind their positive or negative responses in this regard.

The data collected during this survey will be compared to other contemporary investigations (particularly Soukup 2009) in an effort to obtain a broader view of dialect usage and attitudes towards dialect in Vienna and its environs.

Since a very similar study was undertaken at the same time in the UK (Manchester) with more or less the same questions, the opportunity presents itself to compare dialect usage in the area in and around Vienna with regional accents and usage in the urban area of Manchester. References will be made during the course of the presentation to both sets of data.

Language planning in Europe during the long 19th century: The selection of the standard language in Norway and Flanders

Els Belsack (VU Brussel)

The long 19th century (1794-1914) is considered to be the century of language planning par excellence. The interplay of the "one nation, one language" idea, the Romantic Nationalist cultural movement, and the formation of the contemporary nation states laid the foundations for the sociolinguistic reality in 21st century Europe. Norway and Belgium are two textbook examples in this respect which – despite the overt and many parallels in their sociolinguistic history – have never been thoroughly compared from a language planning point of view.

The present historical-sociolinguistic research project initiated by the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (and in cooperation with of the University of Agder) wants to change this, for the very first time. This paper therefor focuses on the comparison of the processes of language standardization in Flanders and Norway. More specifically, our focus will be on the tumultuous and problematic selection of one or several languages or language varieties for the intended standard language – the first phase in Einar Haugen's standardization process model (1972) next to codification, elaboration and acceptance.

The case of language planning in Norway is a very well-known, well-documented and almost 'classical' example of language planning which led to a rather exceptional situation where two written standards co-exist up until today: *Bokmål* (the 'norwegianized' Dano-Norwegian variety, once based on Danish but with a Norwegian pronunciation) on the one hand, and *Nynorsk* (the artificially created 'New Norwegian' based on the southern/western rural Norwegian dialects) on the other hand. The Norwegian linguist, writer and poet Ivar Aasen composed the latter, the linguist Knud Knudsen advocated for the first.

A similar situation is found in Flanders (the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium), where two options rose when selecting a proper written standard in the 19th century: should Flanders adopt the Northern Dutch norm and thus strengthen the linguistic bonds with the Netherlands? Or should language users adopt a separate southern norm, based on typical southern features? The first is called the integrationist option and was advocated for by the Flemish writer Jan Frans Willems, while the second option was promoted by the particularist movement.

This comparison encompasses both language-external aspects (including historical, political, cultural and linguistic (dis)similarities between Flanders and Norway) and a closer look at the argumentation strategies of all actors involved in this ‘language struggle’ in Norway and Flanders. We hope to contribute to a better understanding of the language planning processes in both case-studies and in 19th century Europe at large.

German at grammar schools in Germany, Luxembourg and German-speaking Switzerland: a comparison

Wini Davies (Aberystwyth), Melanie Wagner (Luxembourg) and Eva Wyss (Basel)

This paper will present some results of a project by Melanie Wagner (Luxembourg), Eva Wyss (Basel) and Wini Davies (Aberystwyth). Demands made of teachers have changed substantially as schools have become increasingly heterogeneous. However, there are still few empirical studies (e.g. Davies 2000, Wagner 2009) of the role of teachers as transmitters of (socio)linguistic norms so that Cameron’s (1995: 14-15) assertion that the processes whereby norms ‘get into’ or are ‘taken up’ by language users are little studied in linguistics is still valid. Furthermore, while academic linguists describe the situation in the German-speaking world as ‘pluricentric’, it isn’t clear that this model has the same validity for ‘ordinary’ language users or even language norm authorities. Consequently, this project has two main aims. Firstly, on the basis of data collected from teachers through questionnaires we aim to throw light on teachers’ practice in grammar-school German classes in three countries where German plays an important role in the core curriculum. Secondly, we will try to establish to what extent the pluricentric model is relevant for teachers, and will also address the issue of the complicated relationship between experts and lay users of language. This particular paper will present the sociolinguistic context of the project and discuss the teachers’ role on the basis of an analysis of the questionnaire data relating to three grammatical constructions.

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The Standardisation of German: Evidence from the GerManC corpus

Paul Bennett, Martin Durrell, Silke Scheible, Richard J. Whitt (Manchester)

The GerManC corpus (details at <http://www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/research/projects/germanc/>) is the first representative electronic corpus for the period 1650-1800. Now that it is complete, we can investigate systematically how variation in the written language was reduced in the course of this relatively short period. In this paper, instead of taking individual features and tracking through the corpus to see how and when (or where) the modern norms were established, we shall be reporting on the overall development in a way that is only possible with a representative electronic corpus of this kind.

In order to annotate the corpus for parts of speech and morpho-syntactic categories, the original orthography had to be normalised, relating each word in the text to a basic lemma – in practice the form prescribed by the pre-1995 Duden *Rechtschreibwörterbuch*. This process naturally generated statistical information on the degree of difference from current orthographic norms. Studying these shows the differential progress of elimination of variation over the period in question, with a marked acceleration in the second half of the eighteenth century and significant regional differences reflecting in particular the relatively late acceptance of Gottschedian norms in South German texts.

200 years of Dutch philology in Flanders: the interplay between academia, social struggle and national identity building

Kim Germeys (VU Brussel)

The present-day area of Flanders witnessed a series of geo-political changes during the early 19th century with important sociolinguistic consequences. After 80 years of French domination, the Southern Low Countries became part of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1814. In this new state Standard Northern Dutch met (alleged) ‘dialectal’ and ‘non-standardised’ Southern Dutch. In 1830 Flanders became the northern part of bilingual Belgium. In this new nation, ‘second rate’ Southern Dutch, fit to be spoken by laborers and farmers had to compete with ‘prestigious’ French. Social inequality started to coincide with the linguistic divide. To fight off social stratification, elaboration of a standard variety of Dutch in Flanders was needed. On the level of variety selection this implied a choice between the existing Northern (and alleged “protestant”) standard versus establishing a Southern (“catholic”) one stressing local Flemish identity.

I will demonstrate how academia has played an important role in the process of social rehabilitation of the Dutch-speaking population through standardisation measures for the Dutch language. Philologists participated in social and scholarly networks and acted in the socio-political sphere by constructing a philological discipline of Dutch, choosing norms and debating about the status of Dutch in Belgium. Despite many detail studies and contributions from neighbouring disciplines, this interaction of the academic world with the sociolinguistic struggle in 19th century Flanders has never been explored before in a coherent and encompassing sociolinguistic project.

I will present a state of the art in which I will present the first results of a case study of the situation in 19th century Brussels. These results will be integrated in the further outline of the project, looking at other university towns in and beyond Belgium.

This project is part of the ongoing research on Dutch in 19th century Belgium carried out by the Vrije Universiteit Brussel’s sociohistorical linguistics team and may as such appeal to the many colleagues in Britain and beyond with whom we have collaborated in recent years.

Competing discourses on language and citizenship in multilingual Luxembourg

Kristine Horner (Sheffield)

Global flows and reconfigurations of ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ EU borders have served as an impetus for the harmonization of migration policies across EU member-states. In this context, multiple EU member-states have introduced language and/or civics tests. In Luxembourg, a new law on *la nationalité luxembourgeoise* was ratified in 2008, which allows for dual nationality but stipulates that candidates must complete civics courses and also pass a formal test in the Luxembourgish language. Like debates in other EU member-states, there was disagreement on the required CEFR level. Moreover, this debate was preceded by others, including which language to test and how to test a language that has been and continues to be used primarily as a means of oral communication.

Formal testing of Luxembourgish has implications for the compartmentalization of languages, as well as the positioning of Luxembourg as an officially trilingual country in international contexts.

Events leading to the introduction of formal Luxembourgish language testing may be regarded ‘acts of citizenship’ (Isin 2008) because they disrupt long-standing language policy. Citizenship theorists have underlined the importance of regarding citizenship as a set of social practices in addition to legal membership in a state; recent scholarship focuses on acts that disrupt the habitus. Research on acts of citizenship – together with social practices – resonates with approaches to language policy foregrounding acts of compliance and resistance. This paper considers shifts in Luxembourgish language policy as acts of citizenship in order to understand how the construct of the nation is being negotiated in late modernity and why explicit language policies are reformulated at critical moments.

Predicting relative difficulty in the acquisition of ‘new’ and ‘similar’ phonemes in second language phonology: a case study of L2 Zürich German

Caroline Hyde-Simon (Southampton)

Previous studies suggest that similar L1/L2 phones are more difficult in acquisition – larger differences notice more easily; minimal differences are overlooked. However, no study has examined the consequences for SLA when the L1 and L2 themselves, not only the sounds, are phonologically related. It is thus possible to test whether phonologically similar languages help or hinder acquisition.

This study investigates L2 Zürich German (ZG) consonant acquisition by L1 German speakers (phonologically related languages) and L1 English speakers (phonologically distinct languages). This is examined through two sets of variables not previously combined: similarity and Markedness. Markedness is universal (highly marked sounds should be difficult; least marked sounds easier), so there should not be any observable differences between the L1s. Similarity is language-specific, so observable differences between the L1s should be apparent. L1 English should perform in a more target-like manner than L1 German.

30 German and 30 English native speakers at beginner and advanced proficiency levels undertook three oral tasks (word, sentence and story condition) to test these predictions. Each task comprised 69 tokens containing an L2 sound differing in degree of Markedness/similarity. Data from 7 ZG native controls provided the L2 phonetic norms. The tasks were digitally recorded and transcribed with PRAAT.

Data analysis shows that least marked sounds are difficult to acquire for both L1s – the reverse of the Markedness prediction. For similarity, English advanced speakers perform better overall, indicating that more proficient speakers from a dissimilar L1 have an advantage. Therefore, phonologically similar languages are not so advantageous in SLA.

Promoting Low German in the nineteenth century

Nils Langer (Bristol)

The instrumentalisation of languages as a means towards national identity was particularly important during the nineteenth century. In northern Germany, the non-dominating varieties of Low German, Saterfrysk, and Frisian were often seen as the real source of cultural identity and distinctiveness, yet only the dominating varieties of High German and Imperial Danish played an actual role in language policies. In this paper, I will present evidence from metalinguistic

discussions on the suppression and promotion of Low German from 1850-1875. In particular I will identify particular argumentation strands which can be linked to different lobby groups.

Comparative Germanic Word-Formation: Affixoids in German and Its Sister Languages

Torsten Leuschner (Gent)

The theoretical issue of affixoids ("Affixoide") in German is well-known, but are there also affixoids in other Germanic languages? Yes, and they are surprisingly different. In my paper I survey the state of the art in affixoid research from a synchronic and a diachronic point of view, adopting a 'pro-affixoid' stance on strategic and empirical grounds (cf. Elsen 2009) and a grammaticalization-based methodology (cf. Stevens 2005). In order to make sense of the diversity of affixoids in Germanic, a useful distinction may be drawn between 'system' and 'norm' (Coseriu 1975): whereas the systemic rules and models of word-formation are very similar in many Germanic languages, the respective 'norm' is distinct in each case, leading to colourful divergences between affixoid inventories that are inadequately represented in dictionaries. The languages I use as models of demonstration are German, Dutch and Swedish. A comparison of their affixoids (both prefixoids and suffixoids) on etymological, lexical-functional and combinatory grounds (cf. Leuschner 2010) will allow me to contrast prototypical tendencies and to weigh up the impact of factors like genetic affiliation, linguistic creativity, and culture-specific lexical patterns (e.g. cursing and swearing, Nübling/Vogel 2004). Issues for future research include new approaches to theory and methodology (cf. Booij's construction morphology, 2010) and ways in which separate research traditions can learn from each other through terminology and data.

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How neutral is the Home Office? Swiss German Gender Choices with English Nouns

Adrian Luescher (Bangor)

This study examines the assignment of gender within mixed Determiner Phrases (DPs) by analysing code switching data from Swiss German (GSW) – English (ENG) bilinguals who are L1GSW – L2ENG speakers or L1ENG – L2GSW speakers living in either Switzerland or the UK. In Swiss German gender (feminine, masculine or neuter) is a feature of the noun marked on the determiner whereas the English language doesn't have gender. Bilinguals therefore make a conscious decision when assigning gender to English nouns (see examples 1 and 2) and the question here is what factors influence this decision?

- (1) “d tide”
 the-fem. tide
 “the tide”
- (2) “s Home Office”
 the-neut. Home Office
 “the Home Office”

Poplack et al. (1982) examined the influence of several factors on gender assignment to English nouns. They argued that in Spanish-English mixed DPs physiological gender, semantic equivalence and phonological shape of the loanword were important factors for gender assignment while in French-English mixing the phonology was less important due to the lesser extent of phonological integration of the English loan word.

Preliminary results of the present study show that physiological gender (masculine or feminine) of the referent indeed plays an overriding role in gender assignment to ENG nouns, but also that the gender of the semantic translation equivalent has a strong influence; 84% of ENG nouns were assigned the same gender as their GSW translation equivalents. Results will further show that derivational morphology also plays an important role in gender marking.

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Pragmatist and Purist: Otto Siepmann, Walter Rippmann, and the teaching and learning of German around the turn of the 20th century

Nicola McLelland (Nottingham)

One of the basic desiderata identified by Stern in 1983 for researching the history of foreign language learning is ‘biographical and critical studies of the personalities, ideas, and influence of great language teachers and thinkers’. Van der Lubbe (2007) was the first book-length work to provide such a biographical study for the history of German in Britain, devoted to the author of the first grammar of German (Aedler 1680); Flood (1999) presents the biography of Adolphus Bernays (1794-1864), a German appointed to teach German at King’s College London in 1831.¹ Other figures who would certainly merit closer study for German in Britain include Magda Kelber (author of the innovative *Heute Abend* and *Heute und Morgen* series used before, during and after World War II), A.S. Macpherson and Paul Strömer, the authors of the very widely used series *Deutsches Leben* at about the same period, and the Russons, whose complete ‘German courses’ were likewise extremely widely used for half a century after World War II. This paper, however, will restrict itself to biographical sketches of two prominent figures in German teaching at the turn of the 20th century, Otto Siepmann (the author of German courses that were in print from 1896 to 1955, and the reformer Walter Ripman (who, besides his own textbook output, was influential as the modern languages editor of the publisher Dent & Sons for about forty years).

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¹ Beyond German studies, note Smith (2009) on the French teacher Claude Marcel (1793-1876), and Linn (2008) on the emergence of what he calls an Anglo-Scandinavian ‘school’ of applied linguists in the late nineteenth century.

Radio Luxembourg 1933-1992, multilingual broadcasting from the heart of Europe

Gerald Newton (Sheffield)

From 1920 to 1929 it was undecided whether Luxembourg should have its own national transmitter broadcasting in German, French and Luxembourgish.

In 1929, however, plans were laid for a 200 kW super-transmitter, with a footprint of 2000 miles, broadcasting to Europe in French (main language), Luxembourgish (national language), English (advertising language), German (advertising language). The transmitter came on air in 1932/33, with native-language “speakers” in French, Luxembourgish, English, and German.

As the bulk of the finance came from France, the German side of operations was regarded with great suspicion by Hitler’s government as a probable purveyor of propaganda, particularly with regard to the Saar Plebiscite campaign of 1934. For this reason the German-language broadcasts did not attain the same heights as the French and English broadcasters, who, along with Luxembourg, enjoyed vast revenues from the station.

The French and English broadcasts became an immense success, and riding on the back of this, Luxembourgish, the national language of Luxembourg, previously restricted to home use, the theatre and shellac recordings, became available over the microphone in an entertaining way to a much wider audience in Luxembourg itself.

A great expansion in the domains of use of Luxembourgish thus became possible through the medium of radio.

Humour in English and German academic research presentations

Gertrud Reershemius

Based on the GeWiss corpus of English, German and Polish spoken academic discourse this article analyses the distribution and function of humour in academic research presentations. A focus is put on differences between the German and English research cultures as expressed in the genre of research presentations and the role of humour as a pragmatic device in their respective contexts. The data is analysed according to the paradigms of corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS).

The findings of the analysis show that humour is used in research presentations as an expression of discourse reflexivity. They also reveal a remarkable difference in the quantitative distribution of humour in English research presentation depending on the educational, linguistic and cultural background of the presenters.

Methodological adaptability and methodological challenges of discourse key word research

Melani Schröter (Reading)

In Germany-based Applied German Linguistics, Schlagwortforschung gained momentum since the 90s, with discourse historical or lexicographical projects like the *Kontroverse Begriffe* (Stötzel/Wengeler 1995), *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus* (Schmitz-Berning 2000) or *Schlüsselwörter der Wendezeit* (Herberg/Steffens/Tellenbach 1997). Research about (political) discourse key words has emphasised the necessity to strictly refer to the discourse context (e.g.

Felbick 2003) and therefore does not suggest reducing ‘discourse’ to the lexical level. On the contrary, Schlagwörter allow studying discourse ‘in a nutshell’, and there are some contexts in which the focus on particular forms may be useful, for example when combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to discourse analysis (cf Baker/Gabrielatos/KhosraviNik/Krzyzansowski/McEnery/Wodak 2008). The suggested paper will deal with evidence for the methodological adaptability of discourse key word research – i.e. incorporation of the cognitive concept of frame (Ziem 2008) and/or corpus linguistics approaches (Storjohann/Schröter 2011). However, it will also be argued that there are more opportunities and challenges for discourse key word research. Niehr (forthcoming) and Schröter (forthcoming) suggest that international or comparative key word research could be one of such future routes to explore.

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Constructional change affecting German possessive -s: A diachronic, usage-based account

Alan Scott (Nottingham)

In this paper I propose a usage-based account (e.g. Bybee 2006) for a change in the use of the German possessive -s construction.

The prototypical possessors occurring with possessive -s are proper names and kinship terms. A seemingly recent development – widespread in informal online communication – is the occurrence of possessors consisting of a possessive determiner and a common noun denoting a person related to the speaker, e.g.:

*das is doch nicht die aus **meinem bruders** klasse oder??*
*ich wusste nicht mal **meine lehrerins** name*

(both attested in online forums)

Possession is marked once only, on the right-edge of the possessor NP: this is unexpected in a language with morphological case marking; the extended possessive -s competes directly with the concordial genitive.

I suggest that this constructional change represents a natural extension of the prototypical use of possessive -s: just as the canonical use of possessive -s involves proper names (including kinship nouns used as proper names), these [possessive determiner + common noun] NPs are interpreted by language users as units functioning as names and are therefore licensed to occur with possessive -s. Corresponding developments took place elsewhere in the Germanic languages, e.g. Swedish (e.g. Norde 2006) and Dutch (e.g. ten Kate 1723).

I conclude that German possessive -s is undergoing constructional change (e.g. Bergs & Diewald 2008) involving an analogical extension of its type frequency. This does not represent ill-formed use, either of possessive -s or of the concordial adnominal genitive, but follows a tendency found throughout the Germanic languages.

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The intersection between meter and syntax in the Old Saxon *Hêliand*

Katerina Somers (QMUL)

This paper investigates the intersection between meter and syntax in the Old Saxon *Hêliand*. After presenting a basic clausal typology, which reveals that approximately 95% of the clauses that comprise our corpus can be classified according to the position of the finite verb, we then discuss the placement of these clauses in the long line and their relationship to meter. A salient feature of the *Hêliand* is the pervasive use of hook style (*Hakenstil*), whereby the beginning and end of clauses do not coincide with the long line, but rather extend from the left edge of the b-verse in one line to the right edge of the a-verse in the following line. According to Heusler (1920), this mismatch creates suspense and propels the work forward.

In our corpus, 83.2% of the long lines display bow style. In addition, the right bracket of a clause occurs at or within one word of the long line boundary in approximately 75% of cases. Ronneberger-Sibold (1994) argues that the right bracket aids the hearer in syntactic decoding. Thus, we argue that the poet's use of bow style to evoke anticipation is counterbalanced by a clear syntactic signaling of the clausal boundary and marking of the long line for the hearer's benefit. We argue further that the placement of the right bracket at the long line boundary is facilitated through the use of extraposition and appositives, which themselves often contain formulaic expressions and serve fill out the a-verse.

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Superdiversity, language mapping, and the house at Mareschstrasse 74

Patrick Stevenson (Southampton)

Steven Vertovec (2007, 2009) coined the term ‘superdiversity’ to take account of the accelerating ‘diversification of diversity’ that characterizes contemporary western societies in general and metropolitan cities in particular. Much of the research that has been conducted in this context to date has been concerned with different patterns of migration (circular, serial, shuttle etc), focusing on a wide range of social dimensions (eg country of origin, ethnicity, religion, legal status), but relatively little attention has been paid to language. Home language surveys (eg for Hamburg: Fürstenau et al 2003) provide one perspective on this phenomenon, but the data for most German cities (including, surprisingly, Berlin) is patchy and inconsistent, and there has as yet been no attempt to map the distribution of languages along the lines of the *Language Capital* project in London (Eversley et al 2010; see also Barni & Extra 2008).

However, even detailed and sophisticated quantitative analyses such as the London project only tell us one aspect of the story. Linguistic superdiversity is about much more than growing numbers of migrant languages. So in my talk, I’d like to begin by considering what we do seem to know about the extent of linguistic diversification in Germany, and then discuss ways of complementing this demographic perspective with a biographical approach. This glimpse of the complex experiences with language of the residents in a Berlin apartment house will be a response to the challenge posed by Ingrid Gogolin (2010) to explore the ‘linguistic texture of migration societies’ and a contribution to what Creese and Blackledge (2010) refer to as a ‘sociolinguistics of superdiversity’.

Flemish Dialects and Their Borders: a Case Study of “Vejels” and “Loois”

Toke Van Gehuchten (Minnesota)

Flanders has always been a linguistically diverse region. For instance, one can split Flanders into three major dialect groups: Vlaams, Brabants and Limburgs, in which the first one has undergone a clear coastal Germanic influence – which can also be found in Frisian -, whereas the latter displays strong similarities with its eastern neighbour, German. However, for some reason, little research has been done on “Brabants”, the dialect group which inhabits central Flanders and which is crammed between the Vlaamse and Limburgse dialects. For that purpose, this paper presents a clear view on the phonetics and phonology of “Vejels”, a Brabants dialect spoken in the village of Veerle-Laakdal (located in the Province of Antwerp) and on “Loois”, another Brabants dialect spoken in the neighbouring village of Tessenderlo (located in the Province of Limburg). Strikingly, both dialects differ significantly in phonetics and phonology despite its close proximity and although Loois is not yet a truly Limburgs dialect due to syntactic differences, it does show some phonetic similarities with the typical Limburgs dialects. As it will become clear throughout the paper, there are both historical and linguistic reasons for the differences and similarities between both dialects and the reason why Loois is not a typical Limburgs dialect despite its current location in the Province of Limburg.

‘I have been properly brought up.’ Changing forms of address among Dutch students and their (grand)parents

Roel Vismans (Sheffield)

This paper reports on research into the use of Dutch forms of address (i.e. the 2nd-person pronouns *u* and *je/jij*) among students in the Netherlands, their parents and in some cases grandparents. The research data were collected by means of a questionnaire in January and February 2011, in which

respondents were asked which pronoun they used to address a variety of persons. The research by Vermaas (2002) was based on a similar questionnaire that she had distributed in 1992-93. Thus, it is possible to see what, if anything, has changed in the use of these forms of address in the last two decades. Moreover, in addition to this comparison and a (statistical) interpretation of the new quantitative data, I will also provide a qualitative analysis based on the comments of the respondents to my questionnaire. Finally, recent changes in Dutch forms of address will also be compared with those in other European languages (cf. Clyne et al. 2009).

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Building a Corpus for Middle Low German: Notes and Queries

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Middle Low German (MLG), the language of North Germany from 1150–1600, is one of the few older Germanic languages yet to have any substantial presence in a historical corpus. This represents a serious lacuna in the historical corpora for Germanic, in particular given the major influence of MLG on other Germanic languages around the North and Baltic seas as a consequence of the Hanseatic League, when it became an international *lingua franca* in the 14th and 15th centuries. We propose to rectify this by building a new representative corpus of MLG, following the methodology of the parsed Penn-Helsinki corpora of historical English and the new Icelandic Treebank (<http://www.ling.upenn.edu/hist-corpora/> and www.linguist.is/icelandic_treebank).

The text corpus will be based on texts which are in prose, not translated, and are clearly dated and localised (for a rationale, see Reenen and Mulders 2000), such as charters, diplomatic codices, or court verdicts. The construction of this corpus has begun with the selection of a range of *Urkundenbücher* and similar legal texts from a number of different places each for the four main scribal dialects of MLG (Westphalian, Eastphalian, North Low Saxon and the Baltic cities).

The paper will present a brief description of the MLG Corpus before turning to issues of morphological tagging, focussing on the NP. In MLG the system for marking both case and number is significantly restructured by contrast with Old Saxon, and there are many ambiguous forms. Taggers of the YCOE corpus of Old English faced a similar problem, opting not to tag for case at all in ambiguous instances. The paper will discuss how to tag such cases so that the data are described neutrally and without prejudgement of how many categories the system contains.

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The role of phonetic and phonological variation in English listeners' perception of Dutch vowels

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It is well known that your native language (L1) affects learning the sounds of a second language (L2), but could your particular L1 accent be a significant factor in the L2 learning process? In the first half of this paper, the acoustic properties of English vowels in the Standard Southern British English (SSBE) and Sheffield English (SE) accents are compared with Northern Standard Dutch (NSD) vowels. It is shown that the English vowels which are acoustically most similar to Dutch vowels are not always the same for SSBE and SE due to phonetic and phonological differences. In the second half of the paper, the results of a listening experiment are presented in which L1 SSBE and L1 SE listeners categorised NSD vowels in terms of the perceptually most similar English vowels. A number of differences are observed between SSBE and SE listeners' responses and these differences are generally predictable based on the acoustic comparisons presented in the first half. The present findings indicate that L1 phonetic and phonological variation has a clear role in the perception of non-native sounds. This suggests that L2 learners from different L1 accent backgrounds will have somewhat different starting points for learning some L2 sounds.