

# Decolonising a field and its practices 1

Dick Smakman 5  
Leiden University

Patrick Heinrich and 10  
Ca'Foscari University of Venice

Rania Habib 15  
Syracuse University

---

## ABSTRACT 20

Mainstream sociolinguistic theories were developed in Western societies based on Western languages and societies. This resulted in unnecessary epistemological restriction, which attempts at decolonization seek to address and overcome. Decolonizing sociolinguistics implies counterbalancing Western scholarly domination of the rest of the world. It aims to produce and legitimize new knowledge, methods, and ways to engage in sociolinguistics. We argue that sociolinguistics as we know it should be expanded. Scholars have today an extensive toolbox and specialist terminology for conducting sociolinguistic analysis, but these tools fit Western languages and societies better than non-Western ones. In this article, we discuss the origin, workings, and omissions of mainstream sociolinguistics and present alternative approaches that have been neglected due to an overtly Western bias of the discipline. We conclude with practical suggestions for decolonizing and advancing the field of study. Decolonizing sociolinguistics is a long-term endeavor that involves researchers, editors, publishers, and students. 25 30 35

**Keywords:** decolonization, origin of sociolinguistics, epistemology, methodology, globalizing sociolinguistics

## 1 INTRODUCTION 40

It is a common assumption that mainstream sociolinguistic theories stem from Western societies. This epistemological restriction is not due to any malintent. However, the need for a counterbalance from the mainstream is urgent. The recent attention on

decolonization is part of such counter-action (Deumert et al. 2021; Deumert & Makoni 2023; Charity Hudley et al. 2024, and Arabic sociolinguistics has contributed to some of these discussions (Colombu 2021). In this article, we discuss epistemological restrictions of mainstream sociolinguistics – its origins, workings, and omissions – before we turn to decolonization and conclude with some practical suggestions for decolonizing and advancing the field of study.

## 2 ORIGINS OF THE WESTERN BIAS IN SOCIOLINGUISTICS

The field called sociolinguistics is relatively new, as its origins are usually identified to lie in the 1960s. In that decade, a surge occurred in studies that sought to understand better how language functions in society. Three factors contributed to this interest. First, a sociolinguistic orientation in research was motivated by countering the lack of society and concrete language use in generative grammar. In particular, the notion of “native speaker” was scrutinized (Coulmas 1981). The second reason was an expansion of tertiary education, the mass university, and a sense that working-class children needed to participate in such new settings successfully. Language was seen as a prime obstacle to doing so (Ammon 1973). The third factor was urbanization, which led to more attention to linguistic diversity in urban spaces (Labov 1972). These specific experiences in the West formed sociolinguistics and its research agendas, and they have informed mainstream sociolinguistic epistemologies ever since. As a result, sociolinguistics is widely or commonly understood to study language variation in modern urban settings.

Sociolinguistics developed from and drew on Western traditions of studying language and society. Works of sociolinguistics *avant la lettre* included research in which the correlations between characteristics of speakers and language were combined. These were usually categorized as sociological or cultural and, in some cases, dialectological. The fear of the imminent disappearance of dialects had sparked a series of descriptive research that contained sociolinguistic observations. In Europe, such dialectological research developed, for example, in England (Wright 1898–1905) and in France (Guilliéron & Edmont 1902–1910). We also find such precursors of sociolinguistics in smaller states. Boelens and Van der Veen (1956) described language attitudes and use of Frisian and Dutch in the bilingual province of Friesland in the Netherlands. Weijnen (1946) observed and described patterns of beliefs about southern dialects in the Netherlands.

## 3 NON-ANGLO-WESTERN TRADITIONS

Western Europe was not the only place where such research occurred, but these studies did not find entry into what became known as sociolinguistics from the 1960s onward. In India, Pandit (1955) investigated dialect borders. In Russia, studies with sociolinguistic characteristics appeared in the 1920s, such as an investigation into the use of new words in Russian by Selishchev (1928), or the use of slang as an identity marker in the language of school children in Russia by Polivanov (1931). Shpilrein and

colleagues (1928) described the lexicon of Red Army soldiers. In the country that is now Ukraine, a variationist study of the language of Ukrainian workers appeared (Danilov 1929). South American examples of an indigenous sociolinguistic tradition include the socio-phonetic studies by Guitarte (1955) and Malmberg (1950) in the Argentinian city of Buenos Aires. Argentinian social systems were compared to traditional European class systems.

We can also find a fully developed research paradigm of sociolinguistics *avant la lettre* in Asia. In Japan, such research was initially done by folklore scholars who described local customs (Tachibana 1943[1936]) or studied the distribution of variations of the word for snail (*kagyū*) in concentric circles across Japan and interpreted this distributional pattern as evidence of historical language contact and change (Yanagita 1980[1930]). Already in the 1930s and 1940s, Tanabe (1933) published a book titled *Gengo shakaigaku* (The sociology of language), in which he explicitly connected social and linguistic variables. In the same year, Kikuzawa (1933) developed the notion of register, which he called *isō* (literally ‘strata’). He advocated a study of strata that should shed light on *yōsō* (‘state’) and *yōshiki* (‘mode’). The former corresponds roughly to register and the second to medium of communication. Around the same time, Kindaichi gave this new research direction its name by coining the term *gengo seikatsu* (‘language life’):

Life is one harmonious and congruent unity, and just as one can consider analysing the economic life, the religious life, the social life, the intellectual life, the aesthetic life, the sexual life, etc. in a unified way, one can also consider language life (*gengo seikatsu*) as one such abstract entity. (Kindaichi 1933: 35, translation Heinrich)

In the years that followed, language life would grow into one of the most prominent fields of Japanese linguistics and diverge into different fields of specialization. We can find an empirical tradition that merged linguistic fieldwork with statistics (for such a collection of works translated into English, see Sibata 1999), a more theoretical tradition that departed from the view of language as a dissemination and interpretation process (Tokieda 1941), which later developed in what was called *bamen-ron* (context theory), a kind of early Japanese pragmatics (Tsukahara 1963). There was also a historical branch called historical language life (*gengo seikatsu-shi*) (Uno 1986). The study of language life started declining in the 1980s after Western sociolinguistics had been introduced to Japan. The lack of theorization and its unapologetic emic orientation made comparisons between Japanese and other languages impossible, and this contributed to the decline of language life studies (Heinrich & Masiko 2015; Heinrich 2019).

#### 4 THE ARABIC TRADITION

The Arabic linguistic tradition is rich and dates back to the mid-7th century. The foundational principles of early Arabic grammar and diacritics are attributed to Abu al-Aswad al-Du’ali (603–689 CE). The early Islamic caliphs feared that Arabic would

be corrupted due to contact with other languages, prompting this foundational work. This tradition primarily focused on the description and analysis of Arabic grammar. Some of the most important grammarians in the history of the Arabic language include Al-Khalil Ibn Ahmad Al-Farahidi (718–786 CE), Sibawayh (760–796 CE), Al-Jinni (932–1002 CE), and Al-Zamakhshari (1074–1143 CE). They came from diverse ethnic backgrounds: Al-Khalil was Arab, Sibawayh was Persian, Al-Jinni was of Byzantine descent (Suleiman 1995: 28), and Al-Zamakhshari was Persian. All of them relied on the Qur'an and old poetry in their grammatical works and treatises.

A notable aspect of this tradition was the method of describing Arabic grammar through its use in society, which dates back to the 8th century. Sibawayh, greatly influenced by his teacher Al-Khalil who compiled the first Arabic dictionary, was the first to provide a comprehensive description of Arabic grammar in his book *Al-Kitāb* (The book). This description was based not only on poetic texts and usage in the Qur'an but also on information from Bedouin informants, considered the purest and most uncorrupted speakers of Arabic. Sibawayh also highlighted the presence of various types of linguistic variation in Arabic (Owens 2001: 420–421). Despite being a non-native speaker of Arabic, Sibawayh once lost a linguistic debate with Al-Kisa'i (737–804 CE) about whether the word *las 'atan* ('sting') should be considered feminine or masculine in reference to *al-'aqrab* ('scorpion'). It later turned out that Sibawayh was correct, and that Bedouin judges were bribed by Al-Kisa'i to say that the word could not be replaced with *hiya* ('she'). This story underscores the importance of questioning prevailing (Anglo-Western) epistemologies and embracing other (non-Western) epistemologies instead of omitting and silencing them.

The rigidity of Arabic grammar and its adherence to the Qur'an and old poetry, despite many irregularities and exceptions, did not go unchallenged. The idea of simplifying Arabic grammar and abolishing some grammatical categories dates back to Ibn Mada' (1116–1196), who emphasized the importance of building a clear and simple grammar accessible to all, including laymen Arabs and non-native speakers of Arabic. His thoughts and approach to Arabic grammar were "shaped by his pedagogic interests as a teacher of the subject to the sons of the Berber rulers in whose employ he served" (Suleiman 1999: 148). For him, grammar was an "empirical enterprise [...] grammatical statements and generalizations are [...] open to evaluation by confronting them with the attested data" (Suleiman 1999: 156). Thus, his main emphasis was on describing actual linguistic utterances rather than on pre-prescribed grammar whose "original purpose [...] was to protect the language from *lahn* (solecism, linguistic corruption)" (Suleiman, 1999: 161).

The term *lahn* was used by most early accounts of uncodified Arabic dialects to characterize the speech of *al-'aama* ('ordinary people'). For example, this term was used by the renowned Middle Ages historian, sociologist, and philosopher Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406 CE) in his 1377 book *Al-Muqaddimah* (The Introduction). However, Ibn Khaldun acknowledged that one of the distinguishing achievements of society was its spoken language. For him, this is evidenced by the success of many non-Arabs in Arab societies due to their mastery of the Arabic language. Ibn Khaldun dedicated a good proportion of his *Al-Muqaddimah* to studying language. His approach to language

learning was innovative and aligned with modern second language acquisition theory (Osman 2003: 50). He promoted language learning through communication and conversation instead of relying solely on grammar and the study of the Qur'an (Osman 2003). In this sense, Ibn Khaldun can be considered one of the earliest supporters of the communicative approach to language learning (Osman 2003: 50). Although monolingual himself, Ibn Khaldun's views emerged from his social and cultural observations of how Arabic was taught in different countries (North African countries, Spain, and Egypt or the East) and how different peoples learned it. He was most impressed by the Spaniards, who possessed a strong command of Arabic without focusing on the Qur'an or rote memorization (Osman 2003).

Ibn Mada's call for the grammatical simplification of Arabic has been echoed by modern scholars such as the Egyptian scholar Shawqi Daif in his 1947 edited edition of Ibn Mada's book *Kitāb ar-radd 'ala n-nuhat* (The Book of the Refutation of Grammarians). This trend emerged from the dissatisfaction people had "with the way the Arabic language was taught in schools," relying on old grammar books (Versteegh 1997: 150). However, purists have always opposed any reform or simplification of Classical Arabic (CA) grammar to maintain their power grab over the Arabic language, regardless of how this may affect education.

The focus on the purity of the Arabic language, driven by religious thought and the rigor of the Arabic grammatical tradition, is the main reason Standard Arabic (SA) maintains its structure and high status. This starkly contrasts the various spoken dialects of Arabic, which have undergone numerous linguistic changes and are generally perceived as lower in status (see Albirini 2016: 11–12). This long Arabic grammatical tradition has "produced a descriptive corpus of great detail" (Owens 2006: 1) and continues to be the foundation for many Arabic linguistic and sociolinguistic studies. The literature on Arabic grammar "details not only minute facets of phonology, morphology, and syntax, but also gives interesting data on different linguistic variants. The modern linguist thus meets not only linguistic forms, but also descriptions and interpretations of these forms as developed by the Arabic linguists themselves" (Owens 2006: 34). This grammatical tradition not only influences research but also shapes language ideologies and education in Arab countries, where SA is romanticized as a holy language in which the Qur'an was revealed. Consequently, it is considered the appropriate medium for education, government, and formal communication.

## 5 THE LACK OF RECEPTION OF NON-WESTERN WORKS AND THE MERGING OF TRADITION IN THE ANGLO-WEST

In hindsight, we understand that publications from outside the Western context have not contributed to the development of Anglo-Saxon mainstream sociolinguistics for four reasons. First of all, the language in which these publications were mainly published prevented them from being read outside the country or region where they were published. Arabic research was published in Arabic, Japanese research in Japanese, Russian research in Russian, Dutch research in Dutch, and so on. Their impact would undoubtedly have been broader if they had been written in an international academic

lingua franca like French, English, or German and published by internationally operating publishers. Second, some of these publications were not always based on mainstream methodologies with high degrees of statistical validity, methodological transparency, set research questions, and adaptation of sociological insights. For example, the exact methodology of Weijnen's impressive attitude study into attitudes of Dutch speakers of dialects in villages in the south of the Netherlands toward the dialects of neighboring villages always remained unclear. It was seemingly based partly on the researcher's intuitions. Thirdly, political restraints in certain countries, like China and Russia, have played a role in investigations that were classified as sociological. This may have affected the objectivity of researchers and freedom to report what they observed rather than serving their governments' ideologies. As an illustration, the researcher Danilov (1929) had to officially announce that his investigation did not clash with Marxist ideologies. In the West, there was and is a hesitance to embrace the results from such publications. A fourth and final reason was that a field called "sociolinguistics" did not exist. The fact that these studies were either dialectological, sociological, linguistic, folkloristic, life studies, or psychological made it more difficult to learn about their relevance. In many cases, they were associated with folklore – about and for a given country's inhabitants. They were not necessarily relevant for an international audience seeking to understand the language–society nexus better.

While sociolinguistic traditions were established locally in various countries, Western researchers gradually found each other. Already de Saussure was reported to have said the following:

Must linguistics then be combined with sociology? What are the relationships between linguistics and social psychology? Everything in language is basically psychological, including its material and mechanical manifestations, such as sound changes; and since linguistics provides social psychology with such valuable data, is it not part and parcel of this discipline? (De Saussure 1978 [1916]: 6–7)

Long after de Saussure's statement, we can find scholars who started putting "sociology" and "linguistics" together. Thomas Hodson, an English anthropologist, wrote an article entitled "Sociolinguistics in India" (Hodson 1939). The American linguist Eugene Nida (1949) mentioned the word "socio-linguistics." Probably the most famous early mention of socio-linguistics (also spelled with a hyphen) was another American linguist, Haver Currie (1952).

By the mid-1950s, a unification of various loosely sociolinguistic approaches was propagated, especially in the United States. A call for a unified theory came from Polish-born American linguist Uriel Weinreich (1954). The American Joshua Fishman (1958) produced an explicitly sociolinguistic study by describing the alternation between the 'in'-like (/in/) and the 'ing'-like (/iŋ/) pronunciation in the progressive suffix in the speech of children in the northeastern United States. Richard Allsop (1958), a native of Guyana in South America, described the language in this former

British colony, and this investigation contained sociolinguistic aspects. Through a string of publications, the British sociologist Bernstein (1958; 1959; 1960) took an educational angle by describing the correlations between social class and language perception as viewed in the classroom. In general, the narrative about what came to be known as sociolinguistics intensified in the 1950s and 1960s. These calls and contributions were made in English, which, after the end of the Second World War, had developed into the undisputed global lingua franca in academia, an unbroken trend at the present (Ammon 2001).

## **6 THE BIRTH OF ANGLO-WESTERN SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND THE NATURE OF THE BIAS**

It wasn't until two investigations by the American Labov (1963; 1966) on language variation and use on the island of Martha's Vineyard and in New York City department stores that sociolinguistics took flight. Today, there is a broad consensus that Labov was the main initiator of the field. He and several American academics established a powerful tradition. However, this tradition did not fully acknowledge and embrace research done before the 1960s in the West and ignored research conducted by academics studying linguistic cultures outside the Anglo-Western sphere.

The signature of the field has been powerfully Anglo-Western since, and the epistemological bias that results has been identified as a problem by numerous researchers (Thiong'o 1986; Hountondji 1990; Mihesuah 1999; Smith 1999; Coulmas 2005; Meyerhoff & Nagy 2008; Creary 2012; Hira 2012; Smakman 2015; Coupland 2016; Hutchings & Morgan 2016; Smakman & Barasa 2016). The theoretical frameworks that have come out of the Anglo-Saxon sociolinguistic tradition have taught us much about the role of interlocutors in one-on-one discourse, communication in social groups, language policies, language choices, and many other themes. Generally, the discourses about these themes have been successfully applied to case studies worldwide. Sociolinguistics has been a success story. Researchers around the world almost automatically adopt Anglo-Saxon theories to design their research projects and use Anglo-Saxon frameworks to interpret their data (see, e.g., Yuen Ren et al. 1967). If the data does not (easily) fit Western models, they tend to stay restricted to the sociolinguistic region concerned. In other words, they are not seen as a case that calls for expanding or modifying the mainstream Anglo-Saxon approach. Such a practice aligns with what philosophers of science call normal science. In normal science, research is not inductive from data toward abstraction and theory building, as is commonly believed by the practitioners themselves. Rather, research resembles puzzle solving. One looks from the start for a set pattern in new data (Kuhn 1970: 35–42). Sociolinguistics also largely operates in this way. For example, non-Anglo-Saxon sociolinguists look for language variation that correlates with social class rather than dealing with the question of whether this phenomenon exists in the language under consideration (Battisti & Pires Lucas 2015).

This brings us straight to another reason for the current Anglo-Saxon bias. Like all humanities and social sciences, Anglo-Western sociolinguistics suffers from what is

called methodological nationalism (Wimmer & Schiller Glick 2002). The nation-state is seen as a quasi-natural entity, and its dominant beliefs and institutions are, therefore, uncritically reproduced in research. In sociolinguistics, this implies a need to depart from a view of an Anglo-Saxon society in a nation-state with one clearly dominant, written, and modernized language (and possibly a few second languages taught at school). Anglo-Saxon society is more diverse than this, and what is more, the rest of the world is also more complex as well. This notwithstanding, the main roles in theorization have been developed on the basis of such a monolingual imagination of society in the United States and the United Kingdom. Everyday functional and vital multilingualism in these countries is mainly found outside the public eye in semi-isolated immigration and other minority contexts, in international families, or in pockets of heritage language speakers. This kind of research is often relegated to the field of linguistic anthropology, leaving the simplistic societal view that informs many sociolinguistic epistemes untouched.

## 7 EXAMPLES OF THE BIAS AND CRITICISM OF THE BIAS

Scholars have an extensive toolbox and specialist terminology for conducting sociolinguistic analysis, but these tools fit Western contexts better than non-Western ones. After all, they have been developed based on data from Western settings. An example is the mainstream understanding of the relationship between language use and gender. We understand this correlation through Western epistemological ideologies as to what gender means and the salience of gender differences in language use (Cameron 2000). Another example is the concept of language vitality. To determine this, we rely on modernist ideas of language standardization (Smakman 2012; Smakman & Barasa 2016), unmarked monolingualism, power structures familiar to the formation of European nation-states, and literacy (UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages 2003).

It could even be argued that critical sociolinguistics and its current occupation is essentially the product of a broader European critical theory, particularly the Frankfurt School. Social differences are also subject to bias, and European class structures are the basis of social categorization (Horkheimer 1982). Introductory books, like Meyerhoff's (2019) well-read *Introducing Sociolinguistics*, oftentimes have a chapter which is simply called "Social class." The introductory book by Gerard van Herk (2018) has a chapter called "Social status," which is more general and more readily applied outside Anglo-Saxon societies. Using "Status groups" as a category would allow us to also study distinct social groups, like caste, tribe, and clan, along the lines of sociolinguistic frameworks (instead of relegating this kind of study to linguistic anthropology). The Anglo-Western view in such books (usually written by native speakers of English) is that social groups that are not called "class" are exceptional, even if they are not explicitly presented or qualified as such. By broadening the categorical spectrum, we can understand that "social class" is just one type in which status and status differences may be realized and reproduced through language use.



If we look for a critical awareness about the limits of mainstream approaches, we are ill-advised to only look at it in the center of the sociolinguistic tradition. Change speeds up at the geographical peripheries and at the social margins. It is, therefore, unsurprising to find a long tradition of criticizing the Anglo-Saxon approach from the margins of international linguistics. One such example is the defense of the Japanese tradition of language life (*genko seikatsu*) in the 1970s:

I have already said that sociolinguistics is booming in the United States. Just because it's booming there, must we panic as if to say if we don't hurry, we shall be late getting it started in Japan? [...] The reason [why we don't need to panic] is that we have had it in our back yard; the National Language Research Institute of Japan has since 1949 been steadily engaged in investigation, on a large scale of just precisely what is now called sociolinguistics. (Sibata 1975: 161)

More recently, dominant approaches have come under criticism from endangered communities, that is, from social margins. Indigenous sociolinguist Wesley Leonard (2020: e285) names the elephant in the room when he writes that “linguistics has several colonial structures,” but continues by stating that “it does not have to be this way.” With regard to the study of Indigenous languages, colonial structures and practices include the underrepresentation of Indigenous scholars despite Indigenous languages being an essential object of research, the marginalization of Indigenous community interests, the lack of their involvement in the study of their languages, oppressive and essentialist epistemologies underlying terminology such as “vanishing languages” or “last speaker,” and so on. We also find a widespread attitude not to assist or support dominated speakers and their languages, a proverbial practice in the often-repeated call to “Leave your language alone!” (Hall 1950). From the perspective of dominated language communities, the call to leave your language alone is naïve, for their domination is the result of uninvited encounters with dominant groups. They know that *laissez-faire* is not neutral. It is simply a means for siding with the strongest player in the field.

Decolonization offers a way out of mainstream practices, but it is not easy to go against the established system. To get published, pass PhD exams, or pursue academic careers, it is advisable, if not inevitable, to publish internationally. This usually implies taking a Western stance. Western approaches carry more weight and prestige. They are also of high quality and work in many different circumstances, and alternative theories and methodologies have usually not yet passed this reliability test. Then there are the established gate-keeping mechanisms that prevent reforms. Smakman (2015) revealed a dramatic overrepresentation of native speakers from Anglo-centered institutes in publications in international journals and editorial boards.

As long as students of sociolinguistics are trained along the lines of linguistics that has colonial traits, and as long as non-Western epistemologies and practices are a priori ruled out as “non-scholarly,” “non-scientific,” or “not neutral,” so long sociolinguistics will remain what it has been so far. Leonard (2020) is correct – sociolinguistics does

not have to be this way. De-centering and questioning grand narratives is difficult (Canagarajah 2005; Pennycook 2018), but the first step should be considering all narratives to be equally part of the field. As practitioners of sociolinguistics, we cannot but take practical steps to avoid the continuation and consolidation of the mainstream tradition. Power structures and inequalities within the field need to be addressed, and research epistemologies and culturally contextualized theories need to be acknowledged, addressed, and incorporated into the body of sociolinguistic knowledge. This is a long-term endeavor that involves researchers, editors, publishers, and students.

We will provide more details on how this can be done practically at the end of this article. Let us first consider what decolonization and decolonizing sociolinguistics can offer us in this respect because we have so far not addressed the fact that the West colonized the entire world except for Japan and Thailand (Siam). This has left marks in the sociolinguistic situations we find across the world and in the sociolinguistic tradition itself.

## 8 DECOLONIZATION AND DECOLONIZING SOCIOLINGUISTICS

Stein and de Andreotti (2016, n.p.) define decolonization as “an umbrella term for diverse efforts to resist the distinct but intertwined processes of colonization and racialization, enact transformation and redress in reference to their historical and ongoing effects, and create and keep alive modes of knowing, being, and relating that these processes seek to eradicate.” For sociolinguistics, we can deduce two tasks from such a definition. One is the transformation of the linguistic ecologies during the colonial period and the efforts to undo some of the most unwanted effects. We can locate such effort, most prominently in sociolinguistic fields such as language policy and planning, or language education. The second is maintaining, reclaiming, or revitalizing language practices, attitudes, and knowledge suppressed during the colonial period. In sociolinguistics, this alludes to linguistic diversity, vernacular language use, ritual language use, or specific types of linguistic interaction. The lingering effect of the colonial experience in language structures, use, and research can be captured by distinguishing the end of colonialism as a historical period and political order and the remaining characteristics of coloniality, which continues to have wide-ranging ramifications in the field of knowledge production (Quijano 2007: 171–174).

Colonialism and decolonization do not progress uniformly worldwide (Osterhammel 2010), and the same applies to activities of decolonizing or engagements in postcolonial linguistics (Errington 2008). Broadly speaking, decolonization in sociolinguistics involves undoing the Western scholarly domination in the rest of the world, the so-called Global South. It seeks to overcome the effect of colonial dominance on hierarchies, epistemologies, and practices that have been subordinating people, cultures, and languages (Mufwene 2020). Rojo (2017: 82) adds that decolonization requires the production and legitimation of new discourses and knowledge.

Let us consider the case of Arabic sociolinguistics as an example. In Arabic-speaking countries, there are significant disparities in economic relations with the former colonizer, the influence of third powers, and forms of government, as well as in the

sociolinguistic legacy and how linguistic research is conducted. Decolonialization necessitates a profound sociolinguistic understanding of the diverse speech communities in the Arabic-speaking world. Arabic sociolinguistics is a well-established field of research with specialists working and studying Arabic linguistics worldwide. Arabic is one of the world's largest languages, spoken by over 400 million speakers. It is an official language in 25 countries, 22 of which are Arab countries. All of these states have been colonies or protectorates of European countries (France, Great Britain, Italy, Portugal, Spain). French remains an official language in some of these states (Comoros, Djibouti) and colonial languages continue to play significant roles in specific domains, most prominently in higher education (Ballais et al. 2018). Arabic-speaking countries also exhibit autochthonous linguistic diversity, which encompasses languages such as Kurdish, Turkmen, Amazigh (Berber), and Nubian, and these speech communities have been subjected to a process of what is termed internal colonization (Mezhoud & El Kirat 2010).

Due to the long-standing and rapid degree of urbanization of the Arab-speaking world, (Western) sociolinguistics – understood mainly as the study of speakers' choices in modern, urbanizing contexts – was embraced as a meaningful paradigm to expand the study of Arabic already in the 1960s and 1970s (Owens 2001). As in most cases outside the West, the sociolinguistics of Arabic followed practices according to which theories originated from Europe and the US, and Arabic provided data to test, verify, and confirm these theories. Such a division of labor is not unique to linguistics but a practice that haunts all humanities and social sciences. In her seminal book *Southern Theory*, Connell writes that in the colonies, “the *theoretical* stage of science was omitted. Accordingly, the colonies became a field for collecting raw material – scientific data – sent to the metropole where theory was produced” (2007: 104; emphasis in the original). We can see the legacies of such metropole–periphery relations, for example, in the difficulty of publishing results of Southern sociolinguistics in the journals of the Global North.

Colonization has also impacted the development of Arabic linguistics and shaped the sociolinguistic situations we find in Arab countries today. The long Arabic linguistic tradition that flourished during the Abbasid Caliphate (750–1258 CE), known for its promotion of the sciences and arts, receded during the four centuries (1517–1918 CE) of the Ottoman Empire's occupation of most of what is called the Arab world today. As mentioned before, this tradition focused on the codification of Classical Arabic (CA), which developed into what we now call Standard Arabic (SA), and rarely examined other Arabic dialects. The fall of the Ottoman Empire was followed by the occupation of various Arab countries by Western nations in the first half of the 20th century. For example, France occupied Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Syria, and Lebanon, while Britain occupied Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine. Against this colonial backdrop, sociolinguistics emerged in Arabic contexts, paralleling its emergence as a distinct discipline in the West with the works of Fischer (1958) and Labov (1963).

The study of Arabic sociolinguistics was initially shaped by Western scholars who were interested in the rich linguistic diversity of the Arab world. These early works often focused on dialectology (Bassiouney 2009: 5), documenting the variations in

Arabic spoken across different regions in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Among these scholars was the French Orientalist William Marçais (1872–1956), whose work on the North African dialects of Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco was instrumental in understanding the linguistic diversity of Maghrebi Arabic and set the stage for subsequent research in the region. Jean Cantineau (1899–1956) was another French linguist who conducted extensive research on the Bedouin dialects of the Arabian Peninsula and the Levant. His studies in the 1930s and 1940s on the dialects of Jordan, Syria, and the Arabian Desert were among the first to systematically analyze the linguistic features of Bedouin Arabic. Cantineau’s work highlighted the importance of tribal affiliations and migration patterns in shaping dialectal variations. These early dialectology studies were primarily descriptive, focusing on cataloging the linguistic features of different Arabic dialects, and provided the foundational knowledge that later scholars would build upon.

As the field developed in the mid-20th century, Arab scholars began to contribute their own perspectives and analyses, leading to a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the linguistic diversity within the Arab world. Arab scholars systematically studied the sociolinguistic landscape of their own linguistic communities. One of the pioneering figures was Ibrahim Anis (1906–1961), a Western-educated scholar, whose work (e.g., Anis 2003[1952]) in Egypt examined the sociolinguistic dynamics of diglossia – a phenomenon where two distinct varieties of a language, High (formal) and Low (colloquial), are used by a single language community. The concept of diglossia was then articulated by Charles A. Ferguson in his 1959 article “Diglossia,” which became central to the study of Arabic sociolinguistics. Ferguson introduced a framework that explained the functional distribution of H and L varieties of Arabic. This framework was pivotal in understanding how different contexts – such as formal writing, religious sermons, and casual conversations – determine the choice of linguistic variety. The notion of diglossia has since been a focal point for numerous studies (e.g., Al-Toma 1969; Badawi 1973; Mitchell 1978; Al-Batal 1992; Elgibali 1993) about language use, identity, and power relations in Arab societies (for details, see Habib, this issue). Additionally, the influence of the Labovian variationist paradigm and Western scholars generated a great number of Arabic variationist studies. Examples include Schmidt (1974) in Egypt, Abd-el-Jawad (1981) in Jordan, Holes (1983) in Bahrain, Abu-Haidar (1987) in Iraq, Amadidhi (1985) in Qatar, and Daher (1998) in Syria.

In recent decades, Arabic sociolinguistics has expanded to encompass a wide range of topics, including language and gender (e.g., Hachimi 2001; Sadiqi 2003; 2007), code-switching (e.g., Bentahila 1981 and Chebchoub 1985 between French and Arabic in Morocco and Algiers, respectively; Eid 1988 and Bassiouney 2013 between SA and Egyptian Arabic), attitudes, identities, and ideologies (e.g., Sayahi 2020; Adam 2022), language policy (e.g., Rannut 2009; Al-Issa 2022), and the impact of globalization and technology on language use (e.g., Alomoush 2021). The advent of social media and digital communication has introduced new dynamics into the sociolinguistic landscape (e.g., Al-Kaisi & Zaki 2022; Habib 2024), with Arabic speakers increasingly engaging in written forms of colloquial dialects online. This shift has prompted scholars to

explore how digital platforms are reshaping linguistic practices and social interactions in Arabic-speaking communities (e.g., Habib 2023). 1

Today, Arabic sociolinguistics is a more visible and evolving field. Scholars continue to build on foundational theories while incorporating different approaches and methods (quantitative, qualitative, anthropological, discourse and conversational analysis, etc.) to address contemporary topics. Research is increasingly being conducted by native speakers of Arabic, who bring nuanced perspectives to the study of their own linguistic environments. This shift is essential to create a more diverse and representative body of work that reflects the complexities of Arabic sociolinguistic phenomena. As the field continues to grow, it is important to recognize that the vast landscapes and linguistic diversity of the Arab world require dedicated efforts from more Arabic researchers. These efforts are essential for further developing sociolinguistic theory, enhancing our understanding of Arabic-speaking communities, and contributing to the broader discourse on language and social interaction. 5 10 15

## 9 THE WORKINGS OF THE BIASED SYSTEM AND PRACTICAL STEPS FOR HOW TO CHANGE IT

Decolonial sociolinguistics requires questioning, expanding, or replacing some epistemologies and scholarly practices. In a recent discussion in the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, Ndhlovu (2021: 194) cites a concern by Pennycook and Makoni (2020: 79) according to which mainstream linguistics had “produced a vision of language that had little to do with how people understood language locally.” While a call to make Arab-speaking communities the central locus of all academic activities and work steps (not just as a data collection site) is the apparent first step in this direction, such efforts of re-centering research on the communities are more complicated in practice than may appear at first sight. Decolonization requires new, purposeful action. In the inaugural edition of the journal *Decolonization*, Tuck and Yang (2012: 3) write that “[d]ecolonize (a verb) and decolonization (a noun) cannot easily be grafted onto pre-existing discourses/frameworks, even if they are critical, even if they are anti-racist, even if they are justice frameworks. [...]. Decolonization doesn’t have a synonym.” Appleton (2019: not paginated) suggests starting with practical objectives which include: “Diversify your syllabus and curriculum; Digress from the cannon; Decentre knowledge and knowledge production; Devalue hierarchies; Disinvest from citational power structures; Diminish some voices and opinions in meetings, while magnifying others.” Such a template of activities illustrates that decolonization must be tackled on various fronts, and it must do so by taking real action and by changing institutions and practices. 20 25 30 35

It is not too difficult to find attempts to decolonize sociolinguistics. To start with, this journal issue is such an example. Another explicit effort is a volume entitled *Globalising Sociolinguistics* by Smakman and Heinrich (2015). The idea behind these publications is to provide a platform for research from outside Western settings that approaches mainstream theories critically. Smakman and colleagues (2024) tried to provide explicitly practical action points toward improving the theoretical and 40

methodological state of the field, and, more importantly, work on the inequality that stems from the bias in question. They have suggested a number of practical steps that could easily be taken and might have an instant decolonizing effect. Several of these steps involve interfering with the academic output mechanism. 1

A general step, or, rather, a shift in approach and attitude, is a re-evaluation of the language quality of texts that are submitted. With the use of English as the written language of communication come expectations by editors and reviewers as to the near-nativeness of the English used (Smakman & Duda-Osiewacz 2014), and oftentimes, this expectation is not satisfied or met. Such gate-keeping mechanisms move the relevance and quality of the content to the background. Also, people from different cultures argue differently, and learners of English struggle to fit their rhetorical style into a text of a language they do not have a perfect command of. Editors and reviewers need to learn to understand the intention of the authors rather than acting as schoolteachers who are not willing to read text that is not in perfect line with their own standards. As an editor of one of the main international journals in sociolinguistics once said in personal communication with one of the editors (Smakman) of this journal issue: "It is not my aim to reject papers, but to accept papers or make them acceptable." Rather than waiting for researchers to send in articles, journals could decide on a theme and invite authors to submit articles. An aim would need to be a diverse group of prospective authors with many different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and a commitment of the editors to help them. Waiting for researchers to send articles to prestigious journals will inevitably lead to an overrepresentation of academics from high-ranking institutes and a continuation of the Anglo-Western bias. It is a well-known fact that authors from lower-ranked and non-Western universities have, in many cases, stopped trying, knowing their chances of acceptance are low. Their data and analysis thus remain hidden. 5 10 15 20 25

The same cooperation principle goes for research grants to enable research. There is a systematic tacit exclusion of authors from institutes in countries lower on the Human Development Index by making the standards not only high but also Anglo-Western in nature. Also, limited access to economic and technological resources may lead to the inability to carry out large-scale research projects or promote the proliferation of research. Introductions to the field should be rewritten and focus on representing mainstream as well as non-mainstream theories. A serious reduction of examples about some form of English would also be a good step forward. It is noticeable that the editorial boards of journals are diversifying. At the same time, people who have been on such boards also know that there is a silent system of selecting the board members with the "right" background for actual reviewing and selecting, and as anonymously as possible, making the diverse group of editors (from all kinds of universities) a type of window dressing. There should be a commitment to activate editorial diversity, and this commitment should be systematized. The peer-reviewing system also needs to be reconsidered. It is difficult, if not impossible, to investigate the workings of this system and which choices are made, because anonymity is so highly valued. Nevertheless, the feeling that native speakers of English, as well as those working at highly ranked (Western) universities, are more commonly acting as peer reviewers is a common one. 30 35 40

Finally, the accessibility and dissemination of articles need to be considered. High-ranking universities tend to also provide easy access to publications to their members by subscribing to a large range of journals. It is not acceptable for certain academics not to have access to articles because their university cannot afford subscriptions. Open Access seems to be the inevitable future for publishing from a decolonizing perspective.

## REFERENCES

- Abd-el-Jawad, Hassan. 1981. *Lexical and phonological variation in spoken Arabic in Amman*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania. (Doctoral dissertation.)
- Abu-Haidar, Farida. 1987. Are Iraqi women more prestige conscious than men? Sex differentiation in Baghdadi Arabic. *Language in Society* 18(4). 471–481.
- Adam, Salah A. 2022. Multiple attitudes and shifting language ideologies: A case of language shift among Libyan Tuaregs. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 278. 229–258.
- Albirini, Abdulkafi. 2016. *Modern Arabic sociolinguistics: Diglossia, variation, codeswitching, attitudes and identity*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Alomoush, Omar I. S. 2021. Is English on mobile linguistic landscape resources no longer viewed as a linguistic threat to Arabic in Jordan? Exploring functions of English on printed shopping bags in Jordan. *English Today* 37(1). 50–57.
- Allsop, Richard. 1958. The English language in British Guiana. *English Language Teaching* 12(2). 59–66.
- Amadidhi, Darwish. 1985. *Lexical and sociolinguistic variation in Qatari Arabic*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh. (Doctoral dissertation.)
- Ammon, Ulrich. 1973. *Dialekt, soziale Ungleichheit und Schule* [Dialect, social inequality and school]. Weinheim: Beltz.
- Ammon, Ullrich (ed.). 2001. *The dominance of English as a language of science*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Anis, Ibrahim. 2003[1952]. *Fī al-lahajāt al-‘arabiyya* [About Arabic dialects]. 3rd edn. Cairo: Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop.
- Appleton, Nayantara Sheoran. 2019. Do not “decolonize” ... if you are not decolonizing: Progressive language and planning beyond a hollow academic rebranding. *Critical Ethnic Studies*. <https://www.criticalethnicstudiesjournal.org/blog/2019/1/21/do-not-decolonize-if-you-are-not-decolonizing-alternate-language-to-navigate-desires-for-progressive-academia-6y5sg>.
- Badawi, As-Said M. 1973. *Mustawayat al-‘arabiyya al-mu‘asira fi MiSr* [Levels of contemporary Arabic in Egypt]. Cairo: Dar Al-Ma‘aref.
- Ballais, Jean-Louis & Al Amrawy, Mohamed & Al Dbiyat, Mohamed & Charbel, Laurence & Geyer, Bernard & Mezedjri, Lyamine. 2018. The place of the French language in Arabic-speaking Mediterranean. In Brunn, Stanley D. & Kehrein, Roland (eds.), *Handbook of the changing world language map*, 1–13. Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Bassiouny, Reem. 2009. *Arabic sociolinguistics: Topics in diglossia, gender, identity, and politics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Bassiouny, Reem. 2013. The social motivation of code-switching in mosque sermons in Egypt. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 220. 49–66.

- Al-Batal, Mahmoud. 1992. Diglossia proficiency: The need for an alternative approach to teaching. In Roushdy, Aleya (ed.), *The Arabic language in America*, 284–304. Detroit: Wayne State University Press. 1
- Battisti, Elisa & Pires Lucas, João Ignacio. 2015. Class in the social labyrinth of South America. In Smakman, Dick & Heinrich, Patrick (eds.), *Globalising sociolinguistics: Challenging and expanding theory*, 153–163. London: Routledge. 5
- Bentahila, Abdelâli. 1981. *Attitudinal aspects of Arabic–French bilingualism in Morocco*. Cardiff: University of Wales. (Doctoral dissertation.)
- Bernstein, Basil. 1958. Some sociological determinants of perception. *British Journal of Sociology* 9. 159–174.
- Bernstein, Basil. 1959. A public language: Some sociological implications of a linguistic form. *British Journal of Sociology* 10. 311–326. 10
- Bernstein, Basil. 1960. Language and social class. *British Journal of Sociology* 11. 271–276.
- Boelens, Krine & Van der Veen, J. 1956. *De taal van het schoolkind in Friesland* [The language of the school child in Friesland]. Leeuwarden: Fryske Akademy. 15
- Cameron, Deborah. 2000. Styling the worker: Gender and the commodification of language in the globalized service economy. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 4. 323–347.
- Canagarajah, Suresh. 2005. Reconstructing local knowledge, reconfiguring language studies. In Canagarajah, Suresh (ed.), *Reclaiming the local in language policy and practice*, 3–24. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Charity Hudley, Anne H. & Montoya, Ignacio L. & Mallinson, Christine & Bucholtz, Mary. 2024. Introduction: Decolonizing linguistics. In Charity Hudley, Anne H. & Mallinson, Christine & Bucholtz, Mary (eds.), *Decolonizing linguistics*, 1–21. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 20
- Chebchoub, Zahida. 1985. *A sociolinguistic study of the use of Arabic and French in Algiers*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh. (Doctoral dissertation.) 25
- Colombu, Alessandro. 2021. Decolonizing Arabic language teaching: A case study. *Languages, Cultures, Mediation* 8(2). 101–118.
- Connell, Raewyn. 2007. *Southern Theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Coulmas, Florian (ed.). 1981. *A festschrift for native speaker*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Coulmas, Florian. 2005. *Sociolinguistics: The study of speakers' choices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 30
- Coupland, Nicolas (ed.). 2016. *Sociolinguistics: Theoretical debates*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Creary, Nicholas M. (ed.). 2012. *African intellectuals and decolonization*. Athens: Ohio University Press.
- Currie, Haver C. 1952. A projection of socio-linguistics: The relationship of speech to social status. *The Southern Speech Journal* 18(1). 28–37. 35
- Daher, J. 1998. Gender in linguistic variation: The variable (q) in Damascus Arabic. In Benmamoun, E. & Eid, M. & Haeri, N. (eds.), *Perspectives on Arabic linguistics XI*, 183–208. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Danilov, Georgy Konstantinovich. 1929. Yazyk obshchestvennogo klassa [The language of a social class]. *Uchenye zapiski Instituta yazyka i literatury RANION* [Scientific notes of the Institute of Language and Literature RANION] 3. 163–194. 40
- De Saussure, Ferdinand 1978[1916]. *Course in general linguistics*. Introduction by Jonathan Culler. London: Fontana/Collins.



- Deumert, Ana & Makoni, Sinfrey (eds.). 2023. *From Southern Theory to decolonizing sociolinguistics: Voices, questions and alternatives*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. 1
- Deumert, Ana, & Storch, Anne & Shepherd, Nick (eds.). 2021. *Colonial and decolonial linguistics: Knowledges and epistemes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Eid, Mushira. 1988. Principles for code-switching between Standard and Egyptian Arabic. *Al-'Arabiyya* 21. 51–80. 5
- Elgibali, A. 1993. Stability and language variation in Arabic: Cairene and Kuwaiti dialects. In Eid, Mushira & Holes, Clive (eds.), *Perspectives on Arabic linguistics V*, 75–96. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Errington, Joseph. 2008. *Linguistics in a colonial world: A story of language, meaning, and power*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing. 10
- Fishman, Joshua A. 1958. Social influences on the choice of a linguistic variant. *Word* 14. 47–56.
- Guilliéron, Jules & Edmont, Edmont. 1902–1910. *Atlas linguistique de la France*. Paris: H. Champion.
- Guitarte, Guillermo. 1955. El ensordecimiento del zaísmo porteño [The silencing of Buenosairean Zaísmo]. *Revista de Filología Española* [Journal of Spanish Philology] 39. 261–283. 15
- Habib, Rania. 2023. Arabic songs: An affective forum for combating COVID-19 and other insecurities. *Text & Talk: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Language, Discourse & Communication Studies* 43(6). 733–753.
- Habib, Rania. 2024. COVID-19 vaccines humor and identity construction in the Arab world. *Journal of Arabic and Diglossia Studies* 1(1). 1–11. 20
- Hachimi, Atiqa. 2001. Shifting sands: Language and gender in Moroccan Arabic. In Hellinger, Marlies & Bußmann, Hadumod (eds.), *Gender across languages: The linguistic representation of women and men*, 27–51. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Hall, Robert A. 1950. *Leave your language alone!* Ithaca, NY: Linguistica. 25
- Heinrich, Patrick. 2019. Language life (gengo seikatsu). In Heinrich, Patrick & Ohara, Yumiko (eds.), *Routledge handbook of Japanese sociolinguistics*, 407–419. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Heinrich, Patrick & Masiko, Hidenori. 2015. Japanese sociolinguistics: A critical review and outlook. *Contemporary Japan: Ca' Foscari Japanese Studies* 3. 249–266.
- Hira, Sandew. 2012. Decolonizing the mind: The case of the Netherlands. *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 10(1). 225–261. 30
- Hodson, Thomas Callan. 1939. Sociolinguistics in India. *Man in India* 19. 23–49.
- Holes, Clive. 1983. Patterns of communal variation in Bahrain. *Language in Society* 12(4). 433–457.
- Horkheimer, Max. 1982. *Critical theory*. New York: Seabury Press.
- Hountondji, Paulin. 1990. Scientific dependence in Africa today. *Research in African Literatures* 21(3). 5–15. 35
- Hutchings, Jessica & Morgan, Jenny L. (eds.). 2016. *Decolonization in Aotearoa: Education, research, and practice*. Wellington: NZCER Press.
- Al-Issa, Ali. 2022. Planning language identity in the Sultanate of Oman: A linguistic anthropological perspective. In Hopkyns, Sarah & Zoghbor, Wafa (eds.), *Linguistic identities in the Arab Gulf states: Waves of change*, 33–51. Abingdon: Routledge. 40
- Al-Kaisi, Meis & Zaki, Mai. 2022. Arab influencers and social media: A sociolinguistic study of a new culture. In Al Rashdi, Fathiya & Rao Mehta, Sandhya (eds.), *Language and identity in the Arab world*, 153–173. Abingdon: Routledge.

- Kikuzawa, Sueo. 1933. *Kokugo isō-ron* [The stratification of Japanese]. Tokyo: Meiji Shoin. 1
- Kindaichi, Kyōsuke. 1933. *Gengo kenkyū* [The study of language]. Tokyo: Kawade Shobō.
- Kuhn, Thomas. 1970. *The structure of scientific revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Labov, William. 1963. The social motivation of sound change. *Word* 19(3). 273–309. 5
- Labov, William. 1966. *The social stratification of English in New York*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Labov, William. 1972. *Language in the inner city: Studies in the Black English vernacular*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Leonard, Wesley Y. 2020. Insights from Native American studies for theorizing race and racism in linguistics. *Language* 96(4). e281–e291. 10
- Malmberg, Beril. 1950. *Études sur la phonétique de l'Espagnol parlé en Argentine* [Studies on the phonetics of Spanish spoken in Argentina]. Lund: Alf Lombard.
- Meyerhoff, Miriam. 2019. *Introducing sociolinguistics*. 3rd edn. New York: Routledge.
- Meyerhoff, Miriam & Nagy, Naomi (eds.). 2008. *Social lives in language: Sociolinguistics and multilingual speech communities celebrating the work of Gillian Sankoff*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 15
- Mezhoud, Salem & El Kirat, Yamina. 2010. In North Africa and the Middle East. In Moseley, Christopher (ed.), *Atlas of the world's languages in danger*, 26–31. Paris: UNESCO.
- Mihesuah, Devon A. (ed.). 1999. *Natives and academics: Researching and writing about American Indians*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Mitchell, T. F. 1978. Educated spoken Arabic in Egypt and the Levant with special reference to participle and tense. *Journal of Linguistics* 14(2). 227–258. 20
- Mufwene, Salikoko. 2020. Decolonial linguistics as paradigm shift: A commentary. In Deumert, Ana & Storch, Anne & Shepherd, Nick (eds.), *Colonial and decolonial linguistics: Knowledges and epistemes*, 187–298. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ndhlovu, Finex. 2021. Decolonizing sociolinguistics research: Methodological turn-around next? *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 267. 193–201. 25
- Nida, Eugene A. 1949. *Morphology: The descriptive analysis of words*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Osman, Ghada. 2003. The historian on language: Ibn Khaldun and the communicative learning approach. *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin* 37(1). 50–57. 30
- Osterhammel, Jürgen. 2010. *Colonialism: A theoretical overview*. 2nd edn. Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers.
- Owens, Jonathan. 2001. Arabic sociolinguistics. *Arabica* 48(4). 419–469.
- Owens, Jonathan. 2006. *A linguistic history of Arabic*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pandit, P. B. 1955. Linguistic survey of border lands of Gujarat. *Journal of the Gujarat Research Society* 14. 57–67. 35
- Pennycook, Alastair. 2018. *Posthumanist applied linguistics*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Pennycook, Alastair & Makoni, Sinfree. 2020. *Innovations and challenges in applied linguistics from the Global South*. London: Routledge.
- Polivanov, Yevgeny D. 1931. *Za marksistskoe yazykoznanie* [For Marxist linguistics]. Moscow: Federatsiya.
- Quijano, Aníbal. 2007. Coloniality and modernity/rationality. *Cultural Studies* 21(2/3). 168–178. 40
- Rannut, Ulle. 2009. Circassian language maintenance in Jordan. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 30(4). 297–310.

- Rojo, Luisa Martín. 2017. Language and power. In García, Ofelia & Flores, Nelson & Spotti, Massimiliano (eds.), *The Oxford handbook of language and society*, 77–102. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1
- Sadiqi, Fatima. 2003. *Women, gender and language in Morocco*. Leiden: Brill.
- Sadiqi, Fatima. 2007. Language and gender. In Versteegh, Kees (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Arabic language and linguistics*, 642–650. Leiden: Brill. 5
- Sayahi, Lotfi. 2020. Language and identity in post-Revolution Tunisia: Between authenticity and commodification. In Bassiouney, Reem & Walters, Keith (eds.), *The Routledge handbook of Arabic and identity*, 108–119. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Schmidt, Richard. 1974. *Sociolinguistic variation in spoken Egyptian Arabic*. Providence, RI: Brown University. (Doctoral dissertation.) 10
- Selishchev, Afanasii Matveevich. 1928. *Yazyk revoliutsionnoj epokhi* [The language in the time of revolution]. Moscow: Rabotnik prosveshcheniya.
- Shpilrein, Isaak Naftulovich & Rejtynbarg, David Isaakovich & Netskij, Georgiy O. 1928. *Yazyk krasnoarmeitsa* [The language of a Red Army soldier]. Moscow: Gosizdat.
- Sibata, Takesi. 1975. On some problems in Japanese sociolinguistics: Reflections and prospect. In Peng, Fred C. C. (ed.), *Language in Japanese society*, 159–173. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press. 15
- Sibata, Takesi. 1999. *Sociolinguistics in Japanese contexts*. Edited and translated by Kunihiro, Tetsuya & Inoue, Fumio & Long, Daniel. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Smakman, Dick. 2012. The definition of the standard language: A survey in seven countries. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 218. 25–58. 20
- Smakman, Dick. 2015. The Westernising mechanisms in sociolinguistics. In Smakman, Dick & Heinrich, Patrick (eds.), *Globalising sociolinguistics: Challenging and expanding theory*, 16–36. London: Routledge.
- Smakman, Dick, & Barasa, Sandra N. 2016. Defining “standard”: Towards a cross-cultural definition of the language norm. In Tieken-Boon van Ostade, Ingrid & Percy, Carol (eds.), *Prescription and tradition in language: Establishing standards across time and space*, 23–38. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. 25
- Smakman, Dick & Barasa, Sandra N. & Smith-Christmas, C. & Albury-Garcés, N. 2024. Towards cultural diversification in sociolinguistics. *Slovo a slovesnost* 85(2). 127–149.
- Smakman, Dick & Duda-Osiewacz, Agnieszka. 2014. A contrastive rhetoric analysis of scholarly publications by Polish and Anglophone authors. *Journal of Language Teaching and Learning* 4(2). 29–47. 30
- Smakman, Dick & Heinrich, Patrick (eds.). 2015. *Globalising sociolinguistics: Challenging and expanding theory*. London: Routledge.
- Smith, Linda T. 1999. *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*. Dunedin: University of Otago Press. 35
- Stein, Sharon & de Andreotti, Vanessa Oliviera. 2016. Decolonization and higher education. In Peters, Michael A. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of educational philosophy and theory*, not paginated. Singapore: Springer. <https://link.springer.com/referencework/10.1007/978-981-287-532-7>
- Suleiman, Yasir. 1995. Arabic linguistic tradition. In Koerner, E. F. K. & Asher, R. E. (eds.), *Concise history of the language sciences*, 28–38. Oxford: Pergamon. 40
- Suleiman, Yasir. 1999. *The Arabic grammatical tradition: A study in Taʿlil*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Tachibana, Shōichi. 1943[1936]. *Hōgengaku gairon* [Outline of dialectology]. 3rd edn. Tokyo: Ikuei Shoin.

- Tanabe, Juri. 1933. *Gengo shakaigaku* [Sociology of language]. Tokyo: Meiji Shoin. 1
- Thiong'o, Ngũgĩ wa. 1986. *Decolonising the mind: The politics of language in African literature*. London: J. Currey.
- Tokieda, Motoki. 1941. *Kokugo genron* [A general theory of Japanese]. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Al-Toma, Salih. 1969. *The problem of diglossia in Arabic: A comparative study of classical and Iraqi Arabic*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 5
- Tsukahara, Tetsuo. 1963. Bamen to kotoba [Context and speech]. In Morioka, Kenji (ed.), *Kōza gendaigo* [A course on contemporary language], vol. 1, 228–250. Tokyo: Meiji Shoin.
- Tuck, Eve & Yang, Wayne K. 2012. Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1(1). 1–40.
- UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages (eds.). 2003. *Language Vitality and Endangerment*. Paris: UNESCO. 10
- Uno, Yoshikata. 1986. *Gengo seikatsu-shi* [Historical language life]. Tokyo: Tokyodō Shuppan.
- Van Herk, Gerard. 2018. *What is sociolinguistics?* 3rd edn. Toronto: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Versteegh, Kees. 1997. *Landmarks in linguistic thought. Vol. 3: The Arabic linguistic tradition*. London: Routledge. 15
- Weijnen, Antonius A. 1946. De grenzen tussen de Oost-Noord-Brabantse dialecten onderling [The borders among the East-North-Brabantian dialects]. In Weijnen, Antonius A. & Renders, J. M. & Van Ginneken, Jacobus (eds.), *Oost-Noordbrabantse dialectproblemen: Bijdragen en Mededelingen der Dialectencommissie van de Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen* [East-North Brabant dialect problems: Contributions and Communications from the Dialect Committee of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences], vol. 8, 1–15. Amsterdam: KNAW. 20
- Weinreich, Uriel. 1954. Is a structural dialectology possible?? *Word* 10. 388–400.
- Wimmer, Andreas & Schiller Glick, Nina. 2002. Methodological nationalism and beyond: Nation-state building, migration and the social sciences. *Global Networks* 2(4). 301–334.
- Wright, Joseph 1898–1905. *English dialect dictionary*. Vols. 1–6. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 25
- Yanagita, Kunio. 1980[1930]. *Kagyūkō* [Thoughts on “snail”]. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Yuen Ren, Chao & Noss, Richard B. & Yamagiwa, Joseph K. 1967. *Linguistics in East Asia and South East Asia*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton. 30

35

40