



Sociolinguistics on the Move

What Migration and Multilingualism Do to Language Ideologies in Globalized Societies

Naomi Truan
Leiden University

Migration and multilingualism are central forces shaping linguistic variation and change in contemporary societies. Yet research on language ideologies often remains structured by national frameworks and a monolingual bias, implicitly assuming relatively stable linguistic communities (Truan 2024). What happens when speakers move across ideological regimes and negotiate competing norms about what counts as correct, legitimate, or authentic language use?

In this talk, I examine how migration and multilingual repertoires shape the circulation and reinterpretation of language ideologies. I present two case studies based on French speakers living in Berlin, through two highly visible sites of ideological contestation in contemporary language debates: gender-inclusive language (Truan 2025b) and anglicisms (Truan 2025a). The data show that interviewees are generally more open to language change in their L2 (German) than in their L1 (French), thus suggesting that ideological transfers may happen from the L2 to the L1—a novel finding not documented in the literature until now.

In the last part of the talk, I sketch what this recentering of multilinguals could mean for newest areas of study in sociolinguistics such as critical AI studies. While we do know, for instance, that Large Language Models (LLM) perform better in globally dominant languages, favor standardized varieties (Bauer 2025), and show a strong Anglophone bias (Barkin 2025), research of this kind remains heavily output-oriented rather than user-centered, focusing on bias in the machine rather than on the practices and positioning of its users. What remains comparatively largely underexplored is how users themselves, across social class positions and migration trajectories, integrate GenAI into their multilingual lives.

I conclude by reflecting on what these dynamics imply for sociolinguistic theories of language variation and change in increasingly mobile and multilingual societies.

References

- Barkin, Gareth. 2025. Epistemological persistence in multilingual AI: The illusion of locality in large language models. *International Review of Modern Sociology* 51.
- Bauer, Nicolas F. 2025. Does ChatGPT increase language homogenization? In *KI in Medien, Kommunikation und Marketing: Wirtschaftliche, gesellschaftliche und rechtliche Perspektiven*, ed. Christina Vaih-Baur, Veit Mathauer, Eva-Irina von Gamm, and Dominik Pietzcker, 11–31. Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien.
- Truan, Naomi. 2024. Whose language counts? Native speakerism and monolingual bias in language ideological research: Challenges and directions for further research. *European Journal of Applied Linguistics* 12:34–53.
- Truan, Naomi. 2025a. Beyond monolingual views: The language ideologies of multilinguals on anglicisms in french and german. *Critical Multilingualism Studies* 12.

Truan, Naomi. 2025b. „In Deutschland wird es weniger diskutiert“: Sprachideologien über geschlechtergerechte Sprache aus der Sicht von L2-Sprechenden des Deutschen. In *Linguistische Berichte*, ed. Paul Meuleneers, Lisa Zacharski, Evelyn Ferstl, and Damaris Nübling, 56, 237–258.