

Bente A. Svendsen and Stefania Marzo
A ‘new’ speech style is born

The omnipresence of structure and agency in the life of
semiotic registers in heterogeneous urban spaces

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to contribute to the sociolinguistic discussion about the need for a unified sociological theory, by applying realist social theory (RST) (Carter and Sealey, this volume) to the total linguistic fact (TLF) (Silverstein 1985) or to the semiotics of ‘new’ speech styles in heterogeneous urban spaces. We explore, with data from Belgium (Flanders, Limburg) on *Citétaal* and Norway on so-called *kebabnorsk*, the ways structure and agency are omnipresent in the enregisterment of these semiotic registers. Through media discourse analyses, we investigate essential parts of this enregisterment process, in particular the invention and diffusion of labels and the assignment of stereotypical indexical values to these speech styles and to their alleged speakers. We demonstrate, in line with other studies, that media in interplay with scholars is a key force in the enregisterment of these speech styles. In the analysed media discourse, *kebabnorsk* and *Citétaal* are constructed as a ‘mixed language’, as a countable and uniform entity, the use of which inevitably results in unemployment. The alleged language users are constructed as a homogeneous group, namely ‘young people with migrant backgrounds’. It is shown that social structure, including asymmetric power relations and language hegemonies, are omnipresent in the valorisation of these registers and that media discourses rely on language ideologies of unity and purity, ideologies central to a *monolingual* orientation. We advocate a *translingual* orientation towards language and communication in which communication transcends languages and involves negotiation of mobile resources. This orientation captures the ontology of language and communication and has, as such, the potential to empower the language users’ individual agencies.

Bente A. Svendsen: Professor of Norwegian as a second language and Scandinavian linguistics and the Deputy Director of MultiLing Centre for Multilingualism in Society across the Lifespan, a Centre of Excellence at the Department of Linguistics and Scandinavian Studies at the University of Oslo, E-mail: b.a.svendsen@iln.uio.no

Stefania Marzo: Assistant Professor at the Department of Linguistics at the KU Leuven, Belgium, E-mail: Stefania.Marzo@arts.kuleuven.be

Keywords: Realist social theory, the total linguistic fact, semiotic registers, media discourse, heterogeneous urban spaces, translingual practice, language ideology, Cîteaal, ‘Kebab-Norwegian’

Riassunto: Lo scopo di questo lavoro è di contribuire alla discussione sociolinguistica sulla necessità di una teoria sociologica applicando la cosiddetta *realist social theory* (RST) (Carter e Sealey, questo volume) sul *total linguistic fact* (TLF) o sulle nuove pratiche di parlato in spazi urbani eterogenei. Saranno utilizzati dati provenienti dal Belgio (Fiandre, Limburgo) sulla cosiddetta *Cîteaal* e dalla Norvegia sul cosiddetto *kebabnorsk*, per analizzare in quale misura ‘*structure*’ e ‘*agency*’ siano onnipresenti nell’*enregisterment* di questi registri. Attraverso un’analisi discorsiva dei media s’indagheranno parti essenziali di questo processo di *enregisterment*, in particolare l’invenzione e la diffusione delle etichette attribuite a questi registri e l’assegnazione di valori indessicali stereotipati a queste pratiche di parlato e ai loro presunti parlanti. Dimosteremo, in linea con altri studi, che i media in interazione con gli studiosi costituiscono una forza fondamentale nell’*enregisterment* di questi stili di discorso. Si rivelerà che *kebabnorsk* e *Cîteaal* vengono costruiti come ‘linguaggi misti’, come delle entità fisse, calcolabili e invariabili, il cui impiego porterebbe alla disoccupazione. I presunti utenti sono considerati come un unico e omogeneo gruppo, ossia ‘giovani con background migratorio’. Dimosteremo che la struttura sociale tra cui le relazioni di potere asimmetriche ed egemonie linguistiche sono fondamentali nella valorizzazione di questi registri semiotici e che i discorsi dei media partono da ideologie linguistiche di unità e di purezza, centrali dell’orientamento monolingue. Verrà proposta una visione ‘translinguale’ su lingua e comunicazione in cui la comunicazione trascende la lingua. Questa visione cattura meglio l’ontologia di lingua e comunicazione per potenziare le cosiddette ‘*agencies*’ individuali degli utenti di lingua.

Samenvatting: Dit artikel wil een bijdrage leveren aan de sociolinguïstische discussie over de nood aan een sociologische theorie, door de *realist social theory* (RST) (Carter en Sealey, dit volume) toe te passen op de *total linguistic fact* (TLF) (Silverstein 1985) en op de zogenaamde ‘nieuwe’ spreekstijlen in heterogene stedelijke contexten. We verkennen, met gegevens over de zogenaamde Cîteaal uit België (Vlaanderen, Limburg) en het zogenaamde *kebabnorsk* uit Noorwegen, hoe ‘*structure*’ en ‘*agency*’ alomtegenwoordig zijn in het *enregisterment* van deze spreekstijlen. Door middel van een analyse van mediadiscours onderzoeken we essentiële onderdelen van dit *enregisterment* proces, in het bijzonder de uitvinding en verspreiding van labels en de toewijzing van stereotiepe indexicale waarden aan de spreekstijlen en hun vermeende sprekers. Er wordt aangetoond, in lijn met vorige studies, dat de media in samenspel met wetenschappers een belan-

grijke schakel vormt in het *enregisterment* van de deze omgangsvormen. Zo blijkt dat *kebabnorsk* en *Citétaal* worden geconstrueerd als 'mengtalen', als telbare en uniforme entiteiten, waarvan het gebruik onvermijdelijk leidt tot werkloosheid. De vermeende gebruikers van deze registers worden ook beschouwd als een specifieke en homogene groep, namelijk de 'jongeren met een migratie-achtergrond'. We tonen aan dat de sociale structuur, waaronder asymmetrische machtsverhoudingen en taalhegemonieën, fundamenteel is in de valorisatie van deze taalregisters en dat het media discours gebaseerd is op taalideologieën van eenheid en zuiverheid, die typerend zijn voor een monolinguale visie op taal. Ten slotte pleiten we voor een translinguale visie die de ontologie van taal en communicatie dekt en meer aandacht schenkt aan de *agency* van taalgebruikers.

DOI 10.1515/eujal-2015-0008

1 Introduction

Sociolinguistics has often been accused of lacking a unified sociological theory (e.g. Williams 1992) and during the nineties there was an ongoing discussion about the actual need for such a theory (e.g. Coupland 1998). That discussion has somewhat lost its lustre, although sociolinguists are still concerned with the well-known micro-macro gap (e.g. Blommaert and Rampton 2011). An engagement with ontological questions concerning the intrinsic relation between language, people and society is, nonetheless, necessary, as pointed out by Carter and Sealey (this volume), *inter alia* to avoid 'failures' in language planning due to top-down policies and practices. The overarching aim of this paper is to contribute to that discussion by applying realist social theory (hereafter; RST) as developed by Archer (1995, 2013) and Carter and Sealey (2000, this volume) with a view to exploring the ways social structure and agency (see 2 *infra*) are omnipresent in the life of a *semiotic register*, that is in the emergence, maintenance and (re)production of repertoires of performable signs assigned with stereotypic indexical values (*cf.* Agha 2007).

The semiotic registers in focus are the 'new' ways of speaking in linguistically and culturally diverse urban spaces that have been documented during the last three decades across Europe, particularly among adolescents (e.g. Källström and Lindberg 2011; Kern and Selting 2011; Kotsinas 1988; Marzo and Ceuleers 2011; Nortier and Svendsen 2015; Quist 2000; Quist and Svendsen 2010; Rampton 1995, 2009, 2011). These linguistic practices are being/have been *enregistered* (Agha 2007), i.e. "recognized (and regrouped), as belonging to distinct,

differentially valorised semiotic registers by a population” (Agha 2007: 81), both by its alleged users and non-users.¹ Through media discourse analyses, we will explore essential parts of these enregisterment processes, in particular the invention and diffusion of labels attached to the speech styles and the assignment of stereotypical indexical values to these purported ways of speaking (cf. e.g. Androutsopoulos 2010; Cornips, Jaspers and de Rooij 2015; Jaspers 2008; Milani 2010).

Semiotic registers are identified by appealing to the reflexive evaluation of speech (Agha 2007:151), mirrored in various (*etic* and *emic*, Pike 1954) labels attached to ways of speaking. Labelling is an ideological act wherein certain ways of speaking and certain groups of people are demarcated and divided into linguistic and social categories or groups in relation to certain identities and interests (Canagarajah 2013). As has been critically stated by several scholars in the last years (Cornips *et al.* 2015; Jaspers 2008; Milani 2007; Rampton 2011), values ascribed to these speech styles are often reflected in the names and labels scholars and journalists create and diffuse. Some labels emerge and diffuse in, and are amplified through, media (“talking illegal”, Jaspers 2011), often with scholarly assistance, such as the invention of the term “Rinkeby Swedish” (cf. Jonsson and Milani 2009; Milani 2007, 2010). Others are terms created by linguists intending to avoid stigmatising labels, such as *Straattaal* (for a discussion, see Cornips *et al.* 2015), and still others are introduced by linguists in an effort to seek professional terminology, such as “multiethnolect” (Clyne 2000; Quist 2000) and “contemporary urban vernaculars” (Rampton 2015).

Within sociolinguistics, there is an ongoing discussion as to how to label these semiotic registers, and the chosen labels are generally anchored in the various studies’ theoretical and methodological approach (Cornips *et al.* 2015; Jaspers 2008; Jonsson and Milani 2009; Milani 2007; Quist 2008; Rampton 2015; Svendsen and Quist 2010; Svendsen 2015). Several labels have been suggested, depending on the research strand: In the variety or dialectological approach, scholars have usually proposed, or used, labels such as “dialect”, “sociolect” (e.g. Kotsinas 1988), “ethnolect” (e.g. Muysken and Rott 2013) or “multiethnolect” (e.g. Clyne 2000; Quist 2000; Svendsen and Røyneland 2008). More ethnographic language-practice-oriented strands generally work with labels such as “multi-ethnic youth language” (Aarsæther 2010), “late modern urban speech style” (Møller 2009) and “multi-ethnic urban heteroglossia” (Rampton 2011). It is not our aim here to suggest the most adequate label to attach to these speech styles, but

1 Agha’s (2007) *register* and Eckert’s (2004) *style* can be treated as largely equivalent (Rampton 2015: 27) and the two notions are in this paper used interchangeably.

to emphasise the necessity for a continuous reflexive scrutiny of the role of scholars and the media in the (re)constructions of urban voices in today's heterogeneous urban spaces, in order to uphold a continued spotlight on their role in objectifying processes (cf. e.g. Blommaert and Rampton 2011; Bourdieu 1991; Cornips *et al.* 2015). In this paper, we will in other words, include the role of the scientists in the construction of the interpreted, including their 'struggles' for classifications and naming disputes, and "not just as the responsibilities, preference, fudge or failure of the analyst" (Rampton 2015: 42).

We will explore, with data from Belgium (Flanders) and Norway, parts of the enregisterment process as it is (re)produced in mainstream media and social media in interplay with scholars by addressing the following two research questions:

- 1) To what extent do media and the voices of scholars contribute to the invention and diffusion of labels attached to an alleged way of speaking in linguistically and culturally diverse urban spaces in Oslo, often labelled as *kebabnorsk* ('Kebab-Norwegian') (e.g. Aarsæther 2010; Opsahl and Nistov 2010; Svendsen and Røyneland 2008), and in the easternmost province of Flanders (Limburg), often referred to as *Citétaal* ('Cité language' or 'Cité Dutch') (Marzo and Ceuleers 2011, Marzo *forthc.*), and;
- 2) what values and personal characteristics or (in)activities are in media discourse ascribed to these alleged ways of speaking and to their purported speakers?

These two research questions are addressed by analysing two data sets of media texts in Norway and in Flanders. First, we will delve into digital news archives in both areas in order to investigate how existing labels have been created and diffused through media in interplay with scholars over the past decades. We will then proceed with an in-depth analysis of two language debates in the media in Norway and Flanders, namely a language debate that emerged in 2011 within a political campaign for a local election in Limburg (Flanders) and a debate on *kebabnorsk* that took place in the Norwegian press in June 2009² (see Section 3).

Although there are significant differences between Belgium and Norway in terms of historical and socio-political development, demographic composition and, hence, patterns of linguistic contact, it is interesting to explore, and compare, the enregisterment processes of these speech styles since they – being a consequence of migration and globalisation processes in general – evoke tradi-

² Parts of this language debate has been analysed in Norwegian in Svendsen (2014), see also Hårstad and Opsahl (2013).

tional dichotomies and ‘boxes’, such as ‘us’ and ‘them’ and ‘minority’ versus ‘majority’ (e.g. Aarsæther 2010; Quist 2000; Rampton 2011; Stroud 2004), and, consequently, dimensions of societal inclusion and exclusion processes in a changing Europe (cf. Horizon 2020, grand societal challenge: “Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies”). As we will demonstrate in this paper, the speech styles are debated in the media in both countries; and those language debates are interwoven with ideological viewpoints on language deficiencies, low professional potential and low prestige, which might lead to linguistic and, hence, social exclusion of the purported speakers (cf. Androutsopoulos 2010; Cornips *et al.* 2015; Jaspers 2011; Milani 2010; Stroud 2004; Svendsen 2014). Another important aim we have set ourselves in our paper is to unravel, and denaturalise, the media-constructed links between alleged ways of speaking and the values, personal characteristics and/or (in)activities ascribed to a purported group of speakers. The data and our methods are elucidated and analysed below, but first we will anchor our study theoretically.

2 The birth and life of a speech style. The ‘Total Linguistic Fact’ within structure and agency

According to Eckert (2004: 43), linguistic forms “do not come into a style with a specific, fixed meaning, but take on such meaning in the process of construction of the style”. These processes of meaning-making are based on repeated, generalised and conventionalised perceptions of different linguistic forms, or ways, of speaking. In line with Silverstein (1985: 220), this social meaning-making process can be explained and understood by integrating the three realms of the very premises of language, namely language form or structure, language usage or pragmatics and language ideology, the so-called total linguistic fact (hereafter; TLF). The TLF is, according to Silverstein (1985: 220), irreducibly dialectic in nature: “It is an unstable mutual interaction of meaningful signs forms contextualised to situations of interested human use, mediated by the fact of cultural ideology”.³ He states that these three realms interact in the linguistics (and sociolinguistics), for “every linguistic category related to our ability to refer and predicate, which carefully examined, is situated at such a triple intersection” (Silverstein 1985: 221). The linguistic forms and structures occur, according to

³ TLF is consistent with Agha’s (2007) *semiotic register* and Eckert’s (2004) *speech style* (Rampton 2015: 71).

Silverstein (1985: 222) as indexes of (pointers to) intersubjective consequences of communication (i.e. pragmatics), and whenever language is consciously used to achieve a certain communicative purpose the language use entails a “consideration of the ideologies about language form, meaning, function, value, et cetera that the users apparently bring to bear on the activity of using it” (Silverstein 1985: 223).

The construction and (re)production of social meaning in relation to linguistic forms and structure are characterised by processes wherein people start to recognise certain ways of speaking as pointing to (indexing) certain places, people and values ascribed to various social actors (Silverstein 1985, 2003). These processes of social meaning-making are value-based in the sense that they are connected to judgement, value assignment and distinction, and based on recurrent connections between a specific way of speaking and supposed activities, or inactivities, personal qualities and values in individuals and groups wherein individual representatives of an ostensible social group are assumed to be identical, or similar, to other members of this supposed group; they are, as such, shaped by ideologies about correctness, prestige, social class or status in general. Irvine (1989: 255) defines language ideology as “the cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests”. Language ideology is thus related to group beliefs, power relations and cultural hegemonies; they are dynamic, potentially inconsistent and in opposition to each other and to other ideological beliefs in general (Gal 1998). Hence, enregisterment processes can hardly be understood without paying attention to the relation between social structure, (how it conditions) language and individual agencies (*cf.* Carter and Sealey, this volume).

As a type of system, language has systemic features, “but as a human product, it cannot have purposes and intentions of its own” (Carter and Sealey 2000: 12). The social actions conducted with, and through, language are irreducibly connected to language speakers or social actors. Archer’s (1995, 2013) conception of sociological realism within RST (and theorised within sociolinguistics by Carter and Sealey 2000, this volume), draws a distinction between structure and agency (note that this dualism is different from the Saussurean linguistic dualism between *la langue* and *parole* or the Chomskyan *competence* and *performance*, *cf.* Carter and Sealey 2000). Structure refers to “human relations among human actors – relations like power, competition, exploitation, and dependency” (Porpora 2013: 27). Structure is, thus, conceived of as relations among social positions that human actors occupy (Porpora 2013: 27).

[...] structured social relations provide the contextual conditions for social action, and are a feature of social reality which extends beyond individual consciousness and control. Examples of 'structured social relations' would include patterns of income distribution, legal and political systems, belief systems such as religions, and so on. In a significant sense, then, structured social relations have an externality and objectivity which gives the social world an independence from social actors. However, our argument does not entail a reification of structures, since it is a view of the social world in which it is only human beings who can act in the world and are thus the 'agents' of social actions. (Carter and Sealey 2000: 5)

Structures are, in other words, relevant to social action and outcomes "because they generate common locations in relation to cultural and material resources" (Carter and Sealey, this volume, page 1):

From birth people are inextricably entangled with relations of inequality, of many kinds, that will shape – amongst other things – life chances, aspirations and cultural habits, so that people will find themselves in unequal competition with others. Agency, in the realist sense proposed here, refers to the collective conditions of action that are derived from these common, relational locations. (Carter and Sealey, this volume, page 1)

Structures may condition the individual agencies, people are not determined by them; however, they constantly manoeuvre in relation to them (Archer 1995; Carter and Sealey, this volume). Although social actions and outcomes always are the result of the interplay between agency, structure and culture (Carter and Sealey, this volume), Archer (1995) stresses that structure, culture and agency must not be conflated, at least not on an analytical level. Too much emphasis on agency overlooks "the very real constraints acting on us in time and space", and too much emphasis on structure disempowers people and fails to "account for human beings making a difference" (Carter and Sealey 2000: 11).

Social structure is relevant to TLF due to the indexical (usage, pragmatics) character and the ideological level of semiotic registers (Agha 2007). There are commonly systems of competing valorisations of certain registers, and thus competing models of normativity in a society (Agha 2007: 157). Such competing models of normativity are the result of people having access to semiotic registers in different ways, due to socially structured relations, although being open cultural systems, the registers are also object to functional reanalysis (Agha 2007: 158). As stated by Agha (2007: 158), "once a distinct register is culturally recognised as existing within a language, its repertoires are susceptible to further reanalyses and change." Although language is a collective, emergent phenomenon, it is each of us individually who use language and thus exercise our own "individual capacities as coherent selves to choose what it is we say" (Porpora 2013: 27).

The social existence of semiotic registers depends on the fact that stereotypes make them communicable across large social-demographic scales and time spans (Agha 2007:279). Links between alleged ways of speaking and “widely shared generalisations about members of a social group” (Hogg and Vaughan 2011: 54; or social stereotypes, Bhabha 1983) are recursively (re)produced by social actors in various arenas; in the family, among peers, in institutions such as childcare, school and work; and in and through media (Agha 2007). The key role media plays in the assignment of indexical values to certain alleged ways of speaking and to their purported speakers is partly attributable to media’s legitimacy and authority as news outlets and its wide distribution (see 2 *infra*, *cf.* Agha 2007).; The impact media has on the ways people think and act is, however, not straightforward, but complex. Media researchers (e.g. Thompson 1995) have demonstrated both theoretically and empirically that media users are not a (passive) mass who psychologically receive and interpret the message in identical ways. Various other socially structured positions (such as age, gender, class positions), personal experiences and (societal) knowledge explain why people understand and act differently following similar media exposure (e.g. Luhmann 2000). However, media has a *potential* to influence the way people think and act by recursively projecting certain links, for instance between a purported way of speaking, (a) certain *personae* and certain values, thus contributing to constructing and reproducing linguistic and social stereotypes. As Bell (1991) so vigilantly reminded us regarding news production, there is always a need to sociologically locate which groups are doing what, for which purpose and to whom (*cf.* Carter and Sealey 2000).

Scientists have, due to their social position as ‘experts’ (although they are not always constructed as one, see Milani 2007 and *infra*), easier access to media than lay people, and language debates are, from time to time, initiated as a consequence of their media appearances (see Milani 2007 and *infra*). Language debates, since they often presuppose (implicitly or explicitly) language ideologies, are excellent loci for studying – as emphasised by Blommaert (1999) – the reproduction of hegemonic language ideologies and for revealing how these ideologies create and reconstruct certain conceptions of social realities. We will return to our analyses after we have elaborated upon the data and the methodological tools applied for analysing them.

3 Data and methodology

Carter and Sealey (2000) put forward some methodological implications of RST applied to sociolinguistics, and state that since the social world is stratified and

that various social domains have their distinct properties, those properties need to be accounted for in relation to language use and social action. They stress that it is necessary to reflect on how other domains exert conditioning influences on domain(s) relevant to the research questions; how, in pursuit of their interests, social actors encounter and negotiate these conditioning influences and constraints; and how these encounters and negotiations generate emergent phenomena which affect the social environment encountered by subsequent social actors (Carter and Sealey 2000: 16). Encouraged by those considerations, we will return to them in our analyses and discussion. We are, moreover, inspired by the analytical tools developed by Irvine and Gal (2000) to unveil the (re)construction of ideological representation of linguistic differences. According to them, there are three main components present in this kind of (re)construction, namely *iconisation*, *erasure*, and *fractal recursivity* (Irvine and Gal 2000: 37–39): Iconisation refers to the construction of an essentialised, or one-to-one, relationship between language (or linguistic form) and the social images they are associated with, as if the linguistic features represent a social group's inherent nature or essence. *Erasure* relates to processes where sociolinguistic factors, people or activities are excluded, or rendered invisible, in a given representation. Erasure entails simplification of a given language-ideological field; for example, that a language or a social group is presented as homogeneous by ignoring or discounting all the inherent variation. *Fractal recursivity* describes the processes whereby alleged differences or oppositions on one level are projected across to another by means of iconisation.

To address the two research questions of this paper, the extent to which the media and the voices of scholars contribute to the invention and diffusion of labels attached to the purported speech styles in focus; and how these alleged ways of speaking are presented in media discourse, we have used two digital news archives: the Scandinavian *Atekst Retriever* (Norway) and *Gopress* (Belgium, Flanders). We have also performed a micro-analysis of two language debates in both countries. The data thus allow both quantitative and qualitative discourse-oriented analyses.

The micro-analysis of the Flemish case is based on a discussion between politicians during a local election campaign in May 2011, when the labour party launched their campaign using a slogan with linguistic features associated with *Citêlanguage* (see *infra*). The discussion started on Facebook and was followed by a debate in written press, blogs and the local party's election brochures. The use of those linguistic features within the labour party campaign provoked several heated reactions in the nationalist party, which refrained from using 'slang words' and criticised the labour party for glorifying a 'deficient language' (see *infra*) at the expense of 'standard' Dutch.

The 'Kebab-Norwegian debate' comprises media articles on *kebabnorsk* in the Norwegian media, published between 4 and 19 June 2009. During that period, there was a surge in media coverage which can be referred to as a public exchange of opinions or debate. The backdrop for this debate was the appearance of a young rapper, Danny (now Danny Maroc),⁴ and a female, middle-class, middle-aged language researcher (the first author) at the national television corporation's (NRK) annual conference on 4 June 2009. During their performance, Danny and the first author launched the idea of a new 'dialect' in Oslo, with reference to a stabilisation of a new speech style in linguistically and culturally heterogeneous urban spaces. The chosen title for this performance was borrowed from the title of one of Danny's raps: "It is we who are Wergeland now!"⁵ The title thus alludes directly to the similarities between Danny himself and the Norwegian national icon Henrik Wergeland who 'Norwegianised' the Dano-Norwegian language in the 1800s after Norway's liberation from Danish colonial rule. Following this performance, a journalist wrote an article that was published in the regional newspaper *Dagsavisen* about *kebabnorsk* (12 June 2009)⁶, which sparked the 2009 'Kebab-Norwegian debate'. This news event triggered many reactions, peaking with a television debate on the talk show *I kveld* (17 June 2009)⁷, before concluding with an article in *Dagsavisen* (19 June 2009)⁸. As a consequence of this debate, Danny and the first author was later on invited to a radio interview (NRK/*Språkteigen* 18 November 2009). The media reports on *kebabnorsk* did by no means stop with this debate (see Figure 1 *infra*). It is a recurrently interesting topic for the media, particularly during the quiet holiday periods. The media pieces in the 'Kebab-Norwegian debate' are mainly factual articles, that is news stories, in line with many other studies of language in media discourses (e.g. Bell and Garrett 1998; Johnson and Milani 2010). Here, data from the first newspaper article that culminated in the 'Kebab-Norwegian debate' and the reactions to it will be analysed, including parts of the televised current events debate on NRK's *I kveld* talk show where several of the parties involved in the newspaper debate were invited in the studio (Danny, the director of the Norwegian Association for the Service Industry (NHO Service) and the first

⁴ His name is published with his consent.

⁵ See <http://www.nrk-fagdagen.net/?p=332> (last visited 1 August 2014).

⁶ See <http://www.dagsavisen.no/samfunn/kebabnorsk-sperrer-for-jobb/> (last visited 1 August 2014).

⁷ See <http://www.nrk.no/nett-tv/indeks/175113/> (last visited 1 August 2013).

⁸ The article is no longer available online, but can be accessed through *Atekst Retriever* or the National Library.

author) (see 5 *infra*), along with a glimpse into the subsequent radio interview (see 6 *infra*).

The Flemish case study is a local debate, and this is probably due to the fact that *Citétaal*, unlike *kebabnorsk*, is reported on in a peripheral region and not in the capital as *kebabnorsk* is in Norway. Although *Citétaal* often attracts attention in the Flemish media, the articles found in the digital retriever *Gopress* showed that the debates about the purported effects and ‘dangers’ of what is called *Citétaal* take place more often in local media (province of Limburg). Nevertheless, as will be shown, the debates in Flanders (and in particular in Limburg) generated discussions very similar to the ‘Kebab-Norwegian debate’ on values and stereotyped views on ‘standard’ and ‘non-standard’ language.

In the next section, we will address the paper’s first research question by presenting quantitative analyses of how media in interplay with scholars contribute to the invention and diffusion of labels attached to these alleged ways of speaking.

4 The invention and diffusion of labels in media discourse

In Oslo, several names are used by lay people to label the purported way of speaking in heterogeneous urban spaces, such as *gatespråk* (‘street language’), *Holmlia-norsk* (‘Holmlia-Norwegian’) and *kebabnorsk* (‘Kebab-Norwegian’) (Ims 2013; Svendsen and Røyneland 2008). The name *kebabnorsk* is in analogy with the Swedish label *kebabsvenska* (‘Kebab-Swedish’) and was imported to Norway in the mid-1990s by a journalist, and first used academically by a graduate student (Aasheim 1995).⁹ In Figure 1, we see the number of articles in which *kebabnorsk* appears in the Norwegian press over time (including printed press, web, radio and television):

⁹ *Kebabsvenska* was one of several terms originally used to label what is more known as “Rinkeby-Swedish” (*cf.* Milani 2007, 2010). The term is no longer widely used.

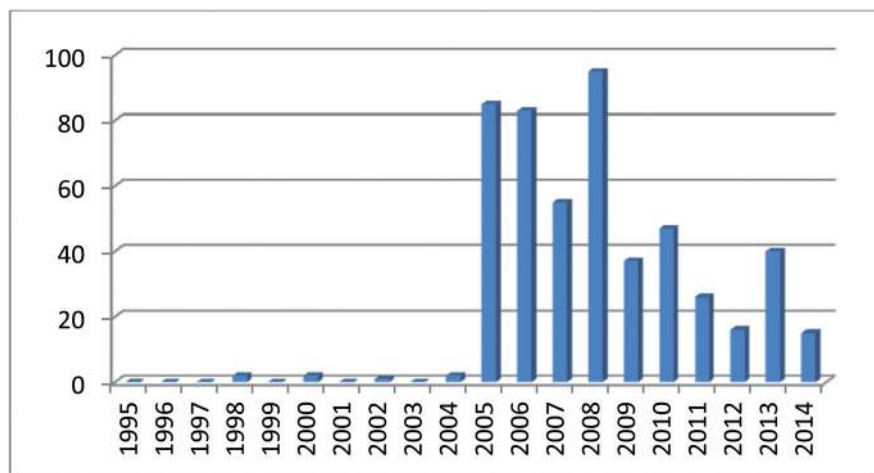


Figure 1: Number of media articles on 'kebabnorsk' ('Kebab-Norwegian') after 1 January 1995 in the Norwegian press (Atekst Retriever 26 September 2014, N=506).

We see that the publication of articles on *kebabnorsk* in the Norwegian press gathered momentum in 2005. That year, the philosopher and translator Østby (2005) published the so-called *Kebab-Norwegian dictionary* (authors' translation) where different loan and slang words in use by some of the adolescents in these heterogeneous urban areas were translated and explained. Another important explanatory factor for the acceleration in 2005 was the launch of the *UPUS/Oslo* research project¹⁰, which generated relatively many media articles on the alleged way of speaking in these areas (see Figure 2 infra). Although researchers have tried to either avoid using the term *kebabnorsk* or replace it with more linguistic or *etic* (Pike 1954) terms, journalists have, as we see in Figure 1, kept the label alive. For example, when the Oslo part of the *UPUS*-project started, several media events were arranged in, or in front of, kebab shops.¹¹ As presented in Figure 2, over time, the philosopher and translator Østby has appeared most frequently in the press on articles about *kebabnorsk* (70 out of 506):

10 The Oslo group of the *UPUS*-project (*Utviklingsprosesser i urbane språkmiljø* – 'Developmental Processes in Urban Linguistic Settings') consisted of, in alphabetical order, Finn Aarsæther, Ingvild Nistov, Toril Opsahl, Unn Røyneland and Bente Ailin Svendsen. It was funded by the Research Council of Norway in the period 2006–2010.

11 See e.g. the first author's website for media clips: <http://www.hf.uio.no/iln/personer/vit/bent-eas/media/>.

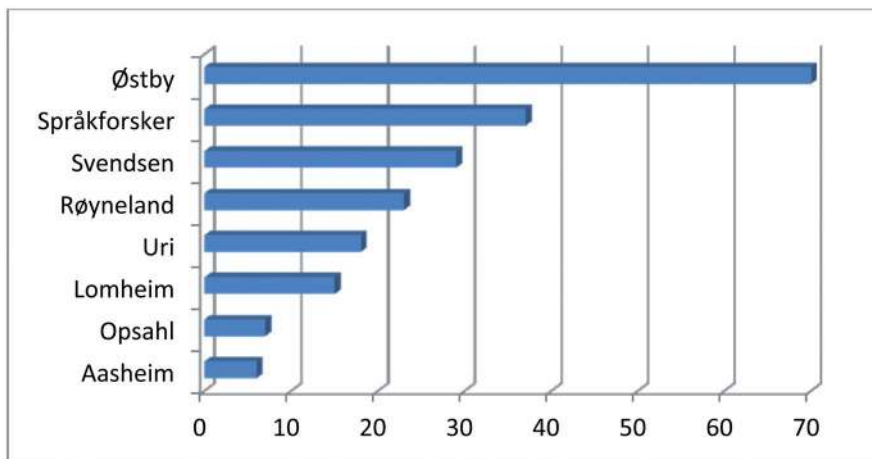


Figure 2: Number of articles after 1 January 1995 in the Norwegian press on 'kebabnorsk'+ various scholars¹² and 'kebabnorsk'+ 'language researcher' ('språkforsker') (Atekst Retriever 10 September 2014, N=506).

The fact that these scholars appear in those articles does not, however, suggest that they themselves use the term, but that they are journalistically framed within articles on *kebabnorsk*. The scholars' social position regarding those articles is the role of an 'expert', as an authority with power (knowledge) on the subject who (dis)affirms the mediated news. The 'expert' role, does not, however, secure a media-projected role as a reliable 'expert' (cf. Milani 2007). In the 2009 debate on 'Kebab-Norwegian' (see Section 5), the first author and other language researchers were, for instance, projected as naive and counter-intuitive, as people who almost appeared to be working against the projected will of young people and out of touch with 'reality'. The boldface introduction in one of the printed newspaper version read:

¹² The researchers in the *UPUS/Oslo*-project with appearance in more than two articles in *Retriever*; the graduate student Aasheim (1995); a well-known Norwegian language researcher and author, Helene Uri; the former Director of The Language Council of Norway, Sylfest Lomheim; and the philosopher and translator Østby. The columns in Figure 2 are not mutually exclusive, meaning that Østby, for instance, might appear with Røyneland and vice versa.

Excerpt 1:

Even though young immigrants believe speaking Kebab-Norwegian closes doors in the employment market, language researchers see no reason why they should stop speaking that way. (Authors' translation, *Dagsavisen* 12. June 2009)

The increased frequency over time of the use of *kebabnorsk* in the media might have led to an entrenchment of the term and a kind of generic acceptance of it. Indeed, Ims (2013) demonstrates in an internet-based national questionnaire on Oslo-language in 2010 that 23% of the more than 100 000 respondents labelled “dette språket” (‘this language’) *kebabnorsk* as the most frequently used term both in Oslo and elsewhere. Even though, not surprisingly – due, *inter alia*, to the *UPUS/Oslo*-project – articles on *kebabnorsk* appear most frequently in media in Oslo, it is rather interesting to see that the term appears in media articles all over the country and in each and every one of the 19 counties (*Atekst Retriever* 26.9.2014).¹³ Although there is no previous large-scale survey as the one on Oslo-language (Ims 2013), it is fascinating to note that when we conducted our interviews as part of the *UPUS/Oslo*-project primarily in 2006 and 2007, most of the adolescents did *not* label the alleged “special way of talking” in heterogeneous urban areas as *kebabnorsk*, and those who did, did not necessarily identify themselves with the term; “quite a few of the informants from that area reported that they did not appreciate it; some of them said they find it overtly stigmatising” (Aarsæther 2010:124; Svendsen and Røyneland 2008). However, when the first author (BAS) interviewed 15–20 randomly passing young people in a nearby square 6–7 years later (in November 2013), all of them said that the way they speak ‘there’ is *kebabnorsk*, as exemplified in this excerpt from an interview involving three 12-year-olds:

¹³ The international Schibsted media company owns the largest media houses in Norway and Sweden, such as the largest newspapers in Norway, *Aftenposten*, *VG*, *Stavanger Aftenblad*, *Bergens Tidende* and *Fedrelandssvennen*, meaning that one article might be published in all of the five newspapers at once. A thorough analysis of each article would reveal whether this is the case.

Excerpt 2:¹⁴

BAS: kjempebra (.) det (.) men ee jeg driver og undersøker hvordan man snakker i Oslo	BAS: very good (.) that (.) but ee I am investigating how people talk in Oslo
A: mm	A: mm
BAS: og har dere noen oppfatning om hvordan man snakker her på Holmlia ↑	BAS: and do you have an opinion about how you talk here at Holmlia ↑
A: kebabnorsk	A: Kebab-Norwegian
BAS: hva er det ↑	BAS: what is that ↑
A: det er sånn jeg ee jeg vet ikke hvordan jeg skal forklare	A: It is like ee I do not know how to explain
B: det er en slang	B: it is a slang
BAS: er det en slang ↑	BAS: is it a slang ↑
C (?): ja	C (?): yes
BAS: hva er det for noe da (.) hva er liksom slang ↑	BAS: what is that (.) what is slang in a way ↑
C (?): gatespråk for eksempel	C (?): street language for example
BAS: gatespråk	BAS: street language
C: ja	C: yes
BAS: ja hva hvordan er det fordi man snakker på gata eller ↑	BAS: yes what is it because you talk on the street or ↑
C: nei det er sånn man snakker i Holmlia	C: no it is the way you talk in Holmlia

Hence, in this context, it seems like the media in interplay with the voices of scholars has contributed significantly to shaping the research field they are studying. This reminds us of the prominence of Giddens' (1984:374) "double hermeneutics" in which the meaningful social world, as constituted by lay actors, is a logically necessary part of social science and the metalanguages invented by scholars. Hence, there is a need for continued reflexivity on objectifying processes and the constant 'slippage' from one social world to the other involved in the practice of the social or (socio)linguistic sciences. We will return to the objectifying processes through labelling after we have presented an analysis of the Flemish data.

In Flanders, lay actors generally use three names to label the way youngsters in urban spaces of Limburg speak, namely *Citétaal* ('citélanguage'), *Cités* ('Cité's language') or *Algemeen cités* ('common cité's language'). The term *cité* ('compound') refers to the occurrence of a speech style in the former mining com-

¹⁴ Transcripts are close to orthographic. (.) denotes a brief pause; longer pauses are times in seconds. Inaudible strings are marked by xxx. Single parentheses denote paralinguistic traits, such as laughter, whereas – denotes interruptions and ↑ rising intonation. Overlapping turns are marked by square brackets.

pounds, or neighbourhoods, where this 'way of speaking' emerged and diffused, probably after WWII (Aarsæther, Marzo, Nistov and Ceuleers 2015).¹⁵ Initially designing a form of talk of the foreign guest workers and their families living in the mining ghettos, the three labels refer to the linguistic practices of youngsters in the province of Limburg. As is shown in Figure 3, the three labels have been used in media texts since the nineties.

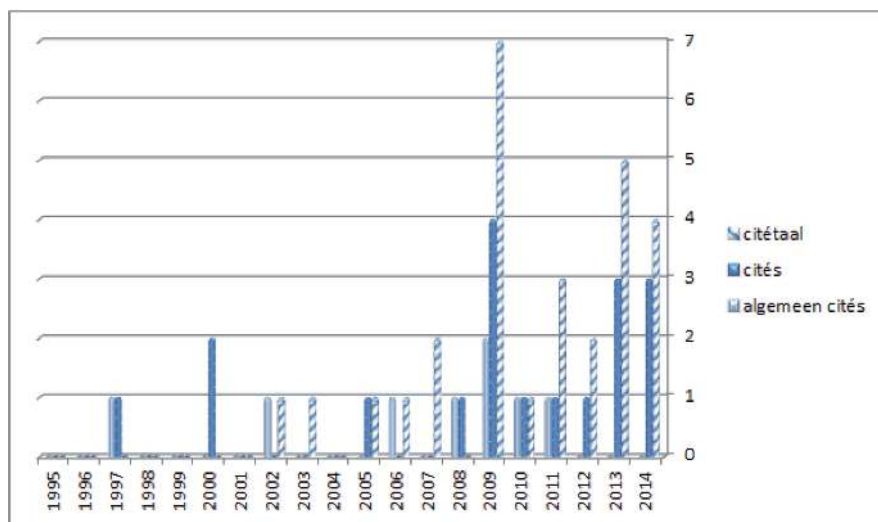


Figure 3: Media articles about 'Citëtaal', 'Citës' and 'Algemeen citës' ('Citëlanguage') after 1 January 1995 in the Flemish press (GoPress, September 2014, N=54).

Although we analysed all media texts between January 1985 and September 2014, there was no occurrence of any label referring to *Citëtaal* in the Limburg area before 1997. Our query consisted of different labels, that is, the most current one, as *Citëtaal*, *Citës* and *Algemeen Citës*, but also less current ones, including *Straat-taal* ('street language') and *jongerentaal* ('youth language'). We see that the first articles using the labels *Citës* and *Algemeen Citës* date from 1997. In that year, Johan Dirikx, a Flemish author, published his book *Mijnland* ('Land of Mines'), where he described the complicated lives of a group of second-generation Italians in the Limburg citës. He paid particular attention to the speech style of these

¹⁵ There are indications that former versions of what is known as *Citëtaal* emerged before WWII, among the first mining communities in Limburg, in particular, as a sort of *lingua franca* among the first coal miners (in particular Polish and Italian miners), see e.g. Nantke (2013).

youngsters. In response to the publication of the book, a journalist (Ward Ramaekers) wrote a popularising (and also ridiculing) text on what he called *Algemeen Cités* or simply *Cités*, in which he referred to the Dirikx's book *Mijnland*. The newspaper articles of 1997 both discuss Ramaekers' text and use the same labels. The tone of the articles ridicules the speech style of the youngsters, in line with Ramaekers' original text. As there are no data on language use by youngsters in the nineties, nor on their comments about their language use in that period, it is difficult to verify whether Ramaekers himself invented the labels *Algemeen Cités* and *Cités* or whether the terms were already utilised among users (and non-users). What we see, however, is that the term *Algemeen Cités* is still in use among youngsters, and in particular in recent hip-hop lyrics.

Excerpt 3: Lyrics *3600, de ruimte de kracht* by different artists¹⁶

1 De mijntijd is voorbij	1 The mining days are over
2 velen hebben niet gezwezen	2 many didn't keep silent
3 Maar fuck ABN	3 but fuck Standard Civilised Dutch
4 hier wordt	4 here we speak
5 Algemeen Cités gepraat	5 Common Cités's

The label *Citétaal* was used for the first time in 2002 in an interview with a Turkish woman (living in Limburg) that was published in a regional newspaper. Thereafter, it became somewhat the 'default' term (or in any case, the most frequently used term) to refer to the speech style in Limburg. The peak in Figure 3 in 2009 can be explained by the publication of an interview with the second author in *Taalschrift*, an online journal on language and language policy, where the author used two labels, namely *Citétaal* and *Cités*. This interview attracted major media attention (both on radio and newspapers), where both terms were used, but in particular *Citétaal*.

Youngsters often use the same labels (in particular *Citétaal* and *Cités*), but sometimes also more satirical labels, including *kapotte Vlaams* ('broken Flemish'), *Genks* (i.e. a speech style spoken in Genk) or more local names as *Winterslags* (i.e. slang words associated with the neighbourhood Winterslag) or *Algemeen Beschaafd Winterslags* ('common civilised Winterslag language'), where 'algemeen beschaafd' ironically refers to an old label used for 'standard' Dutch,

¹⁶ Cd released in 2007. See video on youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3t689FIpu8>.

namely *Algemeen Beschaafd Nederlands* ('common civilised Dutch'). As a consequence, *Citêtaal* in Flemish Limburg is a relatively old phenomenon and several labels have been, and are still being, used in the media by linguists and lay actors (both users and non-users) alike. It is, therefore, difficult to verify whether it was scholars or journalists who were responsible for labelling the speech styles of youngsters and which labels were the first used by youngsters. The data clearly show a direct correlation between the use of labels in the media, however, and the publication of books and popularising comments and interviews with linguists. In the next section, we will address the second research question, namely how these ways of speaking are presented in the media, by analysing the two mediated language debates, and we will first accompany you on your virtual trip to Norway.

5 Competing valorisations of *kebabnorsk* and *Citêtaal* in the media

In the first paper-printed article published in a regional newspaper *Dagsavisen* (12 June 2009), the journalist constructed a causal relationship between speaking *kebabnorsk*, unemployment and being a young person with a 'minority background'. The relationship between *kebabnorsk* and difficulties finding a job was established from the outset in the title of the piece: "Kebab-Norwegian blocks for employment". The three young boys who were interviewed are from the above-mentioned suburb Holmlia, and they stressed that they are well aware that it is inappropriate to speak *kebabnorsk* in a job interview:

Excerpt 4:

Kebab-Norwegian blocks for employment

Three young people from Holmlia NN (16), NN (19) and NN (17) warn their peers against using Kebab-Norwegian.

"You can't go to a job interview and say: 'Sjof my CV'," says NN (19) shaking his head while explaining that 'sjof' means 'look at'.

His friends NN (17) and NN (16) nod in agreement.

Although these young people are aware of the fact that people (including themselves?) tailor their language use to different contexts, this awareness is not elaborated upon in the interview. On the contrary, the discursive 'truth' that speaking *kebabnorsk* leads to unemployment is reinforced in the following line by

the journalist, who points out that unemployment is higher among “immigrants” than among the rest of the population. Further support for this ‘truth’ is provided in a subsequent statement by an ‘expert’, a working life researcher from the Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research.¹⁷

In this newspaper article, *kebabnorsk* is placed in a context that is tantamount to scaremongering rather than a factual presentation of news. The young people want to *warn* children not to talk that way. At the local activity centre, *children are not allowed* to speak *kebabnorsk*. The boys from Holmlia *do not have a high opinion of kebabnorsk* and one of them wishes that it was *banned*. Furthermore, a direct causal link is established between the use of *kebabnorsk* and poor mastery of Norwegian (hard to write essays in Norwegian, extra time required to express oneself correctly, forgetting words and terms learned in Norwegian because they have become so used to speaking *kebabnorsk*).

These projected causal relationships are only possible because the journalist (or the editor) has chosen to omit (or *erase*) many other elements. For example, it is not mentioned that the young people – like everyone else – are capable of varying their speech and usage according to the situation, whom they are talking to and what they are talking about, an ability that they themselves mention at the beginning of the story and that the journalist fails to follow up on. On the contrary, this insight is subverted in the subsequent parts of the interview. The adolescents are turned into straw men by somehow ‘testifying’ that their ‘language’ is limited. In doing so, they lend authenticity to the news story, a kind of production of facts. It is almost like they are being quoted to support ideological conceptions that marginalise the alleged *kebabnorsk*-speakers. The fact that the language skills of children and young people are dynamic is also erased. There may be many other linguistic and social reasons why they find it ‘hard to write Norwegian essays’ other than the fact that they seemingly use *kebabnorsk*. The projected negative consequences of using *kebabnorsk* are summed up in the article headings: *You won’t get a job speaking Kebab-Norwegian*, *Negative signals*, *Worse in Norwegian* and *Ban it*.

In one of the next articles (*Dagsavisen* 16 June 2009), the Norwegian Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud responds to the claim that “minority youth” may experience discrimination if they speak *kebabnorsk*. She advises the “adolescents with a minority background” to contact the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud if they feel they have been excluded from employment on account of speaking *kebabnorsk*. A senior inspector at the Norwegian Labour Inspection

17 See <http://www.dagsavisen.no/samfunn/kebabnorsk-sperrer-for-jobb/> (last visited 1 August 2014).

Authority believes that many employers are prejudiced against *kebabnorsk*. Nevertheless, she does not think that that is a reason for “young people with a minority background” to stop speaking *kebabnorsk* (*They must be allowed to be themselves and express themselves in a way that they feel comes natural to them*). We notice that both the Ombud and the senior inspector ‘defend’ the young people who ostensibly speak *kebabnorsk*. The supposed language users are nonetheless constructed as a single group, namely young people with a “minority background”, and the projected image of them is that they only speak *kebabnorsk* and nothing else. In other words, the linguistic and social diversity of the group is erased. These ‘advocators’ of *kebabnorsk* and its speakers are thus, in fact, actually contributing to the same homogenisation processes as those ‘opposed’ to *kebabnorsk*. In other words, we find competing value ascriptions, although both rely on the same homogenisations recurrently reproduced through intertextualities, whereby the journalists or editors reproduce ‘punch lines’ or alleged causalities that actors later on in the debate lend from and echo. Stereotypical conceptions and alleged causalities are thus reproduced since stereotypes cannot be proven to exist in any other ways than through repetitions (Bhabha 1983).

The ‘Kebab-Norwegian debate’ reached a peak with the television debate on the *I kveld* talk show (17 June 2009). Two of the people interviewed in the preceding newspaper debate were invited (see 3 *supra*), along with the rapper and self-proclaimed speaker of *kebabnorsk*, Danny. In his introduction to the debate, the debate leader (DL) repeats as an echo the same link that has been constructed in the printed articles between *kebabnorsk* and unemployment:¹⁸

Excerpt 5:

DL: but first (.) it is called Kebab (.) Norwegian and is a mixture of Norwegian (.) Kurdish (.) Arabic and Urdu (.) this language makes it difficult for many minority adolescents to get a job (1.0) and this is what this language sounds like (1.0)

The introduction is followed by a clip from a television series in which the presenter ventures out to Holmlia “to hear real Kebab-Norwegian” as he puts it, despite the fact that he actually gives a handful of young people a sheet of paper with words and phrases (some sexualised) that he asks them to explain and read out loud. By constructing this episode as a journey of discovery which the journalist embarks on and where he meets ‘natives’, both this purported linguistic

18 See <http://www.nrk.no/nett-tv/indeks/175113/>.

practice and, not least, the young people are portrayed as ‘exotic’ by projecting an image of the ‘ethnic Other’ through the eyes of some sort of tourist. After this clip was shown in the studio, the DL gave the floor to the NHO director:

Excerpt 6:

- DL: here we heard a little Kebab-Norwegian NN (.) and you represent employers in the private sector and you call it a bad thing or not-Norwegian
- NHO: yes
- DL: what do you mean by that?
- NHO: no ((laughing)) you can interpret yourself if you try to understand what’s being said here ((points to the screen where they broadcast the video from Holmlia)) (1.0) and it’s for sure- we organise many companies in the service industries and they are struggling with this to get language and communication to function ((looks at Danny)) (1.0) and ehm then I think it’s very strange if you as a Norwegian or somebody with a command of the Norwegian language (*lit. sproget*) has to unlearn and start to use a tribal language which you can’t use at work (.) then you ask for unemployment

According to the NHO director, unemployment is a logical (and consciously chosen) consequence of *kebabnorsk* or what he calls a “tribal language”, “a bad habit” or “not-Norwegian” (*then you ask for unemployment*). The use of the phrase “tribal language” draws parallels with the notion of an in-group language, but can also trigger stereotypes related to an outdated colonial discourse that argued that the European bourgeoisie was superior to the ‘regressive’ and ‘primitive’ others. By using this turn of phrase, he appears to place Danny and his peers in a devalued position. Accordingly, expressions carry meaning in relation to what is not said, or is left unsaid, and reading between the lines of the NHO director’s words, the implicit message being along the lines of: “We already have so many communication issues with workers with an immigrant background, so why add yet another complicating factor, namely *kebabnorsk*?” In this way, *kebabnorsk* is categorised as a form of learner language, which implies a lack of competence in the Norwegian language. This kind of connection is, however, not consistent with the sociolinguistic research that has been conducted on the linguistic practices of these young people’s (e.g. Nortier and Svendsen 2015; Opsahl 2009; Quist and Svendsen 2010; Svendsen and Rønneberg 2008). Quite the reverse, in fact. Research demonstrates that this speech style does not indicate a lack of knowledge of Norwegian, but is rather part of young people’s linguistic repertoire – a style for use in certain contexts, also by young people with Norwegian born (grand)parents. Moreover, the NHO director’s use of the conservative, old-fashioned, ‘posh’ word for ‘language’ (the *Riksmål* “sprog” as opposed to the *Bokmål*

“språk”) further supports his construction of an apparently ‘original’ and ‘pure’ Norwegian language versus this ‘incomprehensible’ “tribal language”. This, combined with his laughter, may have contributed to reinforcing the structural asymmetries in social positions held by himself and Danny. The director has, indeed, more formal power than Danny, being a director and being his senior. Hence, structures condition Danny’s individual agency (*cf.* RST *supra*), but not only in relation to the director. Danny is – as the rest of the participants – orchestrated by the DL, as demonstrated in Excerpt 8 below in Danny’s – rather strong – reaction to the director’s statement.

Danny argues that at least users of “what you call Kebab-Norwegian” have social antenna (in opposition to the director?), and that people change their speech style depending on whom they are talking to and that there are other reasons for unemployment than the use of *kebabnorsk*:

Excerpt 7:

- DL: but aren’t you afraid that this language might prevent many young people with a minority background from getting a job?
- Danny: no because I believe that everyone- as I just said (.) and I shouldn’t really need to repeat myself, but I will ((looking at the director)) they- like when they are at a job interview (.) they don’t say- you can ‘sjofe’ my CV and things like that (.) then ((coughs)) what I feel is that there are many factors that are important to include here and there is a lack of knowledge about young people with a minority background which is why these prejudices come in (.) and these- these can prevent young people with a minority background from getting a job (.) or there is a lack of qualifications [among] young people with a minority background
- DL: [but] but tell me↑ what is the difference between Swedish and Kebab-Norwegian? ((to the director))

Danny is, in other words, trying to unravel, or denaturalise, the projected iconic link between *kebabnorsk* and unemployment by pointing out that prejudices, ignorance about “young people with a minority background” or a lack of qualifications may also explain the alleged unemployment (see Svendsen 2014 for a discussion on the statistics on employment among young males with parents born abroad). However, the DL does not follow up on this thread and ‘kills’ the attempt by, instead, letting the director comment on the difference between Swedish and *kebabnorsk*, a topic that only becomes meaningful later on in the debate when *kebabnorsk* is discussed in relation to young Swedes working in Norway. In other words, the preceding newspaper debate influenced Danny’s social environment and positions, and, hence, his individual agency in this setting (*cf.* RST in 3 *supra*). A more thorough analysis might be able to

reveal the ways the structured social relations influenced the social actors' positions throughout the interview. Danny, for example, managed to influence social action and outcomes by subverting the asymmetrical differences in formal power and age between himself and the director by handing him a book at the end of the programme, entitled *Mangfold og likeverd* ('Diversity and equality').

In the 'Kebab-Norwegian debate', a number of binary oppositions or contradictions (*fractal recursivities*, cf. Irvine and Gal 2000) are constructed, such as 'minority' versus 'majority' and *kebabnorsk* versus 'standard Norwegian'. These social and linguistic positionings are only possible through the erasure (cf. Irvine and Gal 2000) of several dimensions and through the construction of certain indexical and iconic connections. The vast linguistic diversity of spoken Norwegian is ignored or erased, including dialects in general and dialects in Oslo, in particular, as is also the variation in the alleged 'standard Norwegian', which is projected as a kind of default way of talking. This notional 'standard' is then juxtaposed with *kebabnorsk* as a deviation from the norm. In Norway, there is no spoken 'standard', but there are two official *written* forms: *Bokmål* and *Nynorsk*. The debate, moreover, constructs *kebabnorsk* as a single, quantifiable entity, as if it was a specific, fixed way of speaking without any variation. This is especially disheartening in light of the fact that in the television footage, the young people in Holmlia only explained, and read out, some sentences from a sheet they were given by the presenter. In the debate, the alleged users of *kebabnorsk* are also constructed as a homogeneous group, a kind of pan-ethnic "minority group" in which all linguistic, cultural and social variation among them has been erased. The fact that young people with Norwegian-born (grand)parents also use this speech style, as evidenced by research, is entirely erased (e.g. Aarsæther 2010; Opsahl 2009; Opsahl and Nistov 2010; Svendsen and Røyneland 2008). The iconisation of the link between *kebabnorsk* and young people with a 'minority background' thus projects an image of these youths almost as if unemployment is necessarily determined by their biological or cultural essence (cf. Irvine and Gal 2000; Milani 2010). Moreover, this iconisation is also gendered, in the sense that no girls are included in the various news events that make up the 'Kebab-Norwegian debate'. In other words, an image is projected in the 'Kebab-Norwegian debate' where the prototypical user of *kebabnorsk* is a boy, or young man, with a 'minority background'. The following causal relationships are projected in this iconisation: If A (*kebabnorsk*), then B (boy or young man with a 'minority background'), then C (unemployment). In sum, this causal relationship is only possible by erasing the actual sociolinguistic variation; and the socially structured contextual conditions for such variation; including the actors' individual agencies (cf. RST *supra*).

In the same way, we find competing value ascriptions in the overt publicly evaluations of *Citétaal* in Flanders. An illustration of this can be found in the political campaign for local elections in 2011. During that campaign, the local labour party and the local nationalist party had been publicly at loggerheads about the use of linguistic features that are considered to be typical for what people by now know as *Citétaal* in their campaign. It all started with the slogan of the labour party, *Genk, de stad van de shtijl*, (‘Genk, the city of style’). *Stijl* (‘style’) is written with <sh> to mark the palatalisation of [s] to [ʃ] in the first syllable position (*stijl* is pronounced as [ʃteil] instead of [steil]), which is a recurrent feature associated with *Citétaal*. With the slogan, which became a Facebook page, they drew upon the construction of a new local identity of the city of Genk that this speech style had triggered in recent years (see Aarsæther *et al.* 2015), while explicitly referring to historical and social values (migration, melting pot of languages and cultures) that underlie this identity. The following promotional text was diffused on several social media channels:

Excerpt 8:

Genk, the city of shtyle
 Where Rocco Granata and Martin Margiela were born
 Where you can drink real cappuccino in every street
 (...)
 Where youngsters speak a particular language
 Where you hear other languages too, as Dutch, German, Italian, Spanish, Turkish, and Portuguese¹⁹

During their campaign²⁰, the labour party also distributed gadgets and stickers with ‘typical’ *Citétaal* expressions. The uses of these expressions have been overtly rejected by the nationalist party. In their campaign brochure, a local nationalist party politician strongly criticised it and emphasised how vital the use of “correct” Dutch is for “proper” integration into society. Here are parts of that article:

19 Authors’ translation of: *Genk, stad van de shtijl – waar Rocco Granata en Martin Margiela zijn opgegroeid waar je een echte cappuccino drinkt in iedere straat (...) waar alle jongeren een taaltje spreken waar je naast dat taaltje ook Nederlands, Duits, Italiaans, Spaans, Turks, Portugees,...hoort (...)*

20 Parts of this campaign are published in Marzo (forthc.).

Excerpt 9:

With this slogan, the labour party is heading to the 2012 local elections. I almost choked on my morning coffee when I read the slogan in the newspaper! Instead of pointing to the lack of language skills of our youth, they choose to glorify the stigmatised *Citèlanguage*.²¹

In the following paragraphs of the campaign folder, the same politician constructs a causal relationship between youth of ‘immigrant background’ in the schools of Genk, their way of speaking Dutch and their future prospects.

Excerpt 10:

One third of the young people who go to school speak a language other than Dutch at home. They often have a limited vocabulary and insufficient knowledge of grammar. And that is an obstacle for their future prospects. The labour party insinuates that speaking *Citètaal* is cool and glorifies the deficiencies that limit the opportunities of Genk’s youth.²²

Similar to the national debate on *kebabnorsk*, an iconic relationship is constructed between the use of *Citètaal* and youngsters who “speak a language at home other than Dutch”, and seemingly – due to their “insufficient knowledge of grammar” – have poor professional prospects (“an obstacle for their future prospects”). Also, a series of recurrent contradictions are created (*fractal recursivities*), such as between youngsters who speak a language other than Dutch at home and the native Flemish youngsters or between *Citètaal* and ‘standard’ Dutch. By constructing these contradictions, these politicians tend to homogenise the whole group of youngsters with a ‘foreign’ background as ‘non-standard’ language users and as youngsters with poor professional prospects. In a nutshell, the use of [ʃ] in the slogan is ostensibly reduced to the issue of ‘non-native’

21 Authors’ translation of Dutch: “*Genk heeft shtijl*”. *Met die slogan trekt de socialistische partij PRO Genk naar de gemeenteraadsverkiezingen in 2012. Ik verslikte me bijna in mijn ochtendkoffie toen ik het in de krant las! In plaats van onze jeugd te wijzen op hun gebrek aan taalbeheersing verheerlijkt PRO liever het stigmatiserende citètaaltje.* This text was published in the monthly brochure of the local nationalist party (see https://genk.n-va.be/files/afdeling/generated/leden_magazine/186_11-%20GENK%204.pdf).

22 Authors’ translation of Dutch: *Eenderde van de jongeren die bij ons naar school gaat heeft een andere thuistaal dan het Nederlands. Zij bezitten te vaak een te beperkte woordenschat en beheersen onvoldoende grammaticaregels. En dat hypothekeert hun toekomst. De socialistische partij insinueert dat het spreken van citètaal ‘shtijl’ is en verheerlijkt zo de tekortkomingen die de kansen van de Genkse jeugd beperken.*

youngsters using 'non-standard' speech and who are 'governed' by social structures that provide them with rather limited access to job opportunities.

The squabble between the two parties was followed by a heated debate between the nationalist and the labour party, with subsequent reactions in the press and social media channels. This is one of the labour party's reactions:

Excerpt 11:

A political party in Genk wrote an entire article on how horrendous the word 'shtijl' sounds according to them. They are clearly missing the point. As if we think that perfect Dutch is not important. On the contrary! It is about recognizing what makes Genk unique. But that element has been completely ignored. That is why this campaign (entirely funded by us) is so important. If I were to take the other party's viewpoint seriously, then people from Antwerp should be banned from using the phrase 'Crazy about A'. Speaking a dialect like that is simply outrageous! (*Ironic tone*).²³

This comment was posted on the blog of a labour party member who firmly defended the use of the variant [j] as a typical characteristic of Genk – as proof of 'authentic Genk speech' (*what makes Genk unique*) by referring to its historical and social values. The comparison with the Antwerp dialect is striking, juxtaposing *Citétaal* to other local varieties and dialects in Flanders. The expression *Zot van A* ('Crazy about A') is a slogan that was peddled by political parties in previous local campaigns in Antwerp and has now become iconic for the city of Antwerp.²⁴

Interestingly, while defending the use of *Citétaal*, the labour party reacts by using the same monolingual perspective. Hence, both the advocates and opponents of *Citétaal* consider the speech style as a 'language' or 'dialect', and hence as a countable homogenous entity and in that way render the immense variation in the youngsters' use of this speech style invisible (Marzo and Ceuleers 2011).

23 Italics are ours, authors' translation of Dutch: *Een partij in Genk besteedt een heel artikel aan hoe schandelijk "shtijl" wel is. Duidelijk niet begrepen waarover het gaat. Alsof wij onberispelijk Nederlands niet belangrijk vinden. Integendeel! Het gaat over het herkennen van wat Genk uniek maakt. Maar dat wordt niet eens gezien. Daarom is die (volledig door onszelf betaalde) campagne net zo belangrijk. Als ik die partij moet geloven mag geen enkele Antwerpenaar "Zot van A" nog in de mond nemen. Schandelijk zo'n dialect spreken!* Comment appeared on the blogsite of a member of the local labour party (see <http://www.bloggen.be/geertprogenk/archief.php?ID=1190503>).

24 Note that this is pronounced differently in Antwerp than in the rest of Flanders and is seen as iconic for Antwerp.

The labour party constructs the same binary oppositions as the nationalist party did. Although they do not refer to the differences between ‘native’ Dutch speakers and speakers with ‘foreign backgrounds’, they do use the same opposition between ‘non-standard’ language (such as *Citétaal* or ‘dialect’) and ‘standard Dutch’, as is done in the following reaction of the labour wing party:

Excerpt 12:

What about the slogans of the nationalist party? Everybody is Genking²⁵ or everybody is thursdaying. Is this correct Dutch?²⁶

The media debates on *kebabnorsk* and *Citétaal* reproduce conceptions of ‘languages’ as ‘packages’, as delimited countable entities, which are, in turn, linked to specific social and/or ethnic groups. This view neglects the immense social and linguistic diversity found among speakers, and undermines individual agencies by failing to report that the adolescents are aware of, and actively differentiate between, contexts in which to use these speech styles (e.g. Opsahl and Nistov 2010; Marzo and Ceuleers 2011; Madsen and Svendsen 2015; Svendsen and Røyneland 2008). The adolescents in the *UPUS/Oslo*-project, for instance, spoke more ‘standard-like’ in the interview with the researchers than in the peer conversations (Opsahl and Nistov 2010). The vast linguistic diversity within spoken Norwegian and Dutch is ignored or erased, including variation within dialects in general and within dialects in Oslo and Flanders in particular, as well as the variation in the alleged ‘standard’ Norwegian and ‘standard’ Dutch, which are projected as a kind of default way of talking. These alleged ‘pure’ ‘standards’ are then juxtaposed with *kebabnorsk* and *Citétaal* as ‘deviations’ from the norm. Those constructions are at work on both sides of the table; in the discursive construction by ‘advocators’ and ‘opponents’ of *kebabnorsk* and *Citétaal*; they both rely on social and linguistic homogenisations. Such erasure (Irvine and Gal 2000) of linguistic and social diversity represents a kind of power exercise in which the positions the human actors occupy are structured by asymmetric access to power (cf. RST *supra*), regardless of whether they ‘defend’ or ‘resist’ *kebabnorsk* or *Citétaal*. We might see such a power exercise as a kind of subjectification in a

²⁵ The constructions “is Genking” and “is thursdaying” are translations of the Dutch verbs “Genken” and “donderdagen”, which are verbisations of the nouns *Genk* and *donderdag* (‘Thursday’).

²⁶ Authors’ translation of Dutch: *Zijn de nieuwe slogans van de stad ‘Iedereen Genkt’ of ‘Iedereen Donderdag?’ dan wel correct Nederlands?*

Foucaultian sense (Foucault 1975): “you are yourself, but you are yourself in one way only: as the positive exotic ‘Other’ (Bhabha 1983, *cf.* Stroud 2004), the exotic speaker of *kebabnorsk* and *Citétaal*”. The media, in other words, paints a rather limited picture of the alleged language users and fails to report that these practices represent optional speech styles in use *independently* from ‘boxes’ such as ‘minority’ and ‘majority’ youth, as borne out in sociolinguistic research (Aarsæther 2010; Marzo and Ceuleers 2011; Opsahl 2009; Opsahl and Nistov 2010; Svendsen and Røyneland 2008).

Kebabnorsk and *Citétaal*, as their equivalents in other countries, for example in Sweden and Denmark (such as “Rinkeby Swedish”, “Blatte Swedish” and “Perker Danish”) seem to be positioned in direct contrast to the national ‘standard languages’ in terms of the ideology of languages (e.g. Milani 2010; Madsen 2013; Madsen and Svendsen 2015; Stroud 2004). Similar to our analyses above, Milani (2010) showed how “Blatte Swedish” has been constructed as a particular way of speaking where linguistic, social and historical variation has been erased. Along the same lines, Stroud (2004) argues that “Rinkeby Swedish” is portrayed as a kind of ‘pan-immigrant variety of Swedish’, which is contrasted with standard Swedish, as if ‘standard’ Swedish constitutes some kind of default way of speaking without any variation. In other words, this kind of repeated construction of binary oppositions, both linguistically and socially, between ‘us’ and ‘them’ actually constructs and, in fact, maintains boundaries between what is considered ‘Norwegian’, ‘Flemish’ or in generic terms as *the* ‘Native Language’ versus the ‘ethnic Others’ and their purportedly ‘deviant’ way of speaking (*cf.* Stroud 2004).

We will end this paper by discussing the omnipresence of structure and agency in the life of the semiotic registers in focus, and anchor our analyses in prevailing language hegemonies and cultural models.

6 The omnipresence of social structure and agency in the life of *kebabnorsk* and *Citétaal* – Towards a translingual orientation

Our analyses have demonstrated that the media, in interplay with Norwegian and Belgian scholars, have contributed significantly to the construction and reproduction of these semiotic registers. In Norway, the media and scholars have played a pivotal role in the diffusion and conventionalisation of the label *kebabnorsk* among its users and non-users alike. According to Kulbrandstad (2004), the term *kebabnorsk* was before 2004 merely one among many other. However, after the

millennium, there was a change in the media discourse. While in the mid-1990s *kebabnorsk* was presented as a set of (exotic?) slang words, by the turn of the century it was presented as a ‘deficient’ way of speaking Norwegian, in line with the analyses above. In 2010, *kebabnorsk* is the most commonly used term both by its users and non-users (Ims 2013). Hence, the social actors in the media debate on *kebabnorsk* in general (be it scholars, journalists, editors, alleged users and non-users), have somehow, through their encounters and negotiations, generated emergent phenomena which influence the social environment (and perceptions) experienced by subsequent social actors, as reflected in the ways the adolescents in Excerpt 3 (supra) perceive *kebabnorsk* as an index of how they speak at Holmlia (cf. RST supra). In Belgium, there are also clear indications of journalists, authors and scholars influencing the choice of particular labels, although the longer and different history of the speech styles in Flemish Limburg makes it challenging for us to confirm the same strong influence of media on the diffusion of the label *Citëtaal*. This does not suggest that the media takes on a role that is different, or less significant, in Belgium from that in Norway, it is merely not possible to document it in our data, and the topic thus needs further investigation. However, as has already been stated in the first pages of this paper, *Citëtaal* is a much more local phenomenon, developing in a rather peripheral area of Flanders and Flemings in general are probably, for that reason, less ‘worried’ about the effects of it.

The significant role of media in interplay with scholars in the diffusion of labels attached to these speech styles is somehow not surprising (cf. e.g. Androutsopoulos 2010, Cornips *et al.* 2015; Jaspers 2008; Milani 2007, 2010), but has never, not to our knowledge, been documented quantitatively before. According to Bourdieu (1991) and Giddens (1984) it is true that the scholars play a substantial role in the (re)construction and reproduction of mental representations of categories and classifications (Bourdieu 1991; Giddens 1984), and sciences which claim “to put forward the criteria that are the most well founded in reality” are merely recording a *state* of the struggle over classifications, often invoked through a scientific authority (Bourdieu 1991:222). The act of categorisation, when it manages to achieve recognition or when it is exercised and diffused by a recognised authority, such as the media, is in itself a matter of power, as in the act of trying to bring into existence the ‘object’ in question by the act of naming or labelling ‘it’ (Bourdieu 1991). The scientist’s individual agencies as ‘experts’ in the media are nonetheless, as demonstrated above and by Milani (2007), structured by the social positions held by other social actors, as well as contextual conditions and constraints in the media domain (cf. RST supra). Such constraints include how journalists and editors, in pursuit of their own interests – e.g. news value, news coherency and sales figures – encounter, negotiate and orchestrate journalistic framing, for instance by creating opposite poles and tensions, such as shown above.

In the two language debates presented here, *kebabnorsk* and *Citëtaal* are each constructed as a 'mixed language', as a single, countable entity, as if it represents a specific, way of speaking without any variation, a fixed 'language', the use of which would inevitably lead to unemployment. The alleged language users are constructed as a specific, homogeneous group, namely "young people with migrant background", rendering the immense social and linguistic diversity among them invisible. Hence, these two debates reflect a limited and oversimplified comprehension of the linguistic practices of young adolescents. Within these media discourses a traditional *monolingual* orientation to language and communication is thus applied in which languages are treated as autonomous systems, as purported 'wholes' which conceal linguistic variation (cf. Androutsopoulos 2010; Jonsson and Milani 2009; Milani 2010; Svendsen 2014). The monolingual orientation to language and communication relies on historical language ideologies of unity and purity (Canagarajah 2013) in which 'language' is conceived of as a self-standing system; as pure and separated from other 'languages'; and not as integrated semiotic resources (Canagarajah 2013: 20). It relies, moreover, on the idea that one 'language' corresponds to one 'identity' (Canagarajah 2013), as it is mirrored in the media projections through the (re)production of iconic links between purported 'languages', their alleged speakers and their personal characteristics and/or (in)activities, as if language percolates from the social group's essence or nature (cf. Gal 1998, Milani 2010).

According to scholars like Blommaert and Rampton (2011), Jaspers (2008) and Canagarajah (2013: 10), (socio)linguists still operate within a monolingual framework where they treat languages as a purported 'whole', forgetting that "wholeness is a social and ideological construction." As Cornips *et al.* (2015: 67) remind us, linguists have language ideologies, too, and these might influence their choice of "professional language names". The monolingual orientation is, by and large, anchored in 18th- and 19th-century movements, such as Romanticism, and the construction of the nation state based on the postulate one-nation-one-language (Anderson 1991), where language was seen as an expression of the essence of the nation and its people (e.g. Canagarajah 2013). Although the work by several scholars on language ideology, such as Schieffelin, Woolard and Kroskrity (1998) and Irvine and Gal (2000) has unravelled and denaturalised iconic links between language, place, people and the values ascribed to them, the monolingual orientation still holds its hegemonic position in language and educational policies and practices across Europe and beyond (e.g. Canagarajah 2013; Carter and Sealey, this volume; Creese and Blackledge 2010; Cummins 2008; García and Li Wei 2014; Geeraerts 2003; Kulbrandstad, Bakke, Danbolt, Engen 2008; Polzenhagen and Dirven 2008). The monolingual view is embedded in what Polzenhagen and Dirven (2008) call the 'romantic' and the 'rationalist' cultural

models, which can be distinguished by their underlying linguistic assumptions of language as a medium of communication (rationalist model) and language as a medium of expressing identity (romantic model) (cf. Geeraerts 2003). Although the two models are essentially different, they both have a clear nationalist pronunciation and, hence, underlying suppositions about inherent homogeneity and cohesion. Accordingly, they “contain an inherent oppressive element in their attitude towards social and linguistic groups that do not conform to the presupposed cohesion of society” (Polzenhagen and Dirven 2008:245), which for that reason, do not counter the consequences of the increased contemporary language contact zones (Pratt 1991).

Canagarajah (2013) suggests an alternative orientation which is closer to the ontology of language and communication, namely a *translingual* orientation. A translingual orientation assumes that communication transcends individual languages and that communication is more than words (Canagarajah 2013: 6). Canagarajah (2013: 6) propose *translingual practice* as an umbrella term for the many other terms used by several scholars to represent their insight into language and communication in the global contact zones, such as *metrolingualism* (Otsuji and Pennycook 2009), *hetero-graphy* (Blommaert 2008), *truncated repertoires* (Blommaert 2010), *plurilingualism*²⁷ (Council of Europe 2007), *linguaging*²⁸ and *poly-linguaging* (Jørgensen 2008), referring to various language practices wherein language use transcends different ‘languages’ and semiotic systems. We are intrigued by Canagarajah’s (2013) work, because he has developed a coherent framework for translingual practice, in both a theoretical and empirical (synchronic and diachronic) sense, where he elaborates upon the fact that communication always involves negotiation of mobile resources, and that languages have always been in mutual contact. Hence, the speech styles addressed in this paper are not *in se* a recent phenomenon; even ‘standard’ languages are translingual practices. The written Norwegian standard *Bokmål* (there is no spoken ‘standard’), for

27 The Council of Europe (2007: 10) has used the term *plurilingualism* to refer to “the potential and/or actual ability to use several languages to varying levels of proficiency and for different purposes. More precisely, following the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (p. 168), plurilingual and pluricultural competence is the ability “to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural action, where a person, viewed as a social agent, has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures”. It is not seen as a juxtaposition of distinct competences, but as a single competence, even though it is complex.”

28 Svendsen (2004: 46) defines *språking* (‘linguaging’) in relation to her study of multilingual practices among trilingual children in Oslo with parents born in the Philippines, as the phenomenon where we “as *Homo Sapiens* use the most efficient verbal (but also non-verbal) tools, regardless of “language costume”, to achieve our communicative goals.” (Authors’ translation)

instance, influenced by, *inter alia*, Low German and contains many words from other languages such as English, Arabic and French, in addition to Danish, the former colonial language. A theory on language and communication must allow for the fact that language resources *in se* are mobile, fluid and hybrid. This does not mean, however, that we need to dispose of the label 'language' or language names such as French, Italian and English, for neither analytical purposes in linguistics, nor as empirical phenomena among lay actors. Instead, we must raise awareness of the historical, ideological and socio-political constructedness of 'languages'.

This paper has illustrated the fact that 'languages' are very much alive out there, and that mobile linguistic resources acquire labels and identities, which are reified through language ideologies, recursively (re)produced in media discourse. By applying RST to the TLF or to the semiotics of the speech styles in linguistically and culturally heterogeneous urban spaces, as presented in media discourse, we have demonstrated that social structure including asymmetric power relations and language hegemonies are omnipresent in the valorisation of these semiotic registers. The young people in these urban contact zones (Pratt 1991) raise their voices, showing their agencies, to contradict prevailing language hegemonies, as reflected in Danny's reactions in Excerpt 8 and in the rap quote on *Citétaal* in Excerpt 3, but in the media presentations analysed this paper, their individual agencies are rather limited and conditioned by social actors and contextual constraints in the media domain. The Flemish debate is a debate between politicians, and does not as such include the voice of the young people (but see Marzo, forthc.). Other types of data, such as interactional data from other social domains or data on the young people's metalinguistic reflections, could possibly have revealed the young people's individual agencies to a larger extent than our analyses have demonstrated. Danny has for instance, recursively raised his voice against the label *kebabnorsk*, a notion he conceives of as derogatory. As a particular example of Giddens' (1984) "double hermeneutics" (see 4 *supra*), wherein the linguist clearly intervene in the social field of study, Danny sent the first author a mail (preceding the 2009 'Kebab-Norwegian debate') with a rap attached where he enthusiastically narrated that he had used the label 'multiethnolect' after having been introduced to the term by the author.²⁹ In the rap Danny states that *it's worse*

29 I know there are people who dislike the new words. We have only done what Wergeland did. Making history with new words in the dictionary, and clearly this appeals to some Norwegians. And there are always more coming here, because the language is a bit meagre, adding more flow. It's not a bad thing. The fact of the matter is, man, that it's worse to speak good Norwegian badly than bad Norwegian well, man. And no matter where you go in Norway, among the kids Norwegian 2 rules. And anyway, everyone has their dialect, but where I come from we speak

to speak good Norwegian badly than bad Norwegian well, and in the radio-interview given in the repercussion of the ‘Kebab-Norwegian debate’ (see 4 *supra*), he elaborated upon this statement: “it is the content of what I am saying that matters, so why bother about how I am expressing it”. He claims, moreover, acceptance for the ways he speaks, and that he is “updating the Norwegian language” since “we are now in a new era with many minority youth”, and “that foreign words are natural” [...] “it is part of the language evolution”. In Norway, the local dialects (geolects) have a relatively high prestige and they are used in all public domains. Danny expressed his contentment after he had been introduced for the term ‘multiethnolect’ and in the rap the ‘multiethnolect’ is projected as equivalent to what everybody else in Norway ‘have’, i.e. a dialect. This analogy would not have had the same positive value in Belgium, where dialects in general have far less prestige than in Norway, but in a Norwegian context this juxtaposition is highly symbolic. Hence, it would be potentially rewarding to include other types of data in the RST frame to further investigate the intrinsic character of structure, agency and culture in relation to these semiotic registers. A continued effort to apply RST to the semiotics of these speech styles would, moreover, benefit from an elaboration of the ‘culture’ dimension of this irreducible tripartite (see *supra*; Archer 2013; Carter and Sealy, this volume; Porpora 2013), not at least to define ‘culture’ in relation to a social and linguistic reality as a consequence of late modern globalisation being much more complex than the one postulated when Silverstein (1985) developed his TLF within a monolingual frame.

By exploring parts of the enregisterment processes of these ‘new’ speech styles, we have opted to shed light on the enregisterment processes of speech styles *in se*, since these are semiotic registers *in spe*; reminding us of that ideology is present in every language label or characterisation. Nonetheless, there is still a need to further explore the enregisterment processes of these speech styles, their sustainability or durability over time (Rampton 2015); to compare them with equivalent linguistic practices diachronically; to continue to investigate the local (national) variation in these processes; and to explore the role of other stakeholders in the enregisterment processes, such as the effect of incorporating these speech styles into the school curriculum, as was the case in Norway (in text books). Moreover, there is a need to raise societal awareness of the translingual character of all ‘languages’ and, thus, (spoken and written) communication, especially in educational settings. Language education (including bilingual) has

multiethnolect. (Danny *Norsk2 – et lite stykke Norge* ‘Norwegian2 – a little piece of Norway’, see www.youtube.com, last visited 18 November 2013, authors’ translation). The title of this rap alludes to the former school subject Norwegian as a second language, frequently called *Norsk2* (‘Norwegian second’).

traditionally argued that languages should be kept separate in the learning and teaching of them (Creese and Blackledge 2010:104; see Cummins 2008). Code-switching studies (e.g. Lanza 2004) and studies of language competences in two or three languages (e.g. Svendsen 2004; 2006) show, however, that languages are not acquired, nor used, in language vacuums. Approaching language teaching with a translanguing orientation – as emphasised by the Council of Europe (2007) – which includes the pupils' heritage languages and their translanguing practices in general in the classroom (Creese and Blackledge 2010; Cummins 2008; García and Li Wei 2014), might enhance their metalinguistic awareness, a prerequisite for learning to read and write. Last but not least, it might increase their self-esteem and empower them by recognising their language competences as a pool of resources to draw on and not as a deficit on their way to acquire a purported and vivid, albeit non-ontological, 'standard language'.

Acknowledgement: We would like to thank the three anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments to the first draft of this paper.

Funding: This work is partly supported by the Research Council of Norway through its Centers of Excellence funding scheme, project number 223265.

References

- Aarsæther, Finn. 2010. The use of multiethnic youth language in Oslo. Pia Quist and Bente A. Svendsen (eds.), *Multilingual Urban Scandinavia. New Linguistic Practices*, 111–26. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Aarsæther, Finn, Stefania Marzo, Ingvild Nistov & Evy Ceuleers. 2015. Indexing locality: contemporary urban vernaculars in Belgium and Norway. In Jacomine M. Nortier and Bente A. Svendsen (eds.), *Language, Youth and Identity in the 21st Century. Linguistic Practices across Urban Spaces*, 249–270. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Aasheim, Stine. 1995. "Kebabnorsk". *Framandspråkleg påverknad på ungdomspråket i Oslo*. ['Kebab Norwegian': foreign language influence on youth language in Oslo]. MA thesis, University of Oslo.
- Agha, Asif. 2007. *Language and Social Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Anderson, Benedict. 1991. *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Androutsopoulos, Jannis. 2010. Ideologizing ethnolectal German. In Sally Johnson & Tommaso M. Milani (eds.), *Language Ideologies and Media Discourse: Texts, Practices and Politics*, 182–202. New York: Continuum.
- Archer, Margaret S. 1995. *Realist social theory. The morphogenetic approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Archer, Margaret S. (ed.). 2013. *Social morphogenesis*. Dordrecht: Springer.

- Bell, Alan. 1991. *The language of news media*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Bell, Alan & Peter Garrett. 1998. *Approaches to Media Discourse*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Bhabha, Homi K. 1983. The other question. The stereotype and colonial discourse. *Screen*, 24(6). 18–36.
- Blommaert, Jan. 1999. The debate is open. In Jan Blommaert (ed.), *Language Ideological Debates*, 1–38. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Blommaert, Jan. 2008. *Grassroots literacy: Writing, identity and voice in Central Africa*. Oxford: Routledge.
- Blommaert, Jan. 2010. *The Sociolinguistics of Globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Blommaert, Jan & Ben Rampton. 2011. Language and superdiversity. *Diversities* 13. 1–21.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1991. *Language and the Symbolic Power*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Canagarajah, Suresh. 2013. *Translingual Practice. Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations*. London: Routledge.
- Carter, Bob & Alison Sealey. 2000. Language, structure and agency: What can realist social theory offer to sociolinguistics? *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 4(1). 3–20.
- Carter, Bob & Alison Sealey. this volume. Realist social theory and multilingualism in Europe.
- Clyne, Michael. 2000. Lingua Franca and Ethnolects in Europe and Beyond. *Sociolinguistica* 14. 83–89.
- Cornips, Leonie, Jürgen Jaspers & Vincent de Rooij. 2015. The politics of labelling youth vernaculars in the Netherlands and Belgium. In Jacomine M. Nortier & Bente A. Svendsen (eds.), *Language, Youth and Identity in the 21st Century. Linguistic Practices across Urban Spaces*, 45–70. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Council of Europe. 2007. *From linguistic diversity to plurilingual education: Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe*, last accessed 1. December 2014 (see http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Guide_niveau3_en.asp, last accessed 1.12.2014).
- Coupland, Nikolas. 1998. What is sociolinguistic theory? *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 2. 110–117.
- Creese, Angela & Adrian Blackledge. 2010. Translanguaging in the bilingual classroom: a pedagogy for learning and teaching. *Modern Language Journal* 94. 103–5.
- Cummins, Jim. 2008. Teaching for transfer: Challenging the two solitudes assumption in bilingual education. In Jim Cummins & Nancy H. Hornberger (eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education: Vol. 5. Bilingual education*. Boston: Springer. 65–75.
- Eckert, Penelope. 2004. *The meaning of style*. www.stanford.edu/~eckert/PDF/salsa2003.pdf (last accessed 1.10.2014).
- Foucault, Michel. 1975. *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison*. Paris : Éditions Gallimard. Bibliothèque des histoires. (Norwegian edition: *Overvåkning og straff. Det moderne fengsels historie*, 1999. Oslo: Gyldendal.)
- Gal, Susan. 1998. Multiplicity and contention among language ideologies : a commentary. In Bambi B., Schieffelin, Kathryn A. Woolard & Paul V. Kroskrity (eds.), *Language ideologies. Practice and Theory*, 317–331. New York: Oxford University Press.
- García, Ophelia & Li Wei. 2014. *Translanguaging. Language, Bilingualism and Education*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Geeraerts, Dirk. 2003. Cultural models of linguistic standardization. In René Dirven, Roslyn Frank & Martin Pütz (eds.), *Cognitive Models in Language and Thought. Ideology, Metaphors and Meanings*, 25–68. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1984. *The Constitution of Society*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hogg, Michael A. & Graham M. Vaughan. 2011. *Social Psychology*. Edinburgh: Prentice Hall.

- Horizon 2020. *The EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Europe in a changing world – Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies*, see <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/europe-changing-world-inclusive-innovative-and-reflective-societies>, last accessed 1.12.2014).
- Hårstad, Stian & Toril Opsahl. 2013. *Språk i byen. Utviklingslinjer i urbane språkmiljøer i Norge* [Language in the city. Language change in Norwegian urban spaces]. Bergen: Fagbokforlaget.
- Ims, Ingunn I. 2013. Språklig registerdanning og verditilskrivning: Betegnelser på nye måter å snakke norsk på i Oslo [Enregisterment processes, language ideology and valorization in multilingual Oslo, Norway]. *NOA. Norsk som andrespråk*, 2. 37–71.
- Irvine, Judith T. 1989. When talk isn't cheap: language and political economy. *American Ethnologist* 16. 248–267.
- Irvine, Judith & Susan Gal. 2000. Language ideology and linguistic differentiation. In Paul V. Kroskrity (ed.), *Regimes of language*, 35–84. Santa Fe, NM: SAR Press.
- Jaspers, Jürgen. 2008. Problematizing ethnolects. Naming linguistic practices in an Antwerp secondary school. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 12(1–2). 85–103.
- Jaspers, Jürgen. 2011. Talking like a zerolingual. Ambiguous linguistic caricatures at an urban secondary school. *Journal of Pragmatics* 43. 1264–87.
- Johnson, Sally & Tommaso M. Milani (eds.). 2010. *Language Ideologies and Media Discourses. Texts, Practices, Politics*. London: Continuum.
- Jonsson, Richard & Tommaso M. Milani. 2009. Här är alla lika! Jämlikhetsideologi och konstruktionen av den 'Andre' i media och skola [Everybody is equal in here! The ideology of equality and the construction of the 'Other' in media and school]. *Utbildning and Demokrati* 18(2). 67–86.
- Jørgensen, Jens N. 2008. Polylingual languaging around and among adolescents. *International Journal of Multilingualism* 5. 161–76.
- Källström, Roger & Inger Lindberg (eds.). 2011. *Young Urban Swedish. Variation and Change in Multilingual Settings*. University of Gothenburg.
- Kern, Friederike & Margret Selting (eds.). 2011. *Ethnic Styles of Speaking in European Metropolitan Areas*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Kotsinas, Ulla-Brit. 1988. Immigrant children's Swedish – a new variety? *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 9. 129–141.
- Kulbrandstad, Lars-Anders. 2004. 'Kebabnorsk', 'perkerdansk' og 'gebrokken' – ord om innvandreres måte å snakke majoritetsspråket på ['Kebab Norwegian', 'Perker Danish' and 'broken' – terms for immigrants' ways of speaking the majority language]. In Helge Sandøy, Endre Brunstad, Jon Erik Hagen & Kari Tenfjord (eds.), *Den fleirspråklege utfordringa*, 108–30. Oslo: Novus.
- Kulbrandstad, Lars-Anders, Elin Bakke, Anne Marit V. Danbolt & Thor Ola Engen. 2008. *Skolekulturer for språklæring 5* [School cultures for language learning]. Hamar: Høgskolen i Hedmark, avdeling for lærerutdanning og naturvitenskap.
- Lanza, Elizabeth. 2004. *Language Mixing in Infant Bilingualism: A Sociolinguistic Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Luhmann, Niklas. 2000. *The Reality of the Mass Media*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Madsen, Lian M. 2013. 'High' and 'low' in urban Danish speech styles. *Language in Society* 42(2). 115–38.
- Madsen, Lian M. & Bente A. Svendsen. 2015. Stylized voices of ethnicity and social division. In Jacomine M. Nortier & Bente A. Svendsen (eds.), *Language, Youth and Identity in the*

- 21st Century. *Linguistic Practices across Urban Spaces*. (eds.), 207–230. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Marzo, Stefania. forthc. Exploring the social meaning of contemporary urban vernaculars: perceptions and attitudes about *Citélanguage* in Flanders. *International Journal of Bilingualism*.
- Marzo, Stefania & Evy Ceuleers. 2011. The use of *Citétaal* among adolescents in Limburg. The role of space appropriation in language variation and change. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 32. 451–460.
- Milani, Tommaso M. 2007. Voices of authority in conflict: The making of the expert in a language debate in Sweden. *Linguistics and Education* 18. 99–120.
- Milani, Tommaso M. 2010. What's in a name? Language ideology and social differentiation in a Swedish print-mediated debate. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 14. 116–142.
- Muysken, Peter & Julian Rott. 2013. Ethnolect studies in the German and the Netherlandic area. An overview. In Peter Siemund, Ingrid Gogolin, Monica Edith Schulz & Julia Davydova (eds.), *Multilingualism and Language Diversity in Urban Areas*, 177–206. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Møller, Janus S. 2009. Stereotyping categorisations of speech styles among linguistic minority Danes in Køge. In Marie Maegaard, Frans Gregersen, Pia Quist & Jens N. Jørgensen (eds.), *Language Attitudes, Standardization and Language Change*, 231–254. Oslo: Novus.
- Nantke, Pecht. 2013. Siehs' du, du wars (...) besser wie du hast gedacht: Du has' Französisch gesprochen! *Taal en Tongval* 65(2). 149–169.
- Nortier, Jacomine & Bente A. Svendsen (eds.). 2015. *Language, Youth and Identity in the 21st Century. Linguistic Practices across Urban Spaces*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Opsahl, Toril. 2009. Wolla I swear this is typical for the conversational style of adolescents in multiethnic areas in Oslo. *Nordic Journal of Linguistics* 32 (2). 221–244.
- Opsahl, Toril & Ingvild Nistov. 2010. On some structural aspects of Norwegian spoken among adolescents in multilingual settings in Oslo. In Pia Quist & Bente A. Svendsen (eds.), *Multilingual Urban Scandinavia. New Linguistic Practices*, 49–63. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Otsuji, Emi and Alastair Pennycook. 2009. Metrolinguism: fixity, fluidity and language in flux. *International Journal of Multilingualism* 7(3). 240–254.
- Østby, Andreas. 2005. *Kebabnorsk ordbok* [Kebab-Norwegian dictionary]. Oslo: Gyldendal.
- Pike, Kenneth. 1954. *The Intonation of American English*. Ann Arbor, IL: University of Michigan Press.
- Polzenhagen, Frank & René Dirven. 2008. Rationalist and romantic models in globalisation. In Gitte Kristiansen & René Dirven (eds.), *Cognitive Sociolinguistics: Language Variation, Cultural Models, Social Systems*, 237–300. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Porpora, Douglas V. 2013. Morphogenesis and social change. In Margaret S. Archer (ed.), *Social morphogenesis*, 25–37. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Pratt, Marie L. 1991. Arts of the contact zones. *Profession* 91. 33–40.
- Quist, Pia. 2000. Ny københavnsk 'multietnolekt'. Om sprogbrug blandt unge i sprogligt og kulturelt heterogene miljøer. [New Copenhagen 'multiethnolekt'. On language use among youth in linguistically and culturally heterogeneous settings]. *Danske talesprog* 1. 143–209.
- Quist, Pia. 2008. Sociolinguistic approaches to multiethnolect: language variety and stylistic practice. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 12(1–2). 43–61.
- Quist, Pia & Bente A. Svendsen (eds.). 2010. *Multilingual Urban Scandinavia. New Linguistic Practices*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Rampton, Ben. 1995. *Crossing: Language and Ethnicity among Adolescents*. London: Longman.

- Rampton, Ben. 2009. Interaction ritual and not just artful performance in crossing and stylization. *Language in Society* 38(2). 149–176.
- Rampton, Ben. 2011. From 'Multiethnic adolescent heteroglossia' to 'Contemporary urban vernaculars'. *Language and Communication* 31(4). 276–294.
- Rampton, Ben. 2015. Contemporary urban vernaculars. In Jacomine M. Nortier & Bente A. Svendsen (eds.), *Language, Youth and Identity in the 21st Century. Linguistic Practices across Urban Spaces*, 24–44. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schieffelin, Bambi B., Kathryn A. Woolard & Paul V. Kroskrity (eds.). 1998. *Language ideologies. Practice and Theory*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Silverstein, Michael. 1985. Language and the culture of gender: at the intersection of structure, usage and ideology. In Elizabeth Mertz & Richard J. Parmentier (eds.), *Semiotic Mediation: Sociocultural and Psychological Perspectives*, 219–259. Orlando Academic Press.
- Silverstein, Michael. 2003. Indexical order and the dialectics of sociolinguistic life. *Language & Communication* 23. 193–229.
- Stroud, Christopher. 2004. Rinkeby Swedish and semilingualism in language ideology debates: A Bourdieuan perspective. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 8(2). 196–214.
- Svendsen, Bente A. 2004. *Så lenge vi forstår hverandre. Språkvalg, flerspråklige ferdigheter og språklig sosialisering hos norsk-filippinske barn i Oslo* [As long as we understand each other. Language choice, multilingual competence and language socialization among Norwegian-Filipino children in Oslo]. Dr. Art. Dissertation, Acta Humaniora, 216: Oslo.
- Svendsen, Bente A. 2006. Flerspråklig identitet [Multilinguality]. *Nordand. Nordisk tidsskrift for andrespråksforskning* 2(1). 33–56.
- Svendsen, Bente A. 2014. Kebabnorskdebatten. En språkideologisk kamp om sosial identitet og verdier [Social identities and values in the debate on 'Kebab-Norwegian' – an ideological battlefield]. *Norsk tidsskrift for ungdomsforskning* 1. 33–62.
- Svendsen, Bente A. 2015. Language, youth and identity in the 21st century: content and continuations. In Jacomine M. Nortier and Bente A. Svendsen (eds.), *Language, Youth and Identity in the 21st Century. Linguistic Practices across Urban Spaces*, 3–23. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Svendsen, Bente A. and Unn Røyneland. 2008. Multiethnolectal facts and functions in Oslo, Norway. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 12(1–2). 62–83.
- Svendsen, Bente A. & Pia Quist. 2010. Introduction. In Pia Quist & Bente A. Svendsen (eds.), *Multilingual Urban Scandinavia. New Linguistic Practices*, xiii–xxiii. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Thompson, John B. 1995. *The Media and Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Williams, Glyn. 1992. *Sociolinguistics. A Sociological Critique*. London: Routledge.