Multilingual Margins

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from the periphery

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CHAPTERS

Linguistic Prehistory and Identity in Nigeria's *Bini-Ife* Pre-eminence Contestation

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Abstract

On the basis of genetic classification, Edoid (of the *Bini* people of Nigeria) is conceived as an offshoot of Benue-Congo earlier than Yoruboid (of the *Ife* people of Nigeria). However, the reverse is the case when viewed from the sociolinguistic platforms of population, prestige and power. Thus, in 2004, the Edoid patriarch of *Bini* launched a biography, wherein he narrated the *Bini* origin of the Ife monarchy. This sparked a barrage of unguarded responses from both sides of the controversy, largely centred on different interpretations to oral tradition. By exploring language as custodian of prehistory, this paper makes a linguistic contribution to the continuing debate about which predates the other between *Ife* (Yoruboid) and *Bini* (Edoid) of southwestern Nigeria. It pieces together evidence of cognate lexical simplification, patterns of cognate counting systems, sound inventory, and decadence of vowel harmony, which support the chronological pre-eminence of Edoid over Yoruboid; thus, calling for archaeological, anthropological and geographical inspection.

Keywords: Prehistory, Pre-eminence contestation, Bini-Ife, Edoid, Yoruboid

INTRODUCTION

There are two main concerns of comparative historical linguistics, namely the determination of genetic linguistic relatedness and the illumination of prehistories, otherwise known as linguistic palaeontology. The first of these has been robustly explored, to the extent that there are gross phylogenetic trees to which most natural languages have been parsed (Greenberg, 1963; Guthrie, 1971; Blust, 1995). However, scant attempts have been made (especially in recent time) to reconstruct specific historical events through linguistic inferences. In the case of Africa, some such attempts include the routing of the migration of Niger-Congo populations to their current location in West Africa (Heine, 1979; Horton, 1982 and Elugbe, 1992); Williamson's (1988) inferences on the trajectory of the Ijaw in eastern Nigeria; and Lewis' (2015) identification of settlement and migratory patterns of populations in North Edo, western Nigeria. It should be noted that these works have focused largely on prehistoric migrations, leaving out aspects like prehistoric identity. For instance, there is the contest of ethnocultural and political

pre-eminence between the ancient *Ife* and *Bini* empires of Nigeria to which this paper lends linguistic evidence.

It often happens that languages with multitudes of speakers occupying vast expanses of land and wielding political blocs enjoy overwhelming prestige above cohabiting languages with tiny populations of native speakers. Often, also, the attitudes which derive from such linguistic imbalance are so pervasive as to permeate spheres of language choice and use, even to notions of chronological pre-eminence of a language with a large population of native speakers over that of a language with a small group of speakers. This state of affairs is more likely when the language with the advantage is properly codified and standardized. That is the case in southwestern Nigeria, where the minority and largely un-codified Edoid languages of the *Bini* are often taken to be recent offshoots of the Yoruboid stock. To the extent that, Yoruboid, a huge language family with a cluster of nineteen varieties (considered as dialects because of their homogeneity[1]), is perceived as parent of Edoid, which is comprised of thirty heterogeneous languages (See Figs. 2 and 2b)[2].

The force of political appropriateness between *Bini* and *Ife* has been strong enough to occlude phylogenetic facts which plot Edoid above Yoruboid in West Benue-Congo (Williamson and Blench 2000: 31, figure 1). In fact, it is popularly expressed in larger Nigerian society that the Edoid speak more recent versions of Yoruba. However, since 2004, there have been fierce verbal and written exchanges between monarchs and leaders on both sides of the divide; each claiming diachronic precedence over the other. Following from this backdrop, this paper assesses linguistic evidence to test the original question about which of Edoid and Yoruboid precedes the other.
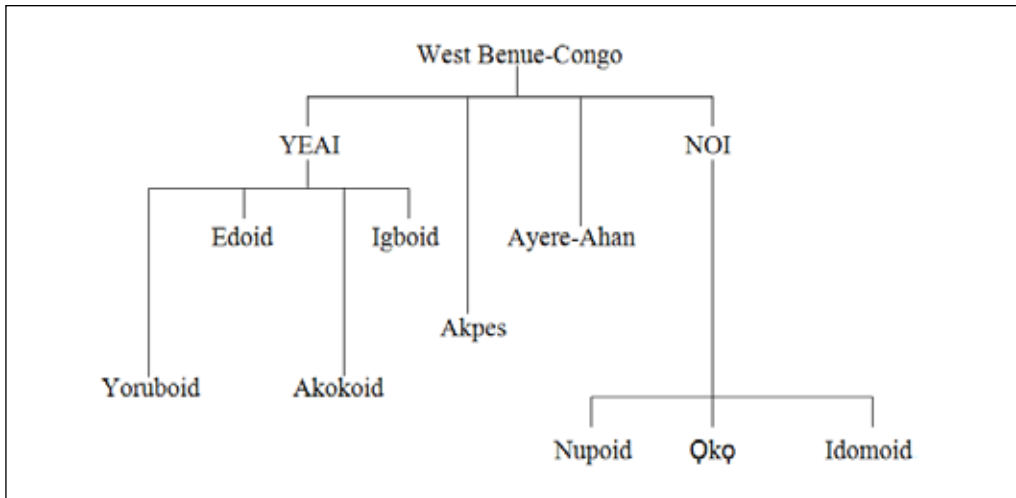
Figure 1: Classification of West Benue-Congo Language (Williamson and Blench, 2000: 31)

1 Yoruba is referred to as homogeneous because its varieties are intelligible along a dialect chain. The varieties of Edoid are, however, heterogeneous because they are mutually unintelligible and distinct languages.
2 In figure 2a, aside from Ife, all of Ondo, Ogun, Lagos, Ekiti and Oyo are Yoruboid. The Edoid languages from which data were drawn are indicated in figure 2b.

Figure 2a: Map of Nigeria showing Ife (*Uhe*) and Benin (*Bini*)

Figure 2b: Map of Northern Edo showing relevant villages/languages

ORAL TRADITION ON THE *BINI-IFE* PRE-EMINENCE CONTESTATION

Both the *Bini* and the *Ife* people believe that a prince of Ife went to rule *Bini* in the 12ᵗʰ century AD. The points at issue are that of the lineage of the said prince and whether his ascension to the throne was the origin of the *Bini* or a mere change of dynasty.

The position of the Oba of Benin

The mistake that modern historians (including Yoruba) made, as I have found from my own studies, is that they confuse Oduduwa with Orumila, the bringer of Ifa divination.

Omo N'Oba N'Edo UkuAkpolo Kpolo
Oba Erediauwa,
Sunday Vanguard 9 May, 2004.

According to the Oba of Benin, Omo N'Oba N'Edo UkuAkpolo Kpolo Erediauwa, the prince of Ife that took the Benin throne was the son of a runaway Bini prince, Ekaladerhan, whom the Yoruba knew as Oduduwa and rightly claim to have come from the east – Bini being more easterly than Ife. He maintained that Bini and Ife were founded by two of the sixteen co-equal sons of Orunmila; and that the first dynasty of Bini kings was known as Ogisi. There were thirty Ogisi until Ogisi Owodo, who by a diktat of the oracle was compelled to execute his only son. However, unknown to Ogisi Owodo, the executioner spared the life of the son and let him escape into a bush, onwards to Ife (Uhe as the Bini call it). At Ife, this prince of Benin gained popularity for

his healing prowess, to the extent that he was made king by consensus after a popular revolt sent the village head packing. Thus, news reached Bini about the exploits of their crown prince, but when their emissaries eventually caught up with Ekaladerhan, he was already the Yoruba king, Oduduwa. Seeing as it was not possible for the aged Oduduwa to abdicate the Ife throne and ascend that of Bini, he sent his last son, Oranmiyan, to become king at Bini. It was at that time that the Bini dynasty changed title from Ogisi to Oba. Nevertheless, Oranmiyan only ruled for a stint of a few months, after which he abdicated the throne in anger, largely from cultural shock. However, the dumb son of Oranmiyan, who was cured by an *Ife babalawo*, eventually became Oba Eweka I of Benin, thus continuing the dynasty of Oba from Oranmiyan to date.

The position of the Ooni of Ife

The Oba of Benin whose dynasty commenced in 1191 AD was an Ife Prince borrowed to the people of Benin (sic) on their request, after the rule of the Ogisos' ended in Benin history... The Oba of Benin should go and read what his fore-fathers told the Portuguese explorers during their visit to Benin on 2ⁿᵈ July 1550 AD about the relationship between Ife and Benin. So, it is too late for the Omo N'Oba to rewrite our history.

Oba Sijuade, Ooni of Ife
Vanguard, Friday 7 May, 2004

In his account, the Ooni of Ife vehemently dissociated Oduduwa from the Ogisi dynasty of Bini, insisting that since Oranmiyan was loaned to Bini as Oba, upon dying, the head of every Bini Oba was buried at the sacred place of *Orun-Oba-Ado* in Ife up until 1900. As

an extension of the authority of Ife over Bini, the Ooni cited archival records which made clear that the Ooni of Ife had to authorise the installation of new Bini king up to 1916. This position got the backing of historians including Ade Ajayi, who asserts that the father and predecessor of the Omo N'Oba regularly attended the conference of Yoruba Obas and did not object to the fact that the founder of Bini was an Ife prince (The Sunday Vanguard, 9 May, 2004).

Merging the two oral traditions

Whereas the Yoruba maintain that a prince of Ife founded the Bini kingdom, the Bini do not lay claim to founding the Yoruba kingdom. As the Omo N'Oba made clear, Bini and Ife populations hail from a common Orunmila source. Instead, the Bini claim that their fugitive crown prince, by some twist of events, became king at Ife. It was this same Ife Oba of Bini origin that sent a prince, Oranmiyan, to be king at Bini, at the request the Bini, who wished to end an interregnum by reinstating exiled royal lineage. The Yoruba story therefore perfectly fits into the Bini narrative, which accounts for a level-pegged beginning of both Bini and Ife populations as descendants of Orunmila and provides an explanation for the trajectory of Oduduwa before his advent in Ife. It would therefore seem that these Ife and Bini oral traditions told the same story, each as far as it was known to them from different periods in history.

METHODOLOGY

The thrust of the study was to identify which of Yoruboid or Edoid is replete with more complex forms of cognate words and etyma of cultural vocabulary.

Based on this premise, decisions had to be taken on, which varieties of Edoid and Yoruboid languages had representative complexities to warrant comparison; what kinds of lexicon were rich in archaisms and what framework of analysis would best illustrate the complexities being sought.

Selection of languages

The selection of languages to compare was hinged on the results of previous studies. On the grounds of possession of archaic features and high linguistic differentiation, and following the inklings of Williamson (1988), Northwestern Edo, comprising North Edoid languages, has been postulated as the Edoid cradle (Elugbe 1989: 24; Lewis 2013: 239). These studies established that Edo (Bini), despite being the official and most widely spoken language of the Bini Kingdom, has more simplified lexicon than the North Edoid languages. Hence, the North Edoid languages exhibit archaic forms closer to proto-Edoid than does Edo (Bini). This conclusion ties with the age-area principle (Crowley and Bowern, 2010), which affirms that among related languages, remote areas with small populations have high linguistic diversity and archaic features akin to the proto-language, and the areas where these etyma are spoken constitute the homeland of the language group. Hence, whereas Edo Bini is the dominant Edoid language, extant minority languages of North Edoid are closer in form to proto-Edoid than Edo (Bini) is. Going by this foregrounding, North Edoid languages provided the best archaic representatives of Edoid words. These Edoid extant forms were, therefore, compared with cognate Yoruboid forms to determine which of Edoid or Yoruboid retain etyma lexicon.

As already adduced, Yoruboid forms are significantly homogenous. In fact, Yoruboid varieties, with the exception of Itsekiri and Igala, are considered dialects of one language. Hence, the Standard dialect of Yoruba, which is a composite of features of all Yoruba dialects, was used for this study.

Identification of relevant lexicon and phenomena for comparison

Cultural as well as basic vocabularies were compared in this study. This is because aspects of identity and history of closely related peoples are better embodied in cultural lexicon, just as basic vocabulary also preserve prehistory connections. Hence, the Ibadan 400 wordlist, which aside from having basic vocabulary also has cultural items common to the Benue-Congo language sub-family to which the Yoruboid and Edoid belong, was adopted.

The compared vocabulary items were in four broad categories, namely animate, mundane, occupational and numerical. Animate vocabulary included names for local animals common to Edoid and Yoruboid regions, as well as action verbs proper to humans and animals. Flora, water and heavenly bodies constituted mundane items that were analysed. The occupational vocabulary that was evaluated included smithery, pottery and weaving. These, aside from crop farming and cattle rearing, are the most ancient occupations of both peoples. Some attention was paid to cognate logic in numeration between members of Edoid and Yoruboid. Finally, given that language complexity and simplicity can be gleaned from sound inventory, and the presence of decadence of vowels harmony, Yoruboid and Edoid sound inventories and patterns of vowel harmony were also compared.

Identifying natural linguistic change

The inspection of the chronological trend of linguistic change was anchored on phonological plausibility, which draws from the hypothesis that speakers tend to simplify linguistic complexities with the passage of time (Hock, 1991; Ohala, 1993; Kirchner, 2000; Kingston, 2008). By implication, older and isolated varieties of languages manifest complex (etyma) forms which have been lost by more recent varieties. Further still, there are well defined directions of sound change which derive from sounds assimilating the features of their phonological environments (Crowley and Bowern, 2010). For instance, there is a universal tendency towards intervocalic voicing, whereby voiceless sounds like [s] become voiced to [z] when they occur between vowels. Phenomena such as intervocalic voicing are referred to as natural processes. Hence, phonological plausibility is interpreted in historical linguistics as the chronological occurrence of natural processes.

Another characteristic of natural phonological processes is that they usually imply the weakening of sounds, whereby a sound converts to a form which requires less energy for production. This process is referred to as lenition and Hock (1991: 83) provides a detailed intrinsic lenition hierarchy for segments, which is adopted in this study. Some productive leniting processes identified in the data were intervocalic voicing, pre-palatalization, Suffix/prefix deletion, debuccalization (i.e. the changing of oral sounds to [h]), spirantization (consonants converting to sibilant fricatives), sonorant alternation (largely [m] becoming [w] and vice versa),

simplification of double articulation, and nasalization.

Within the context of cultural vocabulary, items with cognate forms were scoured for archaisms. We first explored natural sound changes across cognate cultural and occupational vocabularies, especially those involving lenition (the appearance of weaker sounds from strong ones) and contraction of lexicon by deletion of sounds and clipping of syllables. Thus, etyma lexicons are determined largely on the bases of strength of sounds and complexity of words. Chronological preference was also given to non-derived words over derived words (composed by compounding or phrase nominalisation).

EVALUATION OF ANIMATE DATA

Five sets of animate data were analysed. The separation is more for expository force than for categorical distinctions. We compared Edoid and Yoruboid cognates to see which of the two groups provides overwhelming number of etyma. Where there are two cognate forms, they are presented and analysed together. After such evaluation, the most complex form is nominated as etymon and indicated with an asterisk. Hence, asterisk in this paper does not indicate reconstructed forms. Furthermore, at the right side of each item in the data, we have indicated the language group, either Yoruboid (*Yod*) or Edoid (*Edd*), to which the etymon is ascribed.

Animate items I

Consider animate items in example (1). The extant Igwe form *ìgénàkpè* stands out first as the etymon of the word *fish* in Edoid, where the consonant on the second syllable [g] through lenition and pre-palatalization evolved into [ɣ, ʒ, j] as found in Ikhin, Ghotuo and Arokho. By extension, [dʒ] as manifested in Yoruba, is the first derivative of a combination of pre-palatization and lenition. There has also been a lowering of word initial front vowels from [i] to [ɛ]. The same vowel lowering process is repeated between Uroe and Yoruba in the word for *meat*, just as a velar plosive has become a palato-alveolar fricative in *dog*.

(1)

Fish	Igwe*[1]	Ghotuo	Ikhin	Arokho	Uroe	Yoruba
	ìgénàkpè	*ēʒīē*	*èɣà*	*ējē*	*èhè*	*ɛ̄dʒā* *Edd*
Dog	Ihievbe*	Ikpeshi	Okpella			Yoruba
	ágʷà	*īdʒâ:dʒì*	*áwà*			*ādʒá* *Edd*
Meat	Uroe*	Ake	Arokho			Yoruba
	íràmì	*ɛ́jàmì*	*ɛ́rà*			*ɛ̄rã* *Edd*
	Okpamheri	Ikpeshi	Ososo			Yoruba
	ɛ̀dɔ	*ɛ̀dɔ*	*àdɔ̀*			*ɛ̀dɔ* (liver)
Horse	Okpella*	Ikpeshi	Ikhin			Yoruba
	átʃĩ	*ātʃĩ*	*ɛ̄sī*			*ɛ̄jĩ* *Edd*
Blood	Okpe*	Ghotuo	Akuku	Igwe		Yoruba
	àtè	*àdè*	*â:zè*	*àtè*		*ɛ̀dʒè* *Edd*

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3 Asterisks indicate the form considered as etymon of the set.

In addition, the Yoruba forms for fish and meat have undergone suffix deletion. In fact, there is a trace of the suffix nasal [m] in ē̄rā̃, Yoruba for meat. It is remarkable that the alternative form for meat which dominates Ediod is èdɔ̀, which in contemporary Yoruba refers to liver. It could be mutually argued either that Yoruba has narrowed the meaning of èdɔ̀ or that Edoid groups have extended its meaning. We subscribe to the latter by reasoning that it is less plausible for a generic name like that of a pervasive item like meat to be reduced to a small part of its referent. Thus, èdɔ̀ 'liver' may be referred to as meat, but ē̄rā̃ 'meat' may not be referred to as liver.

The words for *Horse* and *blood* present already attested palatalzation (/t/ to [dʒ] and [ʃ]), occasioned by front vowels. They also have in common the raising and fronting of word initial [a] in Okpella and Okpe to [ɛ] in Yoruba. Both processes simplify in the direction of Yoruba and the cognates cut across Edoid groups.

Animate items II

All the items in (2) display clipping in the form of prefix or suffix deletion or both – CVC, VC and V. There is a tendency for Edoid back vowel [u] to descend to [ɔ] in Yoruba in word initial position, as instantiated in body parts *hand* and *neck*. Lenition in *hand* takes the form of approximation to labial-velar glide [w]; receiving the velar component from the back quality of flanking vowels.

Aside from prefix deletion, item *cow* manifests an inter-language alternation of alveolar [n] and [l]. Again, based solely on the criterion of strength, Edoid [n] predates Yoruboid [l]. There are two cognate forms for *elephant* – àdʒànã̀kú and *éní*. Both are used as synonyms in Yoruba, but in Edoid terrain, the first is restricted to northern Akoko-Edo, whereas the other is used in southern Owan. It should also be noted that àdʒànã̀kú represents one of the few instances where the etymon is extant in Yoruba and prefix deletion occurs in the Edoid forms. As for the *éní* -form, the nasal [n] lenited to [r ̃], leaving a nasal trace on the following vowel.

(2)

Neck	Okpella* *ùtùrì*	Ghotuo *ɛ̄wɔ̄rɔ̄*	Uokha *ūrū*			Yoruba *ɔ̄rũ̄*	*Edd*
Hand	Ikpeshi* *ùbóxɔ̀*	Enwa *óbɔ̀ɣì*	Igwe *wóbɔ̀*	Uokha *úbɔ̀*	Ikhin *òbɔ̀*	Yoruba *ɔ̄wɔ́*	*Edd*
Friend	Ikhin* *lámɛ́rɛ́*	Arokho *ɔ́rè*				Yoruba *ɔ̀rɛ́*	*Edd*
Cow	Akuku *ìmànú:̀*	Atte *mànú:̀ ̃*				Yoruba *mà:́lú:̀*	*Edd*
Tail	Uroe* *ūkpúrúmúɔ̀ì*	Igwe *úrúāhɔ̀̃*	Ikhin *ìrù*			Yoruba *ìrù*	*Edd*
Push	Warake* *ɔ̀tɔ́ĩ̀*	Ghotuo *tí*				Yoruba *tì*	*Edd*
Grind	Uroe* *ílɔ́mè*	Ikhin *lɔ̄:́*				Yoruba *lɔ̀*	*Edd*
Elephant	Okpella* *éní*	Ikpeshi *éní*				Yoruba *ē̄rĩ̄*	*Edd*
	Akuku *ânàsà*	Ogbe *ánàzà*				Yoruba* *àdʒànã̀kú*	*Yod*

Animate items III

Item *woman* or *wife* in (3) has suffix deletion plus lenition. The latter leads up to debuccalization in the direction s ~ z ~ j ~ h to produce Okpe [ʤhāmī]; and the Yoruba form has [j] which is an intermediate development. As for *cat*, its voiceless labial-velar plosive became voiced intervocalically; and there was also suffix deletion. The item *He-goat* again instantiates chronological debuccalization. This time however, the process progresses in the direction of Edoid, culminating in the loss of segment in Arokho, while Yoruba has the etymon. Item *feather* seems opaque to chronological inferences, save for the fact that the front vowels [e] and [ɛ] may have caused [g] to become [b], the latter being an anterior consonant. It may also be relevant to add that both bilabial [b] and velar [g] are acoustically grave (Jakobson and Halle 1956).

(3)

Woman/Wife	Atte* ɔ̀sàmhì	Ikpeshi ɔ̀zàmì	Okpe ʤhāmī	Yoruba ājā/ìjàwó *Edd*	
Cat	Ikhin* ōlókpèrērè	Arokho ūlékpèrè	Ghotuo/Uroe ōlógbò	Yoruba ōlógbò *Edd*	
He-goat	Okpella ɔ̀wúhɔ̄	North Ibie ɔ̄wùxɔ̀	Arokho ɛ́wiè	Yoruba* ēwúré/obúkɔ̄ " *Yod*	
Feather	Ghotuo úgégé	Sasaru ùrērē	Ikhin ābēbé	Yoruba ābɛ̀bɛ̀/ìjé *Edd*	

Animate items IV

In (4), the item *come* displays a clear lenition and transition of voiced bilabial plosive [b] through the labio-dental to the labial-velar place. There is a conversion from fortis to lenis between Uneme and Atte, then spirantization shift to labio-dental place to yield [v] in Warake and Okpuje, followed by approximation to [ʋ] in Okpella, and finally a change of place to labial-velar in Yoruba. Item *hold* displays a simple case of suffix deletion with the same kind of sonorant alternation between [m] and [w] that is observed in *drink* – yet a case of a bilabial stop surfacing as a labial-velar approximant. The situation is however a little more complex with the item *drink*; whereas the Yoruba form has the [m] which becomes [w] in Edoid Okpe and Arokho, even with a nasal trace on the succeeding vowel, Okpe has preserved the unclipped form of the word. There is an interesting demonstration of strengthening in the development of the word for *die*. North Ibie has a labial-velar approximant in word initial position, which inches up the strength scale as a debuccalized fricative in Ora; and alternatively, as a voiced plosive in Akuku, then as a devoiced plosive in Yoruba.

(4)

Come	Uneme*	Atte	Warake	Okpella	Okpuje	Yoruba	
	ábádìɛ̄	*bhàle*	*òvádè*	*ʋàrē*	*ʋàè*	*wá*	*Edd*

Hold	Ikhin*	Arokho	Uroe			Yoruba	
	múβ̃m̄ɛ	*úwɔ̀rēr̄ē*	*ūmɔ́í*			*mú*	*Edd*

Drink	Okpe*	Arokho		Ghotuo		Yoruba	
	jíwɔ̃̀wù	*wɔ̃̀ .̂*		*wū*		*mū*	*Edd*

Die	Akuku	North Ibie*		Ora		Yoruba	
	gù	*wù*		*hù*		*kú*	*Edd*

Other items of diachronic relevance

The words for *sea, one* and *leopard* in (5) expose a curious development involving the simplification of double articulation to yield a sequence of singly articulated plosive and a nasal vowel [kṽ)]. It would seem that the loss of labial articulation is facilitated by velar lowering; such a process again validates the age-long acoustic link between bilabial and velar articulations (Jakobson and Halle 1956). There is a trade-off between suffix and prefix deletion in *rope* (see Igwe and Yoruba). Igwe is more archaic only because it has a longer form. As is often the case, Yoruba has deleted the suffix and prefix for *small*. The caveat with *rope is that* even non-Benue-Congo Hausa has *Keremi*, suggesting that the word could be Nupoid in origin (borrowed from Nupe slave traders). The etymon for *flower* is conceded to Ghotuo for the simple fact that there is no natural reason for high front vowel [i] to arise from the back vowel reflexes seen in word initial position in the other forms; rather [i] more plausibly was pulled back by the assimilatory effect of vowels in the second and third syllables.

(5)

Sea	Arokho*	Uroe	Igwe	Yoruba	
	ókpédà	*ókpɛ́díɛ̀*	*ōkṹjélé*	*òkṹ*	*Edd*

One	Ikhin	Arokho	Ake	Yoruba	
	ɔ́rɔ̀kpā	*ɔ̄kpā*	*ɛkpà*	*òkã̀*	*Edd*

Leopard	Okpamheri			Yoruba	
	ākpɛ̀			*ɛ̀kṹ*	*Edd*

Rope	Igwe*			Yoruba	
	wúìrì			*òwú /ōkṹ*	*Edd*

Small	Uroe*	Sasaru		Yoruba	
	kékérémì	*ɔ̄kérèmì*		*kékēré*	*Edd*

Flower	Ghotuo*	Igwe	Okpuje	Yoruba	
	ìdòdó	*ūdōdó*	*ódòdō*	*òdòdó*	*Edd*

Sharp	Arokho*	Igwe		Yoruba	
	ɔ̄mútàìrì	*ɔ̀mŭ̃*		*mú*	*Edd*

To sum up section 4, it has been observed that there is an overwhelming assortment of lenition in the direction of Yoruba when compared with Edoid languages. Thus, a huge inventory of etyma supports a predating of Edoid forms over Yoruboid. Along similar lines, on the basis that Yoruba uses two forms for words like *meat, feather* and *elephant,* each of which share cognates exclusively with different Edoid groups, it is being proposed that there have been at least two layers of interaction between the North Edoid groups and the Yoruboid. Quite like the Bini narrative, the first layer may have been genetic and the second dynastic. For instance, the links with Owan languages of north Edo seem more recent than those with Akoko-Edo. To buttress this point, there are extant forms of a cognate for *cat* – ōlókpèrērè – used only by Yoruba, Ikhin, Ghotuo, Arokho and Uroe. The rest of Owan and Akoko-Edo use *músú* of Nupoid origin. The fact that the ōlókpèrērè form is restricted to the Owan axis is a pointer to nascent acquisition. Yoruba also has two forms for cow – ērã̄ and *mǎlù* – each of which share cognate exclusively with different North Edoid regions: *mǎlù* is shared with Akoko-Edo languages, while ērã̄ tallies with Owan languages. Like *músú, mǎlù* stems from Nupe. These common and exclusive patterns of shared lexicon point to relations reaching back to proto-Benue-Congo.

EVALUATION OF OCCUPATIONAL LEXICON

The human professional history began with fortuitous hunting and gathering on land, followed closely by fishing. When populations increased and natural resources began to dwindle, it came time to explore farming and the raising of livestock. Somewhere in-between all of these, pottery developed, largely as a source of household utensils like pots and water containers. Metallurgy came about as tools were needed for farming and more sophisticated hunting, as well as for security. In this section, we investigate items of pottery, weaving and smithery to determine archaisms which may reveal chronological state of affairs between Edoid and Yoruboid.

Inspection of pottery lexicon

ìkòkò nī bābā ìʃāsũ̀
[The cooking pot is the father of pots]
(Popular Yoruba saying)

We will approach the discussion on pottery lexicon from the perspectives of cognate simplification, variety of wares and word formation patterns. Pottery is practised today by Edoid as well as Yoruboid natives, more by the latter. Information was gathered from Ojah and Otuo in Akoko-Edo (Edoid) and Ijaye in Abeokuta (Yoruboid). As it turns out, all three towns are situated at the base of hills; and in them, pottery is more associated with the female than with the male gender. Pottery lexicon from the three villages is tabulated. Consider table 1.

Table1: Comparative Edoid and Yoruboid pottery lexicon

	Gloss	Edoid Langs.	Ijaye (Yoruboid)
1.	Pestle	*úrùmù*	ɔ̄mɔríōdó
2.	Ring like metal	óhámì	
3.	Design comb	ɔ̄tʃέ *(úkὲlὲ)*	ɔ̀jà
4.	Carving wood	*ēkpí*	gbέ
5.	Maize stalk	*ēgbígìrí*	kũ̀kũ̀àgbàdō
6.	Knife	ɔ̀bɛ̄rɛ̀mmā	ɔ̀bɛ̃̄mɔ̀
7.	Shiner	έgúːʃè	áːrɛ́
8.	Foundation	ūrôʋè	ìkpìlὲ
9.	Clay	έrὲm̀mā *(òwὲ)*	àmɔ̀
10.	Fire	*íɲòmì*	ʔnã̄
11.	Pre-mould		īgīːrà
12.	Mud pot maker		ìjámɔ̀kpɔ́
13.	Shining pots		àkpὲ
14.	Cooking pot	ūkòdò	ìʃãsũ̀
15.	Herbalist pot	ùxwèlà	īʃãsùàsedʒē
16.	Water pot	ghέghέàmὲ	*ìkòkòōmī*
17.	Big pot	ùlè	āgbēbī
18.	Pot for herbs		kòlòbō
19.	Pot for solids (swallows)	ùsāì	
20.	Perforated pot	ùbà	
21.	Amala pot	àdàlà	
22..	Sauce pot	lābὲ	
23.	Decorative pot		ɔ̀tūέgbέ
24.	Placenta pot		ìkòkòìbìɔ̄mɔ̄
25.	Ash tray, Candle stand		àtùkpà/ ēkpō

In table 1, Items 4, 6, 9 and 10 of table 1 are cognates shared by Edoid and Yoruboid. It can be told even by simple observation that they derive from common ancestral words. What follows is a phonological analysis of each to ascertain directions of innovation.

Item 4: Carving wood

Edoid	**Yoruboid**
ēkpí	gbέ

Correspondences:
e ~ ø
kp ~ gb
i ~ ɛ

Processes: Intervocalic voicing, followed by prefix vowel elision and final vowel lowering. Innovations are in the direction of Yoruboid.

Item 6: *knife*

	Edoid	Yoruboid
	ɔ́bēɾɛ̄m̀mā	ɔ̀bɛ̄āmɔ̀
	ɛ́ɾɛ̀m̀mā	àmɔ̀

Correspondences: ɛ ~ ø
r ~ ø
ɛ ~ a
m ~ ø
m ~ m
a ~ ɔ

Processes: Loss of VC-prefix and deletion of syllabic nasal. Loss of post nasalization and consequent change of vowel quality to the closest auditory equivalent, [ɔ]. [ɛ] is also lowered to [a]. Innovations are in the direction of Yoruba

Item 10: Fire

	Edoid	Yoruboid
	íɲòmì	īnã́

Correspondences: i ~ ĩ
ɲ ~ n
o ~ ã
m ~ ø
I ~ ø

Processes: [i] assimilates the nasal feature from [ɲ], [o] is first nasalized and then centralized by the forward pull of all the sounds in the word, becoming [ã]. [ɲ] deletes the palatal feature, after which word final syllable [mi] is lost. Innovations are in the direction of Yoruboid.

The processes above display such phonological and morphological simplification as to suggest that the Yoruba words are more recent derivatives. They are upshots of natural processes, shorter in form and less complex than their Edoid equivalents.

Word formation patterns in pottery

It was observed that a number of items in table 1 were derived by description. Given that there is usually no logical correspondence between the signified and the signifier in language, it follows that most words formed by description are applied to items otherwise alien to speakers of the language. Both groups have words so derived, but they are more on the side of Yoruboid. Consider (6).

(6)

Edoid	Yoruboid
	ìjámàkpó
	Woman who makes pots
	ìfãsũàsèdʒē̄
	Pot for herbal drugs
	ɔ̄mɔ̄ríōdō
	Cover of a pounder
ɔ́bēɾɛ̀m̀mā	ɔ̀bɛ̄āmɔ̀
Clay knife	Clay knife
ghɛ́ghɛ́àmɛ̀	ìkòkòōmī̄
Water pot	Mud pot used for water
	ìkòkòìbíɔ̄mɔ̄
	Placenta pot

It should be noted that the Edoid have non-derived native words for many of the items for which Yoruba gives descriptive names. The presence of more descriptive words for pottery items in Yoruba is an indicator of the fact that the trade is nascent and imported.

There is an extension of meaning in the use of *ìkòkò* by the Yoruba. Whereas its cognate equivalent in Ghotuo (Edoid) refers only to cooking pot, the Yoruba meaning of *ìkòkò* is a generic name for pots. To clinch the argument in favour

of Edoid, consider the teaser at the beginning of this section: *ìkòkò bābā ìʃāsǜ* [The cooking pot is the father of pots].

The statement portrays two generic words for pot in Yoruba, *ìkòkò* and *ìʃāsǜ*. The first form, *ìkòkò*, is cognate with Edoid *ūkòdò*, while the second term does not feature in Edoid vocabulary. Indeed, the translation of *ìkòkò* as cooking pot stems from the Edoid cognate word. The fact that *ūkòdò* is more archaic than *ìkòkò* is self evinced from the likelier development of [k] from /d/ when the former is flanked by high back vowels and there is an identical velar plosive in the preceding syllable. Now, Yoruba uses *ìʃāsǜ* and *ìkòkò* as generic synonyms for pot (see items 15, 16 and 24 on table 1). If this pattern is anything to go by, the *ūkòdò-ìkòkò* cognate would be prehistoric and *ìʃāsǜ* would be a recent Yoruba term deriving from other contacts. Should that be the case, it would follow that the expression *ìkòkò bābā ìʃāsǜ* is in tacit admittance of Edoid pre-eminence.

It would then be plausible that occupational pottery is prehistoric to the Edoid. The Yoruba either share this homeland with the Edoid, or they acquired pottery by recent contact. Natives of Ojah speak of times back in the day when the main export of Ojah was pottery. Meanwhile, at this time, pottery is scarcely practiced in North-Western Edo, and ornamental pottery is the mainstay of many present Yoruba settlements. The vast majority of sound simplifications in pottery vocabulary occur in the direction of Yoruboid. Thus, pottery assessment again points to Edoid ancient and Yoruboid nascent practices.

Another dimension to word formation pattern in pottery pertains to the variety of pots. Items 13 to 25 in table 1 are names for different pots. Whereas both groups have names for cooking, water, herbalist and big pots;

it is indicative that other kinds of pots belong exclusively either to Edoid or Yoruboid groups.

The Edoid on the one hand have exclusive pots based on their functionality; such as sauce pot, swallows pot (for solid food eaten with sauce), meat dehydrating pots (perforated to serve its purpose) and *àmalà* pot (items 22, 19, 20 and 21). Just as well, there are Edoid traditional practices attached to the pots. For instance, women are not permitted to dip hands in the *ìlábÈ* – sauce pot. Rather, women may only use a traditional spoon to scoop sauce from the pot. If a woman must dip her hand in a sauce pot, her husband must clear her curse by dipping his own hand in before her.

On the other hand, pots peculiar to Ijaye are ornamental objects of contemporary art. The sole exception is the *kòlòbò* which contains medicinal herbs. As for the placenta pot, *ìkòkòìbíɔ̄mɔ̄*, which seemingly performs a traditional function, it may yet be argued that neither Yoruboid nor Edoid groups bury placenta in a pot. There is no ritual associated with the burying of placenta. It is done in a hurry and in utmost secrecy,lest someone other than the child's father discovers the place it was interred. Thus, like the ash tray and other ornamental pots, the placenta pot is one more recent invention. Hence, the kinds of pots restricted to the Edoid have traditional functionality. They are designed with little aesthetic character and have deep cultural relevance. Such traditionally functional pots are absent in Ijaye pottery, where the pots are more ornamental and made as artefact rather than household tools.

The other side of the pottery tale is that of numbers. Ijaye is currently a beehive of pottery activities. It is in fact the major preoccupation of women in

the entire town. Such extensive practice of a profession is symptomatic of recent acquisition. The exact opposite scenario obtains in Edoid regions, where only vestiges of a glorious pottery industry now exist in a few villages far between. Pottery, certainly, was not a bequeathal by the Yoruboid to the Edoid. Indeed, evidence is accruing in support of an Edoid antecedent to Yoruboid pottery. In fact such patterns have been prescribed as suggestive of homeland as instantiated in the spread of corded ware ceramics across Europe. Kossina (1902) as reported in Renfrew (1988 [1994]: 36), for instance, postulates Indo-European homeland as North-Central Europe, based on archaeological finds of a high concentration of corded ware pots which are sparse in other parts of Europe. He argues that the area of concentration is the homeland, and that the pots were transported to other parts of Europe by groups which migrated away from the homeland. This interpretation ties neatly with the age-area hypothesis advanced by Crowley and Bowern (2010: 13), which stipulates that the overwhelming presence of any phenomenon is suggestive of recent development. In the context of this paper, it would imply that pottery is a more recent occupation of Yoruboid than Edoid natives. This suggestion calls for archaeological excavation to confirm the spread of peculiar pottery.

Inspection of lexicon for weaving

Cloth and basket weaving are practised in Edoid as well as Yoruboid lands. The people of Ososo are renowned for weaving in Akoko-Edo, while Iseyin is just as famous in Yorubaland. As with pottery, however, weaving is contemporarily more widespread in Yorubaland. The items in table 2 are drawn largely from Ibadan list of 400 words.

Table 2: Comparative Edoid and Yoruboid weaving lexicon

	Gloss	Edoid	Yoruboid
1.	Weave	mū	hɯ̃/wɯ̃
2.	Tie	Ìkpárì/gɛ́	dì/sō
3.	Cloth	ūʃē/úkpò (Ikhin)	āʃɔ̄
4.	Gown	ɛ̀wù	ɛ̀wù
5.	Thread	úlè/ówù	òwú
6.	Needle	úrùmè/édùnè/ákpɛ̀dɛ̀ (Ikhin)	ābɛ́ɾé
7.	Rope	úrì/wúìrì (Igwe)	ōkɯ̀
8.	Red	ólɔ̀lɔ̀/sàʔ̀	kpūkpā
9.	Black	Óbìbì	Dúdú
10.	Yellow	āɲēré	ìjèjè/àɲɯ̀ɾ́
11.	Dye (Guinea corn)	āzīkù	āró

Interestingly, many weaving terms are cognate between both groups – items 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10. Indeed, item 4 and 5, ɛ̀wù̃ and òwú, have exact forms both ways.

Item 1: Weave

	Edoid	Yoruboid
	mū	*hū̃*
Correspondences:	m ~ h	
	u ~ ũ	

Process: Quite like the pattern observed with Edoid sounds, [m] debuccalizes to [h] leaving a nasal trace on the succeeding vowel. Innovations are in the direction of Yoruboid.

Item 3: Cloth

	Edoid	Yoruboid
	uʃe	*aʃɔ*
Correspondences:	u ~ a	
	ʃ ~ ʃ	
	e ~ ɔ	

Process: The vowel substitution seems rather intractable. Pre-eminence may only be conceded to the Edoid form on the grounds that high front vowel [e] is responsible for the emergence of [S] from some other consonant, after which the Yoruboid form substituted vowels.

Item 6: Needle

	Edoid	Yoruboid
	akpɛdɛ	*abɛrɛ*
Correspondences:	a ~ a	
	kp ~ b	
	ɛ ~ ɛ	
	d ~ r	
	ɛ ~ ɛ	

Processes: The simplification of labial-velar plosive [kp] results in [b] via loss of velar component. Voiced alveolar plosive [d] also lenites to approximant [r] in intervocalic position. Both processes have the weaker sound as Yoruboid.

Item 10: Yellow

	Edoid	Yoruboid
	aɲere	*ijeje*
Correspondences:	a ~ i	
	ɲ ~ j	
	e ~ e	
	r ~ j	
	e ~ e	

Processes: An Edoid palatal nasal surfaces in Yoruboid as an approximant of the same place, while an alveolar approximant sandwiched between high front vowels switches to the palatal place. Visible innovations are on the Yoruboid side.

Every case of cognation has the etymon in Edoid, suggesting that the Edoid have linguistic precedence.

EVALUATION OF COGNATE NUMERATION

Low numerals constitute basic vocabulary (Swadesh 1952). They also reflect collective logic. Language is logic. Therefore, common counting systems betray common thought patterns and *cognate worldview*. In this section, Edoid counting systems are compared with Yoruboid in anticipation of ancestral revelations.

Counting strategies

Tables 3 and 4 summarize counting patterns for North Edoid languages and Yoruba. It would be observed from them that all the systems operate at base ten numeration. In addition to that, Akoko-Edo languages employ an addition strategy up to numeral 20. Yoruba alone subtracts from 20 while counting 15 to 19 (i.e. numerals 15 to 19 are 20 less five, 20 less four etc.) consistently, and multiples of 20 (50 for instance is 60 less 10 etc.). The Owan languages subtract from 20 to count 16 to 19, but not for numeral 15,

which is counted as *īgbíhjè* (10+5) in Uroe for instance.Whereas Yoruba subtracts ten from multiples of twenty to count 50, 70, 90, all the Edoid add 10 to the preceding multiples of twenty to count same. Curiously, the Uneme count 100 as a multiple of fifty; while all other groups conceive it as twenty multiplied by five.

Table 3: Summary of numeral patterns in Yoruba and North Western Edoid Languages

Numbers	Yoruba	Okpamheri	Uneme	Ososo	Akuku	Ọkpẹ
1	*ɔ̀kã̄*	*ɔ̀ʋú*	*ɔ̀kpá*	*oghuo*	*ogu*	*áwô*
10	*èwá*	*īgbé*	*īgbé*	*īgbé*	*īgbé*	*īgbé*
11 – 14	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition
15 – 19	Subtraction	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition
20	*ōgű*	*ɔ́gbɔ̀lɔ́*	*uwɛ*	*ɔ́gwɔ̀lɔ*	*ú:jíè*	*Íjè*
30	*ɔ̄gbɔ̌*	*ɔ́:gbɔ̀lítègbè* 20+10	*ɔ̀gbà*	*ɔ̀gwɔ̀lɔ̀ànítégbé* 20+10	20+10	*ɔ́gbɔ̀*
40	20 x 2	20 x 2	20 x 2	20 x 2	20 x 2	20 x 2
50	Subtraction 60 – 10	Addition 40 + 10	Addition 40 + 10	Addition 40 + 10	Addition 40 + 10	Addition 40 + 10
60	20 x 3	20 x 3	20 x 3	20 x 3	20 x 3	20 x 3
70	Subtraction 80 – 10	Addition 60 + 10	Addition 60 + 10	Addition 60 + 10	Addition 60 + 10	Addition 60 + 10
80	20 x 4	*uhe*	20 x 4	*uhe*	20 x 4	20 x 4
90	Subtraction 100 – 10	Addition 80 + 10	Addition 80 + 10	Addition 80 + 10	Addition 80 + 10	Addition 80 + 10
100	20 x 5	20 x 5	*ègbɔ́lísèlúkpòlévà* 50 x 2	20 x 5	20 x 5	20 x 5

Table 4: Summary of numeral patterns in North Central Edoid Languages

Numbers	Igwe Sale	Ikhin	Ake	Arokho	Uroe	Ghotuo
1	*ɔ̄:wò*	*ɔ́rɔ̀kpā*	*èkpà*	*ɔ̄kpá*	*ɔ̄kpâ $*	*ɔ̀kpā*
10	*īgbé*	*ìgbè*	*ìgbè*	*īgbé*	*ìgbè*	*ìgbé*
11 – 15	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition
16 – 19	Subtraction	Subtraction	Subtraction	Subtraction	Subtraction	Subtraction
20	*úwòhē*	*ùwè*	*úwè*	*újè*	*Úrè*	*úwègè*
30	*ɔ́gbã̄*	*ɔ̀gbɔ̀*	*ɔ́gbà*	*ɔ̄gbà*	*ɔ́gbà*	*ɔ̄gbā*
40	20 x 2	20 x 2	20 x 2	20 x 2	20 x 2	20 x 2

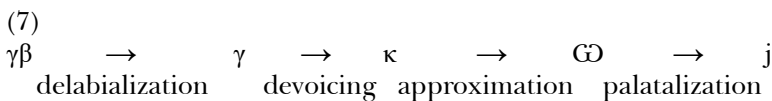| 50	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition
	40 + 10	40 + 10	40 + 10	40 + 10	40 + 10	40 + 10
60	20 x 3	20 x 3	20 x 3	20 x 3	20 x 3	20 x 3
70	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition
	60 + 10	60 + 10	60 + 10	60 + 10	60 + 10	60 + 10
80	20 x 4	20 x 4	20 x 4	20 x 4	20 x 4	20 x 4
90	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition	Addition
	80 + 10	80 + 10	80 + 10	80 + 10	80 + 10	80 + 10
100	20 x 5	20 x 5	20 x 5	20 x 5	20 x 5	20 x 5

Cognate numeration evidence

Words for numerals 1, 3, 4, 10, 20 and 30 are cognate across the board. Yoruba ̀ɔkã̀ (one) is a derivative of Uneme ̀ɔkpá, in which a labial-velar plosive deletes the labial aspect for more efficient articulation. Similar simplifications manifest in Okpamheri ̀ɔʋú (voicing, fronting and approximation), Ososo *oghuo* (voicing and lenition), Akuku *ogu* (voicing and loss of labial feature), Ọkpẹ *áwô* (approximation).

Consider the following vigesimal evidence. Across the Edoid groups of Akoko-Edo, numerals twenty and thirty are represented with derivatives of ɔgbɔ. Certainly, all of Owan use ɔgbɔ for thirty and Yoruba uses the same form. It seems fortuitous until you consider the fact that the Okpamheri (Ososo and Uneme) word for thirty is ́ɔːgbɔ̀lítègbè (twenty plus ten). The fact is Yoruba and some Edoid languages retain only a clipped form of the full word for thirty. Such clips are replete in Yoruba and Owan numerals. The question then arises, why do Yoruba and Owan languages not use ɔgbɔ for twenty? Rather, the words

are ōgṹ#, úwὲ, újè, which would pass as derivatives of ɔgbɔ, following the deletion of the labial aspect of the [gb] to give [g] and corresponding rise of adjacent vowels that are pulled up by a velar force, plus evidence of approximation (see example 7).

Some North Edoid languages (Ake, Arokho, Ghotuo) indicate numeral 20 with cognate terms like úwὲ, újè, úwègè etc. but switch to ɔgbɔ+10, and multiples of ɔgbɔ when counting 30, 40 etc. This pattern indicates that terms other than ɔgbɔ, when used to represent 20, are recent innovations that do not transcend the entire numeral system. We can tentatively assume that these isolates arose by areal diffusion. It is also a fact that subtraction strategy is diffusing northward as only Yoruba and Owan languages manifest it, no Akoko-Edo language yet subtracts. It is evident that 20 (*úwὲ*) surfaces as ɛgba in counting 60 to 90 across Owan. Thus, there is no consistent form for twenty, yet all the variants are derivatives of *gb* as shown in (7), where the consonant innovation from ɔgbɔ through *ogu*, *uwε*, *uje* is summarized.

(7)
γβ → γ → κ → ɢʊ → j
delabialization   devoicing approximation palatalization

It is evident from tables 3 and 4 that cognate counting systems cut across Edoid populations. They share addition patterns with Yoruba uniformly, for low numerals, and subtraction strategy only partially. Terms for 10, 20 and 30 are also cognate. Yoruba and Owan subtraction strategy is an innovation that came about as a result of the loss of the numeral logic for 30, which Yoruba and Owan retain as ɔgbɔ (a clipped form of ɔgbɔ+10). Again, Edoid counting systems seem more ancient.

COMPLEXITY-SIMPLICITY IN SOUND INVENTORY

It is axiomatic that language usage results in simplicity from age to age. Some speculations as to the cradle of human life point in the direction of East Africa. Linguistic evidence quite supports this notion on the grounds that African languages display a lot more complexities than European languages. For instance, the use of pitch in lexical and grammatical significance is sophistication unmatched by European languages, which deploy pitch only as phrasal morphemes and in stress. This section is dedicated to drawing lines of complexity and simplicity between Edoid and Yoruboid, in sound inventory and vowel harmony.

Consonant inventory

In Section 4 it was established by analyses of vocabulary that etyma are retained in contemporary Edoid languages. Further evidence in support of Edoid's chronological advantage include presence of implosive /ɓ/ as well as the preponderance of nasal [m, n, ɲ, ŋ] and fricative phonemes in Edoid (tables 5 and 6). The Yoruba sound inventory (Akinkugbe 1978: 63) is a lot simpler. There is just one nasal phoneme /m/, while continuants /v, ʋ/ non-continuant /ɾ/ and a robust array of non-phonemic proto- and extant sounds like [β, z, ʒ] are markedly absent. Thus, there is more pattern congruity in extant Edoid inventory than obtains in Yoruba. Indeed, as tables 5 and 6 show, Edoid consonant inventory subsumes that of Yoruboid as there are no sounds in Yoruboid not present in Edoid, but the reverse case is different.

Table 5: Proto-Edoid Consonant Phonemes (Lewis 2013: 148)

	Bilabial	Lab-Dent	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal	Labial-Velar
Nasal	m		n	ɲ			
Velarised Nasal					ŋʷ		
Plosive	b		t d		k g		kp gb
Labialised Plosive					gʷ		
Implosive	ɓ						
Taps			ɾ				
Cntrl. Fricative		f v	S		x	H	
Cntrl. Approx.		ʋ	r				
Lateral Approximant			l				

Vowel inventory and harmony

With respect to vowel harmony, both Edoid and Yoruboid are at different levels of decadence; yet Edoid still edges out Yoruboid in antiquity, as high minus Advance Tongue Root (ATR) vowels [ɪ, ʊ] are still in common use. Thus, Edoid vowel harmony still functions in the main like Proto-Benue Congo (Fig. 3a), where only vowels of the same ATR value may co-occur in simple words, and [a] may co-occur with both plus and minus ATR vowels. Example (8) shows Edoid-like ATR harmonic alternations between Ibilo (North Western Edoid) and Ghotuo (North Central Edoid).

(8)
Alternation of ATR Vowel Harmony between Ghotuo and Ibilo

Gloss	Ghotuo	Ibilo
Eight	*enie*	*ɛniɛ*
Leaf	*obe*	*ʊbɛ*
Wash	*fue*	*fʊɛ*
Dig	*gua*	*gʊa*
Four	*eene*	*ɛɛnɛ*

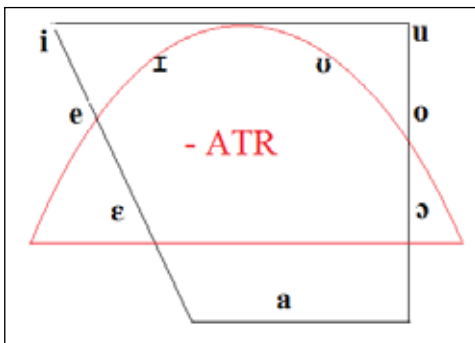**Figure 3a: Proto-Benue-Congo/Edoid Co-occurring oral vowels**

(9)
Mid-Vowel Co-occurrence Restriction in Yoruba

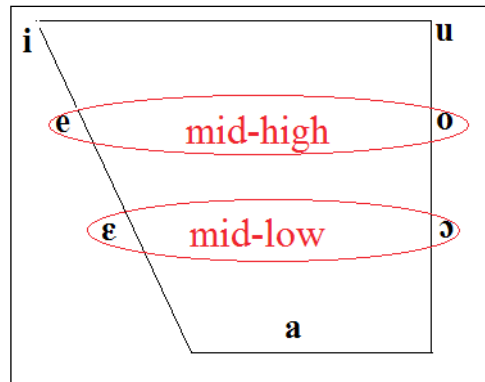| Gloss	Yoruba
Narrative	*ɛdʒɔ*
Snake	*edʒo*
Week	*ɔsɛ*
Month	*oʃu*
Cloth	*aʃɔ*
Poem	*ewi*

Figure 3b: Yoruba Co-occurring Oral Mid-Vowels

The current state of vowel harmony in Standard Yoruba (example 9) largely displays ATR co-occurrence restrictions only among mid vowels (Fig. 3b). Consequently, within a simple word, a mid-high (+ART) vowel may occur only with another mid-high (+ATR) vowel or with vowels in the high and low extremities. In like manner, a mid-low (-ATR) vowel may co-occur with another mid-low (-ATR) vowel or with vowels in high and low extremities. Thus, Standard Yoruba has nearly completely neutralized the ATR contrast between close vowels [i] and [ɪ], now rendered as [i]; and [u] and [ʊ], now rendered as [u]. Since the ATR indifference does not involve mid vowels, the plus versus minus ATR dichotomy still stands; hence the harmony among mid vowels. However, irrespective of the coincidence in ATR

criterion for vowel harmony in Edoid and Yoruboid languages, harmony is manifestly more robust in Edoid languages due to the prevalence of high vowels in the –ATR category.

CONCLUSIONS

The comparison of Edoid-Yoruboid cognate lexicon showed that etyma lexicon is predominantly found in Edoid forms. This strongly indicates that Edoid languages chronologically predate Yoruboid by being closer in form to Proto-Benue-Congo. There are instances where Yoruboid has two words for an item; sharing one exclusively with Edoid languages in the northern extremities of Akoko-Edo, and the other form, again, exclusively with southern and more proximate Edoid languages of Owan. We interpret this pattern to mean that enduring genetic links are betrayed by lexicon shared by Yoruboid and Akoko-Edo (North Western Edoid) in the northern periphery; while those terms shared by Yoruboid and North Central Edoid are as a result of diffusion, given that Owan and Yoruboid populations are contiguous.

In the category of occupational vocabulary, it was found that Edoid traditions have preserved pottery for functionality while Yoruboid traditions have traded off functionality for aesthetics and ornamentation. This is reflected in the morphology of wares. Given that wholesale production traditions are similar, it is not farfetched to link both industries. For that matter, diminishing pottery fortunes in North-Western Edo counterpointed by widespread practice of the industry in Yorubaland paint a typical scenario of source and successor between Edoid and Yoruboid pottery correspondingly.

In comparative Edoid-Yoruboid numeration, it was found that subtraction strategy for numerals 16 to 20, as well as the substitution of numeral 30 with ɔgbɔ occur in the south-north direction. It was also established in Section 6.2 that the current terms in Owan and Akoko-Edo for numeral 20 are derivatives of the current Akoko-Edo term ɔgbɔ. It therefore follows that the conversion of the term to referent of 20 is a more recent development.

The current sound inventory of Edoid contains some sounds like [gʷ, x, ɣ], which are not currently attested in Yoruba, but were originally included in Akinkugbe's (1978) inventory of Proto-Yoruboid sounds. Indeed the current Edoid sound inventory subsumes all of proto- and contemporary Yoruboid sounds. The fact that these sounds are yet replete in Edoid, while only vestiges are found in Yoruboid groups, while unveiling archaic links, also reveals that Edoid inventory is more ancient.

By the foregoing, lexical and segmental archaisms underscore the fact that contemporary Edoid populations speak more ancient versions of the common West Benue-Congo linguistic heritage. Therefore, the persuasion is that Edoid languages predate Yoruboid, at least in their present states of complexity or lack thereof. It is desired that the present assemblage of sound and lexical evidence tilting to Edoid pre-eminence may invite further prehistoric studies from the disciplines of anthropology, archaeology and art history.

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Seeing the point from which you see what you see: An essay on epistemic reflexivity in language research

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Abstract

This essay deals with epistemic issues in language research, focusing particularly on the field of language planning and policy (LPP). It outlines Pierre Bourdieu's principle of epistemic reflexivity as a device for understanding what the view of the research object owes to the researcher's past and present position in social space. I hold that developing such an understanding is particularly vital for LPP scholars, by virtue of the ways in which the objects investigated here tend to linger in the borderlands between science and politics. Accordingly, the essay unearths the philosophical roots of epistemic reflexivity and highlights some of its implications in the research practice with examples from Swedish LPP research. It also examines the value of a reflexive stance in interviews as a way of pinpointing the relevance of epistemic reflexivity in every moment of the scholarly investigation. In conclusion, the argument is that since epistemic reflexivity is a useful device for any critical researcher who wishes to grasp the knowledge he or she produces, it is so also for language researchers, and particularly so in relation to the ideologically normative practices of LPP scholarship. Therefore, a reflexive gaze is a pivotal driver for yielding better language research.

Keywords: Epistemic reflexivity, Pierre Bourdieu, language planning and policy, language and politics, interviews

LANGUAGE, POLITICS, AND LANGUAGE POLITICS

The title of this essay derives from the work of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, whose writings on academic knowledge production deal at length with the relationship between the view of the research object, on the one hand, and the viewpoint of the researcher, on the other. For Bourdieu, understanding this relationship offers researchers "a chance of seeing the point from which you see what you see" (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 18–19), and thereby grasp the knowledge that is produced. Bourdieu discusses this matter as one of 'epistemic reflexivity.' The present work aims to essay some applications of this idea in the practices of researchers, including language researchers. By using it, I propose, they can avoid being "the toy of social forces" in their research practices (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 183, emphasis removed). Therefore, it is at once a pivotal driver for yielding better research.

People in general – including researchers – have strong sentiments attached to languages and linguistic practice, and this fact seems to be particularly salient when such languages are perceived as being "theirs" – their mother tongue, their heritage language, etc. Language thus embodies all kinds of imaginaries with important bearings on people's investments and senses of selves. Like other intellectual inquiries, then, language research is faced with pivotal questions about the status of academic knowledge, and the fact that when researching language, we "bring our biographies and our subjectivities to every stage of the research process, and this influences the questions we ask and the ways in which we try to find answers" (Cameron et al., 1992, p. 5). It should be stressed therefore that many research topics concerning language are vested in language ideologies, that is, "socially positioned and politically interested constructions of language and communicative processes" (Briggs, 2007a, p. 589). I here posit that this problem is particularly pertinent in research within the field of language planning and policy (LPP). LPP practices are at heart language ideologically normative; that is, their stakes and interests center on the politics of a desired language situation (Canagarajah, 2005, p. 153). Hence, as Silverstein argues:

> Professional students of these transformative phenomena are, perforce, themselves engaging in a kind of explicit, necessarily ideological discourse about them. In its ideological aspects, to be sure, such discourse manifests a range of sociocultural positionalities of imagined linguistic projects within the global and national orders. (Silverstein, 1998, p. 421)

From this vantage point, we can say that language planners and other intellectuals alike have language ideologies (e.g., Salö, 2014; Spotti, 2011), in the sense that they embody the values and beliefs of the social worlds where they have learned to think and act (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 136). The present contribution dwells on a metaprinciple apt for dealing with this issue – namely, *epistemic reflexivity* as a never-ending process of critical self-reflection which offers researchers a disposition for grasping these *social worlds* as an inroad to understanding the principles of their knowledge production (Brubaker, 1993). As a research tool, it is useful for any scholar who seeks to develop an epistemological take on his or her relationship to the object he or she has undertaken to study. Hence, it is also of value to scholars of language.

THE SOCIOLOGY OF THE SOCIOLOGICAL EYE

Bourdieu's stance on research and epistemology owes much of its foundations to the French philosopher of science Gaston Bachelard (1884–1962). Commonly labeled as an applied rationalist, Bachelard wrote extensively on historical epistemology and the foundations of the scientific mind (e.g., Bachelard, 2002 [1938]; Tiles, 1985 and Broady, 1991 offer overviews). As outlined by Broady (1991), Bachelard's philosophy of science can be summarized by three broad points. Firstly, it starts from the general proposition that, in essence, science composes a break with everyday mundane thinking, and the spontaneous representations of common sense. It follows from this premise that, secondly, the scientific object must be constructed and therefore not be taken for granted. Thirdly, the researcher's relation to the object should be analyzed as a dimension of the knowledge about that same object. Bachelard's key insights into these matters have had an impact on generations of scholars in France and elsewhere, not least of all in his view of critique as an essential means for overcoming the "epistemological obstacles" that hamper the progression of scientific thought (e.g., Ross & Ahmadi, 2006). Bachelard's insights also came to establish the basis of Bourdieu's take on reflexivity – epistemic reflexivity – that is, the integrated, systematic, and continuous device of the research practice whereby the analyst breaks with his or her own pre-given viewpoints, which are often found built into the research questions, theories, concepts, and analytical instruments that he or she has inherited (e.g., Wacquant, 1992, p. 36–46).

Frequently discussed under labels such as "socioanalysis", Bourdieu's take

on reflexivity builds on the principles of Bachelardian thinking: Through rupture with the spontaneous thinking of common sense, "[t]he social fact is won, constructed, and confirmed" (Bourdieu et al., 1991, p. 57). The risk involved in constructing the object of inquiry, posits Bourdieu, is that the researcher naïvely imports into the research practice, as he puts it, "all that the view of the object owes to the point of view, that is, to the viewer's *position* in the social space and the scientific field" (Bourdieu, 1993a, p. 10). This is an issue fundamentally due to the fact that scientific knowledge can be obtained only by means of a break with common sense – the primary representations or "pre-notions" in Durkheim's vocabulary – in other words, the sort of mundane knowledge about the research object that the researcher has uncritically acquired elsewhere in the social world (Bourdieu, 1989, 15; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 235–238). In the language sciences, Cameron (1990, p. 81) similarly regrets what she sees as a bad habit in much sociolinguistic research: the acceptance and subsequent import of sociotheoretically naïve concepts (her examples being "norm" or "identity") – "used as a 'bottom line' though they stand in need of explication themselves." Bourdieu deplores this mistake; for one, in his own work the refusal to borrow common categories has implications down to the level of prose, where he is at pains to avoid the commonsensical understandings "embedded in common language" (Wacquant, 1989a, p. 31). Jenkins (1992), for example, has criticized this position for the reason that it makes Bourdieu's writings difficult to read and understand (also e.g., Burawoy, 2012, 20). Bourdieu, contrarily, sees this trait as an important technique of keeping science free from the everyday discourse on the social world, "the

discourse of the semi-wise" (Bourdieu & Chartier, 2015, p. 29). For Bourdieu, then, the easy and readable style is thought of as dangerously manipulative, in that simplified discourse serves the end of oversimplifying knowledge about the social world, consequently found in the false clarity of dominant discourse (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 52; see also Wacquant, 1993, p. 237, 247f. and note 5 there).

Allied to that, epistemic reflexivity is vital in cases in which analysts are a part of the group or "set of observers" whose apprehensions they aim at unraveling (e.g., Bourdieu, 1988). Clearly, this feeds into a well-known insider–outsider dilemma. On the one hand, argues Bourdieu, "one cannot grasp the most profound logic of the social world unless one becomes immersed in the specificity of an empirical reality, historically situated and dated' (Bourdieu, 1993b, p. 271). In this sense, indeed, being a member of the group that is investigated might well buy the researcher entrance into his or her key social worlds. The crux of the matter, however, is that the price paid for this insider's access is the overwhelming risk of not seeing the viewpoint from which it is stated, and thereby producing an account which says exactly what the researcher's position in the field allows him or her to say – and nothing else (Broady, 1991, p. 548; see also Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 183–184). Since the researcher, by this logic, is imprisoned by the field, reflexivity is brought up to date as a question of understanding and, subsequently, handling one's own position and dispositions, as handed down by one's field. Hence,

> one's only hope of producing scientific knowledge – rather than weapons to advance a particular class of specific interests – is to make explicit to oneself one's position in

the sub-field of the producers of discourse […] and the contribution of this field to the very existence of the object of study. (Bourdieu, 1983, p. 317)

SCIENCE AND POLITICS, AND BORDERLANDS

To be sure, epistemic reflexivity in the research practice holds ramifications to social scientific research more generally, by virtue of the intricate ways in which its social objects of study tend to linger "between the scientific and the political registers" (Wacquant, 2009a, p. 125). However, it would seem that adopting a reflexive posture is a matter of particular significance in work that deals with saliently ideological and interest-laden topics of research. In what follows, I shall dwell on a poignant example of this sort, which occupies a central position in LPP research: representations of English as a language problem in the protection of national languages (e.g., Hultgren & Thøgersen, 2014). Representations, after all, are "performative statements which seek to bring about what they state" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 225).

Pielke (2007, p. 116) holds that it is "characteristic of the science and politics of the early twenty-first century to see scientists actively engaged in political debates." At least ideally,

> a "policy" is a decision; "politics" is bargaining, negotiation, and compromise in pursuit of desired ends; and "science" is the systematic pursuit of knowledge. (Pielke, 2007, p. 37)

However, this conception seems overly innocent, since, as Pielke (2007, p. 124–125) acknowledges, the systematic pursuit of knowledge is often enacted as a part of the political pursuit of reaching

desired policy. I propose that the case of Swedish LPP adds insight into this dilemma, since the field by some of its properties "follows the logic of the scientific field, but by others it follows the logic of the political field" (Bourdieu, cited in Wacquant, 1989b, p. 17). To speak with Foucault, we can rightly say that while research is one form of discursive practice, LPP is another. In reality, though, this is a difficult line to draw. To do so, as Lynch (2000, p. 31) notes, requires a clear understanding of the boundaries of knowledge-yielding practices. In viewing such discursive practices as fields in Bourdieu's sense, this assumption seems to beg for more attention, for, just as individuals can be a part of several fields, fields also overlap so that knowledge can be yielded out of the logic of one discursive practice while speaking, as it were, in the voice of another. This fact blurs the distinction between science and language politics and complicates the task of refraining from objects of knowledge which are not the products of research practice.

Ideally, at least, university research is a critical enterprise with a salient heirloom to the core values of "freedom in the autonomous pursuit of truth" (Krull, 2005, p. 99). As discursive practices, science and LPP follow different logics in this regard, and are likewise dictated by different terms. Understanding sociolinguistic phenomena may certainly be one objective of LPP; yet, it cannot be the only – such a conclusion overlooks what Ricento (2000) calls the strategy component of LPP. As a practice, ultimately, LPP is about deliberate efforts to influence the behaviour of others (Cooper, 1989, p. 45). Characteristic of the knowledge production here is the creation of what Cibulka (1995, p. 118) calls "policy arguments", by which he means the

use of research to fit a predetermined position, aligned with a desirable policy outcome. Such knowledge can both be imported from the outer fields and filtered by virtue of the field's internal logic or it can be produced from within the field. The difficulty here is that "the borderline between policy *research* and policy *argument* is razor thin" (Cibulka, 1995, p. 118). For the viewpoint of the critical scholar, therefore, it is vital to develop a sociological eye capable of seeing what the view of the research object owes to the point of view of the observer, in other words, to the scholar's past and present position in social space (Bourdieu 1993a, p. 10). "The progress of knowledge", Bourdieu (1990b, p. 1) holds, "presupposes progress in our knowledge of the conditions of knowledge." Reflexivity, here, is what differentiates habitus from scientific habitus, in that the latter includes a disposition to grasp its own principles of knowledge production (Brubaker, 1993, p. 225): As Grenfell notes,

> The 'empirical individual' is like everyman, he responds naïvely to what surrounds him. The 'epistemic individual', on the other hand, is the product of scientific training and experience (Grenfell, 2007, p. 118)

THE BREAK: SITUATING REFLEXIVITY IN PRACTICE

It ought to be clear by now that the issue at hand in this essay pertains to the reflexivity of the researcher, not that of the groups studied. To be sure, although foci may vary, "being reflexive" is a watchword in many strands of sciences (e.g., Mauthner & Doucet, 2003; Lynch, 2000). In Wacquant's (1992) opinion, the most novel facet of Bourdieu's take on reflexivity is that it brings to the fore

aspects that go beyond the individual researcher and instead emphasize the individual's position in the field that he or she embodies. In this vein, it is primarily the field's epistemological unconscious that needs to be unearthed, rather than that of the individual researcher (Wacquant, 1992, p. 41). Epistemic reflexivity thus differs from narcissist conceptions of "researcher positionality" in that it focuses neither on the individual person as a scientist, nor on the scientist's "privilege" or the violence potentially present in producing knowledge about other people. Rather, it attempts at unearthing what the scientist's vision of the object owes to his or her position in social space (Wacquant, 1989b, p. 19). Certainly, the point is not that the researcher should 'confess' things – political affiliation or sympathies, ethnic or religious membership, etc. – in the research *product*, but to deal with such matters if and when they may have a decisive impact on their research *practice*. As Wacquant puts it, "epistemic reflexivity is deployed, not at the end of the project, *ex post*, when it comes to drafting the final research report, but *durante*, at every stage in the investigation" (Wacquant, 2009a, p. 121–122). As a matter of fact, Bourdieu disapproves of pursuits in which reflexivity is added decoratively, often *post festum*, and customarily serving the therapeutic aim of self-understanding.

Accordingly, Bourdieu stresses time and again that reflexivity should not be a self-absorbed return to the individual scientist. However, as noted by Maton (2003, p. 59), while epistemic reflexivity is designed to be a collective reflexivity, scholars often end up exemplifying enacted reflexivity in individualistic terms. Admittedly, this poses a dilemma in work seeking to outline and exemplify epistemic reflexivity, and there might

be no way of by-passing the issue of self-centrism entirely. Yet, it is feasible to account for the position of the individual without adopting an overtly individualistic focus so long as focus is placed on the relationship to one's research object, and the value-laden social worlds previously encountered. In this sense, Bourdieu's brand of reflexivity pertains to a form of self-analysis that does not privilege the self (e.g., Bourdieu, 2007). Seeking to illustrate this position, the following account seems appropriate for presenting the relevant positions in social space that I have occupied that have had a bearing on my relationship to my object of study: English in Swedish academia.

Reflexivity is pivotal in relation to the question of moving from one distinct professional universe into another, each offering their particular point of views – positions from which analysts see what they see (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 18–19). Having undertaken university training in applied Scandinavian linguistics, and later pursuing a professional career at the Swedish Language Council, I entered the research practice as a socialized agent of the LPP field, armed with pivotal preconceptions with important bearings on the object undertaken for investigation. This fact, then, does not merely pertain to matters of embodying "Swedishness" on the part of the analyst, but is also intertwined with and amplified by a set of professional dispositions with focal values attached to the significance of Swedish in Swedish society, enmeshed in the categories, objectives, and interests imbued in Swedish LPP. In relation to this point, at the Language Council, I had already made a contribution to the debate on English in Swedish academia, where the perceived risk of "domain loss" served as the key rationale of the enterprise (Salö, 2010). While this

circumstance does not necessarily equate to being a deeply immersed insider with perspectives genuinely embedded into the value systems of LPP (see Josephson, 2014 for a true insider's account in that regard), it points to matters of working within a language ideological consensus. This involves reproducing accounts that one knows will be positively sanctioned by the field, after having acquired shared dispositions to a particular language problem.

The Swedish field of LPP referred to above pertains to the contexts encountered through my prior experiences, viz. a state-mandated body for language planning and its base of recruitment. Subsequently, upon entering the research practice, an inherited vision of the object was my evident point of entry, associated with anterior dispositions acquired across the life-span. With that follows the importing of pre-defined categories as well as a view of English as a problem which resembles language ideologies and "the epistemological unconscious" of the LPP field (Wacquant, 1992, p. 41). The construction of scientific knowledge, then, ought to begin with a break with the preconstructed object, as a form of "radical doubt" about the commonplace representations it brings to bear (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 235).

How does one go about doing this necessary labour? There are probably different ways, but in my case it was attempted by initially unravelling the state and structure of Swedish LPP as a particular intellectual social space (Brubaker, 1993, p. 221), which was realized by historicizing English as a sociolinguistic problem in Swedish LPP (published as Salö, 2012 and Salö, 2014). Reflexivity, thus, is here enacted

by the very effort of undertaking an opening analysis of the field of which the researcher him- or herself is the product and where previous investments have already been placed (e.g., Salö, 2010). "The first and most pressing scientific priority", posits Bourdieu, is "to take as one's object the social work of construction of the pre-constructed object" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 229, emphasis removed). Studying processes of problematization, then, helps recast LPP as "a field of cultural or ideological production, a space and a game in which the social scientist himself is caught" (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 210).

Blommaert (1996) explores the international emergence of LPP as a field, which he dates to the mid-20th century. As such, holds Blommaert, LPP emerged as a new market for the application of modernist sociology of language and macro-sociolinguistic research in the global south, more often than not in the context of colonial dominance. Swedish LPP, on the other hand, has a somewhat different historical trajectory. What is known in Sweden as "språkvård" comprises a salient strand of functionalist corpus planning with a longstanding history in Sweden, pertaining as it does to the institutionalized standardization and "cultivation" of Swedish (Dahlstedt, 1976; Teleman, 2003, 2005). By and large, however, the component commonly known as "status planning" (e.g., Cooper, 1989) had long been neglected, since, as many scholars have pointed out, the position of Swedish was taken for granted for such a long period of time (e.g., Hult, 2005; Milani, 2007; Oakes, 2001). One possible explanation for this circumstance is that Swedish was established as the national language of Sweden already before the 19th century and, unlike neighbouring countries such

as Norway and Finland, has not had its national sovereignty challenged in modern times (e.g., Josephson, 2002, p. 80f.). In short, there were never reasons to give much thought to the position of Swedish in Sweden, as it had been unchallenged *de facto*.

In the 1990s, however, agents positioned in the Swedish field of LPP identified English as a threat to the position of Swedish in Sweden. In this discourse, the role of English in Sweden was grasped by virtue of a particular set of available apprehensions. During the same period of time, discourses about languages other than Swedish were established in the Swedish society. In fact, for a while, Sweden had five official minority languages but no official majority language. Highlighting this fact in the debate allowed the discussion to center on the status of Swedish by clinging to discourses attached to the other languages, which is to say that Swedish came to be piggy-backing on the position of minority languages in order to secure legal status at the top of the linguistic hierarchy of Sweden. Teleman (2003, p. 234), a central agent in the Swedish LPP field, acknowledges that grasping the situation in the perspective of the minority languages was inspired by ideological currents deriving from post-colonial contexts. Be that as it may, since 2009 Sweden has enforced a Language Act dictating that "Swedish is the principal language in Sweden" (*Språklag* 2009, section 4), which is a phrasing that owes much of its existence to the perceived impact from English (Salö 2012, 2014).

De facto and de jure, thus, Swedish is the language of the Swedish state; yet, "[t]he existence of a language is always a discursive project rather than an established fact" (Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994, p. 64). It is axiomatic that national languages largely owe much of their existence to romanticist ideology and state formation (e.g., Hobsbawm, 1990). Ultimately, then, those who struggle for the unification of such markets likewise struggle for the upkeep of recognized domination (Bourdieu, 1977a, p. 652). By Bourdieu's logic, it is not an exaggeration to say that the maintenance and protection of Swedish is an object of inquiry "overladen with passions, emotions and interests" (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 52). A reflexive posture concerning threats to national languages entails understanding a language problem, on the one hand, as a perceived social problem, one with bearings on people's investments, or their deep-seated feelings about their mother tongue, identity, and national belonging. On the other hand, it entails understanding it as a sociolinguistic problem in the sense of a scientifically legitimate problem (cf. Wacquant, 1989a, p. 55). In this context, Park and Wee state that

> [t]he characterization of a "language problem" usually reflects the apprehension of a social situation from the perspective of a particular observer or set of observers. In other words, what counts as a problem usually reflects the interests or ideological stances (even if subconsciously) of a particular group – and this is particularly so when language issues are involved. (Park & Wee, 2012, p. 23)

Hence, grappling with these matters I came to realize that one can question the extent to which the threat against Swedish exists, as Foucault would put it, independent of the discourses about it. Particular representations of English as a sociolinguistic problem, moreover, were inherited from the context in which I had

dwelled – Swedish LPP – which had thus contributed extensively to the existence of the object of study. Reflexivity, in short, helped me see that LPP is politics on the battlefield of language, and as such it is about representing things, changing things, with words:

> The social world is the locus of struggles over words which owe their seriousness – and sometimes their violence – to the fact that words to a great extent make things, and that changing words, and, more generally representations [...] is already a way of changing things. Politics is, essentially, a matter of words. That's why the struggle to know reality scientifically almost always has to begin with a struggle against words. (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 54)

As can be seen, Bourdieu urges researchers to engage in a struggle against political discourse as part and parcel of developing a scientific – not scientistic – gaze. Does LPP research need straightforward distinctions between what is scientific and what is not? While Bachelard does not side with the positivist position that scientifically procured facts are value-free (e.g., Cameron et al. 1992, p. 6), he does share the view of figures like Popper that science should aim at objective knowledge, distinct from the knowing subject (Tiles, 1985, p. 43, 48ff.). Bachelard, however, preferred the notion "objectivation", thereby repositioning the urge for objective truths by emphasizing that the quest for objectivity is an activity, a line of work undertaken by the scientist (Broady, 1991, p. 347). My present-day position on this vast and deep-seated matter is that this aim is pivotal but immensely difficult, yet conceivable by adopting a reflexive posture (e.g., Bourdieu, 1983, p. 317).

INTERVIEWS AND REFLEXIVITY

While many of the matters of epistemic reflexivity presented thus far might appear to the reader as pertaining mostly to the initial stages of research processes and practices, this is really not so. On the contrary, epistemic reflexivity has its place throughout; it is designed to be continuously and systematically implemented in every moment of the research practice and thus digs deep into the craft of the research practice. For example, it pertains to the formulating of one's interview questions, to interviews as situated and power-laden events in themselves (Bourdieu, 1996b; Briggs 1986; Slembrouck, 2004), as well as to transcribing (e.g., Bucholtz, 2000; Ochs, 1979; also Bourdieu, 1996b, p. 30ff.), etc. Maton (2003) has critiqued the foundations of Bourdieu's version of reflexivity on the premise that reflexive knowledge can and should also be subjected to reflexivity. In short, there is no way of knowing when to stop being reflexive. Both Bourdieu and Bachelard are aware of this fact; as Bachelard posits, "objective knowledge is never complete [...] since new objects never cease to provide new topics of conversation in the dialogue between the mind and things" (2002, p. 243). Complying with this viewpoint, it would be inaccurate and indeed unrealistic to claim that every potential aspect of this exercise has been systematically implemented to the full extent in any scholarly work. Then again, it may be questioned whether a fully-fledged reflexive research trajectory is even possible, as there is always room for more reflexive thought (Maton, 2003, p. 59). As noted, in my work, reflexivity has had purport mostly in respect to the ways I have attempted to handle my dispositions and position in relation

to the field where I previously dwelled and where I had therefore placed my investments. But it has also been a relevant instrument in the production of knowledge through interviews, and below I comment on some of the insights that were gained and difficulties encountered.

It goes without saying that all methodologies have their problems. In sociolinguistics, many studies are open to some of the manifold methodological problems that arise in studies where interviews are used. Scholars who have written critically on these topics recurrently point out that as a communicative event, the interview is skewed and situated, and accordingly yields data that should be thoughtfully interpreted (e.g., Briggs, 1986, 2007b; Mertz 1993). In consequence, while in some respects it can be advisable to think of the interview as a conversation (e.g., Blommaert & Dong, 2010), analysts are often advised to keep in mind that, in actual fact, it is not an ordinary conversation. Rather, "[i]t is a deliberately created opportunity to talk about something that the interviewer is interested in and that may or may not be of interest to the respondent" (Dingwall, 1997, p. 59). Often, the questions asked by the analyst presuppose "certain sustainable metapragmatic starting-points", which may or may not correspond to informants' assumptions (Mertz, 1993, p. 160). One effect of this, naturally, is that the researcher can quite easily – oblivious to the fact or not – produce an account and thereafter pick some quotes "to illustrate a previously determined position on some personal or political issue" (Dingwall, 1997, p. 52). These issues should be acknowledged. However, as De Fina and Perrino (2011) note, much of the literature that seeks to critically scrutinize interviews as a

source of bias in social scientific research seems strongly attuned to overcoming the perceived problem of interviews as "unnatural" contexts, which in itself is a problematic conceptualization. In my view, the issue resulting from using interviews is not primarily that the researchers carry out an analysis on a piece of data that they themselves have created – which is true, yet possible to overcome. Instead, the issue as I see it pertains to a point raised by Hymes (1981, p. 84), namely that "[s]ome social research seems incredibly to assume that what there is to find out can be found out by asking." Broadly, this critical comment aims at shedding light on the methodological pitfall of believing that people have more opinions about most things than what is regularly the case, which is a stance shared by Bourdieu (Blommaert & Dong, 2010, p. 3).

Bourdieu's position on interviews, thus, is somewhat similar: "It is the investigator who starts the game and who sets up its rules" (Bourdieu, 1996b, p. 19). However, Bourdieu goes further in arguing that interviews are problematic because they are linked to the inherent difficulties involved in having informants producing adequate accounts of their own practices.

> Social agents do not have an innate knowledge of what they are and what they do: more precisely, they do not necessarily have access to the central causes of their discontent or their disquiet and the most spontaneous declarations can, without aiming to mislead, express quite the opposite of what they appear to say. (Bourdieu, 1996b, p. 29)

In this quote, Bourdieu reveals his stance on reflexivity, which links to the general issues of agency raised in Bourdieu's framework. This pertains to what Ortner (2006, p. 111) sees

as Bourdieu's "insistence on the inaccessibility to actors of the underlying logic of their practices." Indeed, while Bourdieu does not posit that agents are totally unaware of what goes on around them, he maintains that they grasp it differently. As he puts it, they do not "have in their heads the scientific truth of their practice which I am trying to extract from observation of their practice" (Bourdieu, 2003, p. 288). Consequently, as he notes elsewhere: "Workers know a lot: more than any intellectual, more than any sociologist. But in a sense they don't know it; they lack the instrument to grasp it, to speak about it" (Bourdieu & Eagleton, 1994, p. 273).

To many, this position is provocative. According to critics, by downplaying the informants' abilities to reflect upon their own practices, reflexivity becomes framed as the researcher's privilege only (Archer, 2007, p. 43; Lynch, 2000). It is clear that Bourdieu sees reflexivity as a key difference between habitus and a trained, scientific habitus (Brubaker, 1993). We can say that Bourdieu demands of the researcher to develop an eye capable of projecting an image that goes beyond what the people who are studied are capable of grasping. The problem is not necessarily that people will have nothing to say, but rather that they have not necessarily given much thought to the kind of matters that interest the sociolinguist. Thus, the question is how to deal with informants' accounts "[g]iven that one can ask anything of anyone and that almost anyone always has enough good will to give some sort of answer to any question" (Bourdieu et al., 1991, p. 42). For Bourdieu asking people about their point of view must be supplemented with an understanding of the point of view from which it is stated (Bourdieu, 1996b, p. 34).

One way of dealing with this intrinsic issue, as Dingwall (1997, p. 56) points out, is this: "If the interview is a social encounter, then, logically, it must be analysed in the same way as any other social encounter." Here reflexivity serves a device for understanding and mastering these distortions' (Bourdieu, 1996b, p. 18). Building on such insights in his work on reflexivity and sociolinguistic interviews, Slembrouck (2004) accordingly views the interview situation as a meeting between two habitus. By this logic, the research interview is also intrinsically linked to the linguistic market in which it unfolds and the particular notion of legitimate language that applies there (Slembrouck, 2004, p. 93). The power immanent in the interview events can be brought to bear in important ways. Indeed, informant accounts can be inclined to reproduce dominant conceptions of what is acceptable, conceivable, or normal, which in turn reflect the imperatives of power hierarchies beyond interpersonal relationships (Bourdieu, 1977b, p. 37). In analyzing interview accounts, therefore, it is important to add the social relation between the interviewer and the interviewee that censors discourse by making some opinions seem inexpressible or practices unacceptable (Bourdieu, 1996b, p. 25). For these reasons, it is easy to side with Briggs (1986), who holds that, generally, interviews should be complemented with other data sources. Interviews provide accounts of the practical experience of agents, and, as such, they are "situated performances in and of themselves" (Heller, 2011, p. 44).

CONCLUSION: THE EYE WHICH SEES ITSELF

Viewed through the prism of Bourdieu's reflexive sociology, research is a form of interested practice governed by a scientific habitus (Brubaker, 1993). To be sure, this holds ramifications for analysts, who are cultural producers with a stake in their own object, and who also bring their "spontaneous knowledge of the social world" (Bourdieu, cited in Wacquant, 1989a, p. 44) to their research practices (see Bourdieu, 1993a, p. 8ff.). Like other kinds of social research, language research is at times vested in ways which affect its eventual outcomes. As a case in point, struggles to achieve particular language conditions pertain to the backbone objectives of LPP practices, which, after all, are about "how things ought to be", not about what they are (Canagarajah, 2005, p. 153). Subsequently, LPP research produced in the borderland-like space between science and politics runs the evident risk of ending up showing and saying exactly what one would have expected it to show and say, based on the position – social, academic or otherwise – from which the research was produced. Often, this is because scholars embody the values of the group or object they investigate and, all too often, fail to create a rupture with their inherited view of the problem they investigate. However, as I have sought to signpost here, it is indeed possible to overcome this problem by adopting a reflexive posture. This work is vital in the process that Bachelard (2002) calls "the formation of the scientific mind", but which can more straightforwardly be understood as the acquisition of a professional habitus: a scientific habitus, incorporated as "a disposition to monitor its own productions and to grasp its own principles of production" (Brubaker, 1993, p. 216).

The key proposition of this paper is the impetus for implementing Bourdieu's notion of epistemic reflexivity in the research practice. Epistemic reflexivity offers the critical researcher the intellectual means to equip oneself with the necessary means to understand one's naïve view of the object of study (Bourdieu, 1996a, p. 207) and thereby "avoid being the toy of social forces in your practice" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 183, emphasis removed). As I have attempted to show, for Bourdieu, the construction of scientific knowledge begins with a break with the preconstructed object, as a form of "radical doubt" about the commonplace representations it brings to bear (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 235). Criticism in this sense advances knowledge, and on this point, I concur with the Bachelardian standpoint that unfounded assumptions are epistemological obstacles (Broady, 1991, p. 365). Adopting this device, then, entails a rupture with previous viewpoints, ultimately with the goal of producing a better sociolinguistic understanding of the objects we endeavor to explore. For language scholars, this principle may prove to be useful in the efforts of producing a new gaze, a "sociological eye" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 251), but also an eye that, as it were, is capable of seeing itself (Wacquant, 1989b, p. 20). This reflexive gaze, I hold, is a pivotal driver for yielding better research.

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Language, food and gentrification: signs of socioeconomic mobility in two Gothenburg neighbourhoods

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines at how language and food intersect and interact in gentrification processes. As a capital-driven social process aiming at enhancing the socioeconomic value of urban space, gentrification implies mobility both in the sense that it attracts new people, businesses and capital to an area, and in the form of displacement of less affluent and prestigious people, businesses and semiotic resources from central to marginal urban spaces. The paper examines linguistic and visual traces of such mobilities in two neighbourhoods in Gothenburg, Sweden. Based on the observation that food and food practices are central for the production and reproduction of social distinction, the analysis centres on food related establishments and signs. In particular, it discusses the distinction-making function of prestigious languages, elite gastronomic registers, and gourmet food trucks, and how these depend on the marginalization of low status languages, popular gastronomic registers and cheap generic food carts. People's interaction with these resources contributes to the reconfiguration of social and urban space.

Keywords: gentrification, distinction, gastronomic register, food trucks, linguistic landscape

INTRODUCTION

Cities are in constant change as people and capital move in and out of particular neighbourhoods. Cities also feature social inequalities as economic wealth, cultural capital, and political power are unevenly distributed. The city of Gothenburg, Sweden, is no exception. In 2021, the city celebrates its 400th anniversary and for this occasion large parts of the city are being rebuilt and renovated. As part of the anniversary vision, the city council stresses the increased socio-cultural and linguistic diversity of the inhabitants resulting from immigration and underlines the importance of creating an open and inclusive ambience (City of Gothenburg 2018). The renovations and reconstructions imply changes that not only affect people who live and work in specific areas, but also create new patterns of mobility by attracting new visitors to these areas.

Gentrification emerges as a central process and concept for the study of socioeconomic mobility in urban spaces. Simply understood as the socioeconomic upscaling of a neighbourhood and its inhabitants, gentrification has been widely discussed within social sciences (see e.g. Shaw 2008; Zukin 2010), but less so within language studies (see Papen 2012; Lyons and Rodríguez-Ordóñez 2015; Trinch and Snajdr 2017 for exceptions). Being both driven by and contributing to the unequal distribution of power, capital, and space, gentrification is intimately linked to socio-economic mobility and segregation (Holgersson and Thörn 2014).

The linguistic landscape of a neighbourhood is embedded both in activities on the local scale, among its residents and visitors, and on a translocal scale through use of specific global, international languages and registers,

but also through flows and (im)mobility of people, products, and capital (Lou 2016). Patterns of socioeconomic (im)mobility leave physical and linguistic traces in urban space, and such traces look different in economically advantaged and disadvantaged spaces, or in what Stroud and Mpendukana (2009) call 'sites of luxury' and 'sites of necessity'.

Food has always been a central ingredient of life, as both nourishment and culture. However, within present day urban landscapes and lifestyles, especially in gentrified areas, food has become even more important as a resource for the production of symbolic and economic value (Berg and Sevón 2014; Roe, Sarlöv Herlin, and Speak 2016). At the same time, patterns of social inequality are reflected in which cuisines, and associated 'languages' and 'cultures', are seen as trendy and prestigious, and which are not (Martin 2014).

In this paper, we want to tie these observations together as we analyse the semiotic landscape (Jaworski and Thurlow 2010) in two Gothenburg neighbourhoods. In particular, we examine how food and language – broadly understood – interact in the making of place, and how specific linguistic varieties and gastronomic registers displayed on food-related establishments function within gentrification and migration processes. Throughout the analysis we are concerned with inequality as materialized in practices of social differentiation and spatial segregation.

GASTRONOMIC REGISTERS, (IM)MOBILITY AND SCALING IN URBAN SPACE

The city has been described as 'a mosaic of polarised geographies of wealth, social

status, health, ethnicity and gender', and language (Giolla Chríost 2007: 10). This means that we can expect noticeable differences between different areas of a city: language, money, space, and power are unevenly distributed. At the same time, cities are in constant movement and change, and people with different backgrounds and social positions are living, working and moving side by side. However, differences are often upheld despite mobility: people tend to stick to their own group and class, creating a sort of 'uneasy co-existence' (Shortell 2016: 80) or 'parallel play' (DeSena 2012: 82) of distinct groups. The (re)production of difference and distinction then emerges as a core activity of urban life. As will be illustrated by the analysis presented in this paper, this can be seen in the 'scalar practices' and 'scalar work' (Carr and Lempert 2016) involved in gentrification processes, whereby particular semiotic resources are used for (re)producing and challenging social imagination and differentiation tied to place. Such semiotic resources include, but are not limited to, national languages and indexes, i.e. words and expressions associated with specific languages and cultures. Furthermore, they include varied constellations of 'visual multilingualism' (Kelly-Holmes 2014) and forms linked to what we here call gastronomic registers, that is, 'ways of speaking' in relation to food products and practices (e.g. merchandising, consumption) that index socially imagined configurations of class, ethnicity and (im)mobility. As signalled by the quotation marks, we develop a multimodal and socio-semiotic understanding of register as comprising visuals, colour, (typo)graphic design in addition to verbal 'language'.

Gentrification is linked to migration and segregation in dynamic and complex ways. Many researchers have shown how gentrification processes contribute to spatial segregation within cities, since people with lesser resources are forced to move out of gentrified neighbourhoods. Shortell (2016: 223) argues that 'the more immigrant neighbourhoods are stigmatized, the easier it is for urban planners and developers [...] to frame gentrification as a solution to the problem' (see also Holgersson 2014). At the same time, and to a certain extent, different groups often co-exist in gentrified neighbourhoods since 'members of the ethnic/racial majority (higher in class and status) often regard the presence of other groups as a desirable characteristic, part of what makes the neighbourhood *exotic* or *gritty*, or even *authentic*' (Shortell 2016: 210). This is no surprise as long as the Others not are too many, or associated with low status groups, places, and languages (see our analysis of the differentiated use and value of Arabic in different parts of Gothenburg below).

As shown by Trinch and Snajdr (2017), a core feature of gentrification is distinction. Distinction then does not just mean that something is different from something else, but that this difference is socio-economically recognized and valued (Bourdieu 1984). Trinch and Snajdr (2017) identify two types of signs which are vital when analysing economic and social aspects of ongoing gentrification processes: 'Old School Vernacular' and 'Distinction-making signage'. 'Old school' signs index capitalism without distinction, by including all languages used by people living in the neighbourhood, thus bringing inclusivity in the neighbourhood economy. Contrary to this, distinction-making signage represents 'an exclusivity

that for some readers also represents exclusion' (ibid.: 64). These signs are often minimalistic (for example, they use one word or a short phrase in reduced font size, often with lower case letters) and frequently display playful metareferences, polysemic or cryptic names, or use languages that index sophistication and worldliness (ibid.: 75). In distinction-making signs the use of languages is symbolic or fetishised rather than instrumental-communicative (Kelly-Holmes 2014). Thus, the content is not always understood by the audience. The English or other prestige languages used for this kind of signage in gentrified and socio-economically stratified neighbourhoods contribute to scaling up the value of the neighbourhood, its people, and businesses. In such areas, outside the Anglophone world, English has an emblematic function, along with other prestigious languages, as opposed to a referential use of other languages (Vandenbroucke 2016).

In their analysis of linguistic and cultural commodification processes in Chinatown, Washington DC, Leeman and Modan (2009: 332) argue that we need to examine 'how written language interacts with other features of the built environment to construct commodified urban places'. In this paper, we are not just studying commercial signage, but also the impact of religious institutions on the linguistic landscape (see Blommaert 2013). In doing so, we see how written and visual language interacts with the built and social environment; here, the religious institutions condition signage and physically attract people to the area. The rhythm of a place is composed by people's daily movements, and simultaneously the 'institutional arrangements and the material affordances' that condition them (Edensor 2010: 70). This means

that when we are examining the rhythm of a particular place we must take into account human, linguistic, institutional, and built features. Mobility within a city is dynamic and varies from place to place and with time.

In line with critical sociolinguistics' and discourse analysis' intents to reveal and counter social inequality, we approach the notion of language as 'a set of resources which circulate in unequal ways in social networks and discursive spaces' (Heller 2007: 2). That is, 'language' should not be seen as one sole homogeneous thing (a system, structure, practice, etc.) but a complex and stratified set of communicative resources and 'features' (Jørgensen 2008). Since the usage of such resources and features is conditioned by social, economic, cultural, and political aspects, the im/mobility of particular resources depends on 'the indexical value that [they] have in certain spaces and situations' (Blommaert 2010: 12). This means that we need to take the situated negotiation of indexicality into account in our analysis. We do this by focusing on the scalar work involved in the socioeconomic upscaling of place. Every time we move or imagine and present something as something else (bigger/smaller, better/worse, richer/poorer, etc.) we engage in scalar work (Carr and Lempert 2016). However, it is important to distinguish between scale and value; a new perspective on something does not automatically imply or cause an up- or down-scaling of the value of the same thing. The economic value of language emerges when language 'can be exchanged for other symbolic or material resources' (Del Percio, Flubacher, Duchêne 2017: 55). Such exchanges often involve shifts of perspective and hence scalar work.

We engage in scalar work by choosing a prestigious 'language' for

a restaurant name or a food product (within the contemporary Western world, these have typically included French and Italian), but also by deploying particular linguistic registers. Registers are 'forms of linguistic differentiation' (Irvine 2001: 33). They serve to position the speakers and interaction in social space, to align with or distantiate from certain social positions defined along continua of categories such as class, gender, and ethnicity. Put simply, 'the way people speak expresses and brings into being social differences' (Blackledge, Creese and Takhi 2014, 488). As part of 'a sociolinguistic economy' (Irvine 2001) or 'political economy of language' (del Percio, Flubacher and Duchêne 2017), particular registers, and other language features such as styles, 'are highly valued and rewarded while others get stigmatized or ignored', and 'expertise and access to influential and prestigious [registers], styles, genres, and media is unevenly distributed across any population' (Irvine 2001: 33). This way 'language and discourse play a central role in the production and legitimation of inequality and stratification' (Blommaert and Rampton 2011: 13). Furthermore, as forms of linguistic differentiation, registers always exist within 'a system of distinction'; they 'index properties of your present situation and social activity' or 'a situation you are trying to create' (Irvine 2001: 27). This means registers associated with high value and prestige are likely to be used – with more or less detail and proficiency – in aspirational interactions such as advertising or ordering of foodstuffs, where the speaker/writer either invites others or aims at being recognized as a member of some kind of elite.

Within increasingly multilingual urban centers, people meet a multitude of languages through their daily consumption. Even though most languages are likely to stay foreign and opaque to most people, particular expressions and words emerge as more or less emblematic indexes of entire languages and cultures. Within a political economy where cosmopolitanism and safe exoticism have high currency, market-smart people tend to pick up such foreign and exotic words and strategically use them for social positioning, i.e. for scaling up the social status of themselves, their taste, and their experiences. Many of these linguistic bits and pieces pertain to food products and practices. Tracing changes in the consumption of a particular foodstuff within one culture or country can reveal changes in taste regimes (Järlehed and Moriarty, 2018). An examination of the changing practices and infrastructure of a local food scene – i.e. what foodstuffs are offered where, how, and to whom – can tell us about similar changes in taste regimes and how they tie into local urban transformations related to gentrification. Furthermore, when one kind of food-based activity moves into a neighbourhood, another is often forced to move out (Martin, 2014). This is due to a combination of higher rents, city policies, and market-driven changes in consumer taste and demand.

In this paper we put forward the notion of gastronomic register to address the linguistic and semiotic practice of social differentiation and positioning as related to food and food practices. Gastronomic registers are thus seen as semiotic resources that serve to present and position speakers, practices and spaces/places in relation to food. Since registers as Gal (2018, 3) says, are made up of 'co-occurring forms [which] are usually not only linguistic but multimodal', they materialize in various ways. For instance, in the name of a particular food product

in a specific language, in the usage of isolated language-specific expressions in a verbal exchange around food, in the visual display of particular food stuffs, or in the specific shape and look of a food truck. These register forms resonate distinction-making and scalar work related to food and social practices around food such as production, consumption and display. Consequently, gastronomic registers are an important part of what we elsewhere have called the semiofoodscape, that is, 'a dynamic social construction that relates food to places, people (class hierarchies) and materialities' (Järlehed and Moriarty under review: 2018:6).

THE NEIGHBOURHOODS

We have chosen to focus this study on two centrally located neighbourhoods in Gothenburg: *Olivedal* and *Gamlestaden* (see figure 1). The areas are comparable in size and structure, with a mix of residential buildings, businesses, and restaurants. However, socio-economic and demographic data show that the inhabitants of the Olivedal neighbourhood are more affluent and well-educated than inhabitants in Gamlestaden, where we find more immigrants, with an income level below the city average (see table 1).

In this study we have chosen to document the northern part of the Olivedal area, close to the industrial harbour, more specifically the so-called

Figure 1: Gothenburg City Layout with Olivedal (left) and Gamlestaden (right). The red lines indicate the streets documented in our study.

Sources: Boplats (Areas in Gothenburg: https://nya.boplats.se/tipshjalp/sokahyresratt/kartor) and Official Tourist Map of Gothenburg and the Archipelago 2017/2018.

© Järlehed, Lykke Nielsen, Rosendal and CMDR. 2018

Table 1: Olivedal and Gamlestaden: Socio-economic and demographic data

	OLIVEDAL	GAMLESTADEN	GOTHENBURG
Population	11,313	8,698	541,145
Population changes 2013-2014	+94	+696	+7,874
Born abroad	14.1%	30.3%	24.0%
Unemployment	3.1%	7.0%	6.6%
College/university education (more than 3 years)	50.6%	31.2%	33.9%
Participation in municipal election 2014	85.6%	73.6%	79.2%

Source: City Council of Gothenburg (Göteborgsbladet 2015 - Områdesfakta, Samhäll-sanalys och Statistik, Göteborgs stadsledningskontor)

Långgatorna (*Första* and *Andra Långgatan*, literally 'First Long street 'and 'Second Long street') and the streets found in between these long, parallel streets. The neighbourhood is situated west of the square *Järntorget*, which has been the centre for the labour movement since the late 1800s and today is a vital traffic junction and meeting place. Today, the streets are characterized by restaurants, pubs, and small and independent shops, located in the typical three storey houses of the area. This part of town was originally built in the mid/end of the 17th century and had for a long time a rather bad reputation (the majority of the present buildings date from the 1870s-1910s, Hultgren 2012: 5). This old workers' neighbourhood is today gentrified and has transformed into a living area for high income citizens. However, the gentrification process is not totally completed. There are still some small, simple and cheap beer houses, alternative clothing shops, record shops, and vegan restaurants, as well as political organisations, which have resisted the ongoing transformation of the area. The area, especially the streets *Långgatorna*, is characterized by a special rhythm with buzzling restaurants and crowded pubs during weekend nights, but empty streets on a Tuesday at 10.30 am.

Built on a very old trading settlement, the other neighbourhood, Gamlestaden, is actually the oldest part of Gothenburg (Jörnmark, Forsemalm, and Palmås 2016). Today, we do not see any traces of the early settlements. The current buildings date from 1915 to 1960, with a mix of the typical one brick and two wooden storeys *landshövdingehus* (roughly 'Governor's house', a building type unique to Gothenburg), small squares, and curved streets. Most of the buildings were constructed at the beginning of the 20th century to accommodate workers and big, low-income families.

Gamlestaden earlier had the character of an industrial community at the outskirts of the city. Most people living here were employed by two big industries, the textile factory *Gamlestadens Fabriker* and the bearings and seal factory SKF (originally *Svenska Kullagerfabriken*), which is still a landmark of the area. Resulting from the socioeconomic upscaling of the area, families moved out to new-built, modern flats in the suburbs from the end of the 1950s onwards. The

population of Gamlestaden decreased and the area became rather run-down. Today most houses are modernized or refurbished.

Today Gamlestaden has an air of a small town or a residential borough with minor businesses, shops, and cafés/restaurants. The area is heavily influenced by car traffic, with a main big autostrada, *Artillerigatan*, cutting through the area, because of earlier plans to tear down the area. On the southern side we find the area called Bellevue with small-scale commercial activities, many ethnic shops, mosques, and religious associations. This part of the neighbourhood has become what Loukaitou-Sideris (2002) terms 'ethnically gentrified', that is a gradual displacement of traditional Swedish shops and business with commercial activities owned or run by mainly Muslim immigrants. North of the dividing street, we find restaurants, shops, official cultural institutions, schools, and residential areas. Gamlestaden is thus divided both physically and socially. We chose to include both these parts as this division of public space in Gamlestaden influences patterns of language use and mobility in the area. The mosques have a pull effect on visitors on Fridays in the Bellevue part, while cultural institutions have a similar pull effect through concerts etc. on the northern side of *Artillerigatan*.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA

We documented 9 streets, totalling 3460 meters, in Olivedal and 12 streets, totalling 3760 meters, in Gamlestaden. Four of the streets in the neighbourhood Gamlestaden were situated in the Bellevue quarter (1440 meters). Both the left and the right side of all streets were documented. A total of 226 storefronts in Olivedal and 157 in Gamlestaden

were photographed in May 2016 (in addition to these, complementary overview-photos of streets were taken, as well as individual photos of parts of the storefronts and less permanent signage, such as stickers and posters). The individual photos were subsequently allocated to shop or activity storefront in NVivo 11, which we used as a database and analytical tool.

We employed a mixed methods approach, involving both quantitative and qualitative methods for the analysis. Each storefront was coded for number of languages (1, 2, 3, 3+), language choice and combination (e.g. Swedish and English; Swedish, Arabic and Kurdish) and hierarchy (first, second and third language). In addition we classified the type of activity of each unit of analysis (e.g. supermarket, hair salon, cultural association, religious institutions). Based on this coding we calculated the quantitative distribution and visibility of particular linguistic codes, combinations, and their visual hierarchy within each area.

We further made a thematic coding of all the photos, searching for and exploring patterns of sociolinguistic change (Coupland 2016). In addition to noting gastronomic registers (popular and elite registers), we thematically coded place (landmarks, linguistic place-marking, visual place- and culture-markers), and signs of gentrification (minimalistic display, semiotic and linguistic play, 'time-markers' on signs). Even markers of historical migration, versatile business types visible on storefronts, transliteration practices, and visual multilingualism were identified.

Our data present a higher density of stores/businesses in Olivedal than in Gamlestaden. Additional detailed analysis of the amount, kind and content of the signs in the two neighbourhoods

shows that Gamlestaden, with Hutton's words, is a more 'text-rich' area while Olivedal is more 'text-poor' (2011: 166), that is, signage in the former area is generally more loaded with written and visual symbols than signage in the latter area. Later, we will discuss these features some more with reference to Trinch and Snajdr's (2017) notions of 'old school' and 'distinction-making' signs.

ENGLISH AS DISTINCTION-MAKING RESOURCE

In the following sections, the use of language and 'languages' as part of gentrification processes and socioeconomic upscaling of neighbourhoods will be demonstrated and commented upon, starting with the use of English in Olivedal and Gamlestaden. The use of specific distinction-making languages illustrates value attribution to businesses, people and places, as shown here by the commodified use of English.

English is more frequent on signs in Olivedal than in Gamlestaden, both alone and in combination with Swedish. Almost 10% of the investigated Olivedal signs were written in English only, while English-only signs barely exist in Gamlestaden (only found on one storefront). We see the same pattern with the combination of Swedish and English. More than 40% of the signs in the Olivedal area were written in both Swedish and English, which is twice as frequent as in Gamlestaden. We also find a few combinations of English and another language in Olivedal. All these combinations are with other European languages. In Gamlestaden we only see one instance of the combination of English with another language: an English-Turkish storefront.

Piller (2001), in her study of advertising in Germany found that bilingual advertisements in English and German were used to reach middle-class Germans. These bilingual advertisements are attributed values such as internationalism, future orientation, success and elitism, sophistication, and fun (Piller 2001: 173). In the same way as bilingual use of German and English is 'the "natural" option for successful middle-class Germans' (Piller 2001: 155), bilingual signs in Swedish and English, which frequently occur in Olivedal, emerge as the highest form of linguistic currency when targeting customers in this neighbourhood. This language combination thus serves for making Olivedal distinctive (Trinch and Snajdr 2017), that is, to attract capital in terms of both daily consumption and long term investments (e.g. housing and business). As shown in a number of studies (among others Thurlow and Jaworski 2003; Lin Pan 2010; Lanza and Woldemariam 2014), the English language serves as such a marker and producer of distinction around the world and is used for scalar work in both neighbourhoods.

Figure 2 shows a typical distinction-making sign in the trendy Olivedal neighbourhood. By choosing a prestigious name 'street life', written in English and with lower case letters, the producers index and try to create a cool, urban social activity and atmosphere.

'street life' is the name of a bar. However, the type of business is only indicated by the small Heineken name and symbol (red star) at the lower right bottom of the sign. The use of English here is clearly connotational (Piller 2001: 163) and emblematic (Vandenbroucke 2016: 97). English here indexes worldliness and sophistication and the bar-name has a youthful, hip

Figure 2: Distinction-making sign on Andra Långgatan, Olivedal[1]

Figure 3: Distinction-making sign on Artillerigatan, Gamlestaden

urban connotation. The colourful neon design stresses the coolness. The sign is minimalist in not explicitly stating that it is a bar. This understatement is part of the up-scale sign design, which stresses distinction (Jaworski Forthcoming 2018). Thus, the sign serves to position and distantiate the business and uses English as part of the design.

Although infrequent, we find similar distinction-making signs in Gamlestaden. The local pizza restaurant 'SLICE of New York' in *Artillerigatan* is an example of such an up-scaling use of English, even in this neighbourhood.

The pizza snack bar has an orange circular neon sign with the name SLICE written in capital letters in white on

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1 All the photos in the paper are taken by the authors.

the orange background with 'of New York' printed in handwriting font below. PIZZA KEBAB BURGER is written above the name in the circular logo and PREMIUM INGREDIENTS under the logo. This trademark is also found on the windows of the place. On the windows of the snack bar either 'PIZZA', 'KEBAB' or 'BURGER' is written in big capital letters in black on a grey bottom on top of the window, accompanied by the logo/trademark in orange centred below, in the middle of the window. This is clearly an aspirational use of English, aiming to associate the restaurant to worldliness and international, cosmopolitan New York. Simultaneously, what is offered (pizza, kebab, and hamburgers) is today regarded as typical Swedish fast food. The terms have entered a Swedish vocabulary available to the general public and are part of a Swedish gastronomic register which, instead of indexing urban elite, targets the ordinary men and woman in the street. This indicates that the use of English in signage is not per se a sign of upscaling processes. Furthermore, other languages mark social positioning related to food and food practices.

This use of valued languages as part of upscaling and as a visual sign of ongoing gentrification of the area are found in some establishments. *Trattoria Maglia*, for example, established in 2015 (written in Italian on the restaurant window: 'Dal 2015') is situated in a piazza-like square in the centre of Gamlestaden, and is a White guide sister restaurant of a well-known Italian restaurant in another part of Gothenburg, *Majorna*. The restaurant uses Italian as a distinction-making register, and serves 'Aperitivo' instead of 'After work', which is the coined Swedish/Scandinavian term for meeting colleagues for a (happy hour) drink after work. The design stands out as typically discrete, with white letters on a black background, giving a sophisticated appearance; see Jaworski (forthcoming 2018).

Still, the more typical restaurants in Gamlestaden are run by immigrants from the Middle East/the Arabic-speaking world, the Balkans, and the Horn of Africa. Signs are information loaded and text dense, showing business, products, or services, which is typical for what Trinch and Snajdr (2017) call 'old school' signage. Often the store names, which are in large typefaces, refer to locations or

Figure 4: Signs of gentrification in Gamlestaden (Holländareplatsen 4-6)

surnames, with additional symbols and pictures.

The combination of English and Swedish, which is often found in Olivedal (see above), is less frequent in Gamlestaden. When this combination is found, English has the same emblematic or symbolic function as found in the Olivedal neighbourhood (see the Gothia Falafel sign, figure 5).

Gothia Falafel is a Palestinian vegetarian/vegan fast food stand in Gamlestaden. Gothia Falafel is located in the premises of another restaurant, 'Old Corner', but is a separate business. The sign displayed in white on green uses a combination of English and Swedish. The trademark 'Gothia Falafel' is found above and under the actual locking window of the fast food establishment. 'Gothia' is an established international term, indexing contemporary Gothenburg and its relationship to the history of the Goths, frequently used in Gothenburg for hotels and sport events. Falafel is an established Swedish term today, thus does not form part of a prestigious register associated with a differentiated food practice. The sign also has the English name 'Old Corner' and the Swedish term LUCKAN

'locking window' in capital letters on the canopy above the locking window. In addition, a smaller neon sign in the window says 'Open' in English. This is a referential use of English. The same kind of pragmatic use of English, with 'WELCOME' in capital letters written on one window pane, is found in another small restaurant or snack bar in the area, serving Balkan specialties. This establishment additionally well illustrates businesses in Gamlestaden, with its 'old school', text-dense storefront, with non-standard forms and complementary pictures. Even though the bar does not display any business name on the storefront, dishes on offer are written on a blackboard outside the restaurant, and a board in the window displays photos of dishes accompanied by the printed names of the dishes (*Burek/Pita*, *Cevapi*, *Souvlaki*). Inside the restaurant, Swedish and Bosnian are used on menus and other texts (sayings). It is clear that these sign producers use a specific gastronomic register to promote their businesses and simultaneously to socially differentiate and position them as serving authentic food.

Figure 5: Emblematic usage of English in Gamlestaden (Artillerigatan)

Neither Swedish nor Bosnian are associated with prestige in Gamlestaden. Additionally, Swedish functions as lingua franca for speakers of different immigrant languages, and is used referentially in combination with these languages in restaurant signs. The referential use of English is more frequent on other types of businesses in Gamlestaden, such as small travel businesses, money exchange, and money transfer agencies, in addition to small scale commerce, which often are much diversified shops.

COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS AND COMMODIFICATION OF ARABIC

Arabic is the most commonly used foreign language after English in the two neighbourhoods, though it is used to a significantly lesser extent in Olivedal than in Gamlestaden: a total of 24 storefronts used Arabic alone or in combination with other languages compared to 212 storefronts with English. Unlike English, which is generally considered a valued linguistic capital and used much more frequently in Olivedal than in Gamlestaden, Arabic is not associated with much prestige in Sweden or in Gothenburg due to its reputation as low status immigrant language. This is reflected in our data: Arabic occurs much more frequently in Gamlestaden, where more inhabitants are born abroad, unemployment rates are considerably higher and average income is considerably lower than in Olivedal (fig. 1): 22 storefronts in Gamlestaden used Arabic, mostly in combination with other languages, while only two – a Lebanese and a Palestinian restaurant – did so in Olivedal. The way Arabic is used on signs in the two neighbourhoods largely follows the pattern of pre- and post-gentrification signage described by Trinch and Snajdr for Brooklyn (Trinch and Snajdr 2017: 85-86), as will be illustrated in the examples below. Distinction-making signs dominate in the gentrified area of Olivedal and 'old school' vernacular signage in Gamlestaden. However, our data also shows that Arabic is used as a tool to upscale restaurants in both

Figure 6: Storefront in Gamlestaden with 'old school' signage

areas, although this is done recurring to different registers in the two neighbourhoods. In what follows we will give examples of these uses in the two neighbourhoods.

The Palestinian restaurant in Olivedal, shown in figure 7, is named 'Silvis' after the former owner's wife and the present owner's mother[2] – a female name written in an Arabic 'mimicry' font (Sutherland 2015) which forms part of the restaurant's logo, as if the name rose from the oil lamp. The name *Silvis* also appears on the four sunshades to the left of the entrance, but here it is written with Arabic calligraphy in *al-Tughra'i* style, originally developed under the Ottoman Sultans in the 13th century, but today most often used in religious contexts. The calligraphy style signals both worldly and religious authority, but is difficult to read, even for native speakers of Arabic, because of the writing direction (from lower right to upper left) and the position of the individual Arabic letters (Gibb 1986: 595–98). The use of Arabic calligraphy and the logo with the transliterated name features a minimalist design and makes the signage distinction-making. Using this particular *al-Tughra'i* style as well as gold-colored letters on the logo and the sunshades also reflects scalar work and suggests an increased symbolic value of Arabic within this setting.

The menu at the right hand side of the entry contains many Arabic words written in Latin letters. All dishes have Arabic names, and for each one a short Swedish description presents the ingredients for Swedish customers. Unlike the calligraphy, which indexes classical Arabic and thus represents the high variety of the diglossic Arabic language, the transliterated Arabic words on the menu are all derived from Palestinian colloquial, a low variety of Arabic which does not enjoy the same linguistic and religious prestige as classic Arabic (Ferguson 1959; Badawi 1973; Versteegh 2014). The use of the two different varieties in the same context, even in the same menu, sends mixed signals about the status of the restaurant, but since neither the calligraphy nor the Palestinian colloquial seem to have
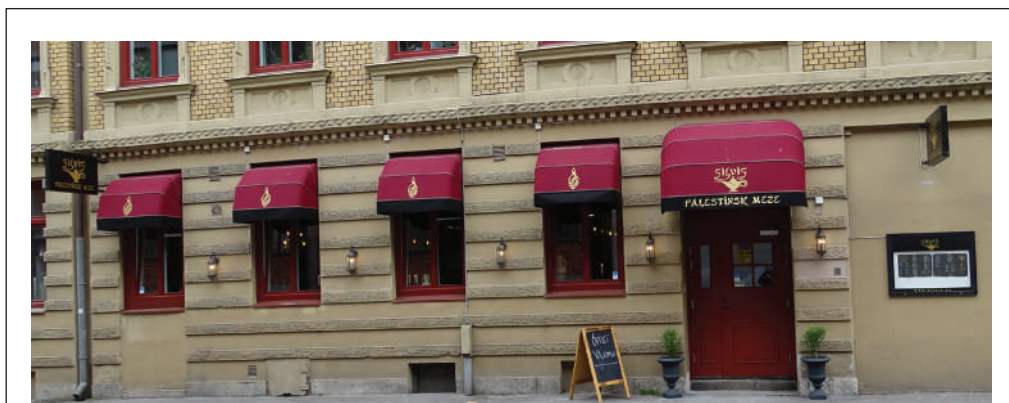

Figure 7: Restaurant Silvis in Olivedal

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2 Silvis teaser, http://silvis.nu/index.html, 0:17, visited November 3 2017.

Figure 8: The menu at Silvis

any genuine communicative function in this context, the visual language usage presumably aims to signal cultural authenticity to customers who do not understand Arabic. Thus, the use of Arabic appears to be a linguistic fetish, in which 'form and symbolic meaning take precedence over content or utility' (Kelly-Holmes 2014: 139). Using a text-sparse storefront based on calligraphy combined with the two different registers of Arabic in its high- as well as its low-variety forms creates a 'one-of-a-kind identity' that sets it apart from other restaurants in the area (Trinch and Snajdr 2017: 80) and contributes to an upscaling of the restaurant's value of attraction. Additionally, the artistic use of cultural artefacts in the logo, on the menu (two oil lamps on the right hand side of the menu and four candlesticks formed by the text of the set menus at the left hand side) and on the restaurant's website, whose address is given below the

menu (historical photo from Palestine, pictures of oriental belly dancing, etc.) as well as the descriptions of traditional Palestinian cuisine and its health effects, also mentioned on the website, makes it clear that this restaurant seeks to create a coherent cultural 'semiofoodscape' (Järlehed and Moriarty, 2018).

In Gamlestaden storefronts including Arabic generally follow the principle of 'what-you-see-is-what-you-get' with large typefaces, store names referring to types of business and products or what Trinch and Snajdr have termed 'old school' vernacular signs, frequently used in not-yet-gentrified areas (Trinch and Snajdr 2017: 70). *Jenans Gatukök* is a case in point: The fast food restaurant's large bilingual sign in yellow and blue (corresponding to the colors of the Swedish flag) states the restaurant's name in Swedish and Arabic followed by the food items offered by the restaurant: 'Falafel, kebab, chicken,

hamburgers, etc.' in both languages. The two languages are separated by a circular label displaying the word *Halal* in Arabic and Latin scripts, indicating that the food sold in this restaurant follows Islamic guidelines. Contrary to the restaurant in Olivedal the Arabic typefaces used here are immediately readable, indicating that Arabic has a genuine communicative function. All other texts used by *Jenans Gatukök* appear in Swedish which serves as a lingua franca for the ethnically diversified residents of the area.

Like *Silvis* in Olivedal, *Jenan* is a personal name, which can be used for women as well as for men, but it also has a strong religious connotation, being the plural of the Arabic word *janna* (pl. *Jinan/ Jenan*) – garden or paradise. In the context of this snack bar one would immediately interpret *Jenan* written in Latin letters as a personal name. However, the word used is not *jenan* but *jana'in,* another plural of *janna*, with the same meaning, paradise. This plural form cannot be taken as a personal name, only as paradise, and this reading

is supported by two additional features: *jana'in* is made definite by the prefix al-, thus indexing a specific place, and a short a-vowel (in the form of an almost horizontal short line) is added on the top of the first consonant of *jana'in* - a feature indicating that the word belongs unequivocally to the high variety of Arabic. The Arabic name of the fast food restaurant is thus 'Food from (the) Paradise', and this is by no means a coincidence. The restaurant is located next to the Bellevue Mosque, one of Gothenburg's oldest and most well-known mosques. From the outside the mosque is anonymous without any Islamic symbols or decorations. The only exception is a sign at a backdoor stating in Arabic 'Women's entrance to the mosque', translated into Swedish as 'kvinnor ingång' (women entrance), and a small piece of tape on the mailbox with the mosque's official name 'Islamiska Sunni Center' (Islamic Sunni Center). 'Food from Paradise' shows how the mosque invests the physical space around it with religious meaning, which

Figure 9: Jenans Gatukök in Gamlestaden

is reflected in the visual language of the surrounding shops and businesses. This feature is also used by a nearby furniture store which has a large framed picture above the entrance with an open Koran and an Arabic text saying 'God (is) the Almighty and Muhammad (is) his messenger'. Commercial companies thus draw on the religious place-making of the otherwise anonymous mosque, but this is merely visible to those who are able to read Arabic. Moreover, in areas like Gamlestaden, with many different groups of Muslim immigrants, religiosity is not only indexed through neighbouring companies' use of names and religious expressions, but also by the fact that the register of classical Arabic, as it appears in e.g. the word *al-jana'in*, is the holy language of Islam and that using it in writing therefore signals 'high Islam' (Moser 2012: 2921–22).

The southern part of Gamlestaden (Bellevue) is home to four mosques, and this attracts many visitors on Fridays from all over Gothenburg, who participate in the Friday prayer and then often go shopping or have lunch or coffee in the area afterwards. The mobility created by the mosques' pull-effect is utilized by restaurants and other companies to upscale their business, through what could be termed 'a proxy-approach'. The *Castaletta* restaurant, located in an industrial suburb 5 km north of Gamlestaden, illustrates how it works: The restaurant has put up a poster with a menu and contact information at a window in the immediate vicinity of two of the mosques. The poster promotes a special offer in Arabic where customers can 'Brunch and enjoy listening to (the famous Lebanese singer, author's remark) Feirouz' songs every Saturday and Sunday between 9 and 13' and 'enjoy a luxurious meal from Restaurant Castaletta as you like (it)'. The poster

reminds Arabic-speaking Muslims who visit the neighbourhood on Fridays that *Castaletta* is worth a visit over the weekend. However, instead of using Swedish to present the dishes, as was the case with *Jenans Gatukök*, *Castaletta* displays photos of the food and write the Arabic names in Latin letters so as to allow customers who do not speak Arabic to read and pronounce the dishes as well as getting a visual impression of the food. This 'proxy-approach' of using posters, stickers, and other cheap advertising media used by companies located outside the neighbourhood is frequently used by such diverse businesses as transport and relocation companies, translators, and other smaller companies which try to exploit the horizontal mobility of mosque-goers as well as the communicative effects of the Arabic language for their own scalar work..

In Gamlestaden Arabic is thus not used as a fetish, but has a communicative and referential function, either as a religious register to upscale local businesses through the use of religious terminology or the high-variety of classical Arabic, or by using the pull-effect of the religious institutions for commercial ends. Furthermore, though the registers used by Silvis and Jenan's Gatukök differ in the sense that the former indexes non-native speakers of Arabic while the latter indexes religiously devoted Muslims, both registers are prestigious and highly valued in their local context. They are therefore likely to be used as aspirational interaction in the two different neighbourhoods, thus echoing distinction-making and up-scalar work. Castaletta, on the other hand, uses a gastronomic register which primarily indexes Arabic-speaking customers, but due to the extensive use of pictures on the poster, non-Arab Muslims

Figure 10: Castaletta's poster in Gamlestaden

can comprehend the register, resonating Old school vernacular signage.

FOOD TRUCKS AND REGISTERS AS MOBILE GENTRIFICATION RESOURCES

In this last section, we will focus on the use and function of gastronomic registers and food trucks within gentrification processes. In Gothenburg, these used to be rather simple mobile food carts that were serving generic and cheap fast food, but they are now rapidly replaced by chic and designed cars that offer more exclusive and gourmet food. We argue that both are at the same time gentrified and serving as tools for the gentrification of particular neighbourhoods. Figure 11

provides an example of a traditional food cart in Gamlestaden (left) and a distinction-making food truck in the Olivedal neighbourhood (right).

The picture of the simple food cart in Gamlestaden shows a number of modern Swedish words or loanwords, such as the Arabic *falafel* and *kebab* and the English *burger*. Although the Swedish Academy's Dictionary (SAOL) only lists the simple forms (kebab entered in 1986, falafel in 2006) of these Arabic words, their social acceptance as part of the Swedish language is clearly reflected in common composite expressions such as *kebabrulle* ('kebab roll') and *falafeltallrik* ('falafel roll plate').[3] These features of Arabic have in the last three decades become part of a new Swedish gastronomic register available to the general public;

both working class and middle class people master it. Its establishment in Sweden is mainly due to immigration of Arabic-speaking people who first spread the names through their snack bars. Later, when the Swedes got familiar with these foodstuffs, a market emerged for a broader circulation of falafel via supermarkets, restaurants, and home cooking.

The same can be said of some Italian coffee terms: *espresso* and *cappuccino* were included in the SAOL in 1986 and *caffe latte* in 2006, and today they are used across class boundaries. However, after more than a decade of intense exposure in restaurants, on TV and lifestyle magazines, and weekend trips to Italy, a sector of the Swedish urban elite has now acquired skills enough to order a full dinner in 'Italian'. A new gastronomic linguistic register thus emerges which the urban elite uses for marking social class belonging and differentiated taste.

It is therefore not surprising that we find an entire menu in Italian exhibited on the street in Olivedal (figure 11, bottom right). When you enter this and other Italian restaurants and cafés in Olivedal and other central middle class areas in Gothenburg, you are often greeted by a *Buongiorno* ('Good day') or *Prego* ('Can I help you/Please') and then thanked with a *Grazie* ('Thanks'). The staff generally mixes such Italian expressions with Swedish, and many customers include some Italian words in their orderings. Similarly, some customers to Arabic-spoken restaurants and food carts try pronouncing the dishes in Arabic and inserting Arabic expressions like *shukran* ('thanks') and *habibi* ('my friend'). However, this is rather done to signal positive attitudes to Arabic language and culture, and to counter the stigmatized image generally ascribed to Arabic in Gothenburg and many other European cities. Due to the low social value of
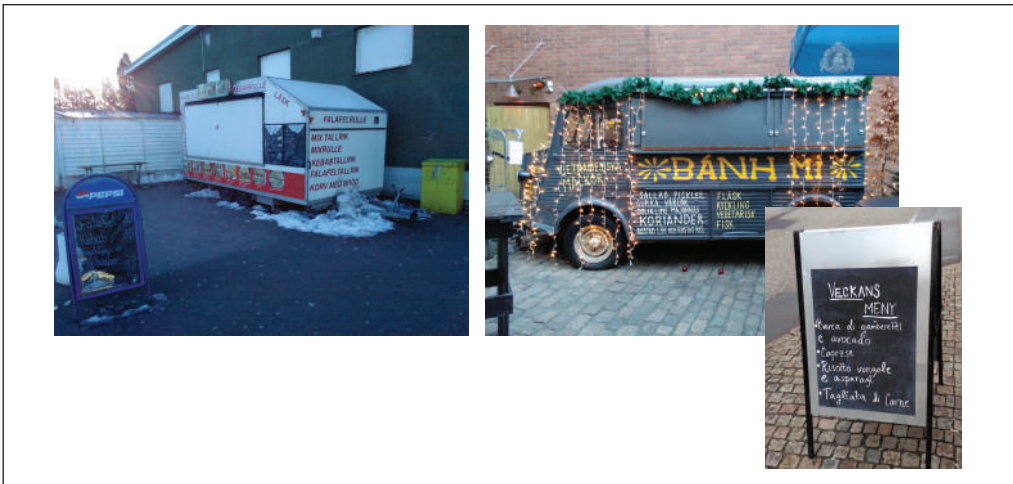

Figure 11: Foodtrucks and menus in Gamlestaden (left) and Olivedal (right)

3   Usage of these foreign food words in Sweden is documented since the 1970s (https://www.google.com/url?q=https://svenska.se/so/?sok%3Dkebab%26pz%3D4&sa=D&ust=1510304067787000&usg=AFQjCNH0B-KnF1eN2gUZ9zvbT5CL-F-pBQ) but we sustain that it is only with their later incorporation into the Swedish Academy's Dictionary that we can see them as officially Swedish, and hence as part of popular gastronomic registers.

Arabic in these places it is immobile and normally restricted to social interactions among Arabic speaking people, whereas the prestige associated with languages and cultures such as Italian and English makes them – or more precisely particular linguistic features that form part of a gastronomic register – highly mobile and useful resources for social up-scaling of people, places, and businesses.

While the popular gastronomic register of Swedish that includes Arabic names such as *falafel* and *kebab* indexes properties of the speakers' present situation and status, the elite gastronomic register of Swedish that includes basic politeness phrases and full menus in Italian, in addition to isolated names of exotic and faraway foodstuffs such as the Vietnamese *bánh mì* (see fig. 11), rather indexes a situation and status the speaker is aspiring to (Irvine 2001). Furthermore, the visual and graphic form given to expressions of these two gastronomic registers in commercial signage are closely related to the two patterns of pre- and post-gentrification in Brooklyn described by Trinch and Snajdr (2017): the many-wordy, vernacular and inclusive 'old school' signs, and the minimalist, exclusive and witty distinction-making storefronts.

The elite gastronomic register is not only mixing bits of high-status languages with Swedish, but also features minimalist design, celebration of vernacular lettering and foreign diacritics, and the rejection of overt signs of commercial dependency or sponsorship, such as the Pepsi logo on the blue sandwich board in Gamlestaden (fig. 11, bottom left).

In Olivedal we find a retro-chic Citroën food truck offering Vietnamese *Bánh Mìs*, or sandwiches. As in Leeman and Modan's (2010) study of Chinatown in Washington DC, commodified language here co-occurs and interacts with features of the built environment. It is the form and symbolic value of words and expressions that count, not their content and connection to an on-site living language community. The Vietnamese words *Bhán mì* on the Olivedal food-truck is in Kelly Holmes' (2014) words, a 'linguistic fetish' that contributes to the ongoing socioeconomic up-scaling of the neighbourhood.

The Vietnamese food truck is not just any food truck; it is part of one of last years' more spectacular restaurant investments in Gothenburg. The company *Avenyfamiljen* ('The Avenue Family') is one of the city's most powerful players in the restaurant scene. In 2013 they purchased the buildings of the old auction house on *3e Långgatan* and within a few months in 2014 they opened three restaurants, one food truck, a wine bar, a bakery, and a 'cultural arena'. They wanted to create a cosmopolitan air to the neighbourhood and thus chose a mix of foreign kitchens and names: the Mexican *Tacos&Tequila*, the Italian *Taverna Averna*, the Vietnamese *Bánh Mì*, the French *Levantine*, and the 'international Chinese restaurant' *Made in China* (figure 12).

As Krase and Shortell (2011: 372) say, those with power 'differentiate' the urban space through 'appropriation and domination'. With their choice of highly designed and ethnically themed kitchens, *Avenyfamiljen* appropriated a variety of linguistic, visual, and material resources from other cultures and places to attract financially strong consumers and consolidate their domination of the city's restaurants, and its residents' taste preferences. Each restaurant displays distinction-making signage (e.g. the minimalist and playful meta-commentary produced by the name Made in China) but also features commissioned street

art and graffiti, such as the adaptation of communist Chinese iconography to celebrate Gothenburg's emblematic but lost shipyards (mural inside Made in China). The 'visual symbolic capital' (Gendelman and Aiello 2010: 258) of street art is clearly illustrated by the fact that the owners chose to pose in front of it in local media coverage.[4]

In addition to the above, *Avenyfamiljen* created *Auktionshusets Kulturarena*, a space for 'cultural events' which so far mainly have consisted in stand-up and fashion shows, weddings, corporate events, and conferences (https://www.auktionsverketkulturarena. se/). That is, what is offered here is a kind of commercialized and sanitized culture directed to the same audience as the one attracted by the thematised restaurants at the street level of the building.

Altogether, *Avenyfamiljen*'s establishment on *3e Långgatan* illustrates the intermingling of public and private initiatives common to gentrification processes (the investor needed permissions of the local civil servants). In particular, this investment contributes to what Leeman and Modan (2009: 338) describe as the 'blurring of the boundaries between culture and consumption': 'Culture is used both to frame public space and to legitimate the appropriation of that space by private and commercial interests (Zukin 1998). As cities and themed environments become sites of 'shopertainment' (Hannigan 1998), consumption becomes culture, and culture becomes consumption.

What we see in Gothenburg is part of a worldwide process of up-scaling of street-food (e.g. Hanser and Hyde 2014; Martin 2014; Newman and Burnett 2013). The process is reflected in the linguistic landscape in several ways: the Swedish terms *gatukök* and *matvagn* are replaced by the English *food truck*; the city of Gothenburg offers several street food markets and festivals in different parts of town; and the city's convention bureau includes a detailed verbal and visual description of the city's food trucks on its webpage (http://www. goteborg.com/en/foodtrucks/). The city council is thus deeply involved in these up-scaling processes. Until a renovation

Figure 12: Storefront and mural in Made in China, Olivedal

4 Similarly, Papen (2015, 20) has shown how street-art in Berlin 'albeit illegal, is not only tolerated but seen as attractive and used for the purposes of place-making – advertising the neighbourhood to entice new residents, visitors, tourists and investors'.

of the central market hall (*Saluhallen*) began in 2010, simple, white, food carts like the ones found in Gamlestaden were standing on *Kungstorget* or the 'Royal Square' in central Gothenburg. They offered falafel, hamburgers, langos and similar cheap generic 'ethnic' foods, normally listed with unfancy writing on simple white boards. When the renovation began the municipality cancelled all the licences. When the hall was reopened, new permits were distributed, but only to food trucks with an aesthetically pleasing design and the 'correct' offer of thematised street-food. At the Royal Square and in the nearby square by *Magasinsgatan* there are now about 10-15 food trucks, several of them specialized in 'ethnic' or 'exotic' food – i.e. food that is deviating from the normative understanding of 'Swedish' food, just as the one on *3e Långgatan* in Olivedal (fig.11, right).

The described process contributed and still contributes to a horizontal redistribution with gourmet food trucks occupying the economically important sites and the traditional or 'old school' food carts and snack bars being displaced to economically and visually peripheral parts of town. It is also a vertical process which resonates and reinforces the unequal socioeconomic valuing of different kinds of street food.

CONCLUSION

This paper was concerned with the interaction of language, food, and gentrification. Examining traces of social and economic mobility in the visual and material surface of two Gothenburg neighbourhoods, we saw how the horizontal distribution of separate resources such as particular languages, gastronomic register forms, and foodtrucks is conditioned by a vertical and uneven distribution of social and economic power. People reproduce this hierarchy and orient after it as they make their daily choices of consumption (taking away a *caffe latte* or a *bhán mì*) and long term investments (buying a flat or opening up a restaurant).

We conclude that the (im)mobility of particular semiotic resources is largely determined by the socioeconomic value that they are ascribed in particular TimeSpaces. By extension, this value ascription is conditioning the (im)mobility of the people who are using these resources, be they specific languages, gastronomic registers or foodtrucks. Drawing on and expanding Irvine's (2001) account of register, we put forward the notion of gastronomic register to deal with socioeconomic scalar work within gentrification. Gastronomic registers and individual languages are part of systems of distinction. Within ever more competitive and trend-sensitive cities, the production of distinction emerges as key for socioeconomic growth and success. We can thus see how particular semiotic resources such as individual languages, gastronomic registers, fancy foodtrucks, and street art are deployed in gentrification processes to attract the attention on new investors, consumers, inhabitants, and visitors, and to thematize and brand businesses and places as unique and exclusive. Yet, although this study analyzed the city of Gothenburg, globalization has contributed to the production and dissemination of a rather generic and standardized repertoire of gentrifying resources which are used in similar ways in cities all over the world (see e.g. Hanser and Hyde 2014 and Irvin 2017 on foodtrucks, Kelly-Holmes 2014 and Girardelli 2004 on individual languages such as English and Italian, and Papen 2015 on street art).

We further observed how the distinction-making and upscaling was achieved both in written and spoken communication as people deploy little bits of Italian or Arabic when engaging in aspirational social interactions in the neighbourhoods' cafés and restaurants. In Gamlestaden we could also see how religious institutions such as mosques have an important pull-effect on people, language, and capital which leaves traces and reshapes the linguistic landscape. However, Arabic and Islam interacts with specific places in particular ways (like all languages and faiths). In Olivedal where there is no mosque and no (large) Muslim community, the Arabic language and visual markers of Middle Eastern culture rather serve as a kind of visual fetish, attracting visitors to the Palestinian restaurant.

Finally, when analysing gentrification we should be aware that it is intrinsically mobile: gentrification is a land-consuming practice driven by capital. When a piece of land such as a neighbourhood is becoming gentrified, the margin for profit decreases and the investors and capital move on, to new land. Parallel to this, less affluent people and businesses are forced to move from the neighbourhoods being gentrified, and they take the linguistic and material resources needed for their businesses with them. As a consequence, the kind of 'old school' signage described by Trinch and Snajdr (2017) and the traditional food carts do not disappear from town, but are displaced to marginalized and poorer areas, such as the Bellevue district of Gamlestaden. Gentrification hence involves both centrifugal and centripetal forces since it attracts certain social groups and linguistic practices but repels others.

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BOOK REVIEW

Lisa Lim, Christopher Stroud and Lionel Wee (Eds.). (2018). The Multilingual Citizen: Towards a politics of language for agency and change. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters. xiv + 303 pp. €144.95 (hardcover). ISBN: 9781783099658

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Waiting for the egalitarian agenda of universal human rights, and its related branch of linguistic rights, to be fulfilled through official political processes and structures is not an option. As the contributors to this volume discuss and illustrate, language rights policies and discourses have yet to provide comprehensive improvement of the well-being of members of multilingual and minoritized communities in many parts of the world. They call for investment in and recognition of other channels of political action, in particular the agency of local individuals who engage in language politics through forms of linguistic citizenship. This volume builds on the growing body of work which explores linguistic citizenship (hereafter LC) as an alternative to language rights and recognition policies (Stroud, 2001; Stroud & Heugh, 2004; Williams & Stroud, 2013), directing focus towards "what people do with and around language(s) in order to position themselves agentively, and to craft new, emergent subjectivities of political speakerhood, often outside of those prescribed or legitimated in institutional frameworks of the state" (Introduction, p. 4). It is a welcome contribution to the scholarship on language policy and planning which gives serious consideration to the nature of language politics on the ground, and attempts to grapple with the inequalities that persist regardless of official pluralist policies (Canagarajah, 2005; Hornberger et al., 2018; McCarty, 2013; Ricento & Hornberger, 1996).

In support of the overarching argument, the volume brings together conceptual framing chapters, case studies with a focus on southern multilingual countries which are generally underrepresented in sociolinguistic scholarship, and critical commentaries by scholars who question

and push forward the development of the authors' contributions. As a whole, the volume makes conceptual and empirical additions to this growing domain of inquiry, and will be valuable to scholars and students of language policy, multilingualism, language education, development studies, and (post-national) political science, among other related disciplines. Considering the aim of the volume to take a step "firmly anchored in a transformative notion of linguistic citizenship" (Introduction, p. 12), several areas emerge which are in need of closer consideration in future research, in particular the relationship between micro-practices of linguistic citizens and the political affordances and constraints which they must negotiate, methodological approaches to examining citizenship practices, and the need for scholarly reflexivity towards the acts of linguistic citizen-scholars (as discussed further below in relation to the sections of the volume).

The first section on *Language Rights and Linguistic Citizenship* lays out the key conceptual arguments of the book, with chapters by Christopher Stroud and Lionel Wee, and a commentary by Stephen May. Stroud and Wee draw on diverse examples to argue for the limitations of linguistic human rights policies which require members of minoritized groups to envision social change within the confines of the state, and within the political processes allowed by the state. Stroud's analysis of a documentary which creates a positive representation of a typically-devalued speech variety ('Afrikaaps') offers insight into what LC can look in practice, including disrupting historical narratives, highlighting complexities, and making previously unheard voices audible and visible. This kind of spectacle

and performance, he argues, may be a more agentive form of visibility than the recognition afforded through linguistic human rights paradigms. In contrast to Stroud's focus on the affordances of LC practices, Wee focuses on the weaknesses of a rights-based discourse, noting that rights-based activism often contributes to essentialism through selecting certain languages or groups to recognize, pressuring groups to (re) invent themselves in relation to officially recognizable criteria, and neutralizing or making these processes invisible and fixed. He states that language, rather than being a static right, must always be "the target of debates and discussions that highlight its dynamic connections with the distribution of non-linguistic goods" (p. 57).

Stephen May's commentary on this section expresses agreement with the deconstruction of fixed notions of language and group identity, while arguing that language rights are an effective political tool in favor of minoritized groups and should not be dismissed so cavalierly. He questions "the extent to which such [local] agency and voice can actually achieve substantive change without simultaneously acknowledging and addressing systemic conditions and constraints" (p. 69). May's critique points towards the need for future research in this domain to demonstrate links between practices of LC and improvements in public recognition, support for, and well-being of minoritized language communities. While scholarship which illustrates acts of agency within minority speech communities is in itself a form of recognition and visibility, there is a need to further trace the interplay between agents and the political structures that they interact with, and to examine

strategies through which agency may be amplified and/or sustained to reverberate louder in structural spaces. While some of the chapters in this volume provide insight into relations between local acts of LC and political processes-- such as the example of a minority language gaining time on national radio due to the actions of a tribal chief in Gregory Kamwendu's chapter on LC in Mali-- the majority of the cases do not engage in rigorous analysis of the links between national and regional political processes, and the choices made by individual agents. While all authors present coherent arguments about the value of local agency, the way that the authors conceive of the relationship between individual agents and collectives varies; future LC scholarship would be enhanced by a more explicit understanding and examination of how agency permeates persistent structures of inequality.

The second and third sections provide case studies in which the key argument-- of language rights versus LC as conceptual and political frameworks-- is examined from different angles and under different circumstances. The second section on *Educating for Linguistic Citizenship* includes chapters focusing on Cameroon (Blasius A. Chiatoh), Mozambique (Feliciano Chimbutane), East Timor (Estêvão Cabral and Marilyn Martin-Jones), and Thailand (Suwilai Premsrirat and Paul Bruthiaux), with a commentary by Kathleen Heugh. These chapters provide interesting case studies of language education policy, helpfully contextualized within historical political processes. However, they discuss this concern from primarily a top-down policy perspective, with little or no data about the actions and perspectives of local actors. The primary weakness of the many of the contributions to the volume

is a continued use of methodologies oriented towards the study of official policies, rather than tackling the close-up examination of actions of linguistic citizens in context. There seems to be a methodological inertia which leads language policy scholars to carry on the same trajectory of exploring case studies through the framework of national language policies and programs, even while aligning with a conceptual shift towards local agency. If the agenda-changing argument of LC is to be carried forward fruitfully, the empirical gaze must shift to actions which may not align neatly within nation-state frames, and scholars must focus on observation, interview, and other interactive methods for collecting data with the potential to illuminate LC practices. Heugh's commentary raises important points about the need to understand the local meanings of globally-popular concepts (such as Mother tongue-based multilingual education, MTB-MLE); an understanding which is likely to continue to be over-looked by national policy studies, but which locally-embedded, participatory research could help to highlight.

The final section on *Linguistic Citizenship in Resistance and Participation* assembles cases from Sri Lanka (Umberto Ansaldo and Lisa Lim), Sweden (Tommaso M. Milani and Rickard Jonsson), Malawi (Gregory Kamwendo), and South Africa (Caroline Kerfoot), with a concluding commentary by Ana Deumert. The cases of Sweden and South Africa include much-welcome analysis of LC practices at the local level, based on a variety of interactive research methods, and the interview and observation data that these methods afford. Additionally, Kerfoot's use of resemiotization as an analytical tool

(in this case, the resemiotization of participatory development discourses from an adult education program into the context of community-run workshops) is a valuable contribution to the previously-mentioned need to examine how LC practices are linked to wider political contexts. The theme of participation in this section contrasts somewhat ironically with the general lack of transparency about the positionality and degree of participation of the authors in this volume. While several of the authors make some mention about their role within the context of study, and Jonsson and Milani offer interesting reflexivity in their postscript, many authors maintain the typical academic pretense of being a voice from nowhere (to adapt from Gal and Woolard (2001)). Acknowledging the centrality of local agency in transformative language policy requires acknowledging the roles that scholars also inevitably play as agents and linguistic citizens. Future scholars of LC could strengthen their work through making this stance apparent, explicating their own political engagements where relevant, and working towards scholarship which is itself a form of social change. Deumert's discussion of disturbance, disagreement and noise encourages scholars to step out of comfortable frameworks of participation and the celebration of colorful multilingual practices to interrogate the forms that agency takes in the day to day, among those who resist as well as those who reinforce the status quo. She argues that scholars would do well to consider ways of writing and making meaning which are less prone to represent people in reductionist ways.

The scholarly and political agenda of LC is ambitious, yet welcome and timely, especially for researchers such as myself who aim to do politically-relevant research and advocacy in contexts of sociopolitical instability. This volume offers insights and examples which help to advance this agenda, while also pointing the way towards further conceptual and methodological scholarly choices which may enhance future research in this domain. The choice to combine case study chapters with critical commentaries adds a crucial dimension of debate and dissent to the volume, enriching the overall contribution made towards ongoing discussions and initiatives around language politics and social change.

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Multilingual Margins

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