

## **Substrate Effects: Linguistic Resources for Indicating Ethnic Orientation**

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Research on language and ethnicity has pointed to the lasting effects of ancestral languages in some situations of language contact. This phenomenon has been referred to as substrate influence (e.g., Winford 2003), shift-induced interference (e.g., Thomason 2001), and substrate effects (e.g., Purnell et al. 2005, Labov 2008). This panel investigates substrate effects in the United States, Canada, and England in communities where an immigrant language (German, Yiddish, Cajun French, Jamaican Creole, Punjabi) continues to influence the speech of monolingual English speakers.

Using diverse data sources, including interviews, observed and videotaped interactions, comedy performances, survey responses, a newspaper corpus, and the U.S. census, these papers demonstrate the importance of local context in analyzing substrate effects. Historical events, such as waves of immigration, changing race relations, and economic and demographic shifts, have led to variable use of substrate influences. In addition, these papers highlight the variation within ethnic and regional groups in the use of substrate features. Individuals' use of phonological, morphosyntactic, and lexical features of their ancestral languages correlates with their age, proximity to immigration and/or ancestral language, social networks, residential location, and attitudes toward their ethnic groups and subgroups thereof.

One finding common to multiple papers in this panel is the resurgence of substrate effects that had appeared to be on the wane. Apparent-time and historical data indicate that a group closest to the ancestral language is most likely to use certain substrate features, a middle group is less likely, and members of a younger group reclaim features that their elders had rejected. This type of boomerang effect, which has been found in previous work (e.g., Dubois and Horvath 2000), may be influenced by increasing consciousness about and pride in ethnic and/or regional distinctiveness, perhaps some degree of enregisterment (see Johnstone et al. 2002, Johnstone 2009).

As a set, these papers point to the diversity of substrate effects and the importance of analyzing each situation with an eye to both linguistic and socio-historical factors. By investigating several situations involving historical shift to English in one panel, we gain a better understanding of language variation, language contact, and the relationship between language and ethnicity.

Timetable: 120 minutes total.

Each panelist will speak for 10 minutes, audience will ask questions for 3-5 minutes. The discussant will respond for about 15 minutes (incl. questions to panelists), and then the entire panel will continue the discussion. The unconventional paper length will allow for more synthesis and overall discussion of the phenomenon of substrate effects (by the respondent, panelists, and audience), while still allowing for some depth into each presenter's research.

## **Incremental change in substrate effects in London Asian English**

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Recent research has suggested that substrate effects in the speech of first generation migrants are either lost entirely or significantly altered by subsequent generations (Chambers 2002; Labov 2008; Hoffman & Walker 2010). For instance, Hoffman and Walker find for Italian and Chinese communities in Toronto that substrate effects arise in the 1<sup>st</sup> generation but that subsequent generations largely conform to ‘a shared native-speaker linguistic system’, with ethnolectal differences taking the form of variable rates rather than deep divergence.

This talk will present evidence that there need not be such a sharp boundary between first (non-native) and subsequent (native) generations. A multivariate analysis of the use of one substrate variant, t-retroflexion, by 42 members of a Punjabi community in London shows that not all British-born generations share a reallocated use. The older (chronologically earlier) 2<sup>nd</sup> generation group closely replicates the linguistic conditioning of retroflexion among the non-native, foreign-born 1<sup>st</sup> generation. Substantial social and linguistic reallocation is only found in the younger (chronologically later) 2<sup>nd</sup> generation.

Close sociohistorical examination reveals this delayed focusing towards new norms to be linked to changes in demographic balance, race relations, and a subtle shift from traditional Punjabi to Western urban gender roles. The delay suggests that nativeness (i.e. being local-born) is not necessarily the point at which use of substrate forms is reallocated, and that social factors may play a greater part. The findings correspond to gradualism in new-dialect formation (Trudgill 2004) and creole formation (Roberts 2000). The contrast to Chambers (2002), Labov (2008), and Hoffman & Walker (2010) suggests their claims may not apply universally, and instead raises the possibility of more rapid assimilation to mainstream norms in some North American communities as compared to the UK.

**How synagogues became *shuls*:**  
**The changing role of yiddish in the linguistic repertoire of American Jews**  
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American Jews offer an interesting case of the lingering effects of a substratum, as they are several generations removed from the large wave of Yiddish-speaking immigration (1880-1920). With some exceptions, Jews two or more generations removed from immigration tend to be monolingual English speakers. While the distinctive Jewish linguistic repertoire includes prosodic, syntactic, phonological, and discourse resources (especially among Orthodox Jews), contemporary Jews tend to distinguish themselves mostly through lexicon: several hundred loanwords from Hebrew, Aramaic, and Yiddish. In this paper, I argue that some Yiddish loanwords are, unexpectedly, increasing in use and changing in social meaning.

I report results of an online survey with 25,179 Jewish respondents. Among the 22 Yiddish words tested, most are age-graded as we might expect: *macher* ('big-shot'), *naches* ('pride'), *bashert* ('destined match'), etc., are used more by older respondents. But younger respondents are more likely to use Yiddish words that have become part of the American lexicon, e.g., *klutz* ('clumsy person'), *shpiel* ('routine'), *shmutz* ('dirt'), as well as Yiddish words in the religious sphere, e.g., *bentsh* ('bless'), *daven* ('pray'), *shul* ('synagogue'). Some of the religious words can be accounted for by trends of religious intensification, but regression analyses indicate that for some Yiddish words, age has a significant independent effect.

I offer historical corpus data as evidence of the recent increase in the use of *shul*. Of the 15,000+ tokens of *synagogue/temple/shul/schul/shool* in the Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle and Jewish Telegraphic Agency, we see a boomerang effect: *shul* is used sporadically in the 1890s and 1900s, then rarely until the 1980s when it becomes more common.

I supplement the quantitative data with qualitative data from popular culture, suggesting that postvernacular Yiddish indexes not only nostalgia and connection to the immigrant generation but also a young hipness that draws ironically from the religious and secular spheres.

**“Up the Bayou-Down the Bayou Syndrome”: Patterning of Cajun French substrate features in the performance of Boudreaux and Thibodeaux jokes**

Katie Carmichael

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Dubois & Horvath (2000) note curvilinear generational patterning of Cajun English (CE) features, writing, “[t]he set of linguistic variables that mark Cajun English originated in the accented English of the older generation...[younger monolingual English speakers] use the Cajun features not as a result of interference from French but as sociolinguistic markers of Cajun identity” (291). The current study examines the social and linguistic patterning of these Cajun French substrate features in Boudreaux and Thibodeaux (BT) joke performances. BT jokes are a genre of Cajun ethnic jokes, generally told with an exaggerated CE accent.

I analyzed the performances of six English-dominant BT joketellers from Lafourche Parish, Louisiana, comparing rates of theta- and eth-stopping and unaspirated /p,t,k/ in joketelling versus conversational speech. The joketellers differed in terms of CF fluency and where they lived along Bayou Lafourche. Bayou Lafourche is an important point of orientation in Lafourche Parish (Dajko 2009), with the descriptors “up the bayou” (UB) and “down the bayou” (DB) carrying local sociolinguistic significance. Due to greater social and geographic isolation in DB towns, CF has been retained a generation longer in these areas than in UB communities; as such, DB joketellers had greater CF fluency than UB joketellers, as well as stronger baseline CE accents.

While both UB and DB joketellers reduced aspiration of /p,t,k/, only UB joketellers significantly increased rates of theta- and eth-stopping in jokes. This is because DB speakers already used stop variants categorically in their baseline speech, thus they did not have this feature available for manipulation. The patterning of these features reflects each joketeller’s employment of slightly different linguistic resources depending on their social and linguistic background. Consequently, this study bolsters past work establishing the agentive and inherently social nature of dialect performance (Lo 1999; Rampton 1999; Schilling-Estes 1998) and ethnolinguistic repertoires (Benor 2010).

## **Variation in Creole substrate influence on the speech of Jamaicans in Toronto**

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The English of second-generation Jamaicans in Toronto shows types of Creole substrate influence that differ from one another both formally and in terms of the indexical work they achieve. Formal types include (1) system-level switches between Canadian English and Creole, as well as (2) gradual style shifting that manipulates only some of the available variables, and (3) stable phonetic markers in an overall Canadian English idiolectal phonology. In Benor's (2010) terminology, these different forms of substrate influences represent different types of the same linguistic act: the deploying of elements of an "ethnolinguistic repertoire" in the creation of individual style. In that spirit, this paper argues that for any given speaker, there is a continuum of formal types of alternation between the unmarked local standard and the marked elements of the Jamaican repertoire. In other words: gradual, subtle style shifting in a linguistic continuum between varieties of the same language can achieve conversational objectives that are very similar to code-switching among the extremes of the same linguistic continuum. More than distinctions between the formal types of variation among the substrate and superstrate in this type of diasporic setting, inter-individual differences in ethnolinguistic repertoire usage require our classificatory attention. In a comparison between six second-generation Jamaican-Canadian speakers, I show that the indexical functions of the Creole repertoire differ greatly among individuals. Factors that must inform a sociolinguistic explanation of these differences include speakers' personal notions of ethnic identity, their set of social networks as well as their position within them, and their reported language attitudes toward Creole.

## **The socio-historical context of imposition in substratal effects**

Miranda E. Wilkerson (*Columbia College*), Mark Livengood, (*University of Wisconsin-Madison*), Joseph C. Salmons (*University of Wisconsin-Madison*)

From the mid-19th century onward, large numbers of German immigrants moved into eastern Wisconsin communities founded by English speakers. German speakers were eventually absorbed linguistically, yet German has left clear structural traces on the local dialects, by borrowing but much from imposition. This paper argues that understanding the historical demographics of likely linguistic input to learners is central to understanding the ‘imposition’ (Van Coetsem 2000) of such features from German onto English.

For one such community — Hustisford, Wisconsin — we have some information on the kinds of input children learning English likely were exposed to, beginning with Census data. Research to date shows that during a period of rapid shift in home language (ca. 1910-1920), most of the children who became the first overwhelmingly English monolingual generation in the community grew up in heavily bilingual households. In 1910, almost 70% of children were being raised in bilingual households, while by 1920, the percentage drops to under 20%. Thus, a large majority of learners in the community would have been exposed extensively to non-native English in the home and elsewhere.

The features which survive today in the area correlate strongly with those that L1 German speakers find hardest to overcome. They include phonological and phonetic features like variable ‘stopping’ of interdental fricatives and final devoicing, but also cover a variety of pragmatic, lexico-semantic and syntactic patterns. That is, during rapid shift to English, these are the features we would expect to be present in the German-colored input to the new generation. Today, some of the features are recessive (stopping) and others are spreading (devoicing), but aside from a few lexical items, they have become regional rather than ethnic markers.