

Danish and German as European neighbour languages

An international conference on language contact in  
border zones and multilingual cities<sup>\*</sup>

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Abstracts

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## Section A - The dynamics of neighbour languages in the Danish-German border zone

### Elin Fredsted (Flensburg)

#### Schleswig – a region of longitudinal language contact

For centuries, Schleswig /South Jutland was an area of language contact between varieties of five typologically and genetically related Germanic languages: South Jutish, North-Friesian, Low German, Standard German (Hochdeutsch), and Standard Danish (Rigsdansk, predominantly as a written variety until 1920). After a short introduction, my presentation will focus on those linguistic features where South Jutish substratum influenced the spoken regional West German varieties: (1) und/än-constructions, (2) prepositions in front of infinitive constructions, (3) durative constructions and finally (3) inchoative constructions. The hypothesis suggested is that these features are the results of a linguistic situation characterized by widespread (productive and/or receptive) bi- and multilingualism and language shift(s).

The situation before 1920 will be contrasted with the linguistic development after the division of Schleswig in 1920 which is characterized by an increasing dominance of the standard varieties of German and Danish at the expense of the traditional regional vernaculars, the emergence of a non-focused contact variety based on Standard Danish (Sydslesvigdansk), and a gradual decrease of regional bi- and multilingualism during the last three generations.

Fredsted, Elin (2003) 'Language contact and bilingualism in Flensburg in the middle of the 19th century'. In: K. Braunmüller & G. Ferraresi (eds.): *Aspects of Multilingualism in European Language History*, Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2003, S. 35-60.

Fredsted, Elin (2013) 'Multilingualism and longitudinal contact in the German-Danish border region'. In: *Language Typology and Universals*, Volume 66, Issue 4. 2013. 331-353.

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### Malene Monka (University of Copenhagen)

#### Danish in Nordslesvig 1864-1920 and what it means for Southern Jutlandic today

With regard to spoken language, Denmark is one of the most standardized – in the sense of homogenized – countries in the world (Kristiansen 2019). However, a recent study has shown that some young people from Southern Jutland still speak dialect as their unmarked everyday language. Furthermore, in interviews, the young people refer to the dialect as we-code for the inhabitants of the region and report the importance of speaking and passing on the dialect (Maegaard et al. 2020).

To explain these findings we need to focus on the history of the area. Present-day Southern Jutland only became a fully integrated part of Denmark after the Reunification in 1920. Before that, the area had been under alternating Danish and German rule for centuries. In the years 1864 to 1920, when the region was under Prussian rule, the dialect was not influenced by Standard Danish as the prestige language was German. Furthermore, in the

same period the dialect was ascribed value as a means to show Danish sentiment, and as a way to stand up against the Germanization of the area. Following national romantic ideas, this meant that Southern Jutlanders considered their dialect tied to Denmark. And over time spoken and written Southern Jutlandic was ascribed a status as the Southern Jutlanders' national language and referred to in definite as *æ sproch* ('the language') (Pedersen 2014: 286).

After the Reunification, Standard Danish became the prestige language and changes have happened, but not as fast as one could expect.

Kristiansen, Tore. 2019 Language standardization. In J. Darquennes, J. Salmons and W. Vandenbussche (eds.). *Language Contact*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. 384-397.

Maegaard, Marie, Malene Monka, Kristine Køhler Mortensen & Andreas Candefors Stæhr (eds.) 2020. *Standardizations as Sociolinguistic Change. A Transversal Study of Three Traditional Dialect Areas*. New York/London: Routledge.

Pedersen, Karen Margrethe. 2014. Sønderjysk skriftsprog i 150 år. *MUDS* 15. 285–300.

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**Nils Langer (Europa-Universität Flensburg)**

**Creating a Minority – on Redefining Frisianness in the Aftermath of the 1920-Referendum**

It is a repeatedly heard though quiet complaint amongst parts of the Frisian minority that most of the festivities in connection with the centenary of the 1920 redrawing of the Danish-German border make little reference to its significance for the "other" national minority in the borderlands: the North Frisians. And yet it was precisely the referendum asking people to decide whether they aligned themselves with either Germany or Denmark that triggered a number of developments in North Frisia which define the Frisian minority to the present day. In this paper, I will present the historical discussions about and amongst the Frisians in order to offer insights of how and why the Frisian movement split in the early 1920s. The border referendum presents a peculiar example of how two national minorities were created: the German minority north of the border and the Frisian minority within the confinements of Germany.

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**Lars Behnke (University of Copenhagen/University of Oldenburg)**

**Common mechanisms in border zone morphosyntax. Evidence from Northern Germany and Eastern Poland**

My presentation compares innovative uses of function words in two distant substandard varieties in border zones: 1) the use of the conjunction *un* ('and') as an infinitive marker in Low German varieties in the German-Danish border zone, as in

(1) I g hef lused un lobm vex (Fredsted 2013, 341)  
(,I want to run away'; literally: ,I have the desire and run away')

and 2) the use of the preposition dla ('for'), e.g. as a marker in external possessor constructions in Eastern Polish dialect varieties in the Polish-Belarusian/Lithuanian border zone, as in

(2) Ja łamałam dla jej płot (Karaś 2001)  
(,I broke her fence'; literally: ,I broke for her the fence')

In both cases innovative constructions alternate with neutral ones (Low German to-infinitives and Polish dative constructions) in many contexts. The "innovative" uses are restricted to and indexical for border varieties and can be seen as the result of contact with the respective neighbour languages.

Despite the distance between both varieties, it will be argued, that the distribution of their innovative constructions can be understood in terms of a common "levelling" mechanism, revealing language-internal "variation" within each of the contacting varieties as being both a favoring and restrictive factor for the occurrence of innovative markers.

Behnke, L. (2014): *Zur Variation zwischen reinem Dativ und präpositionaler Markierung mit dla ,für' in ostpolnischen Dialekten*. Oldenburg

Behnke, L. (2021): Sprachliche Grenzöffnungen: Morphosyntaktische Innovationen in der deutsch-dänischen Kontaktzone am Beispiel des Petuh. In: Geyer, K., Skovgaard Andersen, M. & Heier, A. (eds.), *Tyks(a) - saksa - vācu - vokiečių - býska 2020. Deutsche Sprachwissenschaft und Sprachdidaktik*. Berlin: Peter Lang, 179-197

Fredsted, E. (2013): „Multilingualism and longitudinal language contact in the German-Danish border region“. In: *STUF* 66, 331-353

Karaś, H. (red.) (2001): *Język polski na Kowieńszczyźnie. Historia, sytuacja socjolingwistyczna, cechy językowe, teksty*. Warszawa, Wilno

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## Section B - Contact between neighbour languages in a European perspective

**Silvia Dal Negro (Free University of Bozen/Bolzano)**

**German and Romance varieties in contact in Northern Italy:**

**Exploring insertional strategies**

Northern Italy offers a several sites where a variety of German is in contact with Italian, Italo-Romance, Gallo-Romance or Rhaeto-Romance: all of these contact situations vary according to sociolinguistic and extralinguistic factors, such as (among others) composition of the speech community, structure of linguistic repertoires, language status, geographical isolation, demographic decline. These factors combine into more or less coherent speech community types which, in turn, constrain the typology of contact linguistic phenomena that can be observed. In this presentation I take into account a few emblematic case studies focusing on insertional mechanisms occurring in speech. Based on the outcomes of several research projects and drawing on various corpora of conversational data, the quantitative and qualitative opposition between functional and referential insertions will be explored in more detail.

Berruto, G. (2007), "Lingue minoritarie e sociolinguistica del contatto", in Consani, C. & Desideri, P. (eds.), *Minoranze linguistiche. Prospettive, strumenti, territori*, Roma, Carocci: 17-31.

Dal Negro, S. & Ciccolone, S. (2020), "KONTATTO: A laboratory for the study of language contact in South Tyrol", in *Sociolinguistica* 34: 241-247.

Heine, B. (2016), "Extra-clausal constituents and language contact. The case of discourse markers", in Kaltenböck, G. et al (eds.), *Outside the Clause. Form and function of extra-clausal constituents*, Amsterdam, Benjamins: 243-272.

Muysken, P. (2010), "Scenarios for Language Contact", in Hickey, R. (ed.), *The Handbook of Language Contact*, Oxford, Blackwell: 265-281.

Poplack, S. (2018), *Borrowing. Loanwords in the speech community and in the grammar*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

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**Rahel Beyer (Leibniz-Institut für Deutsche Sprache, Mannheim)**

**Do the Germanic varieties of East Lorraine (France) still belong to German? Evidence from the form of autochthonous near-standard speech**

In terms of language structure, the autochthonous Germanic varieties of East Lorraine belong to the West Middle German dialect continuum. Due to this fact, High German was the written, standard and roof language for centuries and thus the affiliation of the Lorraine dialects to the German diasystem was undisputed. Since 1945, i.e. after the return of the annexed territories to France, the sociolinguistic situation has been complex. The application of various criteria cited in the literature to determine language status leads to unclear or even contradictory results for East Lorraine. So the varieties there are e.g. roofed

primarily by French (on the functionally level), (Standard) German plays no role in public and institutional communication, but Standard German is understood by all and there is no consensus concerning the subjective status perception and conceptualization of the speech repertoire by the speakers (Beyer/Plewnia 2021).

In my talk, I will analyse empirical data on actual spoken language in order to further explore the status question. I will focus on the (Near-) Standard German speech, i.e. its particular form realized by speakers from East Lorraine. What are its characteristics and to what extent can it be situated in a dialect/standard constellation of German? Or does it provide evidence that the varieties or the speakers have actually decoupled themselves from the German diasystem?

Data stems from a project that documents and analyses the (socio)linguistic situation in German-speaking Lorraine for the first time in the history of research. Amongst others interviews on language biographies and language attitudes were conducted with a speaker of Standard German eliciting the informants' "best German".

Beyer, Rahel/Plewnia, Albrecht (2021): German or not German: That is the question! On the status of the autochthonous dialects in East Lorraine (France). In: *Languages* 6(1).

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**Peter Auer (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg)**

**Dialect divergence at the German-French state border**

This chapter summarizes recent research on the German/French border in the Upper Rhine Region, where the state border cuts across a traditional Alemannic dialect area. It is argued that the present-day divergence of the dialects is due to two different repertoire models in France and Germany which counteract the positive effects of border permeability. Despite this general tendency for the dialects to diverge at the state border, it is also shown that traditional regional affiliations with the Alsace continue to differentially impact the speed of dialect levelling on the German side.

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## Section C - Language contact with new neighbours: Effects in urban areas, local borders?

**Anita Berit Hansen (University of Copenhagen)**

**Pronunciation in Parisian suburbs. Effects of language contact or reallocation of working-class variants?**

A long tradition of attracting work forces to Paris from outside countries has produced a high proportion of inhabitants using other languages than French (Gadet 2008). Geographically, most of the immigrants and their descendants are housed in cheap residential areas in the northern and eastern parts of the Capital and its surroundings suburbs – zones that were historically the home of working-class Parisians. Recently, sociolinguists have observed that a specific way of speaking French in these areas has emerged (Fagyal 2010, Gadet 2017). There is agreement that lexical phenomena in this “multiethnolectal French” are due to language contact between French and the immigrant languages, but as for phonetic features, diverging claims exist. Are the palatalized plosives (voiture [vwatʃyr], qui [kji]), the strongly articulated /R/s and the frequent drops of phonetic material an effect of contact with Arabic or are they features of working-class Parisian French that have been boosted through an identity-based process of reallocation? Zooming in on palatalizations, recordings with lower-middleclass Parisians (Hansen ms.) and attitudinal data from a listening experiment (Hansen 2015) suggest that palatalizations clearly connote an immigrant background when occurring with other features, but have firm roots in lower-class Parisian speech; their hyper-frequency in the suburbs seems more a social than a structural effect of the language contact in the area.

Fagyal, Zsuzsanna (2010) *Accents de banlieue. Aspects prosodiques du français populaire en contact avec les langues de l'immigration*, Paris, L'Harmattan.

Gadet, Françoise (2008) “Immigrant Languages in France”, in Ammon, Ulrich & Harald Haarmann (eds) *Sprachen des europäischen Westens*, Klagenfurt, Wieser, 459-469.

Gadet, Françoise (ed.) (2017) *Les parlars jeunes dans l'Île-de-France multiculturelle*, Paris, Ophrys.

Hansen, Anita Berit (2015) “Sensibilité et insensibilité devant la variation phonétique : une étude perceptive sur le français de la région parisienne”, *Langage & Société*, 151, 45-65.

Hansen, Anita Berit (ms.) Changements phonétiques à Paris autour du millénaire. Apports empiriques et théoriques d'une approche multidimensionnelle.

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**Stefanie Jannedy (Leibniz-Zentrum Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft Berlin)**

**Urban German and its Perception in Berlin**

According to the 2019 German microcensus, 21.2 million people (approx. 26% of the German population) living in Germany had a migration background, officially defined as the

person him- or herself or at least one parent not having German citizenship by birth<sup>1</sup>. One of the largest migrant communities is that of Turkish descent, stemming in part from the recruitment agreement with Turkey in the early 60s and subsequent family reunions. In a city like Berlin (3.7 million inhabitants), which exhibits both tremendous postwar historical changes for Berlin natives, as well as a high flux of recent population movements and immigration from within Europe and beyond, broad social categories like ethnicity or level of education conform and connect to the idea of social capital.

As in many other urban centers of Europe and Germany, in Berlin young adults and adolescents in multiethnic neighborhoods with ethnic and cultural roots in Turkey, Lebanon, Palestine, Russia, Croatia, Britain, Poland, Romania or Vietnam and their monoethnic monolingual German peers socialize in the same neighborhood. Their speech which exhibits grammatical features (Auer 2003) as well as phonetic/phonological alternations (Jannedy & Weirich 2014; that are not attested in main stream standard German is often referred to as *Kiezdeutsch* (Wiese 2012) or *Hood German* (Jannedy & Weirich 2014).

In a series of speech production and speech perception experiments, we have investigated alternations highly associated with multi-ethnic adolescents, especially those of Turkish and Arab descent. Our work was able to show that Hood German speech features expressed as fine phonetic detail is not only noticed and evokes negative attitudes by some, but it is also interpreted by listeners. In this talk, we will present data from speech production experiments and attitudinal perception studies, illuminating language contact effects in the urban space of Berlin.

Auer, P. (2003) Türkenslang - ein jugendsprachlicher Ethnolekt des Deutschen und seine Transformationen. In: Häcki Buhofer, A. (Hg.): *Spracherwerb und Lebensalter*. Tübingen / Basel: Francke, 255-264.

Jannedy, S. & Weirich, M. (2014) Sound change in an urban setting: Category Instability of the Palatal Fricative in Berlin. *Journal of Laboratory Phonology* 5(1):91-122.

Wiese, H. (2012) *Kiezdeutsch: ein neuer Dialekt entsteht*. München: C. H. Beck.

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**Lian Malai Madsen (University of Copenhagen)**

**Linguistic fixity and fluidity – observations from urban youth language research**

The past couple of decades, research on urban youth language has been a rife arena for theoretical discussions of sociolinguistic processes and practices. Young people's language use has been observed to be fluid in the sense that it transgresses and blends sets of linguistic and cultural resources that would not conventionally be seen to belong together. Concurrently, it has been documented how linguistic resources, however hybrid and

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/Forschung/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht-2019-zentrale-ergebnisse.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile&v=4](https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/Forschung/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht-2019-zentrale-ergebnisse.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=4)

blended they may appear from a conventional point of view, through repeated use over time become recognized as distinct youth styles - a process involving a sense of linguistic fixity. Thereby, research on urban youth language has contributed to two - in some ways contradictory – theoretical tendencies; 1) concepts like ‘language’ and ‘code’ have been abandoned in favor of new concepts like metrolingualism and trans- or polylinguaging, covering linguistics fluidity and deconstructing the idea of bounded codes (Jaspers and Madsen 2019); and 2) numerous studies now employ the concept of enregisterment (Agha 2003) that in fact covers the processes of fixity resulting in ideas of ‘bounded codes’ (registers). These bidirectional processes of fixity and fluidity are central to sociolinguistic theory and research beyond youth studies. In my talk, I reflect on the evidence, rationale and epistemological contribution of popular conceptions of linguistic fluidity within urban youth language research, and I critically discuss widespread (con)fusions of descriptive, ontological, pedagogical and political purposes in recent theoretical approaches.

Agha, A. (2003). The social life of cultural value. *Language & Communication*, 23(3–4), 231–273.

Jaspers, Jürgen & Lian Malai Madsen (eds.) (2019): *Critical Perspectives on Linguistic Fixity and Fluidity – Languagised lives*. Routledge.

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### **Christina Schoux Casey & Line Sandst (Aalborg University)**

#### **Place, coloniality, and affect in Copenhagen and New Orleans**

In municipalities around the world, politicians, city planners, architects and ordinary people are grappling with the colonial legacies embedded in our local geographies. Artifacts like statues and names often take center stage in these debates. Decisions about naming and renaming have provoked strong reactions from media figures, politicians, and residents repeatedly over the last decade. In New Orleans, attempts to change the names of streets named after Civil War Confederate generals caused widespread protests in 2017. In 2020, a similar incident happened in Copenhagen during considerations of renaming the streets named after colonial Danish slave traders. In this presentation, which is part of a larger research project, we will consider a case study from each city on a street name change and statute removal. We investigate how, why, and when particular names and other artifacts (and not others) accrue symbolic value and generate intense affective ties, often leading to proposed changes in urban spaces becoming intensely contested in public debate.