PERCEPTUAL DIALECTOLOGY

Dennis R. Preston
Oklahoma State University & Michigan State University (Emeritus)

LSA Institute
University of Kentucky
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THE SUBFIELDS:

#1 Folk Linguistics
Who are the *folk*?

We use *folk* to refer to those who are not trained professionals in the area under investigation. … We definitely do not use *folk* to refer to rustic, ignorant, uneducated, backward, primitive, minority, isolated, marginalized or lower status groups or individuals (Niedzielski and Preston, 2003:xviii, emphasis in the original).
Folk belief about who the folk are:

This is NOT a folk; this is a Hungarian sociolinguist. (See all the books!)

These ARE Hungarian folk. (See them dancing folk dances and wearing folk costumes.)
What is folk linguistics worth?
A. ITS GENERAL LINGUISTIC IMPORTANCE:

... we should be interested not only in (a) what goes on (language), but also in (b) how people react to what goes on (they are persuaded, they are put off, etc.) and in (c) what people say goes on (talk concerning language). It will not do to dismiss these secondary and tertiary modes of conduct merely as sources of error.

Hoenigswald 1966:20
Figure 29 Examples of non-nasalized vowel spectra (left) and nasalized spectra (right) of the vowel /æ/ in "back" Plichta 2004

Note the presence (right) of a nasal formant in an NCS speaker’s pronunciation of ‘back.’
A Rothenberg Mask
Typical NCS users produce nasal vowels, even in nonnasal environments (Plichta 2004)
B. ITS ETHNOGRAPHIC IMPORTANCE:

If the community’s own theory of linguistic repertoire and speech is considered (as it must be in any serious ethnographic account), matters become all the more complex and interesting.

(Hymes 1972:39)
[Javanese] language levels ... are ... a means of guarding the addressee’s equanimity, of avoiding angering him or her, and of expressing politeness by deferring to the addressee’s wishes and effacing one’s own. [It] is ... depersonalized ... because that is the behavioral environment that such a respected being’s ‘nature’ supposedly requires. (Irvine 1998: 57)

The Wolof metapragmatic terminology ... identifies ... ‘noble speech’ and ‘griot speech.’ ... In the folk theory that relates ways of speaking to kinds of speakers, the registers take the form they do because persons of the high and low ranks ... are ... accorded certain temperamental characteristics, such as affectivity and excitability. Thus ‘noble speech’ is a flat-affect speech, while ‘griot speech’ is a high-affect, theatrical, hyperbolic style .... (Irvine 1998: 57)
C. ITS IMPORTANCE IN LANGUAGE VARIATION & CHANGE:

*The Evaluation Problem.* The theory of language change must establish empirically the subjective correlates of the several layers and variables in a heterogeneous structure. *Such subjective correlates … cannot be deduced from the place of the variables within linguistic structure.*

(Weinreich, Labov, and Herzog 1968:186)
G: ...if you have such a thing as called standard English other than textbook English, it would probably be the language that you’re hearing right now. As you listen to the Midwestern. (Male, 43, EA, middle class, elementary and junior high school teacher; urban southeastern MI)
"Correctness"

Preston 1996:312
A Michigander’s hand-drawn map
Detroit area adult female tokens (blue)
Peterson & Barney female tokens (purple)

Preston 2005:137
Resynthesized vowel tokens of “last”

Niedzielski 1997
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>token</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>hyper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>standard</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/æ/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>n=</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>42</td>
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Niedzielski 1997
(Niedzielski 1999)
Long-Term Consequences of Ethnolects

Wölck (2002) attributes the Northern Cities Shift to diffusion from ethnolectal varieties.

Most of the features …could not be … mapped according to the methods of traditional dialectology…. The fact that cities as far apart as Buffalo, Detroit and New York share the ‘flat A’ … is a consequence of their similar ethnic composition and cannot be part of the ontogenous development of English. Contact linguistics and contact dialectology can better account for such ‘accommodation.’
D. ITS APPLIED LINGUISTIC IMPORTANCE:

In the general area of applied linguistics, folk linguistics surely plays a most important role. When professionals want to have influence, they are, we believe, ill-advised to ignore popular belief; ... Popular belief about language is both ubiquitous and strong.

(Niedzielski and Preston 2003:xvii)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conversation practice</td>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error correction</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary development</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar exercises</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation practice</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair work</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Highest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to/using cassettes</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Lowest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher explanations</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-discovery of errors</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using pictures/films/videos</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group work</td>
<td>Lowest</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE SUBFIELDS

#2 Linguistic Anthropology — focus on language ideology

In her introduction to *Language Ideologies* (1998:4) Woolard cites a “broad” definition as “shared bodies of commonsense notions about the nature of language in the world” (Rumsey 1990:346), a more structurally oriented one as “sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use” (Silverstein 1979:193), and a more socially sensitive one as “the cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships.” (Irvine 1989:255)
THE SUBFIELDS

#3 Social Psychology of Language — focus on language attitudes

“An attitude is a belief that an object merits a certain (positive or negative evaluation.” (Kruglanski & Stroebe 2005:327).

A belief is the “estimate of the likelihood that the knowledge one has acquired about a referent is correct.” (Wyer and Albarracín 2005:273)
Molina (2010) — Attitudes towards Madrid Spanish by Latin American immigrants

“cortesía” — politeness
    Madrid Spanish is less friendly — “fríos” & “distantes”
    Madrileños are not easy to engage in conversation
    They have a “dura” & impersonal intonation
    They are loud: “Los españoles hablan muy fuerte.”

BUT they prefer Madrid “democracy”; home country use is “Excesivamente servil.”

BUT they prefer the respect of “Usted” in home countries

BUT they dislike other factors: E.g. “No abren bien la boca para hablar.”

BUT they adopt local habits: “hablo más duro”; “no soy tan suave como antes”; “he cambiado a peor.”
GOALS

Folk Linguistics
Beliefs the *folk* have about language

Language ideology
Structured systems of linguacultural behavior and belief

Language Attitudes
(Evaluated) responses to linguistic behaviors
To clarify,

FOLK LINGUISTICS
Studies *beliefs* about language.

LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY
Studies
a) bodies of *notions* about language.
b) sets of *beliefs* about language.
c) systems of *ideas* about language.

LANGUAGE ATTITUDES
Studies evaluated *beliefs* about language.
DATA

Folk Linguistics
Talk about talk (metalanguage) and results of set tasks

Language Ideology
Talk in interaction and other language related behaviors (e.g., child rearing practices)

Language Attitudes
Responses to language varieties
METHODS

Folk Linguistics
Individual and group recordings of discussions of linguistic topics; tasks such as the identification of areas on the basis of folk characterization

Language Ideology
Observation (or participant observation) in natural settings of language related behavior

Language Attitudes
Elicitation of set responses to recorded language varieties
COGNITION

Folk Linguistics — explicit

Language Ideology — explicit and implicit

Language Attitudes — implicit
Participants in some community of discourse are not entirely objective observers of each other’s behaviors. Yet, their own acts are deeply influenced by their perceptions and interpretations of those behaviors. ... Some of the most important and interesting aspects of ideology lie behind the scenes, in assumptions that are taken for granted — that are never explicitly stated in any format that would permit them also to be explicitly denied.

(Irvine 2001: 25)
LANCHART communities

- **Zealand:**
  - Copenhagen
  - Køge
  - Næstved

- **Funen:**
  - Vissenbjerg (Odense)

- **Jutland:**
  - Odder (Århus)
  - Vinderup (Holstebro)
Conscious language attitudes: 
Our own language is the best

Jutland and Funen

[Local name] > Rigsdansk > Københavnsk

Næstved

[Local name] > Københavnsk > Rigsdansk

Copenhagen

Københavnsk > Rigsdansk
### Subconscious results: Voices and varieties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait Pair</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>L</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intelligent – Stupid</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientious – Happy-go-lucky</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthy – Untrustworthy</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal-directed – Dull</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assured – Insecure</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fascinating – Boring</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cool – Uncool</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice – Repulsive</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wilcoxon Signed Pair Test

Friedman Test

*** = p<.001  ** = p<.01  * = p<.05  /= n.s.