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Globalization and Language in Contact

Scale, Migration and
Communicative Practices

Edited by
**James Collins, Stef Slembrouck
and Mike Baynham**



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1 Introduction: scale, migration and communicative practice

James Collins, Stef Slembrouck and Mike Baynham

1.1 Introduction to the scope of our study, the issues faced

At first glance, globalization and language contact seem to inhabit different conceptual worlds. Globalization invokes the world, most commonly with regard to that which it transcends: the nation-state, itself a unit of power and identity of considerable scale and breadth, though now apparently surpassed by transnational, globe-spanning movements of peoples, commodities and cultural media. Language contact, an area of research traditionally concerned with the short-lived and durable effects of contact between speakers of different languages and varieties, is typically associated with the primal scene of communication: the face-to-face exchange. Such exchanges may involve economic transactions, institutional procedure and political processes, but they are thought of as consisting of people talking in a shared situation, some given here-and-now, some realm of everyday life, albeit an everyday that involves ongoing contacts with linguistic 'strangers'. The dichotomy of global scale versus local setting is false, however, for if we live in a globalized world, we live it through local circumstances, and the terms global/local are necessarily linked.

Much literature on globalizing processes focuses on how it engages with the passions and identities of persons, as well as cultural media that are taken up in local circumstances (Coupland 2003; Jacquemet 2005; Silverstein 2003a). In addition, we are continually reminded by sociolinguistics as well as other disciplines that 'bounded units' are suspect, whether of nation, community or neighbourhood (Rampton 2006; Rosaldo 1989). There appear to be few here-and-now situations that do not also entangle abstract systems of great reach (Giddens 1991). Though people continually work to produce a sense of locality, that 'production of locality' (Appadurai 1990) typically entails global/local hybridity; it is increasingly done amongst experiences of dislocation and cultural flow, involving encounters with social others, who speak and write unfamiliar languages, interpolating unfamiliar semiotic

orders (Baynham and De Fina 2005; Blommaert et al. 2005). The study of linkages between global and local, between transnational process and situated communication, therefore presents both opportunities and challenges for contemporary sociolinguistics. In order to appreciate these opportunities and challenges, we should recognize that the study of languages in contact has a long history in linguistics, although with a focus on linguistic-structural outcomes rather than socially embedded communicative processes.

1.2 Historical background

The models of classical historical linguistics contrast genetic-historical ‘families of languages’ and diffusion-based ‘dialect waves’. They distinguish between language changes which unfold over long temporal and extensive spatial scales (genetic change) versus those which are rooted in circumstances of face-to-face or other network-based exchange (diffusion-based change). A founding figure of twentieth-century structuralism, Ferdinand de Saussure, devoted his influential *Course in General Linguistics* to contrasts such as ‘language’ versus ‘speech’ and ‘synchronic’ structure versus ‘diachronic’ change. However, the *Course* also dealt extensively with problems of ‘Geographical Linguistics’, treating such issues as the ‘co-existence of several languages at the same point’, the lack of ‘natural boundaries’ for dialects or languages; and the ‘spread of linguistic waves’ (Saussure 1966: 191–211). The American structuralist Leonard Bloomfield was a committed comparative-historical linguist. Nonetheless, he frankly acknowledged that genetic-historical models of ‘language families,’ encompassing vast geographical scales and processes unfolding over several millennia, were based on theoretical idealizations that abstracted away from many historical realities (Bloomfield 1933: 314–18). He wrote clearly and in detail of the empirical realities of language use and change, and he recognized that they are rooted in smaller time-space realities, the facts of language variation studied by dialect geographers, those of region, market network or village residence.

Other direct efforts to study historical-spatial factors in language and language use include areal linguistics, pidgin and creole studies and modern variationist sociolinguistics. The first addresses the effects of long-term language contact in large geographical areas, typically occurring over hundreds of years. A classic linguistic area is the Balkan region, showing the effects of centuries of control by the Ottoman Empire (Trudgill 1974). Pidgin and creole studies focus on two interesting processes of language contact, both associated with colonial political and economic processes, especially trade, labour movement and

military control. ‘Pidgins’ refer to grammatically and lexically simplified codes, used in situations of limited interlingual contact, but spoken by no one as a primary language. ‘Creoles’ refer to languages which historically emerge from contact, sometimes when pidgins are transmitted to children, elaborated, and thus become primary languages for a community of speakers (Hymes 1968), but often in specific processes of ‘abrupt convergence’ (Thomason and Kauffman 1988), driven by the brutal uprootings of colonial conquest and labour exploitation, involving novel social matrices and rapid language change (Mufwene 2001). In both areal and pidgin/creole studies the focus is upon outcomes, that is, structural-grammatical change in language form. Labov’s foundational work in quantitative sociolinguistics, the studies of variation in New York City English (Labov 1966), drew on the insights of earlier dialect geographers – that language change was ultimately based on speakers in contact influencing each other – but introduced new issues of geographic scale along with new ways of modelling language use in relation to social categories and speaker behaviour.

Whereas nineteenth and early-twentieth century dialect geography was concerned with linguistic variation mapped onto networks of villages and towns, with little concern about the social sources of innovation and conservation (Kurath and McDavid 1961), Labov’s and subsequent variationist research was largely based in urban centres, devoted itself to statistical sampling techniques, and demonstrated both the social stratification of language use and the influence of abstract linguistic norms on language behaviour. In this early variationist research, scale is a matter of extrapolating from demographic samples to putative speech communities (e.g. ‘New York City English’). However, the limitations of this early variationist paradigm were soon realized, in particular, the over-reliance on correlations between speakers’ utterances and decontextualized social categories (e.g. class, ethnicity and gender). Milroy’s (1980) work on variation and change in Northern Ireland argued for the importance of kinds of social networks in understanding which speakers innovated by shifting toward Standard English (open network) and which retained loyalty to local varieties of English (closed network). At around the same time, Gal (1979) studied networks of association as avenues of language encounter when investigating Hungarian speakers’ shift to German. Also studying multilingual interaction, Gumperz (1982) argued that social networks were conduits for the spread of contextualization conventions and not just routes of lexical or grammatical innovation. In work on dialect changes underway in Philadelphia, Labov (1994) argues for a focus on neighbourhoods and on the social networks of individual speakers in order to characterize influential vectors of contact and innovation.

Interestingly, he uses a standard geographical representation, cartographically introducing the study of linguistic change via a succession of maps that zoom through nested scales, from region to city to neighbourhood to housing block.

The shift from village to major city as foci of sociolinguistic research, and the subsequent shift to concerns with network and neighbourhood, should be seen as sociolinguistics grappling with problems of space and time, meaning and process. Cities are obviously of different scale than villages, and they operate as centres of linguistic prestige and influence. But there are never single centres of influence, and as geographers constantly remind us, scales are multiple, never unitary and networks frequently cross different scales (Coe and Yeung 2001). As the chapters in this volume demonstrate, this has relevance for meaning because networks of association bring language users into contact with communicative practices and judgements which are keyed to different scales. These can include the familiar 'community-based', 'urban' and 'national' scales, as well as finely differentiated institutional and activity loci. The focus on networks represents an effort by sociolinguists to investigate the channelling structures as well as the interactive processes of language contact, whether involving encounters across distinct languages or varieties of speaking within the same language. Patterns of cross- or intra-linguistic variation which are characteristic of a given scale – say a metropolitan area, national region or cross-national migration – will only be relevant to meanings occurring in specific situated activities insofar they are drawn into those activities, that is, insofar as they are drawn into the interplay of message, affiliation and undertaking that we term 'communicative practice' (Eckert 2000; Gal 1987; Gumperz 1982).

The lesson to be drawn from this brief account is that issues of language contact are ubiquitous in the study of language, but that the temporal and spatial dimensions have been complex and poorly understood. Mechanisms underpinning the earlier processes of contact – those investigated by dialect geographers, areal linguists and students of pidgins and creoles – include networks and institutions of varying scale and reach, often those of large-scale enterprises: empire and nation, colony and plantation; school, army, church and market. As noted earlier, much previous work gave priority to the study of structural-grammatical change and neglected the study of communicative processes. Subsequent sociolinguistic research also relied on scale-related processes, although it often did so implicitly. It introduced concepts and topics that involve more local and finely drawn scale relations that are connected to the study of communicative practices. Thus, for example, the ethnography of communication tradition introduced questions of community and communicative event (Gumperz and

Hymes 1972); as discussed earlier, local networks have been extensively studied; and face-to-face interaction has emerged as a focus of concern. A challenge for our current work, on ‘globalization and language contact’, is to critically engage these prior traditions and understandings, while addressing issues unique to the current era of globalization. As many analysts have argued, this requires attending to lines of causation that are both top-down (‘global’) and bottom-up (‘local’). In the following section we take up this by focusing on questions of scale and network as they structure and channel language contact and as they are drawn into the heart of communicative practices.

1.3 Scale, indexicality and network

Scale is a central concept in this edited volume and a concept with a deep ancestry in geography – the most explicitly spatial of the social sciences. In fact, it is hard to conceive of geography without there being some kind of scalar logic in place, as much in the discipline revolves around connecting empirical data obtained at some level of detail with the levels of generalization warranted by specific, scale-sensitive research questions (concerning, for example, municipalities, regions, nations, continents etc.). Not surprisingly, identifying the correct scale of phenomena is a theoretical and conceptual problem central to geography (Montello 2001). In human, economic and social geography, scale has in recent years come to be understood not just as a matter of spatial resolution and upward generalization, but as both a strategy and an outcome of political and social processes, thus placing in the foreground the *production of scale*. This has invited attention to how issues of scale and of scalar interpretation shape local conditions and outcomes on the ground and, with this, the need has been articulated to establish empirically the relevance of scale in the interpretation of political and geographic realities, including how scaling can be a resource in the strategic action of institutions or of locally organized groups (cf. Smith 1993 on ‘scale jumping’ as a source of power). In this wider disciplinary context, economic geographers and others (e.g. Coe and Yeung 2001; Smith 1992) have advanced the idea that globalization is multi-scalar in nature; in arguing so, they typically draw attention to the relegation of state regulatory power and authority either up-scale (e.g. the role of supra-national institutions such as the EU) or down-scale (e.g. the emergence of local and regional government and the ascendance of larger metropolitan areas).

Hårstad and Fløysand (2007) join Harvey (2005), Castells (1996), Giddens (1991) and Swyngedouw (1996) in viewing globalization as a restructuring in time-space relations. As the terms ‘globalization’ and

'glocalization' denote, restructuring takes place in relation to spatial scales – the construction of a global scale, the relevance of transnational and intra-national scales, processes at the intersection of various spatial scales etc. In addition, globalization has also been understood as space-time compression, a sharpened awareness of simultaneity. However, time-space compression is only one aspect of a larger reconfiguring of spatial and temporal relations. Wallerstein (1998) takes up the question of TimeSpace more generally and he does so with specific reference to scale and the partitioning of knowledge about the social world in key disciplines. He identifies five different kinds of TimeSpace as relevant to the modern world: episodic-geopolitical, cyclico-ideological, structural, eternal and transformational TimeSpace (see also Baynham, this volume). For example, history's concern with *what really happened?* is traceable to the episodic-geopolitical TimeSpace of official data archives, which are often organized within the spatial boundaries of nation-states and which typically have temporal prohibitions on access that rule out a concern with the present and very recent past.

Wallerstein's theoretical suggestions have relevance beyond the historical period referred to as the era of globalization. Understandably, globalization theorists and analysts have tended to engage in spatial analysis and focus on spatial scale, but Wallerstein cautions us not to lose sight of the temporalities connected to spatial scale, as well as the spatialization of historical processes. Wallerstein argues that the idea of a time scale, like that of spatial scale, is ideological and political; the point is to think about the two – Time and Space – as mutually constituted. Thus, for example, several contributions to this volume insist on a secondary empirical engagement which brings out temporal scaling in spatial analysis (what we below discuss in terms of the 'temporalities of migration'); other contributions grapple with the spatial scale of processes perceived as accomplished over time (discussed below as 'the search for methodologies').

Recently, sociolinguists and anthropologists have begun integrating scale analysis with discourse analysis. A major focus has been on indexicality, seeing this as the route whereby scale enters into meaning making. Blommaert (2005) provides an extensive treatment of indexicalities of globalized and transnational language practices; a recent paper (Blommaert 2007) also applies scalar analysis to a series of sociolinguistic questions related to multimodality and sociolinguistic norms. Silverstein (2003b) treats a wide range of sociolinguistic phenomena – adjacency pairs, pronoun alternations, register shifts and variation style-shifting to standard – in terms of the concept of 'indexical orders'. His account of such orders emphasizes what we have termed scaling, in the sense that scalar judgements inform assumptions about the

macrosocial plane categories which are used in formulating a given contextual ordering, and this is relevant for meaning making in multi-lingual language practices (Collins and Slembrouck 2007). Baynham (this volume) argues that indexicality, which as a construct crucially implies a pointing out from the text to the world, can also help us to conceptualize and analyse the complementary processes by which the world is 'brought into the utterance' and how this indexical 'bringing in' often engages questions of scale. Although not cast in terms of indexical analysis, Fairclough's (2006) discussion of re-scaling as recontextualization examines related phenomena.

Scalar analysis has further implications for sociolinguistics, three of which deserve mention. First, TimeSpace scales help us address some of the challenges which are posed by an era in which temporal-spatial units of analysis are experienced as problematic because identity and practice are often 'deterritorialized', that is, no longer tied to particular places or stable over time and affected by conditions of displacement or spatio-temporal trajectories of migration (Keating; Vigouroux; Valentine, Sporton and Nielsen, this volume). Second, although assumptions about national and ethnic belonging are experienced as problematic, at the same time, they appear to enter interaction reflexively (e.g. Budach, this volume). In that sense, TimeSpace scales are pivotal in the interpretative analysis of how the world 'out there' is played upon and made to bear on the 'here and now' of communicative encounters. Such destabilizing of identity and reflexive construction of identity-in-context can be seen as exemplifying the old question of how social background is drawn into analyses of communicative processes (Gumperz 1982), but now played out in arenas of transnational diversity (Rampton 2006). Third, the hierarchicalization and diversification wrought by globalization complicate but do not remove questions of agency and power from language analysis. Scalar analysis draws attention to the moments, events and movements in which scale shifts are strategic manoeuvres in the play of power. Such moves can lead to the empowerment of local, heretofore disempowered groups: For example, Cox (1998) and Hårstad and Fløysand (2007) draw attention to how local indigenous struggles against multinational mining interests can rescaled when successfully re-narrativized, taken into new, non-local levels of debate, and thus inserted into national, regional or transnational arenas. Conversely, Fairclough (2006, ch. 6) examines rescaling processes which proceed in the opposite direction, from top-to-bottom rather than bottom-to-top, as when Romanian higher education institutions are incorporated (recontextualized) in European Union (Erasmus) educational practices.

We argued in the preceding section on historical background that sociolinguistics turned to network analysis in order to engage macrosocial

phenomena (e.g. nationality, gender, social class) while studying language use as communicative practice. We think this was an important but insufficient development, for it needs to be connected with various consideration of scale. This can be seen as a fruitful, two-way exchange between geographic models and analyses and sociolinguistic developments. Regarding the former, geographers point out that networks allow analysts to understand trajectories, that is, how individual and collective enterprises can cross different scales. In particular, bottom-up perspectives on networks are likely to foreground agency and actors' motivations for involvement. Geographers also argue that network-sensitive analyses are needed to conceptualize how globalization carves out both regulatory and lived spaces (Coe and Yeung 2001: 376). This comes with choices to be made about which sites to research. Smith (2001) discusses how 'translocalities' are urban spaces (e.g. international Christmas markets, immigrant travel agencies, rock concerts) that are relatively more connected to transnational networks than to local networks and relations (see Budach [this volume] and Meinhof [this volume] for analyses). Lastly, geographers recognize that a networks perspective is helpful in reducing the tendency to privilege any particular scale of analysis (Coe and Yeung 2001: 375). Regarding language analysis, this caveat against privileging particular scales (or categories) of analysis a priori is familiar within sociolinguistics. It is found, for example, in Schegloff's (1991) strictures regarding talk and social classification; and with considerable sophistication in Silverstein (2003b). Gumperz (1982) connects the argument directly to network analysis, arguing that networks of association are necessary to understand how phenomena from different scales enter into interactional meaning making. He shows, for example, that one cannot establish in advance whether conversational dynamics are constrained by institutional setting, participants' regional-ethnic affiliations, society-wide language ideologies or some other aspect of the activity underway. Nonetheless, Gumperz also recognized, and discussed explicitly, that *there is always an interaction between situated interpretation of indexicals, social networks and (macro) background variables* (see 1972: 22–3; 1996: 360–4). Put otherwise, as geographic analysis benefits from attention to network analysis, so also sociolinguistic analysis will benefit from attending to questions of scale when grappling with the interpretation of indexicals, when asking, in Baynham's terms (this volume), how the 'world is brought into' the utterance.

1.4 Overview of volume themes

In addition to exploring the overarching problematic of scale, network and indexicality, the chapters which comprise this book raise several

general themes. Some are germane to research on language and globalization while also pertinent to sociolinguistic research more generally. These include (a) the tension between theorizing and fieldwork and (b) the search for methodologies that connect situated language analysis with the study of larger social processes. Other themes are more specific to the study of migration and communicative practice in the contemporary era. These include (c) the political regulation of identity and movement and (d) the need to account for the diverse temporalities of migration.

Tensions between deductive, ‘theory-driven’ and inductive, ‘data-driven’ description and analysis are prominent in sociolinguistic research, especially research with the ethnographic bent shared by all contributions to this volume. The tensions are not special to studies that grapple with the implications of globalization, though they can be particularly acute in such studies. If globalization invites us to take a distant perspective on the world, to view it from afar, from a ‘satellite’s eye’ view, there are nonetheless imperatives for local grounding, for situated or ethnographic perspective on local processes which are also articulated with global processes. This poses new problems of method and theory (Marcus 1995; Ong 1999).

Although we have argued in the previous section for a framework of inquiry centred on questions of scale, indexicality and network, contributors to this volume differ in how strictly they adhere to one or more of these themes as their starting point as against more open-ended explorations of the implications raised by particular migrant lives, stories and movements. Thus, for example, Collins and Slembrouck as well as Pujolar make questions of scale central to their accounts of migration and multilingualism; although the complexities of the field situation are treated at length, the theorization is foregrounded. Conversely, Budach focuses on investigating an international flow of persons and commodities, conceptualizing the problem of transnational ‘identity’, while also extensively treating sites, events of encounter and the diacritics of identity; although theorization is developed concerning globalization and identity, the challenges and potentials of ‘multi-sited’ fieldwork are foregrounded. Although their chapters treat quite different phenomena, both De Fina and Baynham can be seen as occupying a middle ground in the contrast set we have just presented; each develops considerable conceptual framing together with extensive data analysis. Tensions between ‘ideas’ and ‘facts’, and differences of emphasis toward the one or the other, are inevitable in work that engages with the specificities of language use while also committing itself to analyse complex layers of social life (see Heller 1994; Hymes 1996; Rampton 2006 for sociolinguistic discussions; Foley 1990 and

Burawoy 1991 for general treatments of theory-in-ethnography). The term 'globalization' brings with it new emphases and tasks, that of investigating transnational processes being only the most obvious. This is a challenge of theory, but also a problem of method.

The question of methodologies that can engage with processes of broad temporal and spatial scope is familiar in sociolinguistics, but studying migration in an era of globalization raises particular challenges. Several contributions to this volume grapple with the issues raised by global movement, and in so doing they address problems which have general significance for sociolinguistic research. Notable in this regard are the contributions by Meinhof, Vigouroux, Keating and Kell. In her study of transnational movements of Madagascar musicians living in Europe, Meinhof argues that the 'long-life narrative' may be especially well-suited for studying the decades-long emergence of transnational networks and formation of transcultural capital; the latter being linked to language proficiencies but activated, in the sense of Bourdieu (1991), through membership in the networks. Examining African migrants into the troubled Western Cape, Vigouroux argues for site-specific analyses of communicative practices uniting micro- and macro-analytic interpretations of the construction of space-and-scale. Keating, in her study of Portuguese migrants in London, uses innovative approaches to social networks and rescaling practices to investigate (a) shifts in migrant community organization, identity and status due to decades-long residence and (b) multilingual practice through different time-courses, such as that of work activities. Kell studies multilingual literacy practices in situations deriving from internal migrations. She focuses centrally on methodologies for studying multilingual and multimodal practices with different temporal and spatial trajectories. In her chapter the problem of the local vis-à-vis the non-local, pervasive in sociolinguistics, is the focus of sustained description, argument and analysis. A framing issue in her chapter – how different types of persons interact with NGOs and governmental agencies in situations of changing governance (post-Apartheid South Africa) – is shared by many other contributions to this volume. It can be phrased as the regulation of political subjects, in particularly of migrants.

As discussed earlier, much substantive work on globalization is concerned with challenges of the political and economic regulation of newly scaled institutions, work regimes and kinds of citizen (Coe and Yeung 2001; Harvey 2005; Ong 1999; Smith 1992). This insight about regulation can be extended to include the issue of the 'non-citizen' or the 'out-of-place citizen', that is, political subjects who 'hail from elsewhere' (Sassen 1999). Several chapters in this volume bring out the ways in which the movement of people is regulated within and across

national borders. Thus Dong and Blommaert focus on the case of China, a nation-state with strict controls over the ability of citizens to change residence. These controls have been relaxed as China emerges as a centre of globalized capitalism, with the striking result that there are an estimated 147 million 'internal migrants', who suffer from restricted claims on the state's housing and social welfare provisions. Pujolar focuses on the uses of official state offices as well as NGOs, such as social welfare and adult education agencies, to regulate the place and person of new migrants, to 'show them their place' in Catalanian and Spanish social and sociolinguistic hierarchies. He emphasizes that such regulation must be seen as an ongoing practice, part and parcel of what he terms 'local participation.' Galasińska and Kozłowska show what happens to the experience and meaning of migration for Poles moving to the United Kingdom at two historical periods. In the earlier period, they are 'foreign migrants' whose break with the country of origin is sharp and whose possibilities of return are strictly controlled; in the latter period they are 'EU citizens', for whom moving to the United Kingdom is an open-ended affair, with fewer restrictions on their back-and-forth movement, less official scrutiny of their identity and less 'risk' in the change of country. This changed state of affairs is reflected in the narratives they tell of migration. Narrative in relation to political regulation is a theme also in De Fina's chapter. The spatializing practices found in Mexican migrants' narratives are the central focus of her analysis; the background frame, however, for migrants and for US media reports, is the fraught issue and experience of the highly militarized US/Mexico border.

A last theme concerns differing temporalities of social-communicative process generally and of migration in particular. As discussed earlier, the transformations of time-space is a feature often noted by theorists of globalization; and among sociolinguists the question of simultaneities, of interacting time-space scales within a discursive event, has been of recent interest (Agha and Wortham 2005). Several chapters in this volume remind us of a prosaic fact which should nonetheless be emphasized: Migration has many temporal dimensions and, consequently, analysts need to attend to historical phases in migration. Collins and Slembrouck describe a situation of an emergent 'new Latino diaspora', driven by largely undocumented Mexican migration into new regions of the United States; they also discuss recent migration-connected multilingualism vis-à-vis the institutional inheritances of longstanding bilingualism in the uneasy Belgian state. Vigouroux studies an internet café which is a rich site for multilingual and multimodal exchanges, showing the intersection of the micro-time of daily communicative practices and the macrotemporalities of African migrations into South Africa. Keating and also Galasińska and Kozłowska describe

situations in which what was previously migration, whether of Portuguese or Poles, becomes transformed into citizen-movement in the European Union: Within a few short decades, the former ‘migrant identity’ becomes rescaled as that of the ‘transnational entrepreneur’. The chapter by Valentine, Sporton and Nielson reminds us of the importance of intergenerational time, documenting the familiar, poignant condition in which younger and older generations find themselves sharply alienated from each other, divided by changing languages and ways of living. Meinhof’s use of long-life narratives, discussed earlier for its methodological potential, reminds us of the time of an individual life. In her chapter as in Keating’s, we learn that during such a life period the social networks and communicative practices of multilingual migrants can change dramatically. Lastly, Baynham’s discussion of Moroccan migrants in London closes the circle: It shows how subtleties of reference and language evoke TimeSpace scales of varying scope, both in their narrative accounts of the meaning of migration in their lives and in their quotidian interactions with him during the research process.

1.5 Organization of the book: implications for how we think about context

This volume is organized into three parts. Part I, ‘Scale and multilingualism’, as its name suggests, foregrounds the issue of scale, but does so with essays drawn from diverse parts of the world, including North America (Collins and Slembrouck), China (Dong and Blommaert), Africa (Vigouroux) and Europe (Collins and Slembrouck; Pujolar), grappling with issues of internal and transnational migration and a range of social processes shaping multilingual encounters. Part II, ‘Spatialization, migration and identity’, also presents a diverse range of migration flows, from Mexico into the United States (De Fina), North and East Africa into the United Kingdom (Baynham; Meinhof; Valentine, Sporton and Nielson) and Poland into the United Kingdom (Galasińska and Kozłowska). It takes up the questions of indexicalities, in multilingual networks and life trajectories, and especially in the narratives provided about movement, displacement and ‘making a life’ in new circumstances. The final part, Part III, ‘Studying processes and practices across time and space’ focuses on networks and flows, of people and commodities, showing how intertwined linguistic identity and language commodification can be. It also features research from a variety of settings in North America (Budach), Europe (Budach, Keating) and Africa (Kell), but now focusing on the problems of units of analysis and appropriate theory/method when investigating movement across varying scales and via differing networks.

This volume can be understood as contributing to the ongoing re-theorization of context. In a book addressing globalization and language contact through the lens of scale, migration and communicative practice, we are reminded that the question of context is always also the question of scope: Are we viewing processes from great distance or close up? In this regard we recall Hanks' (1996: 140) apt observation:

Ultimately context is nothing less than the human world in which language use takes place and in relation to which language structure is organized. How we describe it and what properties of organization and duration we ascribe to it depend on what we focus on. In other words, because context is so pervasive, '*context*' is necessarily a theoretical construct [emphasis added].

As we are talking about re-theorizing context, it is also useful to orient the approach we take here with Duranti and Goodwin's (1992) influential *Rethinking Context*. It was a groundbreaking volume because it energetically proposed a dynamic account of context in which there is always a co-productive relationship between talk and the production of context, in contrast to more traditional accounts of context as backdrop or setting. Duranti and Goodwin anticipate some of the issues encountered in this volume. They emphasize, for example, the role of speaker agency in the here and now of the interactional moment, while simultaneously recognizing, as Hanks would later, the porousness and provisionality of context and the difficulty of setting limits on what counts as contextually relevant: 'one of the great difficulties posed in the analysis of context is describing the socio-historical knowledge that a participant employs to act within the environment of the moment' (Duranti and Goodwin 1992: 5).

In a sense what we are emphasizing here is not only difficulty but also opportunity: the imperative of bringing in the socio-cultural dimension, captured in the metaphor of scale or order, if we are aiming for what Blommaert (2007) calls a 'sociologically realistic sociolinguistics'. Within their project, designed to assert the dynamic co-productive characteristics of context, the crucial role of the interactive here and now, Duranti and Goodwin allude to without developing the idea of the scalar dimensions of context. Towards the end of the introduction to their volume, they invoke the work of Bourdieu and Foucault as a way of 'finding a solution to the dichotomy between the pre-determined socio historical and economic conditions of existence and its emergent and socially negotiated properties' (Duranti and Goodwin 1992: 30–1). In the ensuing years since the publication of *Rethinking Context*, the interdisciplinary project of re-theorizing the social in sociolinguistics has continued, and our tools have improved for engaging with the

problematic aspects of context identified by their work and that of others. Concerning the question of context, our studies raise many issues, but the following deserve mention.

- Scale requires that we consider the way, as Duranti and Goodwin also note, that the complex material dimensions of the wider world enter into the here and now of sense-making. Disciplines such as political and cultural geography can be of assistance here, though much remains to be done in translating and applying constructs of scale and network to the study of language use (see especially Hårstaad and Fløysand 2007 as well as Valentine, Sporton and Nielson this volume).
- Indexicality, as a tradition of analysis and a theory of context provides us with a valuable tool of thinking about scale and meaning-making *in situ*. As noted, several contributions to this volume apply and develop this line of inquiry (Baynham; Collins and Slembrouck; De Fina; Dong and Blommaert; Pujolar).
- Migration raises sharp issues of dislocation and relocation, and of manifold varieties of language contact and languages-in-contact, thus unsettling various assumptions about context. The assumption that the here and now *is* shared becomes a question of *how* the here and now is shared; that languages *are* resources for interaction becomes the more politically nuanced question *whether* linguistic repertoires are resources. These matters are foregrounded in several contributions (Budach; De Fina; Galasińska and Kozłowska; and Vigouroux).
- An emphasis on communicative practice reminds us of two final issues regarding context. First, that we must attend to doings, that is, to interaction and activity; and, second, that such doings are always framed, that is, scaled, and subject to ideological interpretation and reinterpretation. This is explored and illustrated in several chapters (Pujolar; Kell; and Keating).

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PART I

Scale and Multilingualism