



a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Centre for Intercultural Language Studies (CILS)

Proceedings of the 10th Annual Symposium

“Intercultural Research: Looking Back, Looking Forward.”

About these Symposium proceedings

The 10th CILS Annual Symposium entitled “Intercultural Research: Looking Back, Looking Forward” was held at the University of British Columbia on May 9th, 2014. In order to make the information presented at the Symposium available to the larger audience, participants were encouraged to submit written papers based on their presentations to be included in refereed on-line proceedings.

CILS would like to thank all those presenters who have agreed to contribute to this inaugural volume of Symposium proceedings. We are also very grateful to the academics who acted as referees for the submissions to these proceedings.

Responsibility for the content of each paper lies with its author(s). The author(s) also retain copyright over the text. Papers appear on the CILS website by permission of the authors.

FROM CULTURAL PLURALISM TO
MONOCULTURALISM/MONOLINGUALISM:
A CASE IN POINT, AUSTRALIA IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD

Stefano Gulmanelli

University of South Australia.

Abstract: In a world experiencing a resurgence in nationalist cultural revanchism, often paired with the rejection of multiculturalist ideals, it is worth looking back and seeing how at some critical historical junctures certain culturally pluralist societies were transitioned into monocultural ones. As there might be a lesson to be learned, the paper examines a case in point, showing how, in the first half of the 20th century, Australia departed from and indeed reversed the culturally pluralist traits its society had started to develop in mid-19th century. The analysis focuses on two socio-cultural elements – demography and language – that were used to enforce an ethnocentric (British) monoculture in lieu of what was a potentially multicultural society. Demography is examined as a tool of management of the nation's ethnic composition as well as the element underpinning the official discursive framing of Australia's population. Language is looked at in relation to the role of 'core value' it achieved, eventuating into what has been called 'Australia's monolingual mindset' (Clyne, 2008, p. 348). In its concluding section the paper highlights how policies and narratives of the examined period resonate with socio-political discourses currently emerging in nations and societies that feel challenged by the cultural plurality fostered by globalized mobility and immigration.

Introduction

The paper focuses on the case of a country which – by means of certain socio-political tools – was transitioned from a potentially multicultural/multilingual society to a monocultural/monolingual one. This country is Australia during the interwar period – that is, from early 1910s to mid-1940.

This ‘looking back’ may help us to ‘look forward’, as the title of the symposium at which a version of this paper has been presented encourages us to do.¹ In a societal landscape characterized by a resurgence in nationalist cultural revanchism, paired with an increasingly blunt rejection of multiculturalist ideals, there might be lessons to be learned from the case this paper deals with. Once we abstract from the specific historical contingencies of interwar Australia, it is indeed possible to see that some of the socio-political choices then made to shape Australian society resonate with policies and narratives emerging in societies currently dealing with the challenges of globalization and the ensuing cultural plurality.

The full context within which the construction of an ethnocentric nation unfolded in interwar Australia cannot be dealt with in this paper. Analyzing the whole trajectory that brought Australian society to uphold (white) race and (British) ethnicity as foundational traits of the nation would require to delve into the crucial period of the last quarter of the 19th century. Those were the years during which the ‘Otherization’ of Asia/ns played a critical role in shaping the nation’s collective identity and gave traction to a progressively exclusivist idea of what became the Commonwealth of Australia. The paper chooses instead to concentrate its focus on a specific aspect of how Australia finally achieved its objective of becoming a nation of ‘Independent

¹ A short version of this paper was presented at the Centre for Intercultural Language Study (CILS) 10th Annual Symposium, "Intercultural Research: Looking Back, Looking Forward", University of British Columbia, Vancouver, May 9 2014.

Australian Britons' (Hancock, 1930, p. 66) – that is, how two socio-cultural elements such as demography and language were used to enforce a British monoculture in lieu of what had started as a culturally pluralist society.

In particular, in the next sections demography is examined as a tool of management of the nation's ethnic composition as well as the element providing the official discursive framing of Australia's population. Language is instead analyzed for the role of 'core value' it was given in the name of social cohesion, eventuating into what Clyne (2008) calls 'Australia's monolingual mindset' (p. 348).

Mid-19th century Australia: a culturally plural community

Scholars still debate the extent to which the non-Indigenous community living in early 19th century Australia could be considered as 'culturally plural'. Some insist on what they see as conspicuous multicultural traits (Clyne, 1991c, p. 84; Jensen, 2005, p. 138); others, whilst acknowledging the ethnic diversity existing in settler Australia, express reservations about the attempt to characterize pre-Federation Australia as 'multicultural from 1788' (Dixson, 1999, p. 6).² Yet, it is fairly accurate to state that Australia entered the last quarter of the 19th century experiencing a remarkable cultural diversity. This proposition finds support in the demography characterizing the heterogeneous northern communities of Mackay, Cairns, Darwin and Broome (Richards 2008a, p. 20) as well as the big cities of the south, like Sydney. The latter, as Dutton (2001) reminds us, 'had developed a cosmopolitan character during the early days of European settlement as economic opportunities and demand for labor drew not only British and European migrants but also travellers, workers and merchants from various Asian locales' (p. 29). A

² Jensen (2005) sees the dominant practice of overlooking early Australia's multicultural pattern as instrumental to the affirmation of the national(ist) ethos of a historically British-derived monocultural identity (p. 136).

testimony to the multiracial flavour of the new settlement comes from accounts such as that given in 1826 by Peter Cunningham in his *Two Years in New South Wales*: “Gentlemen foreigners of all nations may be met with now in our Sydney streets French, Spaniards, Italians, Germans ... while even the subjects of his Celestial Majesty cannot resist the fascination of the name of Australia’ (quoted in Malouf 2003, p. 50).

This national/cultural diversity greatly increased as the Gold Rush started in the mid-1850s, drawing people from every corner of the world. Contributing to Australia’s multi-ethnic landscape was also a sizeable influx of Europeans who escaped the Old Continent after the failed revolutions of 1848. We can in other words assume as point of departure that Australia’s socio-cultural set up in the second half of 19th century was one of plurality of nationalities, cultures and languages. This does not mean that there wasn’t a cultural group that, by virtue of its size, was mainstream – and this was the case of the British – but overall Australian society was ethnically heterogeneous as well as culturally cosmopolitan in attitude.

Engineering a British monoculture

As anticipated in the Introduction, we now need to fast forward half a century, skipping over a first fundamental change that occurred as Australian society, in the last quarter of the 19th century, started its trajectory to become a nation – an ‘imagined community’ as Benedict Anderson (1991, p. 6) would call it – in its own right. This critical change was the establishment – concurrent to the birth of the Australian Commonwealth – of what became known as the White Australia Policy, according to which people of non-white races (which in that historical context meant mainly Asians) were hindered from migrating into the country. This was the first step towards an ethnocentric nation – the step that exploited the construct of race. It was a crucial step, but equally critical was the one that followed, starting from the years immediately after

Federation. This second step indeed allowed the completion of an operation that, paraphrasing Jensen (2005), we may define of ‘multicultural practice in reverse’ (p. 141). It involved using demography and language as social engineering tools in order to turn not just Whiteness but specifically Britishness into the nation’s foundational trait.

a. The tool of demography

Demography played a crucial role in the shaping of Australian society as a British monoculture. This occurred in two different but complementary ways: one was through a strict management of the nation’s ethnic composition; the other was through specific patterns of representation of Australia’s demography in the half century from Federation to World War II.

In relation to Australia’s demographic composition, what was explicitly pursued was a sustained increase in the ethnic British presence. This was achieved in two ways. The first one was the decline of its already limited ‘non-white’ component, which in 1901 had already plummeted to less than 4% of the total and that could not grow because of the *ad hoc* exclusionary rules put in place by the Immigration Restriction Act, the cornerstone of the White Australia Policy. The second one was the strict control of the ethnic make up of the arrivals of new settlers that took place in the period going from the early 1910s to the late 1930s. This migration intake was concentrated in three surges: two major ones in 1909-13 and the mid-1920s; and a smaller one in the second half of the 1930s. These ‘waves’ of migrants had each their own specificity in regard to the context that triggered them and the modalities of the policies rolled out to support them. However, they all had a unifying common thread: their ethnic composition was overwhelmingly British (Richards, 2008a, p. 390). A critical role in ensuring this outcome was played by assisted passages that were exclusively offered to immigrants from the British Isles. Thanks to this policy in the years 1910-14 over 500,000 Britons arrived in Australia, compared to just 55,000

continental Europeans (Langfield, 1991a, p. 1). A similar ethnic proportion characterized the immigration influx in the mid-1920s: in 1924, 12,332 European non-British migrants landed in Australia, doubling from the previous year but accounting for just 12 per cent of the total intake, the remaining 88,335 being British (Langfield, 1991b, p. 2).

Imperial provisions such as the 1922 *Empire Settlement Act* and special arrangements with Britain such as the ‘£ 34 Million Agreement’ in 1925 were critical in ensuring the overwhelming Britishness of the new arrivals in Australia. More than half of Britishers sent to imperial destinations in the 1920s under the 1922 *Empire Settlement Act* arrived in Australia (Fitzpatrick, 1951, p. 20), a circumstance which led Stanley Baldwin, British Prime Minister in 1924, to state that: ‘The Australians are the Young of the British’ (Richards, 2008a, p. 89).

A crucial contribution to the enormous ethnic imbalance in the new arrivals came also from increasingly restrictive rules that were applied to European non-British migrants, against whom attitudes had progressively hardened, especially after World War I. Facing the strongest hostility were those from South and Eastern Europe, who were referred to as ‘white aliens’ (Langfield, 1991a, p. 5). The aversion towards them was linked to economic reasons – their alleged availability to accept lower wages – as well as to racial and cultural elements, and a supposed predisposition of certain nationalities to be less law-abiding (Langfield, 1991b, p. 4). The means through which the decrease of non-British migrants was pursued were immigration quotas by nationality and *ad hoc* provisions such as the establishment of a visa system for certain nationalities and/or the request of ‘landing money’ to be paid by migrants as a guarantee of not becoming a burden on the State. By 1925, government policy, Bartrop (2000) notes, ‘had undergone an about face since the early years of the decade. From no restrictions, there were now restrictions; from no quotas, there were now quotas; from no discrimination as to national

origin, there was now active discrimination’ (p. 373). Adding to these measures, authorities exercised a sort of moral (dis)suasion on prospective settlers by conveying the message whenever possible that proficiency in English was an essential – albeit not formal – requirement to find employment in Australia.

The Great Depression imposed a halt to immigration. Yet, once the worst was over the migrants’ intake was resumed. Once again however immigration policy centred on a revival of assisted passages and incentives offered only to those from the British Isles. This time the British didn’t come in droves, because of some favourable socio-economic circumstances then present in Britain. Yet the Australian Government did not extend the assisted passages to the non-British, apart from minor agreements signed in 1939 with the Dutch and Swiss governments.

The management of the ethnic composition of the migrant intake was not the only way in which demography was used to shape an increasingly monocultural (British) society in Australia. An indirect but powerful contribution came from the way the population demographics were represented in the official discourse. The narrative that was fostered aimed at characterizing Australia as a nation with an ethnically (thus culturally) homogenous population – a population of almost exclusive British origin. Even the census data were manipulated to validate this inferred national ethnicity. A striking example of this framing is a table taken from the ‘Comparative Statement, 1921 and 1933 – Nationality of the Population’ (Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, 1933, p. 845):

Table 1: Classification by nationality in Australia, 1921 and 1933

Nationality	1921	1921 (%)	1933	1933
British	5,387,205	99.10	6,569,518	99.09
<i>- Born in Australia</i>	<i>4,581,663</i>			

<i>- Born outside Australia</i>	794,035		842,952	
<i>- Not stated</i>	11,507		-	
Foreign	45,754	0.84	60,259	0.91
Not Stated	2,775	0.06	62	-
Total population	5,435,734	100.00	6,629,839	100.00

These data have been the basis for the oft-quoted notion of Australians being of 98% British origin at the end of World War II. This degree of almost absolute Britishness was proudly sanctioned at the highest level of the political debate. Exemplary in this regard is the exchange between Prime Minister Bruce and James E. Fenton, Member for Marybyrnong, during a debate in the House of Representatives on Sept. the 29th 1927 (Commonwealth Parliamentary Debate, 1927, p. 101):

Mr. BRUCE - The whole question has been examined closely on a statistical basis, and we have to take into consideration the increase of population by Australian births. At present approximately 98 per cent of our people are of straight-out British stock.

Mr. FENTON - Is the Prime Minister sure of that?

Mr. BRUCE - Yes. There is no evidence to suggest anything else. A further statistical fact is that 98 per cent of the births in Australia are of British parentage, so that we are maintaining satisfactorily the proportion of those of British strain in Australia today. The figures prove that at present, there is no menace to our racial purity.

This notion of the ‘98 per cent’ British origin is highly problematic as it is built conflating place of birth (Australia) and place of origin (Britain). Reservations about such a framing were already expressed in the 1930s, for instance by Hancock (1930), who noted that at the time of writing the non-Britishers by origin were likely to be more than 10%. But the official discourse was relentless in portraying Australians as more British than they really were. This narrative was instrumental to the ideological agenda aimed at presenting Australia as an ethnically and culturally homogeneous nation. Within this perspective, the multicultural set up Australia had experienced in the 19th century appeared ‘incongruous’ and its legacy (that is, mixed-ethnicity) highly inappropriate. Framing Australians as almost exclusively of British origin was functional to the curbing of diversity and cultural pluralism necessary to establish British ethnocentrism as a pillar of national identity. It was by virtue of this demographic misrepresentation that Prime Minister John Curtin was able to address the Empire Parliamentary Association in 1944, presenting Australians as ‘a replica of Britain and ... trustees for the British way of life’ (quoted in Meaney, 2003, p. 127).

b. The tool of language

As mentioned in the Introduction, the linguistic landscape of pre-Federation Australia had been all but monolingual. After the initial period of ‘white’ settlement, during which English was the only spoken language, in the central decades of the 19th century Australia experienced a linguistic diversity which found expression in ‘diffused and variegated language practices’ (Lo Bianco, 2003, p. 15).³ This linguistic variety was due partly to the multi-ethnic origin of many of those coming to Australia during the Gold Rush and partly to the influence of the many intellectuals that arrived from Europe in the wake of the attempted uprisings of 1848. By the

³ This without even taking into account the extensive diversity that already existed among Indigenous Australians.

1860s ethno-linguistic enclaves (German, Italian, Polish, Irish) had developed in some parts of the country while the British population itself was not (yet) pervasively monolingual English-speaking. This was the phase Clyne (1991a) calls of ‘tolerant *laissez-faire*’ (p. 4) towards other-than-English idioms, which were freely used at home, in ‘ethnic clubs’ and in communal activities (Clyne 1991c, p. 85). Germans were the strongest non-English community able to create an environment in which the use of the native language could thrive. Indeed, they were the first to have schools teaching in a language different from English. Starting from the 1850s, bilingual education was offered by Hebrew and Gaelic schools, while the well-off English-speaking families increasingly sent their children to English-French institutes. The whole educational system was fairly open to the teaching of foreign languages.

Things started to change in the 1870s, when, in the name of social cohesion, a series of Educational Acts were passed in most colonies establishing monolingualism as mainstream in state schools.⁴ This new phase – which Clyne (1991a) calls ‘tolerant but restrictive’ (p. 4) – revealingly coincided with the beginning of the process of molding an Australian identity. The socio-cultural dynamic characterizing the shaping of the new nation assumed the English language as a critical and defining element. In the new ‘imagined community’, English monolingualism came to be, in Clyne’s (1991b) words, both ‘a marker of Australia’s independent national identity’ and ‘a symbol of British tradition’ (p. 2). Language thus turned into a core value. In parallel to the new nation taking shape, the multilingualism that had characterized mid-19th century Australia was perceived as a hindrance to the nationalist project – which in those historical circumstances was also an Imperial project (framing Australia as part of

⁴ These Acts had a long-lasting impact: the provisions against bilingual education survived for decades – in Victoria until 1984 (Clyne, 1991c, p. 89).

the British Empire). As a result, non-discriminatory language policies were superseded and language homogenization was pursued pushing the nation into its ‘rejecting’ phase (Clyne, 1991a, p. 5) of languages other-than-English. This new stage was epitomized by the abolition of foreign language teaching in Australia’s primary schools. As Frank Tate, the Victorian Director-General of Education, underlined in a Memo sent in 1919 to the Federal Minister for Education:

To place in the minds of children at a most impressionable age a respect and devotion to a foreign language ... will do much to alienate them from English.
(quoted in Clyne, 1991c, p. 89)

This was a risk Australia could not take. English, and the British heritage it was related to, were the core values upon which the new nation was meant to rest.

Amid fears about the possibility that the country could turn into a ‘polyglot’ nation, language became a critical element in the selection of migrants as well as the pretext for quests to limit European non-British migration. In 1922, the opposition to the increasing presence of Italians in North Queensland was related to concerns that they may have ‘demand[ed] the teaching of their language in state schools’ (Bartrop, 2000, p. 370). In the lead up to World War II, residual traces of languages other-than-English waned. Communities such as the Russians and the Italians in Queensland, and the Germans in South Australia, had to shift to English.

When, after World War II, the need to boost the population was not met by a sufficient migrant flow from the British Isles (until then virtually the only source of migrants) and Australia needed to accept non-English European migrants, the policy focused on the strict assimilation of the newly arrived. Central to the homogenizing effort was the language shift enforced through the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), which was launched immediately after the end of

WWII. Significantly the program was moulded on behaviourist psycholinguistic theories prescribing the development of a set of new linguistic habits to replace the old ones (Ellis 2007, p. 6). The pressure on migrants to shed their first language and adopt English was not just political but also social. Persisting in the use of their native language, especially in public and with children, was branded ‘un-Australian’ (Clyne, 2005, p. 144) and even threatening:

Australian men and women ... are certainly not reassured by hearing foreign languages spoken in public spaces. (Albert Monk, president of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, in 1956, quoted by Ozolins 1993, p. 57)

The policy urging the adoption of the English language by migrants was often associated with the consideration that English proficiency was needed for the newly arrived to be able to fully perform as economic (and demographic) agents. However this is only one part of the story. Language, as we know, plays a pivotal role in the social construction of identity (Grimshaw and Sears, 2008, p. 266).⁵ The absolute dominance of a language – in this case, English – must therefore be seen with respect to the implications for the new non-English migrants’ identity. As Herriman and Burnaby (1996) observe, ‘self identity is ... derived in large part by perception of group membership. Language represents the individual’s most powerful lien on the group’ (p. 10).

⁵ The relation linking language and social identity is posited by ‘ethnolinguistic identity theory’ as well as interactional sociolinguistics, with both approaches drawing on Tajfel’s (1974; 1978) Social Identity Theory. On the former perspective, see Giles and Johnson (1987), who identify language as a dimension of comparison with ‘outgroups’ instrumental in achieving Taifel’s ‘psychological distinctiveness’ (p. 71); on the latter see Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz (1982), whose argument hinges on the key point that ‘social identity and ethnicity are in large part established and maintained through language’ (p. 7).

In light of this consideration, a language widely dominant in a society is not just an essential tool of communication and activity within that society but also a crucial component in the conceptualization of the Self. This explains why the coercion of new migrants into a language shift was such an important part of the assimilationist policies of the 1950s and, to a lesser yet important extent, the integrationist ones of the 1960s. This ‘identity-through-language’ shift was pursued by enforcing restrictions to the use of languages other-than-English in public life and publications, and by means of a pressing moral suasion that presented English as more prestigious and far more advantageous for migrant children. This latter aspect was reinforced by the pedagogical belief, peculiar to monocultural societal settings, that ‘linguistic and cultural *differences*’ reflect ‘linguistic and cultural *deficiencies*’ (Hall, 2008, p. 45, emphasis in original); a perspective which - as Hall (2008) elaborates, frames the difference in academic achievements as related to non-mainstream linguistic and cultural settings:

Differences in levels of academic achievement between mainstream, i.e. white, native English speaking, learners and nonmainstream learners were attributed to the latter’s rearing in home and community settings considered to be linguistically and culturally deprived. (p. 45)

This gloomy landscape for languages other-than-English in Australia started to change in the 1960s. This development was due partly to a ‘top-down’ acknowledgement of the need to move away from the assimilationist (as well as the integrationist) pattern and partly to a ‘bottom-up’ push from increasingly assertive minorities who, among other changes, obtained the opening of ethnic schools (Ozolins and Clyne, 2001, p. 379). By then, however, it is possible to conclude, a huge and long-lasting damage was done: the rigid monolingualism that Federation had pursued

almost since its inception and enforced in the interwar period as part of an ethnocentric thrust had finally created what Clyne has aptly called Australia's 'pervasive' (2008, p. 348) and 'persistent' (2005, p. xi) 'monolingual mindset'.

Conclusion

The analysis of the ethno-centric process implemented in interwar Australia shows how this development hinged upon specific policies and socio-cultural framings; among these were the management of society's demographic composition through immigration quotas by nationality and visa requirements for certain nationalities; the representation of a community as historically and/or ethnically and/or culturally homogeneous; and the framing of language as – alternatively or conjointly – a core value, an element of evaluation in the selection of migrants, and a prerequisite ensuring the migrants' ability to perform as economic agents.

It is worth noting how some policies and certain narratives currently emerging in societies that perceive to be challenged by globalized immigration and the ensuing cultural plurality bear some resemblance to policies and framings that informed the ethnocentric push in interwar Australia. It is certainly true that provisions allowing immigration quotas by nationality have been done away even where they have been in place.⁶ Yet, the target set for the various types of immigrant visas may end up performing as a hidden proxy for country-of-origin quotas.⁷ In a similar way, there are, especially in Europe, political movements that offer to their electorates – with increasing success – a characterization of their country as a historically and culturally uniform community,

⁶ In the US, the country-of-origin quota system was terminated through the Immigration Act of 1965.

⁷ One case in point is the Citizenship and Immigration Canada Permanent Resident Overseas Operational Targets by Office: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/departement/ips/economic.asp>

often more or less eliciting narratives of ethnic homogeneity.⁸ As for language, not only the above-mentioned ethno-nationalist parties frame it as a foundational value of collective identity, but many countries deem it as critical in the determination of the suitability of would-be immigrants.⁹

This paper does not suggest that the appearance of some of the policies and the framings above recalled are unequivocal steps of a path leading to the shaping of an ethnocentric society – although this was precisely the outcome interwar Australia purposefully pursued. However, in a historical moment in which nationalism often flirts with notions of ethnicity and multiculturalist ideals are rejected in the name of social cohesiveness, the case here described is a useful reminder that even a society which may seem prone to cultural plurality can always – by virtue of the appropriate social engineering tools – be set back on a path of cultural exclusivity and exclusion.

References

Anderson, B.R. 1991, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd edn, Verso, London.

Bartrop, P.R. 2000, 'Before the Refugees: Foreign Immigration Policy and Australia in the 1920s', *Australian Jewish Historical Society Journal*, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 368-385.

⁸ Movements such as the French Front National, the Finnish Finns Party, the Austrian Freedom Party, the Danish People's Party, the Dutch Party of Freedom and the Italian Northern League all have – to some degree and/or in some moments of their political rise – referred to notions of identity based on ethnic and/or cultural homogeneity.

⁹ Countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada run immigration programs based on points and one of the main categories in the points assessment/awarding is indeed proficiency in the national language(s).

- Clyne, M. 2008, 'The Monolingual Mindset as an Impediment to the Development of Plurilingual Potential in Australia', *Sociolinguistic Studies*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 347-365.
- Clyne, M. 2005, *Australia's Language Potential*, University of New South Wales, Sydney.
- Clyne, M. 1991c, 'Monolingualism, Multilingualism and the Australian Nation', in *Australian National Identity*, ed. C.A. Price, Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, Canberra, pp. 83-98.
- Clyne, M. 1991b, *Community Language: The Australian Experience*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Clyne, M. 1991a, 'Australia's Language Policies: Are we Going Backwards?' in *Language Planning and Language Policy in Australia*, ed. A. Liddicoat, Applied Linguistics Association of Australia, pp. 3-22.
- Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics 1933, *Census of the Commonwealth of Australia, Part XI: Nationality*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra,
<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/2110.01933?OpenDocument>.
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates (CPD) 1927. No. 39, 29 September, Hansard, House of Representatives.
- Dixon, M. 1999, *The Imaginary Australian: Anglo-Celts and Identity 1788 to the Present*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney.
- Dutton, D. 2001, 'A British Outpost in the Pacific' in *Facing North: A Century of Australian Engagement with Asia, Vol. 1, 1901 to the 1970s*, ed. D. Goldsworthy, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, pp. 21-60.
- Ellis, E.M. 2007, 'Discourses of L1 and Bilingual Teaching in Adult ESL', *TESOL in Context*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 5-10.

- Fitzpatrick, B. 1951, *The Australian People 1788–1945*, 2nd edn, Melbourne University Press, Carlton.
- Giles, H. & Johnson, P. 1987, ‘Ethnolinguistic Identity Theory: A Social Psychological Approach to Language Maintenance’, *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, vol. 68, pp. 69-99.
- Grimshaw, T. & Sears, C. 2008, “‘Where Am I from?’ ‘Where do I Belong?’: The Negotiation and Maintenance of Identity by International School Students’, *Journal of Research in International Education*, vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 259-278.
- Gumperz, J.J. & Cook-Gumperz, J. 1982, ‘Introduction: Language and the Communication of Social Identity’ in *Language and Social Identity*, ed. J.J. Gumperz, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 1-21.
- Hall, J.K. 2008, ‘Language Education and Culture’ in *Encyclopedia of Language and Education, 2nd Edition, Volume 1: Language Policy and Political Issues in Education*, eds. S. May & N.H. Hornberger, Springer, New York, pp. 45-55.
- Hancock, W.K. 1930, *Australia*, Ernest Benn Limited, London.
- Herriman, M. & Burnaby, B. 1996, ‘Introduction’ in *Language Policies in English-Dominant Countries: Six Case Studies*, eds. M. Herriman & B. Burnaby, Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, pp. 1-14.
- Jensen, L. 2005, *Unsettling Australia: Reading in Australian Cultural History*, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.
- Langfield, M. 1991b, ‘White Aliens: The control to European Immigration to Australia 1920–1921’, *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol. 25, no. 2, pp. 1-14.

- Langfield, M. 1991a, 'Attitudes to European Immigration in Early Twentieth Century', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 1-15.
- Lo Bianco, J. 2003, *A Site for Debate, Negotiation and Contest of National Identity: Language Policy in Australia*, Language Policy Division, Council of Europe, Strasbourg.
- Malouf, D. 2003, 'Made in England: Australia's British Inheritance', *Quarterly Essay*, vol. 12, pp. 1-66.
- Meaney, N. 2003, 'Britishness and Australia: Some Reflections', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 31, no. 2, pp. 121-135.
- Ozolins, U. 1993, *The Politics of Language in Australia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Ozolins, U. & Clyne, M. 2001, 'Immigration and Language Policy in Australia' in *The Other Languages of Europe: Demographic, Sociolinguistic and Educational Perspectives*, eds. G. Extra & D. Gorter, Multilingual Matters Ltd, Clevedon, pp. 371-390.
- Richards, E. 2008a, *Destination Australia: Migration to Australia since 1901*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney.
- Tajfel, H. (ed) 1978, *Differentiation Between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, Academic Press, New York.
- Tajfel, H. 1974, 'Social Identity and Intergroup Behaviour', *Social Science Information*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 65-93.

ACADEMIC FREEDON AND RESPONSIBILITY: CROSS-CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN RESEARCH METHODS AND ARGUMENTATION

Dean Mellow

Simon Fraser University

Abstract: To examine criticisms of Western scientific research by Indigenous scholars, especially Marie Battiste, James (Sa'ke'j) Youngblood Henderson, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith, this article builds from the critical discourse analysis method that was effectively implemented in Edward Said's (2003) *Orientalism*. Some methods and motivations within the academic discipline of linguistics are compared to the approaches advocated by the Indigenous scholars. The examples indicate that academic freedom must be accompanied by methodological responsibility, including the requirement that research and education systematically consider alternative theories and perspectives.

Indigenous scholars have strongly criticized Western scientific research and its contribution to colonization. Battiste, Bell, and Findlay (2002, p. 90) explained this criticism: “Colonialism has never employed only physical force to achieve its ends: it has always depended on cultural and educational instruments to fortify its own troops, administrators, merchants, and settlers.” To examine this criticism, some methods and motivations within the academic discipline of linguistics are compared to the approaches advocated by the Indigenous scholars. Examples from linguistics were chosen because colonialist practices have substantially reduced the vitality of Indigenous languages and because linguists have often explicitly explained their methods and motivations. In particular, the article examines academic freedom in relation to the responsibility to utilize research methods that systematically consider diverse perspectives, theories, and explanations. The criticisms of the Indigenous scholars can give researchers, teachers, and students the opportunity to examine the practices and assumptions of Western science, enabling alternative forms of inquiry. I follow Smith (2012, p. 6) in using the term *Indigenous* to refer to the many distinct peoples who may describe themselves with terms such as Aboriginal, First Peoples, First Nations, or Native American.

Academic freedom is central to Western science. Without academic freedom, researchers might be constrained by a political agenda or might be prevented from discovering new facts and explanations because of restrictive oversight by a governing body. However, Smith (2012, pp. 70-71) argued that academic freedom should not be separated from responsibility:

Concepts of ‘academic freedom,’ the ‘search for truth’ and ‘democracy’ underpin the notion of independence [of individual academic disciplines, such as theoretical linguistics] and are vigorously defended by intellectuals. Insularity protects a discipline from the ‘outside,’

enabling communities of scholars to distance themselves from others and, in the more extreme forms, to absolve themselves of responsibility for what occurs in other branches of their discipline, in the academy and in the world.

Smith (2012, pp. 176, x-xi) further questioned whether individual researchers are responsibly using adequate research methods to investigate Indigenous issues, including cultures and languages:

[I]t is also important to question that most fundamental belief of all, that individual researchers have an inherent right to knowledge and truth. We should not assume that they have been trained well enough to pursue it rigorously, nor to recognize it when they have ‘discovered’ it.... Along with my colleagues I attempted to develop approaches to research that addressed the stinging criticism being made by my own communities about the unethical, individualistic practice of research that in their view often rewarded researchers for telling half-truths or downright lies, that misrepresented our world, and that gave authority about us to academic researchers.

Researchers who are settlers or descendants of settlers in colonized lands may conclude that this criticism is too strong or that it does not apply to them and their work. Therefore, to explicitly examine problematic aspects of Western science and education, this article builds from the critical discourse analysis method that was effectively implemented in Edward Said’s (2003) *Orientalism*. To illustrate and critique colonialist tendencies, extensive quotations are used to

compare the practices and motivations of Western researchers to those of Indigenous scholars, including Marie Battiste, James (Sa'ke'j) Youngblood Henderson, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith.

Western Perspectives on Academic Freedom, Including Methodological Freedom

One of the main Western approaches to the study of language is often called the Universal Grammar (UG) approach. In this article, variations of UG theory are labelled as Minimalism, Generative Grammar, and Principles and Parameters (P&P). Carnie (2002) and Sag, Wasow, and Bender (2003) explained these and other variations. The UG approach has been led by Dr. Noam Chomsky of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.). Many linguists in many countries have adopted the UG approach in their research and teaching. Chomsky (1995, p. 389) explained that a primary goal is to propose universals of human language and de-emphasize diversity: "The task is to show that the apparent richness and diversity of linguistic phenomena is illusory and epiphenomenal, the result of interaction of fixed principles under slightly varying conditions." To show that diversity is illusory, Chomsky and his colleagues analyze the properties of grammatical and ungrammatical words and sentences in order to propose universal, genetically-encoded principles and concepts. This article also refers to two linguistic theories that have different assumptions than UG: emergentism and cognitive linguistics.

Chomsky has explained his belief in an extreme form of academic freedom in which individuals should be free from institutional restrictions. Because Chomsky worked at M.I.T. and therefore received extensive amounts of direct and indirect funding from the U.S. military, Chomsky (quoted in Barsky, 1997, pp. 140, 141) provided the following justification of his use of military funding:

Nothing should be done to impede people from teaching and doing their research even if at that very moment it was being used to massacre and destroy.... [P]eople have a responsibility for the foreseeable consequences of their actions, and therefore have the responsibility of thinking about the research they undertake and what it might lead to under existing conditions.

Chomsky's belief that only individuals should be responsible for considering the consequences of their work corresponds to his belief in an unconstrained approach to research methods.

Chomsky (1988, p. 190; within a general discussion of his methods in both political activism and linguistics) explained that he rejects the systematic study and use of research methods:

As for my own methods of investigation, I do not really have any. The only method of investigation is to look hard at a serious problem and try to get some ideas as to what might be the explanation for it, meanwhile keeping an open mind about all sorts of other possibilities. Well, that is not a method. It is just being reasonable, and so far as I know, that is the only way to deal with any problem, whether it is a problem in your work as a quantum physicist or whatever.

There are certain fields like psychology where people do carry out extensive study of methods of investigation. There are other fields like physics where you do not study methods of investigation. So at MIT the physics department does not have a course in experimental methods, but many psychology departments spend a lot of time on what they call methodology. Well, there is a lesson there, but I won't draw it.

In other publications, Chomsky has expressed his position that he does not support the systematic use of scientific methods. For example, Chomsky (1969, p. 56) expressed his rejection of scientific methods:

[T]hese achievements [of modern linguistics] owe little to modern science and less to modern technology. The gathering of data is informal; there has been very little use of experimental approaches (outside of phonetics) or of complex techniques of data collection and data analysis of a sort that can easily be devised, and that are widely used in the behavioral sciences. The arguments in favour of this informal procedure seem to me quite compelling; basically, they turn on the realization that for the theoretical problems that seem most critical today, it is not at all difficult to obtain a mass of crucial data without use of such techniques. Consequently, linguistic work, at what I believe to be its best, lacks many of the features of the behavioral sciences. Nor is it obvious that the development of explanatory theories in linguistics merits the honorific designation “scientific.”

More recently, Chomsky (2012, p. 19) expressed his rejection of the use of the systematic analysis of extensive and representative sets of authentic language data (i.e. of corpus linguistics):

[I]f you get outside the hard-core natural sciences, the idea that you should actually construct artificial situations in an effort to understand the world — well, that is considered either exotic or crazy. Take linguistics. If you want to get a grant, what you say is “I want to do corpus linguistics” — collect a huge mass of data and throw a computer at it, and maybe

something will happen. That was given up in the hard sciences centuries ago. Galileo had no doubt about the need for focus and idealization when constructing a theory.

Chomsky's rejection of the systematic study and use of empirical research methods illustrates Smith's concern that Western researchers may not "have been trained well enough" to rigorously pursue research regarding unfamiliar cultures and languages.

Choosing Between Theoretical Pluralism and Single-Paradigm Research

When researchers such as Chomsky and his colleagues do not systematically study research methods, they may consequently follow the Western tendency to only adopt one theoretical approach or paradigm. Battiste and Henderson (2000, pp. 26-28) discussed Kuhn's (1970) observation that some researchers tend to work within only one approach to research rather than comparing a range of possible methods and explanations. Kuhn (1970) described these restrictive approaches to scientific inquiry as paradigms. According to Kuhn (1970, pp. 10, 11), a paradigm is a coherent tradition of scientific research that has attracted an enduring group of adherents and that has a restricted set of research topics and methods that is unequivocal and binding. Kuhn (1970, pp. 150-159) observed that some researchers are so strongly committed to one paradigm that no amount of evidence or argumentation will lead them to change their assumptions and worldviews. Kuhn argued that this adherence to one paradigm is normal for science and is successful in certain respects because it leads researchers to fully test the limits of an approach and prevents them from abandoning a paradigm when a problem only seems to be difficult, but can be solved within the approach.

However, a strict adherence to one paradigm is problematic. Battiste and Henderson (2000, p. 118) explained how this strategy does not lead to neutral scientific findings: “Eurocentric science is based on observations and interpretations that take place within a context of assumptions, ideas, and beliefs. Within this context, strong personal and social motivations influence what a person does and sees.” Rather than comparing alternatives, single-paradigm researchers may seek to “dominate” their disciplines by attempting to obtain as many scholarly resources as possible. Some linguists have reported that an adversarial battle for domination is part of the scientific practice. Carnie (2002, pp. 5, 371-372) explained how some proponents of the UG approach behave while attempting to make it the dominant theory of linguistics, especially in relation to sentence patterns (or syntax):

The dominant theory of syntax is due to Noam Chomsky and his colleagues, starting in the mid 1950s and continuing to this day.... We briefly turn now to the very thorny question of which theoretical approach is right. If you ask this question at any major syntax conference you are likely to get lynched. Most linguists hold to their theories the way religious fanatics follow their beliefs or the way nationalists feel about their countries. I admit that I personally am guilty of this at times. As you can see from the number of chapters in this book devoted to P&P compared to the number of chapters devoted to other approaches, my heart lies squarely in the P&P/Minimalist camp.

Unfortunately, there is rarely rational dialog on the question of what theoretical approaches are the best.

Because of these problematic tendencies within single-paradigm research, Battiste (2013, pp. 120-121) argued for pluralism in order to fully contemplate the range of alternative perspectives and explanations:

The decolonization of Eurocentric science can only be achieved when all voices are allowed to emerge, when we do not give up on all that others have come to know, or all the forms and techniques of thinking that have been developed, and we find ways to make use of whatever can help us to think not only within but also about the dominant tradition. To reject other knowledge systems is to subject students to selective silences and collective ignorance. The exclusivity of Eurocentric science must be transformed, not just corrected or supplemented. It requires that we understand how these traditions of hegemonic knowledge in science and the humanities gained power and prestige, how the terms and systems came to express and shape the curricula, and recognize that equality need not mean sameness.

Some Western philosophers and linguists have also criticized the single-paradigm approach and the competition for domination associated with it. Feyerabend (1968, pp. 14, 33) argued for theoretical pluralism:

I shall also try to give a positive methodology for the empirical sciences which no longer encourages dogmatic petrification in the name of experience.... You can be a good empiricist only if you are prepared to work with many alternative theories rather than with a single point of view and 'experience.' This plurality of theories must not be regarded as a preliminary stage of knowledge which will at some time in the future be replaced by the One

True Theory. Theoretical pluralism is assumed to be an *essential feature* of all knowledge that claims to be objective.... Any such method [that encourages uniformity] is in the last resort a method of deception. It enforces an unenlightened conformism, and speaks of truth; it leads to a deterioration of intellectual capacities, of the power of imagination, and speaks of deep insight; it destroys the most precious gift of the young, their tremendous power of imagination, and speaks of education. (emphasis in original)

Linguists such Derwing (1973, pp. 17, 234) have advocated this pluralistic approach that allows all voices to be heard. A recent example is Scholz, Pelletier, and Pullum (2011), who compared and contrasted three theoretical approaches: essentialism (which includes UG), externalism, and emergentism.

Faulty Generalizations: Overstated Universals and Overuse of Formalisms

When scientists follow only one paradigm, research may involve the promotion of that one perspective rather than a more comprehensive investigation of phenomena. While attempting to persuade others of the value of their paradigm, researchers may present flawed arguments.

Battiste and Henderson (2000, pp. 26, 118-119) explained that these flawed arguments in

Western science may result from an overuse of abstractions and formalisms:

Eurocentric thought asserts there is an artificial kind of knowledge, exemplified by mathematics and logic, that does not originate in the analysis and combination of sensations, but rather in the relationships among categories that exist outside the world of facts....

[A]spects of Eurocentric knowledge have been put into forms of writing and later into

technical and mathematical languages that mask the ambiguities behind and contradictions within scientific thought.

Building from Minnick (1990), Battiste and Henderson (2000, p. 88) also argued that the Eurocentric tendency to pursue universals can result in faulty generalizations, circular reasoning, and mystified concepts:

Faulty generalizations arise from universalism, the concept that there is one ideal, norm, or standard that holds voice, power, and privilege. Universalism is viewed as the highest, most significant, and most valuable of categories. Circular reasoning arises when a standard is derived from particular studies of particular groups or limited samples and then applied as if the standard were universal. Mystified concepts are those categories or ideas that are so familiar they are accepted as natural, but their meanings reflect and perpetuate old exclusivities masquerading as universals.

Examples of faulty generalizations based on universals and formalisms are present in the arguments that some Western scholars have made to attempt to persuade readers about the value of the UG approach. To claim that the components of the UG theory could be explained through evolution, Pinker and Bloom (1990, pp. 713, 716) argued that a relatively small set of hypothetical, abstract representations of language are able to account for the diversity of constructions that are used in human language:

Let us list some uncontroversial facts about substantive universals, the building blocks of grammars that all theories of universal grammar posit, either as an explicit inventory or as a consequence of somewhat more abstract mechanisms.... Even a rudimentary grammatical analysis reveals that surface diversity [across human languages] is often a manifestation of minor differences in the underlying mental grammars.... [T]hese variations almost certainly correspond to differences in the extent to which the same specific set of mental devices is put to use, but not to differences in the kinds of devices that are put to use.... When one looks at more abstract linguistic analyses, the underlying unity of natural languages is even more apparent.

In order to make their generalizations about universals, Pinker and Bloom argued for the existence of “abstract mechanisms” and “underlying mental grammars.” These abstractions include processes (movements or derivations) that are said to create different types of words and sentences, but do not occur in the actual production or comprehension of utterances. These abstractions also include elements that are never pronounced or heard (e.g., zero or phonetically-null elements: *traces* of abstract original positions of elements, and *pro* phrases). These abstractions have been widely criticized and acknowledged as uninterpretable in relation to actual psycholinguistic processes (e.g., Carnie, 2002, pp. 10, 371-372; O’Grady, 2008, p. 461; Sag et al., 2003, p. 301).

In order to make the general claim that linguistic differences “almost certainly” correspond to varying uses of same mental devices, Pinker and Bloom utilized these controversial abstractions. When Pinker and Bloom asserted that certain facts about universals are

“uncontroversial”, that claim is false, as indicated by Tomasello’s (1990, pp. 759, 760) reply to their article:

Almost all of the “facts” [Pinker and Bloom] list are debatable or, at least, open to vastly different interpretations depending on one’s view of the nature of language.... For many of us, the imputation of generative grammar to humans derives from the mistake of assuming that systems created for their mathematical elegance and efficiency are, ipso facto, the way human beings operate.

Many linguists and psychologists, including Tomasello, have rejected these patterns as universal and have argued that the UG abstractions are Eurocentric (e.g., Evans & Levinson, 2009; Haspelmath, 2010; Mellow, 2010; Mühlhäusler, 1996, p. 331; Pennycook, 2001, p. 35; Tomasello, 2003, p. 8). The claims about universals are controversial and crucially rely on their description as hypothetical and psycholinguistically uninterpretable abstractions.

Additional examples of faulty generalizations based on universals and formalisms were presented in Pinker (2007, pp. 238, 239, PS15), an expanded edition of a 1994 book that has been influential in popularizing the UG approach:

Chomsky’s claim that from a Martian’s-eye-view all humans speak a single language is based on the discovery that the same symbol-manipulating machinery, without exception, underlies the world’s languages.... It is safe to say that the grammatical machinery we used for English in Chapters 4-6 is used in all the world’s languages.... Phrases can be moved from their deep-structure positions, leaving a gap or “trace,” by a structure-dependent

movement rule, thereby forming questions, relative clauses, passives, and other widespread constructions.... The notion of Universal Grammar continues to be debated.... In *The Atoms of Language*, the linguist Mark Baker presents an explicit empirical case for a Universal Grammar with a smallish set of parameters differentiating all human languages.

Once again, Pinker argued for the existence of abstract, universal formalisms, including traces and movements. Pinker also overgeneralized the strength of his assertions, using phrases such as “without exception” and “safe to say.” In the 2007 post script (PS15), Pinker acknowledged the debate about the universal claims and also referred to Baker (2001) as “empirical” support for UG.

As Pinker indicated, the analyses of Baker (e.g., 1988, 1996, 2001) have been essential for extending UG analyses beyond English and other European languages. Chomsky (1991, p. 27) also explained the importance of Baker (1988) for extending UG analyses to all languages. With respect to research methods, Baker (1996, p. 515) explained that he follows one paradigm and does not compare his analyses to alternatives:

I have taken much the same approach in my use of the Chomskian Principles and Parameters framework [as in his use of spiritual explanations for language origins]; I have not argued for that framework directly, but have presupposed it and used it to try to shed some light on the material I was analyzing. However, to the degree that this project has been successful, it constitutes an implicit challenge to those who do not agree with important aspects of that framework to either show that they can do better or incorporate aspects of my framework into their own work.

In addition, alternative explanations are often evaluated according to Occam's (or Ockham's) Razor, the criterion that theoretical explanations should not include unnecessary assumptions or categories (e.g., Aarts, 2008, p. 172; Palys, 2003, p. 6). If UG is compared to alternative theories such as emergentism (O'Grady, 2008), then UG has limited scientific value because it requires many abstract principles and concepts that are not necessary in other theories to explain the same phenomena. Baker (2011, p. 73) explained that he strongly resists using Occam's Razor to evaluate his view of language: "Ockham's razor is all very well, and it has its place as a useful tool, but I for one do not want to cut my throat with it and bleed to death."

In the analyses supported by Pinker and Chomsky, Baker has extended UG to other languages through methods that make very extensive use of abstract formalisms that have been criticized as Eurocentric. For example, Koenig and Michelson (1998, pp.131, 135) provided the following critique of Baker (1996):

The sentences in these chapters tend to look like English sentences with Mohawk words.... [B]y making polysynthesis a rather trivial property of agreement, [Baker] has made Mohawk and other polysynthetic languages more similar to English than previously thought. One necessary concomitant of this move is a theoretically alarming need for zeros. Not only are all (nonincorporated) NP arguments in fact zero *pro*'s in Mohawk, but there are also zero incorporated roots. Finally, in cases of three-place predicates such as -u- 'give', the goal argument is realized as a PP complement whose head is a null preposition and whose complement is a null *pro*!

Because the Mohawk sentences that Baker tested appear to be “English sentences with Mohawk words,” his methods and constructs illustrate the Eurocentric criticisms. With respect to colonialist concerns, UG abstractions have also been criticized as not useful for documenting and preserving endangered Indigenous languages (e.g., Evans, 2010; Valentine, 1998).

Baker’s theoretically alarming use of abstractions illustrates the faulty generalizations and mystified concepts discussed by Battiste and Henderson. The abstractions are mystified because they have been criticized as evolutionarily implausible and creationist (e.g., Christiansen & Chater, 2008; Lieberman, 1986). Importantly, Baker (1996, pp. 512-515) also concluded that the UG abstractions cannot be explained by evolution and therefore argued that UG is the result of theological creationism. The psycholinguistically uninterpretable UG abstractions are further mystified because, as acknowledged by Carnie (2002, p. 10), they do not correspond to processes in the brain; instead, the abstractions are used to “represent the external behavior of the mind.” Carnie’s brain-mind dualism appears to be within the domain of scientific inquiry because he proposed the use of abstract modeling about the mind until the brain is better understood. However, other UG linguists have adopted the position of Cartesian dualism, that some aspects of human behavior do not correspond to physical or material processes. For example, Baker (2011, pp. 90-91) argued that “it seems appropriate, then, to think that grammar and vocabulary depend at least in part on the body, but the [Creative Aspect of Language Use] depends primarily upon another ingredient of human nature, the soul.”

The unclear and mystified nature of UG abstractions is further illustrated by the position of Bloom (2005, p. 38), who rejected both creationism and Cartesian dualism: “While there is no accepted theory as to how a physical thing can give rise to conscious experience — and some scholars are skeptical that we will ever have such a theory — it is clear that Cartesian dualism is

wrong, as wrong as creationism.” Thus, Pinker and Bloom (1990) supported the UG paradigm and Bloom argued that creationism and Cartesian dualism are both wrong. However, Baker has been one of the most influential UG theorists for the past three decades and has argued that UG and Chomskyan conceptions of language are evidence for creationism and Cartesian dualism. Consequently, the status of these hypothetical abstractions is problematic and mystified.

Overall, these examples from linguistics illustrate the potential consequences of Western single-paradigm research that focuses on universals rather than diversity and uses abstract formalisms that do not correspond to concrete, physical processes. The resulting hypotheses and argumentation may involve attempts at persuasion through faulty generalizations and mystified concepts.

Persuasion Through Militant Rhetoric and Overstatements of Success

Battiste (2013, pp. 69-73) and Smith (2012, p. xii) argued that research should be collaborative. They also argued that ethical and valid progress will be made when research is humble, sympathetic, compassionate, respectful, and inclusive (Battiste, 2013, p. 72; Battiste & Henderson, 2000, p. 133; Smith, 2012, pp. xii, 5, 9). In contrast to these recommendations, single-paradigm researchers may criticize alternative perspectives using unscholarly and militant rhetoric. Some of the preceding quotations provide examples of this type of flawed argumentation. For example, in Chomsky’s (1988, p. 190) statements about methods, he claimed that “many psychology departments spend a lot of time on what they call methodology. Well, there is a lesson there, but I won’t draw it.” Chomsky (1969, p. 56) claimed that describing research as scientific is only an “honorific designation.” Chomsky (2012, p. 19) claimed that corpus linguists simply “throw a computer at [a mass of data], and maybe something will

happen.” Chomsky’s mocking and ridiculing descriptions are unscholarly and confrontational. Chomsky’s extensive use of sarcasm has been described as “corrosive” (MacFarquhar, 2003, p. 75). In addition to the quotations from Chomsky, the quotation from Carnie (2002, p. 371) indicated that those who compare linguistic approaches are “likely to get lynched” (see also Newmeyer, 1986, pp. 81-82).

This adversarial rhetoric is not unique to generative linguists and is reported as occurring in other Western academic disciplines (e.g., Palys, 2003, pp. 4, 18, 19; Kroll, 2001, p. 221). Just as colonizers believe that they are justified in using military resources to complete their ideologically-driven conquest, single-paradigm researchers may believe that the value of their approach justifies the use of combative and aggressive rhetoric to persuade readers and to compete for limited, publically-funded resources. This militant approach to scholarship may be effective in creating a dominant paradigm because many potential scholars and students avoid engaging in aggressive rhetoric and therefore do not participate. Because they are aware of the colonialist history of educational institutions, Indigenous students may be especially deterred by this hostile and unprofessional rhetoric. Therefore, publically-funded scholars should act responsibly so that universities are civil and inclusive, ensuring that alternative perspectives are not silenced. If unconstrained academic freedom and the pursuit of only one paradigm do not result in scholarly argumentation, then reasons of social justice indicate that granting agencies, administrators, and scholarly organizations will need to impose responsibility on researchers.

In addition to the unscholarly criticism of alternatives, Western scientific rhetoric may also overstate the prestige, authority, and influence of a paradigm and its proponents in order to persuade others of the value of the approach. Similarly, Smith (2012, p. 21) observed that

colonialist and Eurocentric Western leaders are often elevated through partisan rhetoric to the status of a hero:

[In addition to Christopher Columbus] there are other significant figures who symbolize and frame indigenous experiences in other places. In the imperial literature these are the ‘heroes’, the discoverers and adventurers, the ‘fathers’ of colonialism. In the indigenous literature these figures are not so admired; their deeds are definitely not the deeds of wonderful discoverers and conquering heroes.

Examples of rhetoric that overstates success can be found in Western research, including linguistics.

Before considering examples of this type of persuasion within linguistics, it is useful to consider a relatively neutral assessment of the success and extent of support for the UG theory. Newmeyer (1986, pp. 96-7), who has published a number of articles and books documenting the modern history of linguistics, provided the following assessment:

At present, about a third of American linguists are either generative grammarians or presuppose generative grammar in their studies of first-language acquisition, second-language learning, or whatever; another third approach grammar from a nongenerativist direction or reject Chomskyan assumptions in their experimental or applied work; and the final third address aspects of language in which one’s stand on such questions is unimportant, such as is the case in certain subareas of sociolinguistics and phonetics. And this breakdown does not take into account the many humanistically oriented language scholars who do not

even identify themselves as linguists but work in literature departments instead....

Chomsky's influence is enormous, but influence does not necessarily bring agreement.... [I]f

Chomsky is the most followed scholar in the field, he is also the most attacked.

Newmeyer (2003, p. 683) also provided a relatively recent assessment of the extent of support for the UG approach: "My impression is that more linguists around the world do cognitive linguistics than do generative grammar." Thus, the support for the UG approach is substantial, but probably is and has been less than half of linguists, and includes a relatively small number of psycholinguists, computational linguists, and applied or educational linguists.

Assuming the correctness of Newmeyer's estimate, Roeper (2003, p. 13) overstated the support for the UG paradigm: "Universal Grammar is a hypothesis about innate mental structure -- accepted by the vast majority of linguists -- that makes grammar akin to vision."

Quantification as "the vast majority" is an attempt at partisan persuasion.

The extent of the success achieved by Chomsky and the UG approach has also been overstated. For example, Dennett (1995, p. 385) made the following hyperbolic and partisan claims:

Not many scientists are great scientists, and not many great scientists get to found a whole new field, but there are a few. Charles Darwin is one; Noam Chomsky is yet another.... The contemporary scientific field of linguistics, with its subdisciplines of phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics, its warring schools and renegade offshoots (computational linguistics in AI, for instance), its subdisciplines of psycholinguistics and neurolinguistics, grows out of various scholarly traditions going back to pioneer language sleuths and theorists

from the Grimm brothers to Ferdinand de Saussure and Roman Jakobson, but it was all unified into a richly interrelated family of scientific investigations by the theoretical advances first proposed by one pioneer, Noam Chomsky.

A similarly hyperbolic and partisan claim was made by McGilvray (2012, p. 2), who declared that Chomsky “virtually created the modern science of language by himself and ever since has influenced the work of many of the individuals who have increasingly improved this science.” Both of these assertions of phenomenal success overstate the extent to which Chomsky has created and unified a scientific field.

A surprising partisan and hyperbolic claim was the promotional statement on the back cover of Chomsky (2005), a book of articles about anarchism: “Noam Chomsky is one of the world’s leading intellectuals, the father of modern linguistics, an outspoken media and foreign policy critic, and tireless activist.” Given that anarchism opposes hierarchical domination and sexism/patriarchy, the metaphor “father of modern linguistics” is not only inaccurate; it appears to contradict anarchist values. In addition, given that one legacy of the discipline of linguistics during the past 50 years is that it has done very little in response to the widespread decline and death of Indigenous languages, being the “father” of the discipline, if that was even possible, would not be a heroic accomplishment.

Theoretical Pluralism: Allowing All Voices to Emerge

These strong criticisms by Indigenous scholars indicate directions for the improvement of Western research. The examples from linguistics illustrate the potential consequences when academic freedom includes an unconstrained approach to research methods. Within single-

paradigm research, the presence of Western assumptions about universals and formalisms may lead to faulty and overgeneralized claims. Within the competition for publically-funded resources, single-paradigm researchers may attempt to persuade others by overstating their success and may use militant rhetoric that dominates and silences alternative perspectives.

Academic freedom must therefore be accompanied by methodological responsibility, including the requirement that research and education systematically consider alternative theories and perspectives. Theoretical pluralism can allow all voices to be heard. The importance of pluralism was stated in Palys (2003, pp. 30, 27), a textbook for a research methods course (the type of course that Chomsky rejected for linguistics):

As science slowly democratizes, with progressively greater representation from women, Aboriginal peoples, Third World academics, and others, new voices are heard, and the effects of arguing with data, in a public forum, become evident.... Cast your empirical vote for a liberating epistemology that, in encouraging tolerance and diversity, brings a wide range of voices to the table.

References

- Aarts, B. (2008). *English syntax and argumentation* (3rd ed.). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Baker, M. (1988). *Incorporation: A theory of grammatical function changing*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Baker, M. (1996). *The polysynthesis parameter*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Baker, M. (2001). *The atoms of language*. New York: Basic Books.

- Baker, M. (2011). Brains and souls; grammar and speaking. In M. Baker & S. Goetz (Eds.), *The soul hypothesis: Investigations into the existence of the soul* (pp. 73-93). New York: Continuum.
- Barsky, R. (1997). *Noam Chomsky: A life of dissent*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Battiste, M. (2013). *Decolonizing education: Nourishing the learning spirit*. Saskatoon, SK: Purich.
- Battiste, M., Bell, L., & Findlay, L. (2002). Decolonizing education in Canadian universities: An interdisciplinary, international, indigenous research project. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 26, 82–95.
- Battiste, M., & Henderson, J. S. Y. (2000). *Protecting Indigenous knowledge and heritage: A global challenge*. Saskatoon, SK: Purich.
- Bloom, P. (2005). Worse than creationism: Evolution, neuroscience, and the responsibility of psychologists. *American Psychological Society Observer*, 18(10), pp. 5, 38.
- Carnie, A. (2002). *Syntax: A generative introduction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Chomsky, N. (1969). Linguistics and Philosophy. In S. Hook (Ed.), *Language and philosophy: A symposium* (pp. 51-94). New York: New York University Press.
- Chomsky, N. (1988). *Language and problems of knowledge: The Managua lectures*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Chomsky, N. (1991). Linguistics and cognitive science: Problems and mysteries. In A. Kasher (Ed.), *The Chomskyan turn* (pp. 26-53). Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell.
- Chomsky, N. (1995). Bare phrase structure. In G. Webelhuth (Ed.), *Government and binding theory and the minimalist program: Principles and parameters in syntactic theory* (pp. 383-439). Oxford: Blackwell.

- Chomsky, N. (2005). *Chomsky on anarchism*. Oakland, CA: AK Press.
- Chomsky, N. (2012). *The science of language: Interviews with James McGilvray*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Christiansen, M. H., & Chater, N. (2008). Language as shaped by the brain. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 31, 489-558.
- Dennett, D. (1995). *Darwin's dangerous idea: Evolution and the meanings of life*. New York: Touchstone.
- Derwing, B. (1973). *Transformational grammar as a theory of language acquisition: A study in the empirical, conceptual, and methodological foundations of contemporary linguistic theory*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Evans, N. (2010). *Dying words: Endangered languages and what they have to tell us*. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Evans, N., & Levinson, S. (2009). The myth of language universals: Language diversity and its importance for cognitive science. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 32(5), 429-492.
- Feyerabend, P. (1968). How to be a good empiricist – A plea for tolerance in matters epistemological. In P.H. Nidditch (Ed.), *The philosophy of science* (pp. 12-39). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Haspelmath, M. (2010). Framework-free grammatical theory. In B. Heine & H. Narrog (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of grammatical analysis* (pp. 341-365). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Koenig, J. P., & Michelson, K. (1998). Review of: *The Polysynthesis Parameter* by Mark C. Baker. *Language*, 74(1), 129-136.

- Kroll, B. (2001). Considerations for teaching an ESL/EFL writing course. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (3rd ed.) (pp. 219-232). Scarborough, ON: Thomson Learning.
- Kuhn, T. (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions* (2nd ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lieberman, P. (1986). On Bickerton's review of *The biology and evolution of language*. *American Anthropologist*, 88(3), 701–703.
- MacFarquhar, L. (2003, March 31). The devil's accountant: Noam Chomsky's isolation and influence. *The New Yorker*, 64-79.
- McGilvray, J. (2012). Introduction. In N. Chomsky, *The science of language: Interviews with James McGilvray* (pp. 1– 7). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Mellow, J. D. (2010). Fostering diversity and minimizing universals: Toward a non-colonialist approach to the acquisition of Algonquian languages. *Native Studies Review*, 19(1), 67-100.
- Minnick, E. (1990). *Transforming knowledge*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Mühlhäusler, P. (1996). *Linguistic ecology: Language change and linguistic imperialism in the Pacific region*. London: Routledge.
- Newmeyer, F. (1986). *The politics of linguistics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Newmeyer, F. (2003). Grammar is grammar and usage is usage. *Language*, 79, 682-707.
- O'Grady, W. (2008). The emergentist program. *Lingua*, 118(4), 447–464.
- Palys, T. (2003). *Research decisions: Quantitative and qualitative perspectives* (3rd ed.). Scarborough, ON: Thomson – Nelson.
- Pennycook, A. (2001). *Critical applied linguistics: A critical introduction*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

- Pinker, S. (2007). *The language instinct: How the mind creates language* (Expanded ed.). New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics.
- Pinker, S., & Bloom, P. (1990). Natural language and language selection. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 13, 707-727.
- Roeper, T. (2003). *Prism of grammar: How child language illuminates humanism*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Sag, I., Wasow, T., & Bender, E. (2003). *Syntactic theory: A formal introduction* (2nd ed.). Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications.
- Said, E. (2003). *Orientalism*. London: Penguin. (Original work published 1978)
- Scholz, B., Pelletier, F., & Pullum, G. (2011, Winter Edition). Philosophy of Linguistics. In E. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy*. Retrieved on May 13, 2014 from <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2011/entries/linguistics/>.
- Smith, L. T. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples* (2nd ed.). London: Zed Books.
- Tomasello, M. (1990). Grammar yes, generative grammar no. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 13, 759-760.
- Tomasello, M. (2003). *Constructing a language: A usage-based theory of language acquisition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Valentine, J. R. (1998). Linguistics and languages in Native American studies. In R. Thornton (Ed.), *Studying Native America: Problems and prospects* (pp. 152-181). Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press.

EFFECT OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY ON INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' SURVEY FEEDBACK

Anna Mendoza

University of British Columbia

Abstract: Universities commonly assess student satisfaction with their international programs through face-to-face interviews and surveys with a number of open-ended questions. This study investigates the effect of English proficiency on international students' responses. First, in-depth interviews with 15 international students at a Canadian university were transcribed and assessed with vocabulary profiling software to determine English proficiency. Next, differences between students with higher and lower English proficiencies were analyzed with regard to the extent to which students offered concrete, detailed, and constructive criticism. Findings suggest that administrators need to seek feedback on university programs not only from surveys, but also from international student leaders with strong bi/multilingual skills, who can summarize/synthesize feedback from their peers in meaningful ways from a position of trust on both sides.

Introduction: Study abroad and attitudes surrounding English proficiency

The past fifteen years have seen an exponential growth in the numbers of international students pursuing degrees abroad, with the vast majority going to what Kachru (1986) termed “inner circle” English-speaking nations—the U.S., the U.K., Australia, New Zealand and Canada—and coming from emerging economies such as BRIC countries (Verbik & Lasanowski, 2007). Reflecting this global economic trend, there is a growing body of focus group and survey research on international study abroad that has revealed the consensual stereotype of students with low English proficiency as unwilling to adapt and integrate, and responsible for their own exclusion (Peacock & Harrison, 2009; Spencer-Rodgers & McGovern, 2002). Additionally, there exists the attitude in the host communities that foreign language learning for monolingual English speakers is to be commended, whereas English language learning for international or bi/multilingual students is no more than expected (Kubota & Abels, 2006).

This paper adopts a critical lens, similar to that of previous studies on international education, to explore how English proficiency structures social interactions in ways that foster or hinder critical discussion. Moreover, when methods for gathering feedback on international students’ experiences involve very broad, open-ended questions that invite them to verbally recount difficult and complex social situations in a language that challenges them, responses in the form of generalized platitudes stretch the communicative repertoire less than unique narratives of their challenges abroad (especially if the interpretations become contested and require defending). How such conditions affect feedback on student surveys invites further investigation, and is the topic of this study.

Literature review: The impact of international education on Western countries, and the need for accurate survey instruments for students’ experiences

The internationalization of higher education has dramatically changed the tertiary-level student body of Western countries in which English is the dominant language. A British Council study (Bohm, 2004) revealed that international students at the time comprised 47% of the university population, and this proportion was expected to rise to 57% by 2020. A more recent study published online by the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Kunin et al., 2012) revealed that international students' annual expenditure of \$8.0 billion contributes \$4.9 billion to Canada's GDP, 86 570 jobs for Canadians, and \$455 million in government tax revenue. International education is Australia's third largest services export (Marginson, 2007), and in the United States an annual crop of over 800 000 international students supports 313 000 American jobs and contributes \$24 billion to the American economy (NAFSA, 2014).

Given the impact that international students have on Western economies, institutional methods for soliciting their experiences, such as questionnaires and surveys, must offer the opportunity to provide concrete and constructive input to improve international programs, not just further material for advertising. Students must see such surveys as a chance to engage in critical discourses, and believe that their input will improve the programs for future generations. There are, however, several barriers to the collection of valid data even when students are willing to participate. The first is the pressure to maintain a positive image for oneself, even when the survey is anonymous. Williams' (2005) survey measuring various traits before and after study abroad, including Emotional Resilience, Flexibility and Openness, Personal Autonomy, and Intercultural Communication Awareness, contains the caveat: "As is always a concern with self-surveys, the students may have felt an expectation to select more 'correct' answers than what they truly felt" (p. 22). Yet another issue is the impact that limited language proficiency has on the concreteness and specificity of answers. Durrant and Dorius (2007), assessing four types of

study abroad surveys at the same U.S. university, found them replete with written comments that were too vague (“My experience was amazing and wonderful”) or overgeneralized (“I loved every moment I was here”) to be really useful for meaningful program improvement. In addition to issues of validity, or accuracy of information, there are also issues of reliability, or consistency of information: Pellegrino (1998), analyzing qualitative interviews with study abroad students in Russia, found that “learners’ perspectives are volatile, changing from moment to moment, depending on the events of the day” (p. 114).

Additionally, an emergent topic in interview methodology is the effect of interviewer/interviewee rapport on the nature and amount of talk generated. Brown (2003) shows how an interviewee can appear to have a different level of English proficiency with a different interviewer, and Kerekes (2007) illustrates how interviewers co-construct interviewees’ identities and experiences in the context of a job interview. Along with rapport, there is also the issue of power relations. Talmy (2010) asserts that

the interview is constituted by complex relations of power... who chooses what—and what not—to discuss, who asks what questions, when, and how, who is ratified to answer and who is not, who determines when to terminate a line of questioning, and so on.

Nonetheless, students are not without agency; one’s ability to address complex issues in a clear, coherent manner increases as one’s linguistic proficiency increases, and we can expect that students with sufficient linguistic proficiency will be able—if they so choose—to engage in “hybrid discourses” (Sarangi & Roberts, as cited in Duff, 2008), which link personal narratives to broader statements about institutions. In contrast, we can expect students with a lower English proficiency, upon being questioned about internationalization, to repeat cliché platitudes

supporting diversity and multiculturalism, and to express a desire to make good friends from many different cultures, despite linguistic barriers.

Data set and methods of analysis

The data set for this qualitative study consists of responses to the International Student Survey (ISS) at a large Canadian university. Between 2006 and 2008, 179 Sociology graduate and undergraduate students conducted over 300 interviews with undergraduate and graduate students across the university, roughly 57% of whom were international (Kenyon, Frohard-Dourlent, & Roth, 2012). The international student version of the survey took the form of a 97-question semi-structured interview divided into the following categories: demographic background, family history, pre-university education, arrival in Canada, services at UBC (housing, counseling, visa support), experiences at UBC (academic, extracurricular, social, work-related), future educational and career plans after UBC, and experiences with discrimination. Each interview was recorded and transcribed by the interviewer, and became part of a shared data set for Sociology students and faculty.

Participants in the ISS survey were recruited through personal connections of people within the department; however, the hundreds of different starting points greatly reduced the bias that would normally arise from such convenience sampling. However, as I did not conduct any interviews myself, I could not contact participants to ask additional questions or to clarify their responses. There is also the issue of reliability between interviews—even though all interviewers followed the same interview schedule, I found that each interview often went in different directions, depending on the interviewee. Different interviewees seemed to be preoccupied by different topics. This need not be seen as a limitation of the semi-structured interview, which is designed with open-ended questions to allow people to address any significant experience(s).

The ISS interviews for 2008 consisted of 53 interviews with undergraduate students and 12 with graduate students. I decided only to focus on undergraduate students since international graduate students generally have a more advanced level of English proficiency to be admitted to their programs. In sampling, I decided to include only those respondents who reported growing up in at least three countries before coming to Canada for university (n=15). By selecting individuals who were already very internationally mobile before coming to Canada, I hoped to avoid cultural stereotyping in my analysis of students' critical thinking skills and willingness to integrate.

After sampling, I operationalized students' English proficiencies by sampling answers to 10 open-ended interview questions such as "What were your first impressions of Canada?", which invite broad, extended answers. Once I had the answers to these questions for each of the 15 interviews, I cleaned up the samples—deleted ums, ahs, yeahs, and likes, as well as proper nouns denoting countries, cities, nationalities, and people's names. Then I ran each participant's sample through Lextutor, a vocabulary profiling tool (Roessingh & Elgie, 2009). Lextutor's built-in corpora measures English proficiency based on a writing sample or interview transcript by separating all words in the transcript into one of three families: K1 for survival conversation (e.g. "cities", "school", "work"), K2 for dinner conversation (e.g. "responsibility", "discipline", "government") and abstract academic words (e.g. "minority", "diversity", "individualism"). Once academic English proficiency level had been established for each interviewee based on the number of academic word families in his/her transcript, I used the first five interviews to develop a coding scheme for cultural differences, stereotyping, and discrimination. I then asked a secondary coder to analyze five interviews, selected at random, according to this scheme.

Agreement ideally approaches or exceeds 90% to ensure intercoder reliability (Miles & Huberman, 1994); in this case, it ranged from .87 to full agreement on all codes after one round.

Effect of English proficiency on the students' intercultural integration, experiences of discrimination, and ways of relating these experiences

Lextutor revealed what a cursory reading of the 15 interviews would suggest, a wide range of academic English proficiencies based on the number of K1, K2, and academic word families used to answer the 10 open-ended questions for the vocabulary profiling samples. These results, along with the assigned pseudonyms I gave each student, are summarized in Figure 1 below.

Pseudonym Sex/Country	K1 word families	K2 word families	Academic word families	Total word families	Total academic word families
Kari F/Norway	177 85.9%	18 8.7%	11 5.3%	206	Level 1 (6-11)
Yuna F/Japan	253 77.6%	47 14.4%	26 8%	326	Level 3 (23-26)
Christopher M/Indonesia	214 83.9%	22 8.6%	19 7.5%	255	Level 2 (16-19)
Alice F/Belgium	206 78.0%	24 9.1%	34 12.9%	264	Level 4 (34-42)
Julie F/Singapore	262 74.6%	47 13.4%	42 12%	351	Level 4 (34-42)

Diana F/Singapore	148 87.6%	13 7.7%	8 4.7%	169	Level 1 (6-11)
Ivy F/Singapore	113 91.0%	16 5.2%	6 1.8%	135	Level 1 (6-11)
Sebastian M/Turkey	171 84.7%)	20 9.9%	11 5.4%	202	Level 1 (6-11)
Ali M/Indonesia	172 86.4%	19 9.5%	8 4.0%	199	Level 1 (6-11)
Jong M/S. Korea	167 79.1%	25 11.8%	19 9.00%	211	Level 2 (16-19)
Sofia F/Brazil	206 80.8%	23 9.00%	26 10.2%	255	Level 2 (23-26)
Hadiya F/Kenya	135 88.2%	12 7.8%	6 3.9%	153	Level 1 (6-11)
Ai F/Japan	153 86.4%	18 10.2%	6 3.4%	177	Level 1 (6-11)
Jonas M/Germany	205 79.4%	30 11.6%	23 8.9%	258	Level 3 (23-26)
Seiji M/Japan	171 81.4%	23 11.0%	16 7.6%	210	Level 2 (16-19)

Figure 1. Results of Lextutor vocabulary profiling software for 15 participants

There were seven students with relatively low academic English proficiencies (Level 1), four students with moderate academic English proficiencies (Level 2), two students whose

academic English proficiencies were relatively quite high (Level 3), and two students with relatively high proficiencies (Level 4). The student with the lowest academic proficiency used academic word families in 1.8% of her responses. The two students with the highest academic proficiencies used academic word families in 12%-13% of their responses, or 6-7 times more frequently. Although the interview did not intrinsically involve academic topics, particular questions invited students to talk about their experiences in Canada, which could be related to academic discourses about post-colonialism or globalization. Differences in students' academic English proficiencies led to observable differences in the way they responded to questions that demanded critical thinking. This paper focuses on what lower versus higher proficiency students had to say about barriers to intercultural integration and experiences of discrimination.

While research on international students in Western universities has often pointed to language being a significant barrier to integration (Leask & Carroll, 2011; Peacock & Harrison, 2009; Spencer-Rodgers & McGovern, 2002), in this study students with low or moderate proficiencies tended to give positive testimony about the welcoming nature of Canada when questioned about it in abstraction. For example, in response to the question, "How receptive do you think Canadians are towards being friends with international students?", Kari, a Norwegian student, says: "I think that's, especially here... that's very, very common at least. It's a big, a big mix of cultures and nationalities, so it's not a problem at all". Sebastian, from Turkey, answers the same question with "They don't have any problems". Hadiya, from Kenya, responds: "I think I integrated really well and the people here in general are very nice" and later adds, "It's like they enjoy getting to know international students because they think it's cool so it's been easy."

These comments stand in contrast to other elements of the same students' interviews. When asked which country most of her friends came from, Hadiya at first does not reply

directly: “Okay, that’s hard to say cause, cause it’s like, you know, I have like different sort of like circles of friends.” Following a mutual pause between her and the interviewer, she adds, “Most of my closest friends are from Africa.” Similarly, Sebastian’s response to the question, “What proportion of your friends here would you say are from Turkey?” is “A lot, many, most.” While Kari does not report friend networks that are mostly representative of her home country, her extracurricular activities suggest ethnocentrism. “The two groups that I’m with are mostly Norwegian stuff,” she says, “so mostly Norwegians do that, but you meet people everywhere—you have classes here, and living in residence...”

The lower- or moderate-proficiency students still appeared to make more friends or spend more time within their own ethnolinguistic groups, even though they generally agreed Canada was a friendly place. Jong, a Level 2 proficiency Korean student, says, “I didn’t even felt like I was being treated differently... I thought that Canada was a friendly neighbor, so I think that they’re all fair to each other.” However, he explains that “almost 80 percent” of his friends are from Korea, “because of no language barriers; it’s more comfortable to talk to them in Korean.”

The language issue that Jong identifies is also identified by Sofia, a Brazilian student with a Level 3 English proficiency. (Both these students defined the upper limit for their levels.) Sofia lived in Brazil until age ten, moved to Calgary and lived there until age thirteen, then finished high school in Switzerland and France before going to a Canadian university. She remembers how hard it was to make close friends in Calgary due to language:

When I first moved to Canada, I was definitely treated differently because I was the only foreign student in the school. I felt that everyone had known each other since they were babies, and had grown up together. They had their tight-knit groups, and they all knew each other, yeah, for so long and stuff. So for me to come in and try to make friends...

Everyone was quite friendly and welcoming to a certain extent, but I would definitely be the one left out, if there was to be like a group activity or get in pairs, and I'd be like 'Ah, oh no!' But people were friendly for the most part. It was just making really close friends that was harder.

When asked the question on Canadians' receptivity towards international students, she says,

Because I'm quite fluent in English nowadays, and I don't have much of an accent and stuff, it's a lot easier for me. Most people don't know I'm actually foreign when they're speaking to me, or they might sense like an accent, but they... I don't know, they just assume I could be from Canada somewhere else, or America or something. But I find that if you don't speak English very well, maybe it would be a lot harder to make a Canadian friend. Not necessarily Canadian but anyone that speaks English more fluently, you will tend to hang out with people that speak your mother tongue, just because it's easier to convey your thoughts and stuff in your first language, I would say.

While Sofia and Jong seem to share the same ideas, Sofia relates her personal situation to a larger social issue. Jong only speaks to his own personal experience—he has Korean friends because it is easier to express himself in Korean. In contrast, Sofia addresses how the mainstream society only goes so far in welcoming students whose native language is not English. Her words suggest that transforming acquaintanceships into friendships requires more than easier, free-flowing conversation; it requires one to convey one's "thoughts".

Sofia's critiques do not only involve discrimination towards non-native English speakers but also discrimination against First Nations students. Of one of her classes, she says, "[A First Nations student] would make certain comments that might not necessarily (pause), maybe not be

inappropriate, but not really answer the question (pause), I don't know. People would be more critical, I would say, because he's First Nations and they're not." Apart from her, the other two students who responded to interview questions about discrimination by discussing people beyond their own ethnolinguistic or racial groups were Alice and Julie. These three were the three students with the highest academic English proficiencies, with academic word frequencies above 10%. Common among them was their way of using their own experiences of discrimination as a starting point to discuss wider issues. Alice, who has a Belgian passport but identifies herself as African from Kenya, says:

Africa is really misrepresented in the media, and people just think a lot of bad things happen there, a lot of bad things happen there but a lot of good things happen there too... There are people who do see Africa as... people always talk of the continent, not the individual countries, but people who always see Africa as sort of a bad place where bad things happen, which can be kind of, you know, hurtful.

Later on, when the interviewer asked, "Do you feel like some groups get a voice?", Alice's answer contains much hedging to soften her objection to the way the question was phrased.

Um [pause] um [pause]... in some ways, like, I mean like there's an Asian Studies program... but I know that it took them, it took them like thirteen years or something to get it going, you know, so, I don't think that like, I wouldn't say that they get the voice, I think they've earned that, you know, so um, so, so yeah.

The third student, Julie, a Singaporean of Indonesian descent, says,

Recently I found out that the Indonesian class... there's only like two classes, Indonesian 100 and Indonesian 200 and the Arts faculty's trying to weed them out and I actually

personally felt concerned for that because I am of Indonesian heritage. A part of me identifies with that strongly so I've been trying to get in contact with people. Asking them, you know, "How are your classes going?" "Why are you taking Indonesian?" So I've been trying to be more active in the academic context as well.

Her attempts to lobby for the preservation of Indonesian electives seem to be at least partly dependent on her English language skills—getting in contact with people and following up on the issue. The last statement she made during the interview was a summary of her beliefs about the experience of international students at the university:

The international students have a lot to offer and most of the time a lot of them are struggling... So I think it's really important to make international students realize that they have something interesting to offer.

While past studies have found that international students can find solidarity regardless of ethnic background (Schmitt, Spears and Branscombe, 2003) or that interracial university friendships for non-whites seem more common than for whites (Sterns, Buchmann & Bannoëau, 2009), English language skills are likely to affect whether international students or non-whites establish solidarity with different groups experiencing discrimination, or only with their own ethnolinguistic groups.

A telling exception among the participants was Seiji, the only Level 1 or 2 student out of eleven who expressed a critical view of Canadian friendliness towards foreigners. Interestingly, he was the only one of the eleven who mentioned an experience of overt discrimination. His use of the adverbial "from time to time" and the past modal verb "would" to describe this experience suggests that it happened more than once:

From time to time you just walk down the street and a bunch of drunk bastards would drive up and be like, ‘You Asians, get the fuck out from our country’ and throw a beer bottle to us. You know, you get racial comments like you guys are yellow, you guys can’t take alcohol, what are you guys doing here, just stick with your group and whatever language you’re speaking. Speak English goddammit. Well then I’m like “We are speaking English goddammit.”

Implications for further collection of feedback on international student integration and experiences of discrimination

Comparing Sofia, Alice, and Julie to the international students with lower English proficiencies, and the latter group with Seiji, suggests that English proficiency can affect students’ ability to provide on-the-spot responses to complex issues. Unless one’s challenges take the form of overt discrimination, in which case the student can simply repeat the offensive statements directed towards him/her, it is difficult to explain in a foreign language more subtle signs of rejection. Therefore, institutionalized surveys and interviews, even if they pose questions in an open-ended way, may fail to substantially capture subtle challenges faced by a good number of students.

The ways in which questions are posed can also lead students to produce positive statements about the institution or society that are in conflict with their individual experiences, as when students were asked “How receptive do you think Canadians are towards being friends with international students?” and later to describe what proportion of their friends were from their home countries rather than Canada. This mismatch between responses to different questions was also found by Norton (2000/2013), whose study asked five adult English language learners to write an essay on the topic “Some people think that Canada is ‘a good country for

immigrants'. Do you think this is true? Please explain", and to keep personal diaries of their experiences in Canada. One learner, Mai, wrote in her essay,

Canadian people are very friendly and helpful... Don't need too much the knowledge of the English language or experience. People just come to Canada can find the job without too much difficulty. Also the Government of Canada is very caring about life of immigrants.

Another young woman, Katarina, expressed: "Most people feel good in Canada... Another nationality person doesn't feel good in [another] country because most of people there are people who were born there. Immigrants feel good in Canada because they are aware of various nationalities". A third learner named Martina stated in her essay: "Even though the economic situation is not good at this time in the whole world, I think that Canada is a good country for immigrants, especially for hardworkers." These statements stand in contrast to the narratives in the women's diaries, which revealed that they were marginalized due to their English proficiencies, gender, and working-class identities (as they were not able initially to gain jobs in Canada that were commensurate with their past levels of education and experience).

While general questions about students' impressions of Canadian society will often yield similar clichés, many students may be uncomfortable recounting specific experiences that highlight their personal difficulties in Canada. Subtle forms of discrimination such as social exclusion, in which others' unfriendly actions are hard to pinpoint but simply felt, may be difficult to express on institution-wide surveys. These common problems may therefore exist under the radar, while stories like Seiji's take centre stage. In Seiji's case, the verbal abuse was extraordinary yet came from no others apart from the bullies on the street; thus, Seiji is able to gain sympathy from the interviewer without implicating the interviewer. While anecdotes like

these may generate much engaged discussion in counseling and cross-cultural communication workshops, they are not particularly enlightening due to their limited applicability, and might draw attention away from the more widespread forms of subtle discrimination, practiced by everyone, which such workshops might productively address.

Institutionalized discourse can be affected by relations of power, by the need to maintain a positive image, by vague and overgeneralized statements that may not reflect complex experiences, and by the contingencies of rapport between individuals. For these reasons, this paper concludes by encouraging the production of grassroots discourse regarding international students' experiences, to be collected by student representatives with bilingual/multilingual competencies and strong interpersonal relationships with both their peers and program staff. These cultural ambassadors, while experiencing study abroad themselves, are qualified in terms of language background and experience to provide a coherent synthesis of conflicting ideologies and statements, and may be the best positioned to voice their peers' concerns to the administration from a position of trust on both sides. Having several student representatives survey their peers in whatever language their peers feel comfortable speaking in, and having the representatives summarize/synthesize the commentaries in a coherent report, could result in more meaningful feedback than a large pile of surveys, and might help to convince more students that their messages are getting through to the institution. It would also provide valuable leadership and cross-cultural experience to a number of international students, in a setting where international students may doubt their ability to become student leaders due to their English proficiency, by highlighting the value of their bi/multilingualism.

Future research on the relationship between English proficiency and international student integration could explore as an explicit focus how conversations requiring critical thinking also

require a certain degree of linguistic proficiency. This is the kind of talk that goes beyond communicating in a friendly but distant manner, and allows one to blend personal narratives with broader theoretical statements about society, thus positioning oneself as an individual who can navigate social discourses and is worthy of further (deeper) conversation. Being able to participate in this kind of conversation should not require becoming “native-like” in a foreign language and well versed in a foreign culture in an unreasonably short period of time. Critical scholarship in English can focus on how to create opportunities to have critical discussions about internationalization in hybrid and multiple languages. Fostering such participation allows us to embrace, rather than simply recognize, the multilingual and multicultural spaces our campuses have become.

References

- Bohm, A., Follari, M., Hewett, A., Jones, S., Kemp, N., Meares, D, & Van Cauter, K. (2004). Forecasting international student mobility: A UK perspective. *London: British Council.*
- Brown, A. (2003). Interviewer variation and the co-construction of speaking proficiency. *Language Testing, 20*(1), 1-25.
- Durrant, M. B., & Dorius, C. R. (2007). Study abroad survey instruments: A comparison of survey types and experiences. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 11*(1), 33-53.
- Kachru, B. B. (1986). *The alchemy of English: The spread, functions and models of non-native Englishes.* Oxford: Pergamon Press.

- Kenyon, K., Frohard-Dourlent, H., & Roth, W. D. (2012). Falling between the cracks: Ambiguities of international student status in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education, 42*(1), 1-24.
- Kerekes, J. (2007). The co-construction of a gatekeeping encounter: An inventory of verbal actions. *Journal of Pragmatics, 39*(11), 1942-1973.
- Kubota, R., & Abels, K. (2006). Improving institutional ESL/EAP support for international students: Seeking the promised land. In P. K. Matsuda, C. Ortmeier-Hooper, & X. You (Eds.), *Politics of second language writing: In search of the promised land* (pp. 75–93). West Lafayette, IN: Parlor Press.
- Kunin, R., et al. (May 2012). Economic Impact of International Education in Canada – An Update. *Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada*. Retrieved from <http://www.international.gc.ca/education/report-rapport/economic-impact-economique>.
- Leask, B., & Carroll, J. (2011). Moving beyond ‘wishing and hoping’: Internationalisation and student experiences of inclusion and engagement. *Higher Education Research and Development, 30*(5), 647-659.
- Marginson, S. (2007). Global position and position taking: The case of Australia. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 11*(1), 5-32.
- Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- NAFSA (National Association of Foreign Student Advisors). (2014). The international student economic value tool. *Explore International Education*. Retrieved from http://www.nafsa.org/Explore_International_Education/Impact/Data_And_Statistics/The_International_Student_Economic_Value_Tool.

- Norton, B. (2000/2013). *Identity and language learning: Extending the conversation*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Peacock, N., & Harrison, N. (2009). "It's so much easier to go with what's easy": "Mindfulness" and the discourse between home and international students in the United Kingdom. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 13(4), 487-508.
- Pellegrino, V. A. (1998). Student perspectives on language learning in a study abroad context. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 4(2), 91-120.
- Roessingh, H., & Elgie, S. (2009). Early language and literacy development among young English language learners: Preliminary insights from a longitudinal study. *TESL Canada Journal*, 26(2), 24-45.
- Schmitt, M. T., Spears, R., & Branscombe, N. R. (2003). Constructing a minority group identity out of shared rejection: The case of international students. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 33(1), 1-12.
- Spencer-Rodgers, J., & McGovern, T. (2002). Attitudes toward the culturally different: The role of intercultural communication barriers, affective responses, consensual stereotypes, and perceived threat. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 26(6), 609-631.
- Stearns, E., Buchmann, C., & Bonneau, K. (2009). Interracial friendships in the transition to college: Do birds of a feather flock together once they leave the nest? *Sociology of Education*, 82(2), 173-195.
- Talmy, S. (2010). The interview as collaborative achievement: Interaction, identity, and ideology in a speech event. *Applied Linguistics*, 35(3), 1-19.
- Verbik, L., & Lasanowski, V. (2007). International student mobility: Patterns and trends. *World Education News and Reviews*, 20(10), 1-16.

Williams, T. R. (2005). Exploring the impact of study abroad on students' intercultural communication skills: Adaptability and sensitivity. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 9(4), 356-371.