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**Competing ideologies of linguistic authority amongst *new speakers* in  
contemporary Galicia**

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**Abstract**

While in many indigenous minority language situations traditional native speaker communities are in decline, *new speakers* are emerging in the context of revitalization policies. Such policies can however have unforeseen consequences and lead to tensions between newcomers and existing speakers over questions of ownership, legitimacy and authenticity. This paper examines these tensions in the case of Galician in north-western Spain, where “new speakers” have emerged in the context of revitalization policies since the 1980s. The subsequent spread of the language outside traditional Galician strongholds and into what were predominantly Spanish spaces, complicates the traditional ideology about sociolinguistic authenticity and ownership and raises

questions about who are the legitimate speakers of Galician, who has authority and the potential tensions that such questions generate. To illustrate the tensions and paradoxes which *new* and *native* speakers face in this post-revitalization context, we draw on three discussion groups consisting of sixteen young Galicians.

Keywords: new speakers, authority, authenticity, minority languages, Galician

## **Introduction**

In many parts of the world, traditional communities of minority language speakers are being eroded as a consequence of increased urbanization and economic modernization. Language endangerment is frequently indexed by a declining number of native speakers and a break in intergenerational transmission of the language in the home and community. At the same time, however, *new speakers* of minority languages are emerging as a result of community efforts and favourable language policies, prompting some individuals whose families stopped speaking the language in previous generations, to (re)learn and use it (Costa 2010; Grinevald & Bert 2011). This has led to the emergence of a profile of speakers which falls outside that of the so-called traditional heartland areas, frequently in terms of their urban middle-class status and use of a standardized variety of the language (O'Rourke & Ramallo 2011; Pusch & Kabatek 2011). In minority language contexts the emergence of new speakers can generate tensions over ownership and

legitimate rights to the language. These tensions can sometimes lead to unintended consequences on the part of revitalization agendas, and alienate speakers in different ways. This paper brings these issues into focus in the case of Galician, in the north western part of Spain where language policy changes since the 1980s have extended its use into new social spaces and generated new profiles of speakers.

A variety of terms can be found in the literature to describe the *new speaker* phenomenon including *non-native speaker*, *neo-speaker*, *second language speaker*, *L2*, *second language learner* and *adult learner*. Robert 2009 makes explicit uses of the label “New Speaker” to refer to second-language speakers of Welsh produced through Welsh-medium education. Woolard (2011:62) talks about “New Catalans” in reference to second language speakers of Catalan who actively use the language albeit through a “bilingual interactional personae”. “Neo-Breton” is used to describe a similar type of profile (Hornsby 2008; Timm 2010). The idea of *new speakerness* in minority language contexts can include a continuum of speaker types, ranging from second language learners with limited competence in and use of the language (which Grinevald & Bert 2011 classify specifically as “learners of endangered languages”), right up to expert L2 users, whose level of proficiency in the language is such that they can “pass” (Piller 2002) as so-called native speakers.

In the particular case of Galician, the term *neofalante* (new speaker) is used both as a folk and academic concept to describe speakers who are brought up

speaking Spanish, but who at some stage in their lives (usually adolescence or early adulthood), “become” Galician speakers. *Neofalantes* tend to share a number of socio-demographic, sociolinguistic and socio-cultural characteristics which correspond to a younger, middle-class and urban-based profile. This profile of speaker is very much the product of language revitalization policies in place since the 1980s following Spain’s transition to democracy and the inclusion of Galician in domains of use from which it was previously absent including education and public administration. New speaker profiles are in clear contrast to the social characteristics of traditional native speakers of Galician who make up an aging rural population with little or no formal training in the language. New speakers tend to be strongly committed to the revitalization of the language and decisions to become a Galician speaker can sometimes be politically motivated (Ramallo 2010). In some cases this can lead *neofalantes* to “abandon” Spanish altogether, adopting somewhat similar linguistic practices to the “Catalan converts” described by Woolard (1989, 2011) in the context of one of Spain’s other minority languages. This process, of what can be termed *majority language abandonment*, is made possible by the closeness in linguistic terms between Galician and its contact language, Spanish, where a high level of mutual intelligibility exists between the two. At the same time, however, linguistic proximity heightens tensions around the need to maintain difference, driven by fears about crossing too far over the language divide and the blurring of linguistic boundaries. These fears can be set against a background in which such blurring has in the past justified the socio-politically motivated process of “dialectalization” (Kloss 1967) which at various moments in its sociolinguistic history relegated Galician to the status of

a sub-standard variety of Spanish (Monteagudo 1999). The tensions surrounding authenticity and identity which this can create, resonate with similar scenarios in other parts of the world and represent what Jaffe (1993:101) refers to as:

[...] a fundamental epistemological quandary: how to assert the value of mixed or plural identities in “minority” societies in which the attempt to escape relations of dominance places a high premium on declarations of absolute difference and clear-cut boundaries.

This of course also fits with a larger epistemological quandary about discourses of language endangerment and the ways in which languages more generally are constructed as autonomous wholes and as countable and separable entities (Dûchene & Heller 2007). The questioning of these broader assumptions in turn prompts the disinvention and reconstruction of the way we think about language and languages (Makoni & Pennycook 2007). It thus involves a critique of many of the concepts in our field and the generation of a new metadiscourse which prioritizes communities of practices over language (see Blommaert 2010; Martin-Jones, Blackledge & Creese 2012; Pennycook 1994, 2007). This prompts us to turn our attention to the in-between spaces which such practices generate but which have often been ignored in linguistic and sociolinguistic discussion. This explains why new speaker profiles have not received the same attention as native speakers who are often seen to represent users of *real* and *authentic* language and as such making them in some way more worthy of investigation. While in more recent years its centrality has

been challenged (see for example, Bonfiglio 2010; Canagarajah, 1999; Cook, 1999; Davies 2003; Doerr 2009; Firth & Wagner 1997; Jenkins 2006; Phillipson 1992; Rampton 1990), the ideal of the native speaker has remained remarkably consistent within the discipline (Coulmas 1981), including the related fields of sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology. In these latter sub-fields, sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists working on minority language groups have often tended to focus on those communicative practices believed to be the most *traditional* and *authentic*, thus designating them (albeit implicitly perhaps) as legitimate representatives of a given community (Bucholtz 2003:400).

As Fishman (1972:69) points out, the image of the noble and uncontaminated peasant, who had kept the language pure and intact, tended to provide an important source of nationalist language planning in European ethnocultural movements. This imagery is in turn tied up with anthropologically romantic notions around the ideal of the native speaker whose origins can be traced to a bounded, homogenous speech community, within a particular territory and historic past. As Makoni & Pennycook 2007 emphasise, the very concept of language itself, and “metadiscursive regimes” used to describe languages are firmly located in these Western linguistic and cultural suppositions in which the notions of linguistic territorialisation are embedded, linking language to geographical space. These deeply engrained ideologies frequently became the core of revitalization agendas in minority language contexts, linking the native speaker to authenticity and non-native forms with artificiality and hybridity. Thus as Woolard (1998:62) points out, the very movements which set out to

save minority languages are ironically structured around the same received notions of languages that led to their oppression and/or suppression in the first place.

As an ideological construct, *authenticity*, along with its opposite value, *anonymity*, often arise in discussions of the value of language in modern western societies (Gal & Woolard 1995). According to Woolard (2008:304):

The ideology of *Authenticity* locates the value of a language in its relationship to a particular community. To be considered authentic, a speech variety must be very much “from somewhere” in speakers’ consciousness, and thus its meaning is profoundly local. If such social and territorial roots are not discernable, a linguistic variety lacks value in this system

Bucholtz 2003 and Bucholtz & Hall 2004 distinguish between an ideology of *authenticity* and what they term *authentication*, emphasising the idea that authenticity is not a given in social life but is instead achieved and instantiated through the assertion of one’s own or another’s identity as genuine or credible (Bucholtz 2003:408). Authenticity and the link to identity can in turn constrain the acquisition and use of a minority language as a second language by a larger population (Woolard 2008:315), who may see themselves at risk of not sounding sufficiently *natural* or *real* compared with native speakers. Traditional native speakers may thus establish a *social closure* which functions as an identity control mechanism, demarcating their privileged position as



authentic speakers. This mechanism can, according to McEwan-Fujita (2010:29), often lead to frustration on the part of newcomers to the language, sometimes deterring them from using it altogether (O'Rourke 2011a). Insofar as languages are connected to symbolic power (Bourdieu 1982), as Pujolar (2007:121) suggests, the lack of "nativeness" associated with new types of speakers can also be used to deny them access to certain linguistic markets, which in turn can have important consequences for their social and economic prospects.

If the value of authenticity is a marker of being "from somewhere", then the value of anonymity, represents a "view from nowhere" (Woolard 2008:308). In other words, a language has the value of being socially neutral, universally available and natural, making it essentially anonymous. In language revitalization contexts, the inclusion of a minority language in domains and spaces from which it was previously absent can be seen as an attempt to give it the same value of anonymity as a public language. The development of a standardised form also builds on such an attempt. Galician, like Spain's other minority languages including Basque and Catalan, has benefitted from major policy changes coinciding with Spain's transition to democracy in the 1970s. The development of *galego normativo* (Standard Galician) was driven by its newly ascribed role since 1981 as a national and co-official language (with Spanish) in Galicia (Beswick 2007). Standard Galician is described as "polydialectal" in that it not seen to derive from any one single variety (Monteagudo 2004:415). Arguably, therefore, its *anonymity* stems from the absence of traces of any recognizable local variety.

The standard variety also represents a powerful filter for social mobility, presenting a challenge to the authority of traditional native speakers, whose language variety is doubly stigmatized: firstly, by its historically subordinate position in socioeconomic and political terms alongside Spanish and secondly, by its contemporary status alongside Standard Galician. New speakers of Galician have access to the forms of language which have come to be valued in a post-revitalization linguistic market, linked to formal domains of use such as education, the public administration and media. As such, they cannot be described as *minority* speakers per se, where social class becomes more important in determining linguistic authority than nativeness (Frekko 2009).

Failure however to penetrate all spheres of public activity can prevent a minority language such as Galician from gaining what Woolard (2008) describes as the anonymous invisibility of “just talk” which characterises a public language. Instead, it can in fact become highly visible and represent marked linguistic behaviour, used to index a particular stance, ideological or otherwise (Jaffe 2009). In urban contexts, despite more favourable support for Galician at an institutional level, opportunities to use the language continue to be limited. New speakers’ use of Galician in urban spaces is often seen as breaking long established social norms. While not explicitly negative, certain social representations exist which link the use of the language, and therefore new speakers with the political ideology of Galician nationalism (Iglesias & Ramallo 2003; O’Rourke 2011). Although as Milroy (2001:535) highlights, “an extremely important effect of standardization has been the development of

consciousness among speakers of a ‘correct’, or canonical, form of language”, the quest for authenticity can however downplay the value of linguistic correctness. Despite thirty years of institutional standardization, half of all Galicians see the standard variety as artificial, including a younger generation with highest levels of exposure through the education system (Observatorio da Cultura Galega 2011).

The spread of Galician outside of traditional Galician-speaking strongholds and into spaces previously dominated by Spanish can complicate the traditional ideology about sociolinguistic authenticity and ownership. It also raises questions about who become the legitimate speakers, who is given linguistic authority and the potential tensions this can lead to between different speakers of Galician, new and old, in attempts to control the production and distribution of a new set of linguistic resources. Questions of legitimacy, access and ownership therefore become pertinent in struggles to control and derive profit from a new set of linguistic resources on emerging language markets (Heller 2011). In the remainder of the article, we examine some of these tensions, focusing specifically on how they are perceived and constructed by a younger generation of Galician speakers. The focus of our account is to explore the tensions surrounding authenticity and identity which emerge in this new sociolinguistic context.

## **METHODOLOGY**

To begin to explore these tensions we analysed data emerging from three discussion groups involving sixteen young Galician speakers. Participants

ranged in age between 18 and 25 years old and were either currently students at university or recent graduates. Four of the participants were *native speakers* (Group 1) and the remaining twelve had *new speaker* profiles (Group 2 and 3). Both new speaker and native speaker groups were exposed to an officially bilingual educational system, in place since the 1980s, in which at least one third of the curriculum was through the medium of Galician. Their sociolinguistic histories however differ in a number of important ways. Native speaker participants, for example, reported active use of Galician in the home from early childhood. New speakers, in comparison, reported using Spanish with family and friends for at least the first fifteen years of their lives. Although more than half reported passive exposure to Galician in the home and community and came from homes in which parents or grandparents spoke Galician amongst themselves, Spanish was the language used when speaking to their children, thus displaying sociolinguistic behaviour which is often characteristic of a pre-language revitalization generation in Galicia and for whom Spanish continues to be seen as a more valued linguistic resource.

For half of the new speakers in the study, early adolescence constituted a critical social juncture which led them to change their sociolinguistic behaviour as Spanish speakers and to become predominantly Galician-speaking. For the other half, that turning point was more recent and was marked by entrance to higher education. Similar to what Woolard (2011:262) found in case of Catalan, for new speakers of Galician in the study, these key life-stages seemed to constitute critical points in time which “led them to mobilize linguistic resources that had been at least theoretically available to them earlier” (ibid.),

through their exposure to the language in the education system and in the majority of cases also, through passive exposure to the language in the home or community. However, as our discussion will show, this transition did not seem to be a smooth one. The linguistic resources available to these new speakers were not always the right ones and the contexts in which they used the language were frequently contested (at least in the eyes of new speakers themselves) and needed to be negotiated with native speakers, Spanish speakers and even with other fellow new speakers. The process of sociolinguistic transformation was often seen as a difficult process and one which required a heightened sense of awareness about their own sociolinguistic realities as well a strong ideological commitment to becoming Galician speakers. Similar to what Trosset 1986 talks about in the case of Welsh, new speakers are forced to engage in what can sometimes be a painful process of breaking down an old social identity and establishing a new one.

The three discussion groups were convened by one of the researchers (identified as 'F' in the transcribed data) and a series of prompt questions were prepared in advance and used to stimulate the discussion. Participants were told that we were interested in finding out about their experiences as Galician speakers, their use of the language, what other people thought about their linguistic behaviour and their views on the Galician language more generally. The discussion groups were conducted through the medium of Galician and each lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. These were recorded with prior consent of participants and later transcribed. The discourses from the transcriptions were analysed and the salient themes explored. We were

particularly interested in understanding how these new speakers perceived themselves as a social and linguistic group and whether or not they were constructing a collective narrative about what it means to be a new speaker of Galician. We were, however, also interested in how new speakers were perceived and constructed from the optic of native speakers and to what extent a native-non-native dichotomy was maintained (if at all), through references to each other as different sociolinguistic groups. In the following sections we present extracts which highlight some of these tensions, focusing specifically on how ideologies of authenticity and anonymity are represented in the data.

The excerpts represented below are a literal transcription of each speaker's language variety. No attempt was made to 'improve' the linguistic quality of their interventions. In some cases, the Galician used by the speaker shows a high degree of interference from Spanish. Where this occurs, italics have been added.

### **Analysis of the data**

#### *Who is the authentic speaker?*

Linguistic authenticity and the subsequent linguistic insecurity experienced by new speakers was a reoccurring theme in the data. In (1), new speakers describe their own Galician as 'imperfect' (*defectuosa*) and despite efforts to improve it and to 'speak better' (*falar mellor*) by adapting to a more local dialectal variety, their Galician remains 'inauthentic' (*inauténtico*). In this example, Manuel uses rather specialised linguistic terminology (perhaps reflecting his academic training as a student of Galician Philology), to describe

what he perceives as his variety-free and non-localized way of speaking. His Galician is neither ‘diatopic’ (*diatópica*) (referring to variation according place or geographical location), nor ‘diaphasic’ (*diafásica*) (referring to stylistic variation), he says. The perceived lack of authenticity ascribed to new speakers’ Galician also stems from the fact that, in difference to ‘people who have always spoken it’ (*que o falou sempre*), who have ‘their own variety’ (*a súa variedade propia*) and who use ‘vernacular Galician’ (*galego vernáculo*), new speakers acquired it at school. This, in their eyes lessens its value. They describe their Galician as ‘school Galician’ (*galego da escola*) and ‘book Galician’ (*galego de libro*), characteristics which new speakers wish to hide in an effort to disguise their new speaker identity.

(1) Group 2 (new speakers)

M: A miña variedade é defectuosa. ‘My variety is imperfect. The way I  
Eu entendo que a *persona* que o see it is that a person who has  
falou sempre, que tal, que a always spoken Galician, and so on,  
miña variedade non é nin that my variety is neither diatopic  
diatópica nin diafásica, que a or diaphasic, that mine... I speak the  
miña... eu falo o galego que Galician I can. Every day I try to  
podo. Cada día intento falar speak better, and now well if I try  
mellor, e *ahora* pois si intento to more or less include varieties  
máis o menos meter variedades from my own area or to improve it,  
da miña zona o intentar to make it..., but for me my

- melloralo, facelo..., pero para Galician is inauthentic’.
- min o meu galego e inauténtico.
- Fa: Pero, con que o comparas? É ‘But, what are you comparing it  
dicir, con que fas a with? I mean, what are your  
comparación para dicir que non making the comparison with that  
é válido? makes you say that it is not valid?’
- M: Co falante de galego vernáculo, ‘With the speaker of vernacular  
*o sea*, a xente que ten a súa Galician, I mean, the people who  
variedade propia, que aprendeu have their own variety, who learned  
vernácula, e a miña... vernacular, mine is ...’
- F: Pero a túa tamén é propia ‘But yours is also your own’
- M: Non, a miña aprendina na ‘No, I learned mine at school’  
escola
- D: Claro, o noso é un galego de ‘Of course, ours is school Galician’  
escola
- S: Un galego de libro ‘Book Galician’

Paradoxically, however, as can be seen in (2), new speakers get a sense that their Galician is in fact highly valued by traditional native speakers and therefore the very group of speakers they wish to emulate. In this extract, Alberto recalls his grandmother’s reluctance to have him record her speaking as part of a sociolinguistic project he was doing for class. This reluctance was based on her claim that ‘I don’t know how to speak’ (*non sei falar*), so replicating similar feelings of linguistic insecurity experienced by new



speakers in example 1. Such feelings reflect prejudicial beliefs amongst an older generation of Galician speakers about the inadequacies of their own way of speaking compared with Standard Galician. As Alberto points out, people like his grandmother listen to the ‘news’ (*telexornal*) on Galician television, leading them to downgrade their way of speaking in comparison with this new institutional model. This in turn can be seen to alienate older speakers (Roseman 1995), prompting them to give up ownership of the language and to pass it over to those who speak Standard Galician which in their eyes is “better” Galician. In our example here, ownership is transferred to Alberto, who as a student of Galician Philology and therefore, a highly educated speaker of Standard Galician, is likely to be seen in his grandmother’s eyes as the authoritative speaker. So here, social class becomes more important in determining linguistic authority than nativeness. Alberto, however, rejects this status, insisting that it is his grandmother who speaks ‘better Galician’ (*mellor galego*), not he. The authentication of his grandmother’s way of speaking may also reflect a broader ideology of authenticity acquired through his formal training as a Galician Philologist. Indeed, the very fact that he decided to focus his project on his grandmother, and therefore on a traditional native speaker, may in itself be significant and reflect the more widely-held discourse in the field about who counts as a *real speaker*.

(2) Group 2 (new speakers)

A: Eu cando *iba* a gravar a miña avoa, nun traballo en segundo de sociolingüística creo que era, *iba* coa gravadora e xa me miraba e dicíame, “non me graves neniña, non me graves que non sei falar galego”, e claro, dices ti, como dices iso?, se falas ti mellor galego... Pero claro, é o que falabamos o outro día ao estar na clase, que dicimos, claro miran o telexornal e dicen: “gaa!, que galego, isto son... o que eu falo non o é, non”.

‘When I went along to make a recording of my grandmother for a project in second year sociolinguistics I think it was, I went with the recorder and she looked at me and she said: “don’t record me my child don’t record me because I don’t know how to speak Galician”, and of course, you say, how can you say that?, you speak better Galician... But of course, it comes back to what we were talking about the other day in class, we said, of course they look at the news on television and they say: “ha!, what great Galician, they are... what I speak is not, no ”.

*The blurring of language boundaries*

While Standard Galician (and therefore new speaker varieties), are seen to be

idealised by older speakers, a younger generation of native speakers show a somewhat different trend and instead take on a policing role. In example (3), Xavier explicitly states that the Galician spoken by new speakers is of low quality. He criticises it for being too close to Spanish, both in terms of structure and lexicon. He talks about the ‘weight’ (*lastre*) of Spanish on the way new speakers use Galician, rendering it *unnatural* and making it easy to tell whether or not someone is a new speaker, that is, someone for whom ‘it is perfectly noticeable’ (*lle note perfectamente*) that he or she is a new speaker. The blurring of linguistic boundaries causes some tension as new speakers are seen to take on an identity which is not seen to be really theirs, despite, as we saw in example (1), their attempts to adopt what they perceive as more authentic forms of language. Therefore, establishing boundaries between Galician and Spanish becomes a key point of contention, and the more hybridized forms of language characteristic of many new speakers are delegitimized.

(3) Group 1 (native speakers)

<p>X: Eu identificaría a un neofalante como aquil que lle note perfectamente que aínda ten o lastre do castelán por detrás, que non utiliza ben no idioma determinadas estruturas, non son naturais,</p>	<p>‘I would identify a new speaker as someone who you would know perfectly that she still has the burden of Castilian in the background, that she does not use certain structures of language correctly, they are not</p>
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sen entrar xa en castelanismos natural, without going into  
nin nada. Castilian words or anything like  
[...] that’.

New speakers, however, were not unaware of the criticisms levied on them by their native-speaking peers and reject the linguistic policing in which they are perceived to engage through their ‘continuous correcting’ (*corrección continua*) and ‘big brother’ (*gran hermano*) surveillance of new speakers’ use of Galician. While as we saw in example (3), new speakers were criticised for their use of Spanish-sounding words when speaking Galician, in example (4) they question apparent concessions which are made for native speakers in terms of linguistic correctness. In this example, Sandra feels sanctioned for using Spanish-sounding words, such as *jueves* (Thursday), a popular Galician form borrowed from Spanish. This is a word which nonetheless continues to be used by many older native speakers. This linguistic practice, according to new speakers goes unnoticed. New speakers, on the other hand, are expected to use the standardized equivalent of the word, *xoves*. Attempts by Galician speakers to adopt the standard form for words like *jueves* and the anxieties and tensions this seems to cause, is a feature of what Álvarez-Cáccamo (1993:9) defines as “other-language (or other-style) repair”. The standardization of Galician since the 1980s has attempted to remove such popular Galician forms in an attempt to demarcate linguistic boundaries with Spanish. The implication therefore in this example is that the authority awarded to the traditional native speaker is a given, while that of the new speaker is not.

(4) Group 2 (new speakers)

Sa: E á parte corrección  
continua. Inda que non  
sexa aí dunha forma  
liviana, sempre  
corrección

‘They are always correcting me.  
Even if it is only in a small way,  
always correcting.’

D: A corrección...

‘Correcting...’

Sa: Sempre están máis  
atentos a ti que a outro  
calquera. Están máis  
atentos a que ti digas  
“xoves” en vez de  
“*jueves*” que a que un  
galego falante de sempre  
diga “*jueves*” en vez de  
“xoves”. Sabes, están  
máis aí co ollo aí posto.  
Sempre, como en gran  
*hermano*.

‘They are always watching you  
more than anybody else. They  
are watching you and if you say  
“xoves” instead of “jueves” and  
that someone who would have  
always spoken Galician would  
say “jueves” and not “xoves”.  
They are always on the look-out  
you know. Always like big  
brother.’

*Who owns Galician?*

The qualities of nativeness are therefore seen to be inherent in the traditional Galician speaker, thus making it difficult, if not impossible for the new speaker to achieve such authenticity. In Xavier's eyes (5) only people who have spoken Galician 'all their lives' (*o de toda a vida*) can be considered *good* speakers. The implication here is that to speak *good* Galician is not something that can be learned. It can only be acquired biologically. This is in turn linked to place of origin, being from the 'village' (*aldea*), associating linguistic authenticity with a very localized geographical space. Here the language 'was never lost' (*non se perdeu*) and can thus be traced historically through an unbroken lineage. There is thus a clear reification of the traditional native speaker, where the language is seen to have survived in its purest and most uncontaminated form, built around the nostalgia for the past and the mythification of rural Galicia. These ideologies produce what Pennycook (2010:140) refers to as a vision of the local as static, traditional and immobile as opposed to dynamic, about movement and fluid. New speakers are seen to lack this sense of historicity. They are described as having no 'real point of reference' (*un referente real*), thus denying them the authenticity attributed to traditional native speakers, whose way of speaking is anchored in a specific place, making it essentially local. While there was a sense, as we saw in example (2) that traditional native speakers have partly given up claims to ownership of the language to the new speaker, Xavier's comments in (5) suggest that a younger generation of native speakers may be less willing to do so. According to Xavier, 'Galician belongs more to Galicians who have always spoken it' (*o galego é máis dos galegos que falan de sempre*), which includes Xavier

himself as someone who, unlike his new speaker peers, was brought up speaking the language in the home.

(5) Group 1 (native speakers)

X: Falarase ben galego o de toda a vida. O das aldeas é onde millor nivel haberá. Porque lle falta o referente o que falabamos, fáltalles un referente real co que se identificaren e co que se sentiren máis seguros falando galego. En xeral o que noto é pouca seguridade ao falalo.

The person who speaks good Galician is someone who spoke it all his life. People from the villages are those who speak it best. Because they are lacking a real point of reference with which they can identify and with which they might feel more confident speaking Galician. In general what I notice is very little confidence when they are speaking it’.

[...]

X: Considero que o galego é máis dos galegos que falan de sempre. Sobre todo naqueles lugares onde non se perdeu, onde o uso está moito máis

‘I consider that Galician belongs to those who have always spoken it. Especially in those areas where it was not lost, where its use is much more normalized and that.’

normalizado e tal.

[...]

New speakers express the view that their native-speaking peers do not appreciate the efforts required to become speakers of a language in which they were not brought up speaking. Sandra, for example, in extract (6) talks about ‘a certain intolerance’ (*un certo rexeitamento*) amongst mother tongue speakers of Galician leading them to use what are seen as derogatory and disauthenticating labels such as ‘urban Galician’ (*falante urbano*) and ‘speaker of book Galician’ (*falante de libro*) to describe new speakers’ Galician. These are labels which of course, as we saw in (1) would also seem to have been internalised by new speakers themselves and are used in self-descriptions of their own Galician. In conversational interaction with native speakers, new speakers (6) are made feel that their Galician is not good enough. Based on such criticisms, new speakers claim that they are sometimes more at ease using Galician with Spanish speakers with a passive competence in Galician, than with Galician speakers. In the presence of non (active) speakers, new speakers position themselves as language experts and the fear of error and linguistic insecurity is reduced.

(6) Group 2 (new speakers)



S: Pero eu si que noto e noto que por parte dos galego falantes que teñen como lingua materna o galego si que hai un certo rexeitamento ás veces e ao mellor non valoran ou non coñecen o esforzo que tes que facer por cambiar de lingua; entón, pois nada, clasificante como neofalante, falante de urbano e falante de libro, non? etc, etc., e un galego que non é auténtico.

‘But what I do notice is that on the part of Galician speakers who have Galician as a mother tongue they sometimes are a bit intolerant and perhaps they do not value or not know the effort that you have to make to change your language; so, well, they classify you as a new speaker, an urban speaker, a book speaker, no? etc. etc. and a Galician that is not authentic.’

Ma: Pero tamén ás veces é máis incómodo estar falando galego con xente que é falante galega patrimonial que ... ás veces o único... que falar galego con un montón de xente que fala castelán

‘But also sometimes it is more uncomfortable speaking Galician with people who are traditional speakers than... sometimes the only... than to speak Galician with a load of people who speak Castilian’

S: A min tamén

‘That is the same for me’

A: Sínteste mal, parece que

‘You’d feel bad, it can seem like

non falas ben o galego

you don't speak good Galician'

### *New speakers and marked behaviour*

While closeness in linguistic terms between Galician and Spanish can lead to tensions between new and native speakers around questions of authenticity and identity, such closeness allows new speakers to adopt the bilingual norm and to continue to speak Galician even if their interlocutor uses Spanish. However, similar to what Jaffe (1999) found in the case of Corsican, by not adapting to the language of their Spanish-speaking interlocutors, new speakers' linguistic behaviour can be interpreted negatively under the accommodation norm. This can sometimes mark new speakers' behaviour as deviant or out of place.

Institutional support for Galician since the 1980s, promoting its inclusion in key public domains means that the language now has a greater public presence. However, in spite of this, urban contexts continue to be predominantly Spanish-speaking spaces and Spanish is often perceived as the more acceptable and unmarked linguistic and social norm. New speakers' use of Galician in urban spaces can thus be seen to break this long established social norm. In the discussion groups, new speakers talked about the difficulties either they or friends of theirs had experienced in changing their linguistic behaviour and in becoming Galician speakers. In (7), Monica talks about what she rather dramatically describes as the 'absolutely poisonous' (*absolutamente virulenta*)

reaction experienced by other new speaker friends of hers and the need they felt to justify their linguistic behaviour. This took the form of accusing questions and remarks such as ‘what the hell are you doing?’ (*ahora de que vas?*) and ‘you are showing off’ (*te haces la interesante*). Even when reactions are not explicitly negative, Monica is critical of the condescending undertones inherent in comments such as ‘how nice, you have started speaking Galician’ (*hai que ben, empezache a falar galego*) which serves to single out her use of Galician as in some way *cute*. This singling out creates a ‘feeling of abnormality’ (*sensación de anormalidade*) about her use of Galician, marking it as ‘special’ (*especial*) and in doing so denying it the invisibility and anonymity of “just talk” (Woolard 2008).

(7) Group 3 (new speakers)

Mo: [...] *tuvo unha reacción* [...] they had an absolutely absolutely virulenta nese poisonous relationship with sentido, mui virulenta. “Dime, ti them, very poisonous. “Tell me, por que falas?”, y “*ahora de* why are you speaking *que vas?*”, y “*te haces la* Galician?”, and “what the hell *interesante*” y..., y era..., era are you doing?” and “you are complicado. showing off”..., and it was..., very complicated.

[...]

Mo: Eu que para min incluso era ‘For me it was negative when

<p>negativo cando alguén me sinalaba e dicía: “hai que ben, empezache a falar galego”. Para min iso era negativo. Tamén era sempre a sensación de anormalidade de que era algo sinalable, de que era algo especial i eso para min... [...]</p>	<p>someone would single me out and say: “Oh, it’s great, you have started to speak Galician”. For me that was something negative. It was always a feeling of abnormality that it was something that was singled out, that it was something special and for me that ...’</p>
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In a context in which many of their peers speak Spanish, new speakers’ use of Galician is thus rendered highly visible and their use of standard Galician fails to compete with the values of anonymity awarded to the other public language, Spanish. Use of Galician in urban contexts also indexes a certain political position and support for Galician nationalism, leading to what Jaffe (1999:246), in her discussion of Corsican describes as an “overdramatization and overpoliticization of communicative expressive activity”. Thus, new speakers can find themselves being labelled left wing Galician nationalist and supporters of the *Bloque Nacionalista Galego* (BNG). This perception has of course been fed by left-wing nationalists themselves, with an essentialist discourse, specifically centred on language as a symbol of national identity, thus making Galician a central component to their political ideology. While all new speakers in the study pointed to a strong ideological commitment to the language, they were however careful to distance themselves from the politics

of Galician nationalism. Only one person in the study said that changes in his linguistic behaviour were politically motivated. However, even in his case, he made is clear that his use of Galician was no longer linked to an expression of Galician nationalism. Nevertheless, the stereotype exists and for urban Spanish-speaking groups, new speakers' switches to Galician can have a very clear meaning: that they are language activists and supporters of Galician nationalism (O'Rourke 2011b: 141). As example (8) illustrates, this is a stereotype of which new speakers are acutely aware.

(8) Group 3 (new speakers)

Ma: Sobre todo nas cidades... é iso identifican falar galego con afiliación política que moitas veces non é así. Teño unha amiga miña é neofalante y me di ela agora, pois ten certa afiliación, e me di, “eu primeiro falei galego y despois o outro impuxéronmo” (risas).	‘Especially in the cities... that is it they identify speaking Galician with a political affiliation which is not the case on many occasions. A friend of mine is a new speaker and she tells me now well that she is affiliated to a political party, and she tells me that, “I spoke Galician first and the other was forced on me” (laughs)
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### *New Speaker Demands for Recognition*

While new speakers are aware that the Galician they speak is contested and marked, as we can see in (9), they nonetheless demand recognition as a social and linguistic group. Although they aspire to the model of the traditional native speaker, they are acutely aware that this generation of speakers is dying out. In this context, new speakers see themselves as playing an important role in ensuring the future survival of the language. Such a role thus acts as a type of self-justification on their part, as a *raison d'être* and as a means of legitimizing their existence as Galician speakers. Marcel describes new speakers as ‘fundamental’ (*fundamentais*) to the future of the language, emphasising the ‘commitment’ (*compromiso*) involved in becoming a Galician speaker and the ‘desire to want to speak it’ (*un desexo de querer falar*). This can be seen to be something which differentiates them from traditional native speakers who are speakers “by necessity” (Bouzada Fernández 2003) and not because of any ideological positioning, as is the case of new speakers. Without new speakers and support for them, Marcel claims that languages will die out, something which in his view is even more relevant to a language like Galician.

#### (9) Group 3 (new speakers)

M: Eu creo que os neofalantes son fundamentais. É importantísimo e unha cousa fundamental no ‘I think that new speakers are fundamental. It is very important and something fundamental for the future of

futuro da lingua porque no the language because within the  
neofalante existe un desexo new speaker there is a desire to  
de querer falar, un want to speak, a commitment, a  
compromiso, unha consciousness to want to speak  
conciencia de querer falar the language and I think it is  
esa lingua y é eu creo que é fundamental for the future of  
fundamental para o futuro the language.’  
dunha lingua.

[...]

M: Si non contamos cos ‘If we don’t have new speakers,  
neofalantes, se non se apoia if new speakers are not  
que haxa neofalantes as supported, languages will die  
linguas morren y no caso and in the case of Galician even  
do galego máis. more so.’

### *New speakers as linguistic adjudicators*

As well as mediating their linguistic space between native speakers of Galician and Spanish speakers, new speakers also identified certain underlying tensions within new speaker groups (10). In fact, new speakers claimed that most linguistic sanctioning did not come from native speakers per se but instead from other new speakers who demand a very high quality and level of linguistic correctness. This would seem to suggest a new phase in the process of linguistic revitalization in the Galician sociolinguistic context. As a result of three decades of supportive language policy developments for Galician,

linguistic competence across the population has increased, particularly amongst the younger generation through their exposure to the language in the education system. The older stigmas, which were traditionally associated with the language such as poverty and rurality, have by and large disappeared, although, as we have seen, these are at the same time being replaced by newer ones linked to Galician nationalism. In this new context, there is a suggestion that the need to *control* the linguistic quality of urban Galician (characteristic of new speakers) may be emerging (Freixeiro Mato 2010; Sanmartín Rei 2009) and certain varieties of an emerging urban variety of Galician are being given more legitimacy than others. There is therefore a move away from a simple native-non-native dichotomy or a Galician versus Spanish speaker struggle to a more complex spectrum of speaker types with a new set of tensions. New speakers' sanctioning and policing of each other through purist linguistic attitudes also point to a strongly essentialist bias about language, where clear linguistic boundaries need to be adhered to.

(10) Group 2 (new speakers)

Ma: Pero a min personalmente machácanme máis os neofalantes que os patrimoniais. 'For me personally new speakers criticise me more so than native speakers'

A: A min igual 'Me also'  
[...]



M: xxx sempre están máis ‘xxx they are always watching  
*pendientes* sempre están, to see they are always on your  
sempre están riba túa. Non? back. No?’

### *Conclusions*

While in many indigenous minority language situations similar to that of Galician where traditional native speaker communities are in decline, a new profile of speaker is emerging in the context of revitalization policies. The spread of Galician outside of traditional Galician-speaking strongholds and into spaces previously dominated by Spanish has complicated the traditional ideology about sociolinguistic authenticity and ownership. It has also raised questions about who are now the legitimate speakers of Galician, who are awarded most authority and the tensions these changes have generated in a contemporary Galician context.

In our discussions with these young Galicians, an ideology of authenticity was produced by both new and native speakers alike. By idealising the traditional native speaker, they can in many ways be seen to reconstruct an ethnocultural discourse in which the qualities of nativeness are highly valued. While new speakers demand recognition as a sociolinguistic group, they nonetheless show a sense of insecurity in demanding such claims, downgrading their own linguistic ability and thus shying away from existing as *real* or legitimate speakers. For most of them, their role model is the traditional native speaker, who is awarded legitimacy because of what is perceived as an *innate* ability to

speak the language, characteristics associated with historical and biological links with the language. These are links which new speakers did not have and which were used to deny them access to this social world. Their native-speaking peers expressed a similar set of beliefs. For them, however, their authentication of the traditional native speaker allows them to claim certain ownership over the language and use this as a means of contesting new speakers' claim to linguistic space in a contemporary Galician context.

In the eyes of new speakers and younger native speakers alike, new speaker varieties (which are essentially equated to Standard Galician) are considered inauthentic because they are seen to be geographically and linguistically removed from what is an authentic way of speaking. In general, to be considered authentic, a speech variety needs to be "from somewhere" in speakers' consciousness, making its meaning profoundly local (Woolard 2008). New speaker varieties are seen to be from nowhere, thus moving them closer to the value of anonymity in Galician's new guise as a public language and through its standardised form. However, this value is diluted by the fact that Spanish continues to be the more widely used language in urban contexts and continues to be the language of everyday interaction. Neither is the language socially neutral in that its use indexes a certain stance and positioning. New speakers' use of standard Galician in an urban context therefore fails to gain them the anonymity and invisibility that is associated with speaking a public language such as Spanish. Instead, their linguistic practices become highly visible and through their use of Galician are seen either as deviant or out of place. While on the one hand, new speakers reject

this heightened visibility, at the same time, they want to position themselves as different. Through their use of Galician, they are making a statement about their ideological commitment to the language, something which they believe is commendable and which should be recognised. It may therefore be the case that while new speakers' way of speaking is devalued because it fails to comply with the values of an authentic (Galician) collectivity, in the context of late modernity it may symbolize an authentic individuality. Decisions to speak Galician by these new speakers may represent a distinctive way of expressing what Giddens (1991) terms, an individualized identity.

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## Appendix: Transcription Conventions

XXX	unintelligible
[...]	material omitted
...	perceivable pause
Galician	
<i>Spanish</i>	