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Editorial: Introducing Début

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Début: the undergraduate journal of languages, linguistics and area studies

Most research and scholarship by undergraduates is only read by those who teach them. Hopefully the student will take on board the feedback he/she receives and the next piece of work will be of a higher standard. However, the work of the undergraduate hardly ever leaves the boundaries of the student's own university. *Début*, an undergraduate research journal aims to showcase undergraduate scholarship in the fields of languages, linguistics and area studies. All the essays which appear in this first volume have been reviewed by academics in universities other than the one at which the author studies.

The students (or recent graduates) whose work appears here have not only submitted their best work, but have improved it through the review process. As editor, I did not set any particular criteria for the reviewers, other than to provide some comments and make a recommendation about whether or not the article should be published. Many reviewers have told me (unprompted) that they only want to see "first class" work published in *Début.* In short I think it is fair to say that *Début* is not an easy outlet for publication.

Début not only aims to showcase existing research and scholarship — it is also a form of training for the aspiring academic. Whatever its advantages and limitations peer review forms an important part of the process by which academic knowledge comes into being – it is perhaps a matter of concern therefore that many students graduate unaware of how the articles which appear in journals came to be there. The articles in this first volume are "first class" essays made even better.

For further information on submitting an article for *Début*, please refer to the instructions for authors.

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What is the State of Evaluative Affixes in Contemporary English?

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Abstract

In this paper I argue that English uses evaluative morphology and that the current measures of productivity provide counter-intuitive results. Using the Corpus of Contemporary American English I collected data containing instances of evaluative affixes. I explored evaluative affixes in terms of word formation rules and assigned each affix a rating of productivity using the Equation of P (Baayen 1989). I examine these ratings in terms of perceived productivity versus actual productivity according to native-English intuition and the Equation of P, respectively. I discuss the faults of the current understanding and measurement of productivity, as well as the obstacles to accurately collecting data using current corpus technology. Evaluative affixation allows a language to inexpensively add a richness of meaning. Although many linguists mention examples of evaluative morphology in English, there exists no current and comprehensive reference work specifically studying the life and productivity of evaluative morphology. I intend to discuss evaluative affixation as it exists in contemporary English, including: an understanding of what constitutes evaluative morphology, the word formation rules for the thirteen English evaluative affixes, and a study of the productivity of each affix.

Introduction

Before I begin, a brief introduction to terminology is in order. An affix is a type of morpheme, the smallest unit of a language that contains meaning. In English, there are two types of affixes: *prefixes* and *suffixes*. Prefixes attach to the beginning of a word, as seen in recharge, while suffixes attach to the end of a word, as in chargeable. Both *recharge* and *charge* share the same base but the prefix *re-* adds the meaning "to charge again". *Charge* and *chargeable* are similar in meaning but differ in category, with *charge* being a verb and *chargeable* being an adjective. When affixes attach to a base, they may change either the category, the meaning, or both.

Evaluative affixation is a special subset of derivational morphology in which affixes are attached to bases to form new derivatives that convey a meaning of either size or emotion, in the form of diminutives or augmentatives. Diminutives convey "ideas of smallness, pleasantness, familiarity, affection, and […] 'nicknames'" (Dossena 1998, p. 24).[1] Some examples of diminutives are: *booklet* (smallness), "isn't he a *sweetie*?" (pleasantness), *Johnny* (familiarity), *honey-bunny* (affection), *Lefty* (nickname). Augmentatives are the opposite of diminutives. They typically convey a sense of largeness and may contain a pejorative sense, meaning there is a negative connotation. An example of an augmentative in English is found with words using *ultra-*, as in *ultra-bright*, or *ultra-jerk*. *Ultra-* gives both a sense of size or

[1] These categories of diminutives may overlap.

intensity in the former example and intensifies the emotional sense of disdain in the latter example.

My research focuses on the thirteen evaluative affixes currently found in English: *hyper-, mega-, micro-, mini-, nano-, pico-, tera-, uber-, ultra-, -ette, -let, -ling,* and *-y.* Harnessing the advancement of modern technology, I have used an online corpus, the Corpus Of Contemporary American English (COCA), to collect my data. The COCA contains 400+ million words collected from written and spoken texts from popular and contemporary sources, from 1990 to 2009. The COCA provides for wildcard searches and has enabled me to collect affix data. It also allows for the user to view the context in which words are used. With this new technology, linguists and researchers are able to gain a more "real-time" look at the rules of English word formation as they exist and evolve in the present, as well as ensuring the data is the most up-to-date available.

Word formation rules

This section explores the Word Formation Rules (WFRs) for the evaluative affixes. The following WFRs show the rule for attaching an affix to the base and the derivative, i.e. N -> N means the affix attaches to a noun (N) to form a noun (N). My WFRs also give a classification to distinguish which affixes are diminutives and which are augmentatives, as well as providing for additional meanings encoded in each affix. The origin of the affix is included, and it should be noted that only the affixes *-y* and *-ling* are native to English. Finally, there follows a table including some examples, frequencies, and definitions of words used in context.

Suffixes

Table 1 shows the word formation rules for evaluative suffixes. Evaluative suffixes tend to only attach to nouns, to form diminutives, and tend not to change the category of the base, i.e. nouns remain nouns. There are four evaluative suffixes: *-ette, -let, -ling,* and *-y.* Table 2 shows examples of the evaluative suffixes in use with their definitions, along with examples featuring both a low and a high frequency.[2]

Table 1: Evaluative suffixes

Suffixes	*Rule*	*Classification*	*Additional Meaning*	*Origin*
ette	N -> N	Diminutive – "little X"	-feminine noun -feminine group noun	French
let			-	French
ling			-	Native
y			-familiar name -nick-name -rhymes	Native

[2] Although some of the data have highly lexicalised meanings, there is no current way of measuring which words are lexicalised to the degree at which native-speakers do not recognise the affixes as being evaluative. As such, I have kept all instances of "etymological" evaluatives in the data for the sake of consistency. If a measure of the degree of lexicalisation is created, some of this data may be eliminated and the results may change. However, at the present time, there is no way of operationalising this.

Table 2: Examples of Evaluative Suffixes

Suffixes	***Examples***	***Frequency***	***Meaning***
ette	astronette	1	female astronaut
	cigarette	10,608	small cigar
let	buglet	1	small bug
	booklet	1,031	small book
ling	demonling	1	small/young demon
	fledgling	1444	young one
y	barfy	1	nickname for a cat
	larry	23,125	familiar name for Lawrence
	Humpty -Dumpty	117	rhyme

While these suffixes carry the sense of being diminutive, some carry additional meanings. The suffix -ette may carry the additional meaning of "femininity" as seen in *astronette, bachelorette, dudette,* etc. There are 32 examples of feminine forms of generally masculine or gender neutral nouns. There is also a tendency found in the data for *-ette* to form words meaning "female member for team/group X" as in ex-*rockette (1), raiderette (4),* and *redskinette* (2). In each example, the word refers to a woman in a group of women who support a team or are in a band. There were eight occurrences in the dataset indicating this sort of female group branding. This suffix may also be used to form feminine versions of masculine names, such as Georgette, *Nicolette,* and *Harriette*. The suffix *-ette* is of French origin and exists in many of our English words borrowed from French, such as baguette, barrette, marionette. Although these words may not always have a diminutive meaning in English, they have been included in the dataset if they retain a diminutive status in French.

The suffix -y is highly versatile and has several additional meanings apart from being a diminutive: familiarity, nickname formation, and rhyme formation. Familiar names are diminutive versions of proper names and can be seen in examples such as *Tommy* (for Thomas) *Bobby* (for Robert) and *Suzy* (for Suzan). Familiarisation of first names is a common occurrence in English. My dataset includes 183 examples (see Appendix A) of English names that have been made familiar by the evaluative suffix *-y*.

Nicknames are another type of familiarity formed using the -y evaluative suffix. A nickname is a diminutive name given to friends, pets, strangers, or even objects and often focuses on a particular feature or action specific to the individual. Some examples include *Barfy* (the name of a cat that throws up often), *Knitsy* (the nickname for a particular woman who often knits), *Baldy* (for a person who is bald). My dataset includes 109 nicknames formed using the *-y* suffix, found in Appendix B.

Finally, *-y* is used in the formation of rhyme schemes. In English, it is common to form a sort of nonsensical rhyme for talking to children, for creative purposes, or to be silly. Some common examples are *oopsy-daisy* (baby talk), *Humpty-Dumpty* (character in a fairy-tale for children), and other nonsense rhymes such as *palsy-walsy* and *squeaky-deaky*. My dataset includes 138 examples of rhymes made with the *-y* suffix, found in Appendix C.

Prefixes

Table 3 displays the Word Formation Rules for evaluative prefixes. As with the evaluative suffixes, the prefixes tend not to change the category of the base, i.e. nouns remain nouns. Although some of the prefixes may attach to nouns, adjectives and verbs, examples of evaluative prefixation of verbs are rare in my dataset. There are five evaluative augmentative prefixes: *hyper-, mega-, uber-, ultra-, tera-*. Additionally, there are four evaluative diminutive prefixes: *micro-, mini-, nano-, and pico-*. Table 4 shows examples of the evaluative prefixes in use with their definitions, along with examples featuring both a low and a high frequency.

Table 3: Evaluative prefixes[3]

Prefixes	*Rule*	*Classification*	*Additional meaning*	*Origin*
hyper	• N -> N • A -> A • V -> V	Augmentative – "big X"	over, beyond, above	Greek
mega			metric : 1 million	Greek
uber				German
ultra				Latin
tera			metric : 1 trillion	Greek
micro		Diminutive – "little X"	metric : 1 millionth	Greek
mini				Latin
nano			metric : 1 billionth	Latin
pico			metric : 1 trillionth	Latin

Table 4: Examples of evaluative prefixes

Prefixes	*Examples*	*Category*	*Frequency*	*Meaning*
hyper	hyper-abrupt	A	1	really abrupt
	hyperachievers	N	1	super achievers
	hyper-corrects	V	1	action of over-correcting
	hypertension	N	1467	high level of tension
mega	mega-adjustable	A	1	really adjustable
	mega-dork	N	1	super dork
	megawatts	N	523	1 million watts
uber	uber-active	A	1	really active
	uberchallenge	N	1	really difficult challenge
	ubermensch	N	27	German for *superman*
ultra	ultrabad	A	1	really bad
	ultrabots	N	1	super robots
	ultraviolet	A	1649	type of super wavelength
tera	terayacht	N	1	huge yacht
	terabytes	N	50	1 trillion bytes
micro	microcoded	A	1	type of very tiny coding compression
	microbattery	N	1	very tiny battery
	microscope	N	1721	scope to see at the microscopic level

[3] The base of these compounds provides the base meaning, but it is the evaluative affix that intensifies the positive or negative connotations.

Prefixes	*Examples*	*Category*	*Frequency*	*Meaning*
mini	mini-mall-size	A	1	size of a small mall
	mini-bagels	N	1	small bagels
	mini-series	N	766	small series
nano	nano-enhanced	A	1	enhanced on a very small scale
	nanocircuits	N	1	really small circuits
	nanotechnology	N	664	technology on a very small scale
pico	picoarchitectural	A	2	architectural design done very small
	picobrain	N	1	insult - very small brained individual
	picoseconds	N	16	1 trillionth of a second

The suffixes *mega-*, *micro-*, *nano-*, *pico-*, and *tera-* all carry an additional scientific meaning of metric measurement, with *mega-* and *tera-* being large and *micro-*, *nano-*, and *pico-* being small. According to the OED (1989), hyper- carries the additional meaning as a prefix with "the prepositional force of 'over, beyond, or above'" and is "rarely [found in] verbs; e.g. hyperdeify" This correlates with the findings in my data set of only two noted occurrences of an evaluative affix attaching to a verb: hyper- corrects in the context "As a result, the speaker (mistakenly) *hyper-corrects* the /jʒ/ phonetic sequence back to /jz/"; *hyperextend* in the context "…posture by forcing subjects to *hyperextend* the knee…".

Evaluative affixes typically attach to nouns and attachment to verbs is rare. This may be due to the fact that evaluative affixes tend not to change the category of the base. For example, it is possible to attach the prefix *mini-* to the base kick to form *mini-kick*. However, native speakers are unlikely to say "I'm going to *mini-kick* you" and would rather change the would-be verb to a deverbal-noun with the construction "I'm going to give you a *mini-kick*". This changes the verb of the sentence to give rather than *mini-kick*. The same could be said of all the evaluative prefixes, as in "take an *ultra-nap*" or "go for a *mega-run*". Therefore, there are very few occurrences of evaluative affixes attaching to and producing verbs. Instead, evaluative affixes tend to attach to deverbal-nouns and produce deverbal-nouns.

Productivity

My research is primarily concerned with the productivity of evaluative affixation in English. There are many competing definitions and theories of productivity that are fundamentally different, which leaves "studies of productivity […] in a rather poor state" (Bauer 2001, p.25). Some of the definitions of productivity and the scholars behind them are as follows: multiple scholars agree that productivity should be measured in terms of frequency of something in the dataset, but there is a disagreement as to which frequency should be measured (i.e. the frequency of types, tokens, available bases, etc.): Lieber—in terms of number of available bases; Aronoff— proportion of actual words versus total words possible; Harris & Aronoff—probability of new words actually occurring; and Rainer - number of new words produced in a specified time period (Bauer 2001, p.25). For the purposes of this research, I will be using Bauer's *Morphological Productivity* (2001) to define productivity as a measure of the availability and profitability of a morphological process.

Availability is a binary state: either a process is available and alive, or it is unavailable and dead. If a morphological process is available, it may be utilised to create new words, or coinages. An example of an unavailable process is that of the suffix *-th*, as in warmth, strength, and width. English no longer uses *-th* to create new words, and therefore *-th* is now unavailable (Lieber 2009a, p.61).[4] Additionally, availability of a morphological process may change depending on the time period under observation; originally the suffix *-th* must have been available, but in the present state of Modern English it is unavailable. Bauer asserts "statements of availability are temporally located … [w]hat is available in one period may not be in the next" (Bauer 2001, p.205).

The profitability of a morphological process is the "extent to which its availability is exploited in language use" (Bauer 2001, p.211). However, in order to determine the extent of exploitation of availability, one must count the number of coinages. If a process is unavailable, there will be no profitability, and therefore no current productivity. These two ideas come together to mean productivity is the measure of how profitable an available morphological process is in a living language. Bauer (2001, p.41) sums this up nicely:

Productivity is all about potential. A process is productive if it has the potential to lead to new coinages, or to the extent to which it does lead to new coinages. We are aware of productivity only through the new coinages.

Table 5 demonstrates productivity existing within the confines of both availability and profitability. As demonstrated, if a process is unavailable, it is also unprofitable and, therefore, not productive. When a process is available, the most productivity occurs when there is a high profitability. The example of the suffix *-th* has been shown to be unavailable and is therefore unproductive. The suffix *-ness* is both available and highly profitable and is, therefore, highly productive.

Table 5: Availability and profitability

	Available	*Unavailable*
Low profitability	minimally productive	not productive
High profitability	maximally productive	not productive

Along with difficulties in defining productivity, there are many different methods of measuring productivity. One way productivity can be measured is to compare one corpus over time from an older version to the present and calculating the new additions (Bauer 2001, p.157). While this approach would certainly highlight new formations, it is impractical for this research as the COCA is a new corpus and time-constraints rule out the ability to wait a significant amount of time for new additions.

Another measure of productivity, the *Equation of P*, is a measure of productivity crafted by Baayen (1989) and shown as: $P = n1/N$ where n1= the number of hapax legomena (words in the data-set with a frequency of 1) and N = the total number of tokens for the affix. The equation of P ($P = ni/N$) operates under the theory that "the more productive a process is, the more new words it will give rise to and the more chance that these items will occur in a corpus with a very low token frequency, sometimes only once" (Lieber 2009b). These one-frequency words, hapax

[4] A reviewer points to the word *coolth* which, on the surface, appears to be a new coinage but has been attested as far back as the 16th century, according to the Oxford English Dictionary.

legomena (or hapaxes for short), are the key to measuring productivity in this equation.

An additional measure of productivity is "global productivity", known as P*, in which both P and type-frequency are charted. *Types* are individual words using a specific process (in this case an affix) recorded in a corpus. Global productivity produces a scatter plot in which processes occurring with low P and low type-frequency are shown in the bottom left. The high P-rated and higher type-frequency affixes appear in the upper right. This measure quickly shows which affixes are the most and least productive, given extreme positions on the chart. However, the fault of this measure is that "it is not possible to weight the relative contributions of [the two criteria] in such a chart" (Bauer 2001, p.154). This measure cannot compare productivity between two affixes when one experiences high P and low type-frequency and the other experiences low P and high type-frequency, meaning each affix is in a similar location along a different axis. In these situations, it renders the question "is x more productive than y?" meaningless (Bauer 2001, p.154). Global productivity is more suited to a quick view of overall productivity and would not allow for an in-depth analysis and comparison of evaluative affixes.

In my research I have focused on one of the most commonly known measures of productivity, the Equation of P, to measure the productivity of evaluative affixes. It is generally held that they exhibit very low productivity, as shown in an introductory text book to Linguistics by Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams: "Other derivational morphemes in English are not very productive, such as the suffixes meaning 'diminutive', as in the words pig + let and sap + ling"(2003, p. 90). Although evaluative affixes may be less productive than other affixes, they are still productive. Until now, there has been no comprehensive list of English evaluative affixes compiled with their respective measures of productivity. This has left little means to discuss exactly how productive these affixes are. Table 6 displays the productivity of each evaluative affix using Baayen's measure of productivity.

Table 6 Measure of productivity of evaluative affixes

Affix	*Types*	*Hapaxes*	*Tokens*	*Productivity (P)*
Suffixes				
ette	181	72	18,742	0.00384
let	136	54	10,621	0.00508
ling	89	37	11,717	0.00316
y	741	236	303,625	0.00078
Prefixes				
hyper	1,050	614	9,211	0.06666
mega	1,022	650	5,461	0.11903
micro	1,882	987	31,108	0.03173
mini	1,879	1,241	7,759	0.15994
nano	488	279	4,148	0.06726
pico	37	13	124	0.10484
tera	26	14	198	0.07071
uber	114	108	159	0.67925
ultra	1,016	594	7,938	0.07483

Data analysis

There are two observations immediately available in this data: productivity of prefixes versus suffixes and productivity of native versus non-native affixes. As this data demonstrates, prefixes are more productive than suffixes; the suffixes exhibit P of no greater than 0.005, less than P of any prefix. Also shown, native affixes are less productive than non-native affixes. Of the two native affixes, *-y* and *-ling, -ling* experiences P = 0.0031. Even if prefixes and suffixes are examined separately, the French suffixes still exhibit more productivity than the native English suffixes, with *-let* at 0.005 and *-ette* at 0.0038, while *-ling* falls at 0.0031.

However, while this data provides some answers, it raises questions about the Equation of P and the idea of productivity. Many of the productivity ratings of evaluative affixes are counter-intuitive. Additionally, the productivity for the suffix *-y* is vastly different from my early predictions; while intuitively *-y* should be the most productive given the vast array of possible bases with which to attach, it in fact exhibits the lowest productivity of all the affixes.

When examining the number of word types in a corpus, it must be understood that some affixation processes apply to a larger range of bases than others. For example, the prefixes *pico-* and *tera-* have a pragmatic restriction in that they are typically used only in the scientific community as a means of measurement, such as *picosecond, picogram, terabyte, terajoule.* The prefixes *micro-* and *nano-* are also used in the scientific community (*microgram, nanobot, nanosecond*) but as technology has become more common and the average person is exposed to these prefixes more frequently, they have expanded their range of bases and are attachable to additional, non-scientific words (*microcootie, microdecision, nanoboat, nanodeath*). As marketing companies and advertisers are more familiar with these prefixes, they may invent product names incorporating these prefixes, further fuelling their public acceptance. The more often these affixes are used, the more profitable they become and the more productive they are perceived to be. To demonstrate this, an average person would most likely have an idea of what a "*nano-scratch*" or a "*micro-touch*" might be (an action so slight, it was barely felt or seen); contrast this with a "*pico-scratch*" or a "*tera-touch*", which are less transparent.

Table 7

Affix	*Types*	*Hapaxes*	*Tokens*	*P*
micro	1,882	987	31,108	0.03173
nano	488	279	4,148	0.06726
pico	37	13	124	0.10484
tera	26	14	198	0.07071

In this sense, *micro-* and *nano-* are less restricted than *pico-* and *tera-* and apply to a larger range of bases. Intuitively, if an affix may be used on a wider range of bases and average native-speakers begin producing new words with the affix, the productivity should be higher than that of an affix with a very restricted set of bases, rarely used to create new, analysable words. The problem arises when P is measured for these four prefixes. Using the equation of P, both *pico-* and *tera-* experience a higher level of productivity than *micro-* or *nano-*.

Bauer (2001) notes that Aronoff (1976, p.36) believes it to be unfair to consider type frequency when considering productivity, due to the restrictions of word formation contained within each affix. Bauer also concedes that higher type frequency "does have something to do with the perceived productivity of a particular process" (2001, p. 145). The Equation of P is counter-intuitive to our perceived productivity because of the disparity between the number of types created using an affix and the actual level of productivity measured, according to the equation.

Table 8

Affix	*Types*	*Hapaxes*	*Tokens*	P
uber-	114	108	159	0.67925

This same problem of counter-intuitive results occurs with the affix awarded the highest productivity, *uber-*. *Uber-* is recorded as having the second lowest number of tokens in the corpus, yet it is rated the most productive because nearly 70% of the tokens are hapaxes. This measure of P is counter-intuitive for two reasons: the affix is barely recorded in the corpus and this affix is rarely used in native-English. If uber- had a total of 1,000 tokens and 679 were hapaxes, then the measure of P of 0.67925 would feel more accurate because the affix *uber-* would be understood to be used frequently with established words as well as to create new words. In the real world outside of the COCA, the affix *uber-* became popular with "geeks" and computer games through the use of slang, such as the well known phrase (to gamers) "*uber-leet*" which translates as "*super elite*". As this prefix gained popularity, it grew to be used by the general public as an alternative choice for super, which is what the German word *über* actually means. This spike in popularity of creating new types is shown by the number of hapaxes, but the limited number of total tokens also shows that the affix has not gained full acceptance and is not commonly used. Thus the measure of P in this instance is overstated; it does not reflect the reality of the true, low productivity of the affix.

Table 9

Affix	*Types*	*Hapaxes*	*Tokens*	*P*
-y	741	236	303,625	0.00078

The last major discrepancy between perceived productivity and the measure of P occurs with the results for the suffix *-y*. Due to its exceedingly large number of possible bases and the high frequency of use, *-y* has the highest record of tokens of all the evaluative affixes. One would expect -y to be highly productive, yet it experiences the lowest rating of P. This problem may be inherently due to the inadequacy of capturing evaluative uses of *-y*.

There are two reasons why I believe the productivity of *-y* is registering so low. First, the register (the environment of a word) in which we use *-y* to form hapaxes may be too difficult to capture in the corpus. Native-English users may make many words diminutive by adding the suffix *-y*; however, this is usually done in a very informal register or in a mocking manner. Consider an older brother mocking a younger sibling: "Do you have a little *crushy-wushy*?" The term "*crushy-wushy*" is a one-off, one-time-use word made up on the spot. Native speakers will understand that this term implies the older brother is teasing the younger sibling about liking someone. However, this rhyming word is highly unlikely to be recorded in a corpus because of its register; the corpus does not typically capture insults made to siblings, unless these are fictional insults written in a book which the corpus incorporates.

These types of derivatives using *-y* in a private register are not often recorded in the main sources of the COCA: literature and publicly accessible speech, such as news shows or television shows. Instead, these types of words remain one-time-use, informal, and often unrecorded even though they are valid examples of evaluative affixation.

The second reason for the low productivity is that *-y* is so highly used in forming some very well-known words, the frequency, and consequently the token count, is dramatically raised. The diminutive familiar name for Lawrence (*Larry*) was recorded 23,125 times and experiences the highest frequency of all familiar-name creations. There are many hypothetical reasons why Larry is the most common name; perhaps *Larry* is the name of an anchor for a news show that is fed into the COCA. This would raise the frequency of the word *Larry* every time he appeared. The massive number of hits for the name *Larry* detracts from the impact productivity of familiar names that are hapaxes, and therefore new creations, such as *Craiggy*, *Sibby*, or *Tiffy*.

To demonstrate the effect of high-frequency common words significantly detracting from P, I sorted the evaluative instances of -y into four categories: diminutives, familiar names, nicknames, and rhymes. I recorded the statistics of each group and then removed the top three highest-frequency words from each. This significantly lowered the token count from each group and lowered the total tokens of *-y* by almost 100,000 hits.

Table 10: New -Y Suffixation

Affix	*Types*	*Hapaxes*	*Tokens*	*P*
-y original	741	236	303,625	0.00078
-y new	729	236	216,942	0.00109
-y diminutives	311	127	44,758	0.00284
-y new dims.	308	127	24,247	0.00524
-y familiar names	183	17	251,591	0.00007
-y new fams.	180	17	189,679	0.00009
-y nicknames	109	29	5,937	0.00489
-y new nicknames	106	29	2,108	0.01376
-y rhymes	138	63	1,339	0.04705
-y new rhymes	135	63	908	0.06938

This measure improved P in each category and raised the overall rating of P for the suffix *-y*. However, despite *-y* being one of the most frequently used evaluative affixes, with a very large range of bases, and despite this effort to equalise the "unfairness" of the high frequency words lowering the productivity of *-y*, it is still the lowest ranking affix in productivity.

Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated that English contains and uses evaluative morphology. If a rough total is taken of all the tokens demonstrating evaluative affixation (roughly 410,811 at the time of collection) and that total is divided by the total count of all tokens in the COCA (roughly 400,000,000), we see that 0.103% of all tokens are

evaluative. This percentage may be low but it validates the life of evaluative affixation in the English language.

This data demonstrates the existence of evaluative affixation in contemporary English. However, discovering the problems of applying P to this data has shed light on the inherent difficulties of quantitatively measuring productivity in general. The struggle to understand the productivity rating of *-y* outlines a major hurdle for accurately measuring productivity. If a process occurs outside the register of the corpus it is not being accurately recorded. If it experiences a very high frequency for some familiar derivatives, the productivity is not accurately calculated, as these derivatives detract from the impact of many newly created words, shown as hapaxes in the corpus. Another problem occurs when comparing similar affixes that experience different restrictions, as demonstrated in the comparison between micro- and *nano-* versus *pico-* and *tera-*. These affixes reveal the paradox in the Equation of P: the more well known an affix is and intuitively perceived as productive, the less productivity according to the measure of P the affix may actually experience in native-English. This problem is also expressed in the extremely high value of P for the prefix *uber-*. The Equation of P will produce a high rating of productivity even if a process gives rise to very few types, as long as those types are hapaxes. This means affixes perceived as being less productive occur with fewer tokens, yet may have comparatively more hapaxes due to their limited presence in the corpus, and thus exhibit high productivity according to the Equation of P.

In order to more accurately calculate productivity, I believe another equation is needed. There is a need to address the problems encountered in this research, i.e. data being outside the register or clashes in perceived versus calculated productivity. I believe these fixes must be addressed in an equation, as online corpora will never be able to catch all spontaneous uses of evaluative affixation, and I cannot find fault in the data collected through the COCA. Additionally, English is constantly changing and future studies of evaluative affixation using online corpora will return different results. As these evaluative affixes take on new roles, their productivity will change. If the prefix *mega-* becomes "uncool" in the future or there is a technological breakthrough in science spurring a surge in the use of the prefix *pico-* by the general public, the productivity rating will change, and change drastically given enough time. Because productivity is ultimately the measure of the ability of a process to lead to the creation of new words, any changes in popularity in contemporary English will lead to changes in measures of productivity.

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Appendix A

List of familiar names created with –y:

Andy 11,097
Anny 40
Barney 3005
Barny 6
Becky 2,307
Benjy 208
Benny 2,521
Bethy 3
Betsey 256
Betsy 2,786
Betty 6,607
Billy 12,896
Bobby 10,549
Brucey 2
Buffy 1,131
Cammy 18
Chrissy 326
Christy 1,165
Cindy 3,876
Cissy 2
Cliffy 8
Craiggy1
Craigy 1
Cristy 10
Danny 8,873
Davey 44
Debby 219
Dickey 640
Dicky 209
Dommy 1
Donny 1,064
Dotty 137
Eddy 1,369
Elly 318
Elsy 5
Emmy 34
Emy 14
Etty 10
Fergy 5
Franky 40
Franny 261
Freddy 1,471
Fredy 11
Gabby 381
Genny 29
Georgey 3
Georgy 257
Gerty 16
Gibby 116
Gilly 51
Ginny 767
Gordy 1,271
Greggy 25
Gussy 6
Gwenny 2
Harry 20,994
Herby 80
Hildy 70
Horty 37
Indy 1,624
Izzy 573
Jackey 6
Jacky 98
Jakey 14
Janey 213
Jebby 2
Jeffy 12
Jemmy 64
Jenny 4,549
Jerry 16,650
Jessy 111
Jezzy 1
Jilly 708
Jimmy 14,158
Jody 1,783
Joey 3,899
Johnny 8,667
Jonesey 6
Jonesy 35
Jonny 291

Jordy	572	Maddy	88	Ronny	52
Jorgy	1	Manny	365	Roxy	97
Jory	431	Margey	8	Ruthy	8
Joshy	1	Margy	17	Sally	60
Juby	12	Marky	8	Sammy	3
Judy	8,047	Marty	761	Samy	5
Jussy	11	Marvy	1	Scotty	176
Kandy	71	Matty	503	Shelley	1
Karly	45	Maudy	31	Shermy	1
Kassy	9	Maury	416	Sherry	2,055
Katey	14	Maxy	20	Sibby	1
Kathy	5,622	Meggy	14	Siddy	1
Katy	1,601	Mickey	4,299	Silvy	2
Kenny	5,579	Mikey	92	Smitty	35
Kevy	1	Milly	256	Sophy	25
Kimmy	62	Mindy	111	Stacey	81
Kirsty	155	Missy	976	Stacy	269
Kovy	3	Molly	5,030	Susy	17
Krissy	74	Mondy	1	Suzy	449
Kristy	263	Mordy	30	Tammy	250
Larry	23,125	Morty	39	Terry	171
Lenny	1,496	Pammy	12	Tery	4
Letty	178	Patty	264	Theddy	17
Lexy	8	Petey	10	Tiffy	1
Libbey	59	Raddy	1	Timmy	3
Libby	2,516	Raffy	6	Toddy	187
Liddy	387	Ralphy	4	Tommy	8
Lilly	1,905	Reesy	4	Tony	17,793
Lily	5,380	Reesy	4	Tony	310
Lindy	433	Richey	8	Trudy	113
Lissy	35	Richy	3	Vicky	1
Lizzy	276	Ricky	1	Vinny	66
Lonny	117	Robby	96	Willy	88
Lotty	41	Roby	22		
Lucy	6,089	Rommy	6		

Appendix B

List of nicknames created with -y:

Baghdaddy	3	Cubby	57	Knitsy	12
Baldy	35	Darkey	4	Krusty	15
Bapsy	1	Darky	19	Laffy	2
Barfy	1	Diddy	205	Lammy	1
Barny	1	Diggy	3	Lanny	26
Batty	102	Doddy	3	Lefty	383
B-diddy	1	Dopey	258	Liggy	1
Beany	27	Dougy	8	Limpy	16
Binzy	1	Fabby	5	Lippy	26
Bitsey	3	Figgy	1	Livvy	34
Blacky	19	Fitty	8	Longy	25
Blunty	2	Fitzy	56	Loudy	1
Bluppy	1	Flanny	1	Mimsy	3
Bomby	5	Flopsy	2	Mitzy	4
Bonesy	3	Frenchy	15	Moochy	7
Boobsy	1	Frischy	1	Moony	17
Bootsy	4	Fucky	1	Muggsy	4
Bridey	31	Gammy	7	Mugsy	8
Browny	4	Gampy	2	Muttsy	7
Buggsy	1	Ganny	12	Nebby	2
Butchy	6	Gimpy	34	Netty	9
Butsy	1	Goofy	86	Nevy	2
Buzzy	123	Gorty	36	Newty	1
Chappy	3	Grinchy	4	Norby	2
Chazy	2	Gumby	68	Pigsy	1
Chazzy	2	Hammy	25	Rosey	4
Chicky	70	Higgy	4	Rossy	1
Chinky	3	Humpy	29	Rummy	1
Clippy	7	Iggy	237	Santy	2
Cricky	1	Juggy	2	Scaredy	2

Schmidtty	2	Spleeny	1	Whitey	75
Sharkey	11	Steffy	1	Wifey	30
Sissy	996	Sussy	1	Wolfy	2
Smoochy	59	Swammy	1	Zhidy	1
Sniffy	1	Taddy	1	Zippy	18
Snuffy	5	Thinny	1		
Sonny	2,450	Tweety	5		

Appendix C

List of rhymes created -y:

acey-deucey	3	dotty-spotty	1	fatsy-watsy	1
achy-breaky	7	dressy bessy	7	fishy-wishy	1
airy-fairy	8	ducky-wucky	1	flippy-floppy	1
annie banany	1	easy-peasy	8	floaty-boaty	1
artsy-fartsy	8	eeney meeny	1	foxy knoxy	3
artsy-shmartsy	1	eeney-meaney	1	foxy loxy	36
arty farty	3	eensy beensy	1	freaky deacky	1
arty-farty	1	eensy teensy	1	freaky deaky	1
bunny cunny	2	eensy weensy	4	freaky-deaky	4
casey-dacy	1	eensy-beansy	1	freaky-deeky	1
catty latty	12	eensy-weensy	3	freddy-weddy	1
chewy-gooey	2	eeny meeny	9	fuddy duddy	6
chunky-funky	1	eenyteeny	1	fuddy-duddy	27
crepey-drapey	1	eenyweeny	1	fuddyduddy	3
curly-wurly	1	eeny-weeny	9	funky-punky	1
delay-shlemay	1	fancy-dancy	2	fuzzy-wuzzy	4
dillydally	7	fancyschmancy	1	geezy-peezy	1
dilly-dally	9	fancy-schmancy	11	goody-goody	46
dippy-hippy	1	fancy-shmancy	6	gretzky betzky	1
doggy loggy	35	fancy-smancy	3	groovy-doovy	2
dollsy wollsy	1	fatsy patsy	2	handydandy	1

handy-dandy 14
hanky-panky 76
heady-weddy 2
herby curby 1
hibbity-dibbity 1
hickory-dickory 1
higgledy-piggeldy 2
higgledypiggeldy1
higgledy-piggledly1
higgledy-piggledy 25
hinky-dinky 1
hippie dippy 1
hocus-y pocus-y 1
hoitytoity 1
hoity-toity 35
hokey-pokey 18
hokeypokey 4
holy-moly 2
honey-bunny 1
honky-tonky 3
hoochy-coochy 1
hoochy-koochy1
hootchy-cootchy 2
hotsy totsy 1
housy-wousy 1
hully-gully 3
humpty dumpty117
humpty-dumpty 14
hurdy-gurdy 16
hurlyburly 34
hurly-burly 76
iddy biddy 3
iggy-biggy 2
ipsy dipsy 1
itsy bitsy 235
itsy-bitsy 47
itty bitty 51
ittybitty 2
itty-bitty 79
itzy bitzy 2
ivey-divey 3
joshy-woshy 1
jussy-wussy 1
kissy-kissy 7
klunky-wunky 4
knicky-knacky2
loony-toony 1
loosey-goofy 1
looseygoosey 1
loosey-goosey 23
loosy-goosy 1
lopey-dopey 1
lovey dovey 10
mimsy-flimsy 1
namby-pamby 2
namby-pamby 8
nappy-nappy 2
nittygritty 1
okey dokey 13
onesey-twosey 2
oopsy-daisy 3
oopsy-doopsy 1
palsy-walsy 1
pitty-patty 1
popsy wopsy 4
puppy luppy 3
roly-poly 21
rooty-tooty 1
sexy-rexy 3
squeaky-deakey 1
tighty-whitey 3
topsy turvy 5
upsy-daisy 3
wakey-risey 1
wakey-wakey 1

How do the depictions of Japanese lesbian life in the short stories "Peony snowflakes of love" and "A strange tale from down by the river" correspond with accounts of lived experience?

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Abstract:

Depictions of homosexuality, particularly female homosexuality, are not yet widespread within Japanese modern literature. In this paper I intend to provide an analysis of two fictional texts which openly tackle the position and experiences of women who are, or have in the past, been involved in same-sex relationships. I will examine the extent to which "Peony snowflakes of love", written in 1987 by Osamu Hashimoto and Banana Yoshimoto's 1993 "A strange tale from down by the river" reflect the Japanese lesbian experience evidenced in academic research of the last twenty years, considering social attitudes towards marriage, conformity and the perceived importance of gender roles. Through consideration of the texts' authorship, I will raise the question of "authenticity" within the stories and also consider who has the "right" to speak for another demographic group. I will then examine possible reasons why there are so few lesbian-authored texts within the Japanese literary canon and how discussion of existing texts may contribute towards changing this fact in the future.

In order to appreciate the context within which this discussion of addressing writing by marginal groups can occur, it must be acknowledged that, particularly when viewed in comparison to other countries, Japan is a nation with a rich and long-standing tradition of female-authored literature, with works written by women as early as the Heian period (794-1185), forming in integral part of the fundamental literary canon. However, despite this early blossoming it would be centuries before women's literary works could be said to occupy a significant role within this canon, perhaps, as in many other countries, a reflection of a general social trend, within which both women's creative voices and their lived experience were seen to be of secondary importance to those of their male social and economic peers. Indeed, until the turn of the twentieth century, the majority of literature published within Japan related predominantly to only one facet of the Japanese experience: that of ethnically Japanese, male, upper-middle class heterosexuals. In recent years, due in large part to feminist and other popular movements which strove to address numerous social inequalities, writing by those from groups which have historically been marginalized, has come to be seen as equal importance, and those within the literary academy have gone some way to redressing the balance and bias of previous generations.

However, the case of literature depicting same-sex relationships is perhaps an exceptional one. In many cultures around the world, homosexuality is still taboo, if

not actually illegal, and literature which depicts such relationships is vulnerable to attack, and in some cases to censorship. Likewise, much as marginalisation is still subconsciously manifested by the constant usage of, for example, the prefaces "women's" or "black" rather than just including work by these groups within the wider definition of "literature", such writing is still often seen either as a "niche" form of writing with a uniquely homosexual audience and appeal, or else disregarded entirely. However, just as "women's writing" could never be said to reflect *only* the female experience, so "gay and lesbian literature" often explores not only the relationship of marginalised groups and individuals to society at large, but also themes of alienation, self-identity and the necessity of political recognition, which are applicable and essential explorations across the board of human experience.

Yet even within Japan, both anecdotal and academic evidence reveal that, although homosexuality is not illegal, nor is homophobia and its resulting discrimination actively addressed. In many communities, particularly those outside of urban areas, there is often a "lack of public space for exclusive homosexuality and a coherent public gay identity"(Stone 2004, p.6) and complete acceptance of those who choose to be "out" is rare. Rather, inherent conditioned homophobia is visible in widespread societal assumptions of heterosexuality. It is certainly the case that an understanding of Japanese lesbian experiences and the depiction of such through literary means is still in its infancy, due in large part to the double marginalisation faced by those in Japan who self-define both as female, and as homosexual. As one critic has succinctly and accurately stated, "lesbians have faced a double oppression in Japan – as lesbians and as women." (Summerhawk *et al* 1998, p.6). Equally, prevailing Japanese attitudes towards marriage, and more generally with regards to women's freedom, impinge upon both the actions of and attitudes towards lesbian and bisexual women.

In many areas of Japanese society, the institution of marriage still reigns supreme "as a means to achieve social adulthood and normality" (Robertson 2005, p.6) and, despite advances in women's rights, the pressure to find a partner and thereby fit into a society which even today strongly identifies characteristics of womanhood with those of homemaking and child-rearing, is immense. This is a fact reflected in real-life statistical surveys of lesbians. Within a culture in which "it is often said that marriage is not just between a couple, but between villages, families, companies, and groups" (Summerhawk *et al 2005, p.5),* those with something non-conformist to hide within their personal lives naturally feel the most strain. Cherry, in her analysis of Japanese lesbian life in the eighties, writes that, among women over 30 who would define as "lesbians", of those polled "a quarter were married" (Cherry 1992, p.407) and with regard to the future, "even among unmarried lesbians, only 71% didn't expect to wed"(Cherry 1992, p. 409). Equally, within both the short stories under consideration, homophobic prejudices are not in fact as evident as, for example, societal expectations regarding marriage.

Given that literature depicting same-sex relationships within Japan, and research relating to the lives of Japanese women appear to be gaining in prevalence as social attitudes towards homosexuality gradually shift, it seems appropriate to consider an analysis of the ways in which fiction depicting female same-sex relationships may potentially reflect or expose the lived experience of lesbians who have told their stories to academic researchers. The texts chosen for consideration within this paper each raise a number of points of interest and of potential controversy in their depictions of lesbian experience and same-sex relationships within Japan.

They are interesting precisely because they appear, in a number of ways, to corroborate the statistical and anecdotal information presented within research undertaken over the last 20 years, whilst simultaneously calling into question who is writing lesbians into their fiction and for what reasons, as well as feeding into a broader discussion on the role of literature as a vehicle through which those who can historically been marginalised may be empowered to make their voices heard.

Akemi, the narrator of Banana Yoshimoto's "A strange tale from down by the river" (original 1993) tells a piecemeal narrative of her earlier life, within which the past lesbian relationship she references is somewhat incidental, portrayed as merely one of many misdemeanours and sexual extravagancies in which she engaged: they are the "abnormal" from which she has emerged into the "normal". Although she has already rejected the "wild" (Yoshimoto 1995, p.123) sexual exploits of her past, the pivot on which the normality of her future life rests is her impending marriage. Osamu Hashimoto waits until the final few paragraphs of "Peony snowflakes of love" (1987)[1] to call into question the legitimacy of the lesbian relationship depicted. The story centres on the emerging bond between Tomeko, a gloriously stereotypical butch lesbian truck driver and Yae, a painfully awkward older woman, who eventually leaves her husband and adult children to move in with her new lover. As they share dinner, Yae tells Tomeko, characterised throughout as the epitome of the stock lesbian character, with no desire for a heterosexual relationship, "until you get married…I'll always be here" (Hashimoto 1991, p.237). Tomeko is as shocked to hear such a statement as the reader, yet, as already discussed, such ideas regarding marriage are the reality for many gay Japanese, particularly women.

It is also a seemingly faithful portrayal of "real life" Japan, a nation which McLeeland, Suganuma and Welker term "a society based on 'compulsory heterosexuality'" (McLelland *et al* 2007, p.196) which we find within the two distinct works by Yoshimoto and Hashimoto. In the former story, when her boyfriend proposes, Akemi answers "yes, of course" (Yoshimoto 1995, p.129), as though nothing could be more natural than conceding to a heterosexual, monogamous relationship, despite the fact that, sexually in the past, she has "tried absolutely everything…with women…with men" (Yoshimoto 1995, p.123). Such an answer mirrors true social attitudes which seem, essentially, to allow "dalliances", even homosexual ones, provided that they neither take place in the public sphere, nor constitute a *lasting* subversion of sexual norms. Despite her own growing affection for another woman, within "Peony snowflakes of love", Yae, as well as those around her, feels that her 26 year old daughter "might want to think about marriage" (Hashimoto 1991, p.214). Equally, Akemi's former partner, whose name we never learn, is "a well-to-do married woman" (Yoshimoto 1995, p. 139) who seems, like Akemi, and as Yae expects of Tomeko, to have merely been indulging in relationships with other women until she elects to integrate "properly" into Japanese society. Akemi is told by her ex-lover, that her rejection of her past life and her choice to embrace a normalizing, heterosexual relationship is the right thing to do because she is "not a child anymore" (Yoshimkoto 1995, p.139). Through marriage, she does nothing more than fulfil her social obligations. This perception of homosexuality as some kind of passing "phase" reveals again not only the notion that everyone is, essentially, heterosexual, but also that "the concept of 'Japanese womanhood' is achieved through the representation of women's activities as concerned solely with 'the family'".

[1] The dates given in the references refer to the English translation from the Japanese.

(Chalmers 2002, p.44) As Chalmers correctly asserts, despite the huge shift in prevailing attitudes of a post-feminist, post-modern Japan:

> There is one over-arching assumption that still remains firmly in place and overwhelmingly unchallenged in academic and popular discourse. That is, that all Japanese are heterosexual, or, at the very least require a heterosexual guise in which to operate as full members…of Japanese society. (Chalmers 2002, pp.1-2).

In a similar vein, playing with the idea of marriage politics, Hashimoto's lesbian love story employs the idea of the stereotypical "roles" within a lesbian relationship, presenting a clear "male" and "female", mirroring the heterosexual framework. Yae rejects her abusive, alcoholic husband and then settles down into a parallel "husband" and wife relationship. Tomeko is the proud, "well-muscled" (Hashimoto 1991, p.216) possessor of a "swagger" (p.230), a "crewcut" (p.207) and plays *pachinko* (p.229) on her way home from work. In contrast, Yae is a permanently apologetic, hesitant, picture of Japanese womanhood. Like "a naïve Cinderella" (p.212) she is "defenceless" (p.220) in the face of Tomeko's advances. When the two part one evening and Tomeko leaves, Hashimoto describes Yae as "like a child letting go of a parent's hand for the first time" (p.213). The overt portrayal of Tomeko as the "man" of the couple is perhaps best summarised in the line: "Yae…still couldn't reconcile herself to the fact that Tomeko Kasahagi was a woman." (p.218) Given such a presentation of heterosexualised roles within the relationship, it is pertinent to consider who it is that presents such an image of a marital situation which is so evidently only a different manifestation of "the system" which Tomeko "had vowed to never join". (p.224)

Indeed, within Japanese literature which depicts lesbian sexuality, several aspects regarding authorship demand attention. Primarily interesting is the fact that a number of the texts depicting homosexual women which are better known, certainly in the West, are not in fact lesbian-authored. This is exemplified in the cases both of "Peony snowflakes of love", written by a man, and of "A strange tale from down by the river", written by a heterosexual woman. Indeed, anyone attempting to find any Japanese literary works depicting lesbians will notice that such material is conspicuous in its relative absence. The reason for this is perhaps twofold. Primarily, as such authorship demonstrates, many lesbians within Japan still feel great difficulty in addressing and publicizing their own sexuality. This ties in to the other key point highlighted by such a lack of stories addressing lesbian themes: the relative visibility of Japanese lesbian lives within the public domain and the way in which this therefore affects the legibility of lesbian bodies within Japanese literary discourses. Chalmers writes that "the silences that surround Japanese self-identified lesbians' daily reality are both socially and self-enforced from the inside" (Chalmers 2002, p. 137). In a society where the propagation of a myth of homogeneity and the idea of shared group mentality is vital to the construction of national identity, it is hardly surprising that Japanese lesbians often choose to remain hidden, rather than leaving themselves vulnerable to prejudice. In a culture within which conformity is often perceived as fundamentally important, the situation of this group, whose "existence is largely hidden from the public" (Cherry 1992, p.207), is interesting in that it can be, and often is, kept secret. Homosexuals, as a community of practice rather than of identifiable, physical characteristics, can choose not to "come out" and thereby conceal their identity as a member of a marginalised group in a way that those of other minority populations cannot. Within the literary and cultural world, this leads to the omission of an entire group, as described by Klinger:

> If lesbians have historically been "hidden from history," then their books, papers and artwork – the records of their existence and resistance – have been no more secure. (Klinger 2005, p.74).

That is to say, lesbians are often hidden not only within actual society, but also through the absence of their stories in the realm of the written word. In Hashimoto's tale, Yae, in the midst of her own confusing feelings for another woman, suggests to her co-worker that Tomeko "must really be popular with women" and is rebuked with the exclamation: "What do you mean? She *is* a woman!" (Hashimoto 1991, p. 217). The very concept of lesbianism seems completely outside of her sphere of experience.

Equally, although in many literary traditions, the acceptance and inclusion of literature with homosexual themes has aided in encouraging the existence of a queer counter-narrative, empowering those who would once have been marginalised for their lifestyle to not only discuss, but also celebrate it; the nuance of and content of "gay" literature written by "straight" authors is necessarily different in its connotations, and problematizes the entire concept of the genre. Moreover, it leads to a perpetuation of the heterosexual male image of lesbians which has become socially and culturally ingrained. Many of Japan's best known male authors have written lesbian characters or scenes into their work. This list includes Yukio Mishima, Junichirō Tanizaki and the Nobel laureate Yasunari Kawabata. Until very recently, such male-authored works were the predominant medium through which lesbian relationships (or, more frequently, lesbian sex scenes) were presented. When the concept of lesbian sexuality was first publicly addressed in print media within Japan it was predominantly in male authored, male read magazines (McLelland 2005, p.168) as a result of which, even now within Japan, "the image evoked by the word "lesbian"….is perverted, like porno movies, especially to men." (Cherry 1992, p.408) This in turn makes it immensely difficult to find "authentic" depictions of the Japanese lesbian experience, especially within older literature. It was not until the late 1980s that the genre of lesbian writing was launched by the first publications of "coming out" stories and, most particularly in 1986, of "*onna wo ai suru onnatachi no monogatari*" (Welker 2004, p.131), a text which became fundamental for Japanese lesbian women in their construction of an identity and a community. Before this point, as McLelland states:

> It is difficult to distinguish between fantasy writing in which lesbian desire was scripted….and that which was written by women themselves who experienced same-sex desire. (McLelland 2005, p.84)

Not only do male depictions of lesbianism often fall into such a category, but Hashimoto, for example, could easily also be said to be less than sympathetic in his portrayal of what could have been a very positive portrait of lesbianism. Instead he depicts Tomeko, towards the end of the story, starting "to regret that she was only a woman" (Hashimoto 1991, p. 236), leaving the reader with the impression that both she and the author feel that the very fact of her gender undermines the entire validity of her same-sex relationship with Yae. Equally, once the action of the story has become entirely focused on the romantic life and physical space which the two women now share, he describes "Tomeko's broad and, *from a man's point of view*, shapely shoulders" (Hahimoto 1991, p.234 *emphasis added*), even as Yae is touching and commenting upon her breasts. Along with his somewhat negative exploration of Yae's view of her sexual relationship with Tomeko, such authorial choices in narration challenge the reader's potential perception of such a lesbian relationship as either successful or desirable.

The choice of non-lesbian authors to address lesbian themes within their works may well also lead us to question their motivations for doing so, especially if the depictions are, in some cases, less than idealistic. It is therefore not only through the "facts" of lesbian characters' lives that we can attempt to gain an insight into the status of homosexuals within Japan. The very way in which an author such as Hashimoto, as a representative of the non-marginalised, conventionally privileged group, betrays his society's prejudices and expectations is highly informative in itself. Although we can never entirely know an author's intentions, "Peony snowflakes" does appear to demonstrate a male view of lesbianism that is still prevalent because, through the very fact that is still privileges the male gaze and patriarchal hierarchy, it does not threaten the status quo in a way that widespread acceptance of true lesbian sexuality might. As Wieringa et al comment:

> Potentially the presence of women's same-sex pleasure can expose the spurious stability of the family/nation nexus upon which the Japanese earthquake-proof temple is built. (Wieringa *et al*, 2007 p.41).

These two texts raise a number of other questions relating to the role of literature in relation to "real" life experience. Even if both texts had been lesbian-authored, we can never state that literature has any duty to reflect social realities. Equally, we cannot simply superimpose fictionalised narratives over the experiences of Japanese women who identify as "lesbian" in an attempt to match up the effect that their lives and "true" social attitudes towards them may have on the depiction of female same-sex relationships within the literary sphere. However broadly research is conducted on actual lesbian lifestyles within Japan, any account will always be subject to individual bias and idiosyncrasies: one person's experience will never entirely reflect that of another and "the Japanese lesbian experience" cannot be neatly parcelled up as one coherent whole.

However, it remains the case that these two fictional works and their characters can nevertheless be seen as important, creative responses to the society of their authors. No writer can create literature in isolation, shut off from the social discourses which surround them, and both Yoshimoto and Hashimoto appear to address, through their short stories, a number of social pressures, expectations and attitudes which are also evidenced in the personally narrated experiences of lesbian women within modern Japanese society.

It is clear that many literary depictions of Japanese lesbian life may be far from the reality faced every day by homosexual women in a society which often seeks to normalize their relationships through its emphasis on marriage, and its still existent culture of relative silence surrounding marginalised groups. Yet, the very presence of depictions of lesbianism within any literature is perhaps a step in the direction of openness and liberation for an historically neglected demographic group. Equally, the growth of same-sex literature both as a genre within Japan, and within wider literary study, can have positive implications for the visibility and representation of those who identify as gay or bisexual. As Robertson writes:

> Over the past five to ten years, the diversity and pluralities that in dynamic tension with dominant singularities constitute gendered and sexual identities, experiences and discourses in contemporary Japan have finally become increasingly important fields of academic enquiry, interpretation and representation. (Robertson 2006)

Texts such as the two discussed merit analysis not only as literary works in their own right, but also as documents which can shed much light on both prevailing social attitudes towards lesbianism within Japan and the continuing relative absence

of queer, female voices in the written tradition. It is perhaps through criticism of the male gaze within texts such as Hashimoto's, and engagement with the ideas surrounding marriage within Japanese society visible in Yoshimoto's work that future female homosexual authors of lesbian texts might become empowered to tell their stories.

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What is Spanglish? The phenomenon of code-switching and its impact amongst US Latinos

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Abstract

Considering the significant numbers of Spanish speakers in the United States and resulting linguistic strategies in an English language dominant context, the phenomenon of code-switching is examined in this paper as an important element of 'border culture'. Focus is given to linguistic and sociocultural code-switching practices based on research in US Latino communities, and the differences between code-switching and code-mixing are analysed alongside attitudes towards the phenomenon. In asking the question, what is Spanglish? the terms "Latino", and "Hispanic" are problematised, demonstrating that these labels carry strong connotative meanings, and in this way, the use of the term "Spanglish" can be seen as a political assertion of a border identity.

Introduction

In this paper I will be examining a concept and most interestingly, its contextualisation within the US Latino community. Considering that Spanish and English are languages which rate amongst the most dominant worldwide (Pountain 1999), and that in the United States, in 2003, a staggering 38.8 million people were registered as Spanish speakers, this context is certainly significant (Stavans 2003, p. 5). Code-switching is a phenomenon of language contact (Poplack 1988), and in the case of the United States, this contact stretches back to the conquest of New Mexico in 1848, which initiated patterns of resistance and convergence that would characterise the language relationship until today (Gonzales 1999). Not limited, however, simply to the field of linguistics, Johnson (2000) locates the experience of the US Hispanic community in the vast complexities of bilingualism, multicultural experience and group cultural distinctiveness. Surrounded by waves of "hysteria", both from the press and within academia, about the future of Spanish and its integrity faced with the "invasion" of English (Pountain 1999, p.33), this phenomenon of "border culture" (Gonzales 1999, p. 30) may point beyond just language variation or change to a much broader cultural shift in the United States. Therefore I will attempt to analyse elements of code-switching in order to better understand its nature and use within the Latino community, focussing particularly on what is known as "Spanglish". By examining these linguistic phenomena in the Latino community I hope to shed some light on how this reflects the sociocultural situation of the Latino population in the United States.

Latinos in the US

Considering that code-switching has not been observed as a homogenous occurrence, but varying according to context and language mix (Gardner-Chloros, 1997), it is perhaps prudent to reflect briefly on the particular settings and communities. Furthermore, considering that some of the terms used within this debate are regarded as complex and in contention, I shall mostly be using the terminology in the generous sense of their various meanings, clarifying as necessary in the course of the text.

Within the United States the Hispanic community is a sizable minority. In 2002 (Morales) it was predicted that within 20 years it would overtake the African-American community as the largest minority group, yet US Census Bureau statistics claim that this has already occurred (2006). Whilst it is nearly impossible to generalise about a community with migrant roots in such a variety of Latin American, Caribbean and Iberian nations, the three largest groupings are Mexican-Americans, Puerto Rican-Americans and Cuban-Americans (Johnson 2000). It has been noted that the Hispanic community's significant impact on the US "language landscape" is somewhat due to the astonishing growth of the Spanish speaking population in the US, the "cultural, demographic, and geographic factors" promoting the strength of the Spanish, and the Latino valuing of their own bilingualism (Johnson 2000, p.196). In addition to this, the economic and employment conditions in which much of the community finds itself, encourages strong protective bonds to their own culture and language (Johnson 2000). However, the increasing importance of English to this community must not be underestimated, as much as for economic necessities as the new cultural possibilities that the subsequent and younger generations are exploring (Zentella, 1997).

Code-switching: a complex phenomenon

It seems natural to begin with a definition of the phenomenon. Montes-Alcalá describes it as "a natural linguistic phenomenon" in bilingual communities where two or more languages come into contact and alternate at the level of clauses and sentences (2000, p.218). Gumperz, quoted in Zentella, clarifies a little more, positing code-switching as a "juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems" (1997, p.80). However, beyond these occasionally vague descriptions, in the research literature, a wide variety of terms are found such as "code-shifting" and "code-mixing" to which researchers seem to either propose contradicting definitions, despair at the "doomed" efforts to distinguish between them (Zentella 1997, p.81), or declare the unimportance of using any particular term over another (Poplack 1988). Taking into account that in reality, it is often difficult to distinguish the category of utterance, even when the definition is decided, for reasons of clarity I will distinguish code-switching as the alternation of two different language varieties that remain grammatically unchanged (i.e. portions that are unmistakably Spanish or English) and code-mixing as the convergence of two languages that integrate into each other's grammar characterised by borrowings such as calques or integrated loanwords (Gardner-Chloros 1997).

Perhaps it also necessary to further problematise the phenomenon in question by highlighting the fact that the research carried out into code-switching often produces questionable data due to the fact that linguistic behaviour is highly sensitive to context which makes studying any kind of "natural" behaviour complicated. This is especially the case when code-switching is racially stigmatised in any way (Montes-

Alcalá 2000). Toribio (2002) comments that the research environment is often relatively artificial, with the participants often being asked to code-switch; however, whilst this may not necessarily represent spontaneous speech it is still useful for highlighting linguistic and syntactic patterns. In her research, Poplack (1988) noted that different data collection methods had a quantitative effect on the data produced and also reflected that researchers were prone to confuse bilingual behaviour and make insufficient distinctions between communicative and stylistic language use, thus falsely contributing to the already misleading miscellany of code-switching observations. In light of Torres' condemnation of "meaningless" (1991, p.265) studies which focus purely on the quantitative occurrences of the phenomenon without making any significant sociological or linguistic analysis, I will use the perspectives of Toribio (2002) to simplify and divide code-switching into linguistic and sociocultural elements. Whilst I shall attempt to make a division between these two perspectives it is important to recognise that the two elements are undoubtedly and profoundly linked and there is much crossover.

Attitudes towards code-switching

Alongside the vast analytical research and literature involving this aspect of bilingual discourse, much has also been said concerning the attitudes of those within and outside of communities involved in code-switching towards this practice. Lourdes Torres' work with a suburban Puerto Rican community in New York recorded that over 50% of her participants had negative feelings towards the mixing and switching of codes (1987), whereas Montes-Alcalá, in her more recent research in California amongst Spanish speaking youths, noted a shift in the traditional opinion of code-switching towards a more positive appreciation (2000). However, in a different community in the same state, Toribio (2002) found a considerable range of attitudes including utter rejection, apprehensiveness and even positive opinions. Montes-Alcalá (2000) noted in her research that whilst attitudes gave an insight to the perceived status and stigma of the practice of code-switching, such opinions did not necessarily dictate whether the user was able to or actually did engage in code-switching. However, Toribio noted that when a participant expressed strong disapproval or the sentiment that the behaviour was antithetical to their identity, code-switching occurrence and ability was drastically reduced, thus confirming the idea that such practice is not necessarily a part of bilingual experience (2002). Whilst there is a strong code-switching presence in the media, Johnson commented that outside the Hispanic community there is also a sense of negative opinion from the US Anglo population, who assume that code-switching is indicative of a rejection of full participation in American society and a refusal to learn 'proper' English on the part of Latinos (2000).

Linguistic perspectives

The linguistic perspective asks whether code-switching, as a communicative form, sees Spanish maintained within an English context or become subordinate and ultimately "corrupted" by English (Toribio 2002). One of the early criticisms of code-switching accused participants of using it as a linguistic "crutch" in order to compensate for linguistic incompetence (Montes-Alcalá 2000). However, whilst researchers like Zentella have found that code-switching for reasons of lexical ignorance does occur, due to the varying levels of education within the immigrant community, and often quite commonly in children (1997), most research has

concluded that this only accounts for a very small percentage of usage (Johnson 2000). As well as investigating whether participants knew the equivalent term in the other language (Zentella 1997), smoothness and fluency of code-switching was cited as a negation of the "crutch" hypothesis (Poplack 1988). In order to examine the claim that code-switching represents a linguistic innovation and creativity it is perhaps important to look at some of the patterns and mechanics behind the phenomenon (Gonzales 1999). Poplack describes how early research thought code-switching to be an exception to "systematic and rule-governed" language variation (1988, p.44). However, she describes the trends of research resulting in the creation of rigid rules and frameworks, which were only to be discounted for their inability to function across different contexts and language pairs. Whilst the many attempts to create universally applicable rules based on the grammar of the languages in question have been contested (Poplack 1988), unlike the popular assumption that it is just another form of bilingual communication, there are some distinctive patterns (Toribio 2002).

Poplack describes two general syntactic constraints as the "free morpheme constraint" which "prohibits mixing morphologies within the confines of the word", e.g. "*run*-iendo" and would not be used by a Spanish-English bilingual, and the "equivalence constraint" which ensures that both "sides of the switch are grammatically correct according to their particular rules, e.g. "A *tree* verde" would not be possible as it violates the English ordering of words (Poplack 1988, p.47). Code-switching has also been described as occurring intersententially and intrasententially (Zentella 1997). Switching within a sentence – intrasententially – as well as following the aforementioned rules suggests that a certain level of linguistic skill and proficiency is necessary for code-switching to occur – which certainly counteracts the negative connotations of the 'lexical gap' explanation. Counter to the idea of Spanish being lost through the process is the fact that as English dominance increases, calquing is employed rather than just using an unintegrated loanword, thus demonstrating a creative use of Spanish (still adhering to its structure) rather than a simple shift to English (Torres 1987). Considerably more could be said about the linguistic side of code-switching as the mechanics of the phenomenon are undoubtedly complex, however, for the purpose of this examination it is most important to note that those who are more proficient in the two languages being combined, such as fluent bilinguals, demonstrate ever more complex instances of switching (Johnson 2000).

Sociocultural perspectives

Interestingly, in one of Toribio's case studies, one of the participants, Guadalupe, demonstrated a lack of Spanish ability, and whilst her code-switching could be assigned to lexical need, she still codeswitched when need was not an issue (2002). Zentella also shows evidence that 90% of what her Puerto Rican community codeswitched, was in the same sense, unnecessary (1997). Therefore it seems appropriate to ask the question, why codeswitch? One helpful description is again Zentella's as she describes code-switching as "a conversational activity via which speakers negotiate meaning with each other" (Zentella 1997, p.113). It is here that the sociocultural approach seems to offer some insight into the reasons behind the behaviour. In a positive interpretation of code-switching dialogue, Torres (1987) acknowledges that many of the decisions made reflect a certain discourse strategy. Researchers have identified reasons behind the switching as related to strategies of "clarification" and "emphasis", switching in order to establish control, i.e. in a

child/parent scenario, for "marking" or "bracketing" certain parts of the speech such as direct speech and for "footing" in order to highlight a re-alignment of the narrator's role and to appeal to the interlocutor (Johnson 2000, Torres 1987, Zentella 1997). The role of the interlocutor seems to be key in this process as the perceived linguistic proficiency of the addressee seems to be important in determining the speaker's linguistic choice (Gonzales 1999) and of course this is something that parents stress to their bilingual children in order for appropriate communication (Zentella 1997). Punctuating speech with discourse markers such as "y'know" is another example of code-switching to ensure that the interlocutor is following the dialogue (Torres 1987, p. 74).

As well as simply a way of proving the speaker has some knowledge of English or Spanish (Johnson 2000), code-switching is deeply linked to the issue of identity. It was noticed by Johnson (2000) that those who had the highest rates of code-switching were also those who had the most significant and balanced contact with the rest of their community. One way in which code-switching can be seen to link to identity is the fact that it functions to preserve Spanish as the use of English does not in fact change the structure of Spanish (Johnson 2000). With the perceived need to learn English for education and employment success in the United States code-switching allows the Hispanic community to maintain important cultural and linguistic traditions (Gonzales 1999). Perhaps even more subversively, it could be interpreted as a resistance to the "Americanisation" that the host culture threatens to force upon them (Gonzales 1999). Anzaldúa is quoted in Johnson (2000, p.177) as describing ethnic identity as being "twin skin to linguistic identity" and Stavans has argued that language constructs our worldview (Johnson 2000). In this sense, learning a new language for many immigrants to the US is like learning a new cultural identity. However, what we see in code-switching is the mediation of two languages and two cultures, which can be interpreted as an act of "self-reflection" and construction (Toribio 2002, p.98) or even more radically as the creation of a "new powerful voice" (p.110). Finally, what is crucial about code-switching is that whilst it is important to understand the speaker's bilingual ability in both languages, it is equally as crucial to understand how the particular monolingual codes are used within the community as well as community specific cultural and bilingual patterns (Poplack 1988). For example even though a speaker may have the bilingual ability to code-switch, without membership to a code-switching community he or she will lack the necessary practice and social knowledge (Toribio 2002). The significance of community in this sense seems to suggest the importance of the phenomenon beyond a purely linguistic nature.

What is Spanglish?

This leads us onto the question of what is Spanglish? Before even beginning to tackle this question in any concrete way, it is perhaps imperative that we deal with some of the terminology that has been so far used without clarification. I have decided to use the terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" equally and without any sense of differentiation. However, as previously mentioned, the community or communities that are encapsulated by such terms are in no way homogenous. Difficulties arise in the terms when their origins and political insinuations are explored, uncovering right wing, assimilationist and nationalist motives behind the use of the term "Hispanic" which favours a unity based on language, whilst the term "Latino", no less complexly, arose from a desire to distance the community from its Iberian heritage and exclusion of Portuguese speaking Brazilian-Americans, alluding instead to themes of shared

culture and race (Morales 2002). I consider the term "Spanglish" therefore, alongside these other terms, as an "abstraction" (Stavans 2003, p.12) whose varied definitions are politically and ideologically motivated. However, what is interesting for our purposes is to examine the ways in which this has been done and therefore what it means to use the term "Spanglish".

Johnson defines the term through the lens of language, stating that it is the particular combination of Spanish and English language contact, with Spanish being the dominant of the pair (2000). Pountain also confirms that whilst including code-switching, Spanglish is characterised by a version of Spanish that is "lexicalised" by English, which would incorporate 'code-mixing' into the definition (1999, p. 35). Stavans, a US Latino professor who has spent considerable time researching and promoting the phenomenon hints at the complexity of Spanglish by appropriating Herbie Hancock's description of jazz: "It is something very hard to define, but very easy to recognize" (Stavans 2003, p.5). Whilst later attempting a more concrete explanation of Spanglish as "The verbal encounter between Anglo and Hispano civilizations." (2003, p.5), the link to jazz is quite significant as it draws comparisons with a creative and innovative force of the lower classes which moved from subordination to a place of power and status amongst higher echelons of society. However, Latino journalist and poet Ed Morales in his 'manifesto' for Spanglish takes this broad definition even further stating that "Spanglish is what we speak, but it is also who we Latinos are, and how we act, and how we perceive the world." (2002, p.3). This appears to be an attempt to replace the aforementioned problematic terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" with 'Spanglish' as Morales prefers the way it expresses a unity in what the community is 'doing' rather than where they came from (2002).

Despite these seemingly positive characterisations of 'Spanglish' it seems that the popular understanding, often expressed in the US media, of the term does not quite carry the same connotations. Associated with "Tex-Mex" as a pejorative term (Zentella 1997, p.81) for the code-switching practices of the Latino population, Pountain has announced that both term and phenomenon have been "universally ridiculed" (1999, p.35). Partly due to the influence of the Real Academia Española, amongst others, Spanglish appears to be a term that carries a negative connotation to describe the feelings of disdain towards US Spanish-English code-switching practices (Toribio 2002). This is best expressed through the association of the term with a "bastardized language" (Morales 2002, p.5) and the claim that Spanglish is the "trap" preventing Hispanics from full assimilation (Stavans 2003, p.3). However, the fact that it is a phenomenon that is spread in varying capacity throughout the entire Spanish-speaking world by means of the media and relational influences suggests again that there is something more significant occurring than popular assumption allows (Stavans 2003). Linguistically, the significance of 'Spanglish' is similar to that which we have seen in our brief glance at code-switching, and the reactionary fears of it corrupting Spanish have been calmed somewhat by academic investigation that suggests that Spanish is not structurally changed yet given expanded possibilities (Pountain 1999) due to the "natural language evolution" that is occurring (Torres 1987 p.71). Whilst forms of "Spanglish" vary wildly between different communities, its presence in the media is serving to standardise terms and forms (Stavans 2003). Whilst it is still unclear whether we are dealing with an existent language evolving, a new language emerging, or simply just a form of bilingual language contact, De Genova and Ramos-Zayas have called for Spanglish not to be labelled a dialect as it

implies a certain inauthenticity and an implicit association with the racially stigmatised "Black English" (2003, p.171).

One helpful conceptual tool in attempting to investigate Spanglish, is the notion of "border" and "hyphenated" identities (Johnson 2000, p.160) which describe US Hispanic experience as being caught between two languages and cultures and in continual translation. Zentella takes the idea of "borderlands" further describing US Latinos as stuck between the "prestigious English monolingual world" and the "stigmatized Spanish monolingual world" located within the USA (1997, p.114). The creation of a "hybrid language" (Gonzales 1999, p.26) then can be seen as a way of stating that they belong to "both worlds" and that neither should have to be given up (Zentella 1997, p.114). Morales essentially sees this hybrid language and culture as a denial of the dichotomy that it sits between, negating the racial purity and white supremacy that seeks to repress the Latino community (2002). Seen in this light, the way that the Hispanic community is beginning to use the label "Spanglish" to describe itself can be understood as a transformation and a rehabilitation of the term (Zentella 1997). The concept of Spanglish then, whilst useful in describing the hybrid language creation that is arguably occurring, is perhaps best understood as a challenge to the essentialist monoculturalism and established patterns of "categorisation" (Morales 2002, p.7) of the US. The "democratic" nature of Spanglish, which is purportedly used across a variety of class identities (Stavans 2003, p.20), further demonstrates the "transnational" and even 'transracial' sympathies of a postmodern border crossing/eradicating phenomenon, as older patterns of inclusion and exclusion are replaced with new hybrid forms (Morales 2002, p.7).

Standard Spanish?

In responding to the question of whether it matters if Latinos do not use 'standard' Spanish it is important that we remind ourselves of the fact that 'Latinos' are in no way a homogenised group and therefore when talking about the Spanish that they speak, the inclusion of the word "standard" implies a certain motivated intention, namely the hegemonic manoeuvring for power both within and between minority groups and by the dominant majority social groups against minorities. It also is not without a certain irony to attempt to speak of a "standard" language when the very language used to describe and codify the language in question is not agreed upon. However, perhaps the first important question to ask is to "whom" exactly the language choice of the Hispanic population would be significant. This perhaps can be viewed from two perspectives, those from within the community and those outside of it.

Unlike English, the Spanish language has a regulatory body, the Real Academia Española, which serves to standardise and officially legislate the language across the Spanish-speaking world in order to preserve its "acknowledged and much prized" linguistic unity (Pountain 1999, p.34). For such a prestigious enterprise, the fact that the Spanish language is being merged with its traditional enemy, the English language, is a significant occurrence and to such language purists the implications are largely negative (Stavans 2003). Torres also notes that academically there has been "an almost exclusive interest in deviations from standard Spanish" (1991, p.255). Nevertheless, most would agree that due to Spanish not being a *lingua franca* like English, it is more likely to remain unified (Pountain 1999, p.34). It seems probable however, that the most important reaction to the Latino community not speaking a "standard" or mutually intelligible Spanish would come from within the community

itself, given that the Spanish language is one of the most visible unifying factors amongst such a diverse and partly diasporic community (Johnson 2000). One of the four main Hispanic cultural themes as identified by Johnson (2000) was a strong tie to the Spanish-language. This is evidenced by the strong desire that parents have to teach their children Spanish and by the fact that many who rejected it in childhood often return to learn it (De Genova & Ramos-Zayas 2003). However, whilst this appears to tie in with the theme of unity and togetherness, upon closer inspection, it seems that a sense of "standard" Spanish is no more than a myth in the United States. Using Tajfel's "intergroup-distinctiveness framework" (Gonzales 1999, p.27) it becomes clear that the some Hispanic communities compare their language to other groups' "versions" of Spanish as that is the unifying element of the group. For example De Genova and Ramos-Zayas demonstrate examples of Puerto Rican and Mexican animosity between each other based on their perceived language standards and hierarchical judgements (2003). In this case then, the very concept of a 'standard', or for want of a better word, 'best' Spanish is what causes friction between the two groups. Gonzales noted that the older generation was more concerned about the 'quality' of Spanish spoken than the younger Latino generations (1999). Perhaps then this can be seen as a sign that the myth of 'standard' Spanish and the hierarchical notions laid upon national/ancestral differences is being left behind in order to embrace the hybrid border culture of Spanglish and the freedom and unity it brings.

In conclusion, having briefly examined a phenomenon of bilingual language contact in the context of the US Hispanic/Latino community, it must be said that this vast area of evolving research and the size and scope of this paper has not permitted anything close to a comprehensive investigation of the issues in question. Nevertheless, I have attempted to problematise some of the issues that the question raises and expose some of the myths that simplify a complex phenomenon, transforming it into a stigmatised and denigrated practice. Whilst it is possible to affirm, as Torres does, that "all languages incorporate borrowed items from other languages" (1987, p.64) and that the code-switching observed in the United States is a natural part of language contact and even evolution, the particular context, history and communities involved in the US seem to be pointing towards a unique phenomenon and shift beyond the purely linguistic. The polemic concept of Spanglish appears to be a figurehead for a much larger cultural shift in a land that historically has been central to the fusion and creation of new cultures. In fact it could even be claimed that Spanglish, for the Hispanic community, not only represents liberation from the black/white dichotomy of tradition and assimilation but also can be seen as a signpost pointing toward a new "abstract nationhood" (Morales 2002, p.15).

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Behind the Notebook: Following English-Spanish Adolescent Code-Switching

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Abstract

This article follows an English-Spanish bilingual adolescent youth group and their habits of code-switching. It explores the background, context, linguistic elements and other factors in order to understand the choices behind the use (or lack) of code-switching in this particular community.

Introduction

Walk into any international airport, a city grocery store, or even the local elementary school classroom and more than likely there will be a multiplicity of languages. But more than just the languages themselves, often an intriguing phenomenon is present, referred to as code-switching, when individuals alternate between two or more languages in their often rapid-fire conversations. Although it is sometimes viewed as sloppy language usage, code-switching is actually a finely controlled and nuanced tool of communication among bilinguals that is used in a vast array of contexts and purposes. The subsequent study follows several English-Spanish bilingual adolescents as they use code-switching in a wide manner of contexts in the setting of a church youth group.

What is code-switching?

Uriel Weinreich (1926-67) was one of the first linguists to use the term *code-switching* (Nilep 2006, p.4). He suggested the theory of interference of two separate linguistic varieties and that the rapid alternation, especially within sentences, was the result of indiscriminate language use in "poor parenting" (p.5). However, other linguists found this theory inadequate, and came to the conclusion that code-switching is a natural and normal phenomenon. Among those, Rogelio Reyes, in his 1976 article, suggests that code-switching differs from borrowing by the change occurring at "a clearly discernable syntactic juncture" and the added component of the switch has its own "internal syntactic structure" (Berk-Seligson 1980, p.101).

More recently, code-switching, such as defined by Rampton (1995 p.276), refers to all juxtaposition or contact of communicative codes that are received by the listeners as such. These switches serve as "contextualisation cues" which are the basis by which "speakers signal and listeners interpret what the activity is, how semantic content is to be understood, and how each sentence relates to what precedes or follows" (p.276). It cannot be studied in isolation. Rather, Heller (1988a p.2) states that code-switching must be understood in the "context of the community-wide distribution of linguistic resources…[and] the relationship of code-switching to other

forms of communicative behaviour in individual speech repertoires." Furthermore, it is different from other language contact phenomena in that it has social and discourse meaning as well as referential meaning (p.4). Thus, code-switching is both a means and a message (Scotton 1988, p.156).

Code-switching usage has been observed to have several main functions. Firstly, all code-switching signals a change of direction in some manner. This function can further be divided into changes that are "discourse-related," such as a new addressee, new topic, new segment etc., or "participant-related" indicating linguistic preference or proficiency (Rampton 1995, p.277). These various changes in direction by the bilingual speaker may be unconscious in the immediate comprehension but quite intentional choices in the brain (Heller 1988a, p.6). Furthermore, Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004 p.8) note that code-switching occurs in negotiation of identities by choosing to use the language that will best convey the rights and characteristics of the topic. However, they also remind that identity is not the only factor influencing code-switching and must not be given undue weight in exploring this language practice (p.9).

Secondly, code-switching is a "boundary-levelling or boundary-maintaining strategy, which contributes …to the definition of roles and role relationships" (Heller, 1988a, p.1). In this manner, it is used to help establish the language of intimacy versus distance (García 2005, p.27) as well as differentiate between the in-group and outsiders (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004, p.8). In many cases, it is used within the in-group to affirm solidarity, where there are shared expectations and understandings of the interpretation of code-switching (Rampton 1995, p.280).

Finally, code-switching is frequently used as a strategy to assist basic communication. García (2005 pp.28-29) notes that code-switching is often used for clarification or as a teaching device, to reach out to the other person's level of fluency, or even an as intermediate stage in language learning. In this final category, Rampton (1995, p.280) observes that code-switching is used to cross boundaries by speakers whose second language is not yet fully ingrained.

Previous research

Code-switching among youth has been a focus of multiple studies in Denmark, the entirety of which has been called the Køge Project. The linguists followed bilingual students of a Danish grade school, recording their group conversations every year for nine years. The first two studies highlighted below come from this project. My research both confirmed and challenged different aspects that were found in the Danish grade school.

The findings of the first study suggested that linguistic variation is "a means to manipulate group membership and group boundaries" especially in establishing a youth subculture (Jørgensen 2003, p.128). The researcher followed four 5th grade (age 10) Turkish-Danish bilingual students in their linguistic interaction, observing how power wielding, status roles, semantic topics, conversation topic change, control, correction, bickering, and word play were all formed around language use. Ultimately, the adolescents used whatever language components that they found useful and did not necessarily accept the language hierarchy promoted in the rest of Danish society. The second study followed the same group of bilingual Turkish-Danish students in their 7th grade year (age 12), focusing on power struggles. Esdahl (2003 p.79) states that "all conversations are also battles over power (i.e. gaining control], and in the

battles of the conversations, linguistic resources can be used as tools." Bilinguals, thus, are able to use language choice as a power tool, with its impact dependent upon relative prestige and status as well as society and group mentality.

Wielding of power is a common usage of code-switching, and I specifically looked for it in my research. Jan (2003) studies this further, tracing the usage of power-related code-switching among Malaysians between English and Bahasa Malaysian. For example, the switches could be used to indicate important points, to serve as interruptions, and to control the direction of conversation, as well as more common tactics, such as changing topics and choosing speakers. Language itself is "powerless" rather, it is the speakers who wield it who control and contribute to the conversation. In a multicultural situation like that in Malaysia, the participants of a conversation must not only be fluent in the different languages used in code-switching, but also in the non-verbal and cultural nuances that accompany each of the languages. Throughout the findings, Jan (2003, p. 49) found that switching could be tagged as a sort of "intra-ethnic identification", as well as a display of the speaker's dominance, prestige, and higher class (especially through longer stretches of the higher language).

Purpose

Code-switching is a complex and intricate language phenomenon which has resulted in many fascinating studies; however, there are many areas that merit further investigation. In this study, I hoped to explore further the use of code-switching among young bilinguals, especially focusing on the context that triggers the code-switching and the implications this has for future interactions with youth leaders. As my research continued, my question changed to explore why the code-switching was not occurring as often as I had originally anticipated.

Speech community

In this study, I followed the language of eight to twelve bilingual Spanish-English 4th through 10th graders (9-16 years old) who were students in a youth group of a local bilingual church in the inner city of southern Minneapolis, Minnesota, US. All the youth were fluent in English and in Spanish and spoke Spanish at home. The youth group was evenly split between boys and girls and was led by five college students from a local liberal arts college. Most of the leaders had some Spanish-language experience and had been with the youth group for two to three years. I was one of the founders of the youth group and had been serving with the church for three years, as well as being conversationally fluent in Spanish. Because of this, I was accepted by the church in this role and I was familiar with many of the youth, so their behaviour remained consistent while I was observing.

Methodology

For five consecutive Thursdays, I observed the youth during the game, lesson, and meal time for approximately two hours, giving me about ten hours of data. Data collection was done through handwritten note-taking and unobtrusive listening; pseudonyms were used for all the youth. One of the other youth leaders was also a linguist, and he would sometimes offer his observations as well.

My initial expectation based upon previous observation and research was that code-switching would be a commonly-used tool among these young bilinguals. I

expected it to be a key part of their identity, especially since they live in the same Latino community and would choose to use it as a form of solidarity. Specifically, I hypothesised that they would use it in the situations of the game and the lesson, as well as in the social relationships of authority, translation and teaching, and solidarity. Overall, I was to find that this original hypothesis was not complex enough to account for the practice of code-switching among this specific group, and may have stemmed from a limited understanding regarding the depth and control of the youths' switching to accomplish various factors.

Data and analysis

Code-switching can be divided into two types: conversational and situational. Conversational code-switching is described by Gumperz (1982 cited in McClure and McClure 1988, p.34) as the juxtaposition of two or more different codes within the same speech exchange; it refers to the specifics of language description and interchange. Situational code-switching, on the other hand, occurs when the code alternates as a result of the setting, participants, topics, and other boundaries; it is greatly influenced by the social setting (p.33). I will examine both of these types of code-switching in light of my observations from the youth group.

1. Conversational code-switching

I noticed three main patterns in the placement of the youths' code-switching to Spanish, the marked language in their speech: complete discourse thought, complete sentence, and partial sentence. Furthermore, I also noticed common tendencies in speech styles and the role of gender.

Most of the code-switching was limited to complete discourse thoughts. For example, at one point Santiago's father walked past the youth. In Spanish, he asked his son a question, who responded in kind. Santiago only returned to English after his father had left and he had rejoined his peers. The conversations were kept conspicuously separate, and the dialogue with his father did not cause him to utilise Spanish when he talked with his friends.

The second pattern was less common, when the youth switched languages for a complete sentence, before switching back again. These were mostly limited to interjections, such as "oh, good song!" or "just checking, just checking" both by Santiago in two different all-Spanish conversations between peers, and "*¡oh, mi mano!*" also exclaimed by Santiago in an all-English shouting game. Sometimes the youth used this pattern in translations, such as when one girl grabbed her cup and told her young cousin, "It's mine. *Es mío*", before returning to her conversation in English. This is a direct translation and is also a repetition between the two languages. These switches were often short and to the point.

Finally, the third pattern of a partial sentence or occurring within a sentence only happened twice when I observed the speaker either did not remember or know the English word or was translating for younger children. For example, Santiago was exclaiming about a new video game, and said "It's like so <*Spanish word*>!" Also, when Juan was teaching younger Spanish speakers how to make the peace sign, he said, "Make your fingers *en Ve*."

There were also a few tendencies within speech styles of the youth. Even though they often kept the languages separate, the speech styles of the different languages carried over into the inflection and pronunciation of the other language.

Santiago, for example, often spoke with syllable timing when he uttered English, and Marco used Spanish pronunciation when speaking English immediately after a switch. Gender also seemed to be a factor in switching, despite equal fluency between the genders, as only one girl switched with any regularity compared to the more regular switching by the boys. This gender finding seemed to be confirmed by previous research, in that the males utilised code-switching more often, perhaps for purposes of power-wielding.

2. Situational code-switching: games

I expected to hear code-switching occur during the game time; however, I only heard switching twice throughout the five sessions. I anticipated that the excitement and less-supervised nature of the games would result in more switching into a language that appeared to be more comfortable for them. Nonetheless, as I observed the games and activities, I did not notice these patterns.

The games fell into two categories: movement-oriented and word-oriented. The movement-oriented games often involved using a youth room that included such activities as pool, foosball[1], carpet-ball, and ping-pong. These type of games resulted in more intense competition, which led to more shouting and cheering; however, all of it was done in English. I heard one Spanish interjection during a movement-oriented game when Santiago was trying to trick his friend into losing concentration, and yelled, "*¡Oh, mi mano!*" At one point during this type of game, I noticed the youth engaging in wordplay that centred on anglicising their Spanish names in jest and teasing.

The word-oriented games, which focused on problem solving, question and answer, and word play, tended to occur in the sanctuary of the church, which has less room for activity and possibility for noise. Overall, the word-oriented games did not evidence much code-switching. The emotion, shouting, and potential spontaneity levels were less than in the movement-oriented games. However, there were still opportunities for code-switching, such as in Telephone (a word game where the students whisper a message through a line of peers to see how it changes in the transfer), or when their peers would misunderstand the game and the youth would be explaining to each other. Nevertheless, code-switching did not occur.

The movement-oriented games tended to have less direct supervision than the word-oriented games, though the youth leaders were always present and often participating in the games with the youth. The word-oriented games would often be personalised and adapted by the youth to fit their conventions and desires. Thus, while the amount of direct supervision might have influenced the code-switching, it did not appear to be an important factor.

3. Situational code-switching: discussion and reading

Before I began collecting data, I anticipated that I would encounter code-switching among the youth during the lesson time, specifically when they were faced with unfamiliar words. However, I found this to be a rare situation. Typically, the lesson pattern was to begin as a large group for the introduction of the topic and then split into boys and girls for the discussion time. I never noticed any code-switching in the introduction of the lesson, even if we were discussing more challenging theological

[1] British English: *table football*. This refers to the game played with players on poles and not *Subbuteo*.

words that they might not have heard in English before. Similarly, when we watched various video clips in English during the lesson time, none of them used Spanish, except briefly in the small talk before the clip started. All commentary and discussion about the video clips were always in English.

In a smaller discussion group, the girls did not code-switch at all, despite their capability. The lesson and discussion were typically led in English, and we read the Bible verses in English by the girls' choice, even though they could have used the Spanish Bible if they so desired. Although English was never required, especially since most of the leaders were bilingual, English appeared to be the accepted and approved language for teaching. This preference played itself out unexpectedly in reading. It appeared that while the youth could read English, they were not necessarily able to understand it, yet they were also uncomfortable and sometimes unable to read Spanish. For example, the male leader who was also a linguist made the interesting observation that Marco seemed to be unable to read the Spanish Bible, and he could not follow the English verses; thus, Santiago ended up reading the verses in Spanish out loud in order that Marco might understand. While this pattern did not reveal verbal code-switching, it does indicate the separation of the languages in their minds, which could have implications for their speech acts and could potentially be linked to methods of English as a Second Language education.

4. Situational code-switching: authority

I also hypothesised that I expected to see the youth switching between Spanish and English in response to authority. However, throughout my observations, I did not find this to be the case. At one point during the boys' lesson, the leaders had to become assertive in order to bring order to the class. However, even with this assertion of authority, all of the complaints and talking remained in English. I was surprised to hear this because in the body of literature discussing code-switching, authority and power struggles are the most common reason cited for switching among bilinguals (Esdahl 2003; Jan 2003). Although studies differ in the details, most agree that "the alternative forms index overarching social oppositions [such as power], making the choice of one form over the other in a specific context an interpretable act that invites conversational inferences" (Gal 1988, p.246). Furthermore, Heller (1988c p. 266) states more explicitly that "code-switching is linked to issues of power and control, on micro-level and macro-level scales." Thus, the lack of switching found in this context was unexpected, and will be explored in the analysis of this paper.

5. Situational code-switching: solidarity

Overall, I expected that solidarity would be the main reason for code-switching among the youth, and I found this to be the case. Code-switching appeared to be a form of sharing identity in developing an in-group, building friendships, and indicating exclusion; however, it was not a necessary component or the only way these relationships were indicated. The following few instances of code-switching were not even characteristic of the friendships described. Rather, the vast majority of conversations between friends, spanning a wide range of topics, were held in English.

Specifically, I expected to find code-switching to occur within teasing and insulting, because the markedness of the switch to Spanish would give more emphasis to the speech act. I did find this to occur, though not as often as I anticipated. One example of this is found in the teasing of Adriana by Santiago and Marco. The two boys switched into Spanish in order to annoy her; interestingly, despite her fluency in

Spanish, her response to them was only in English. It appeared that the two boys were using switching as a form of solidarity and exclusion; however, Adriana was refusing to respond in kind by remaining in English.

The opposite situation occurred in a scenario of insulting. One night, several of the boys were trading insults, which began in good-natured jest and gradually grew more aggressive. Although two of the boys spoke Spanish as their first language, all the insults were spoken in English. Furthermore, these two boys were good friends, but chose to engage in a spirited free-for-all rather than gang up on the third, monolingual English-speaking boy. It appeared that the strength of an insult depended upon the recipient hearing and understanding it, while the prowess of the insulter was dependent on the understanding and approval of his audience. Thus, because one boy spoke only English, all insults needed to be in English.

Code-switching was also used to indicate exclusion from a small in-group. For example, one night Santiago and Marco were returning to the church after an excursion with the youth group. They were listening to rap music through headphones and talking about girls and music in Spanish. Although they were in a 15-passenger van with seven other Spanish-speaking peers and three Spanish-speaking leaders, all the other conversation was in English, so their use of Spanish appeared to be a form of exclusion to indicate that they were having a more private conversation, even though it was evident the others could understand. These two tended to do the most code-switching with each other; thus, once, when Marco did not come to youth group, the amount of switching decreased.

Communicating within the community, especially with younger children also appeared to be a reason to switch into English. One of the girls in the youth group was talking to her young Spanish-speaking cousin who was just learning English, when she reached for her cup saying, "It's mine. *Es mío*." She had previously been speaking in English and continued in that vein afterward but switched for the benefit of the little girl. Similarly, when Juan was explaining to younger Spanish-speaking youth how to form the peace sign, he switched for their benefit, saying, "Make your fingers *en Ve*."

Analysis and conclusion

Through this study, it is evident that the choice to code-switch is regulated by far more complex factors than might be first anticipated. Gumperz (1982 cited in McClure and McClure, 1988, p.44) observed that Spanish-English code-switching in the United States was "perhaps most frequently found in the informal speech of those members of cohesive minority groups in modern urbanizing regions who speak the native tongue at home, while using the majority language at work and when dealing with members of groups other than their own." However, Gal (1988 p.246) states that "code-switching within a single turn of talk is a common, even characteristic activity of some bilingual populations, while it is rare or non-existent elsewhere." Thus there is no one universal grammar of code-switching, but rather different communities will have different code-switching habits due to different structures available and different levels of consciousness in switching.

This continuum seems to be exemplified in the findings of my study of this particular Latino group which differ from Gumperz's conclusions about Spanish-English code-switching in the US. Woolard (1988 pp.55-56) noticed a similar phenomenon among Catalan speakers bilingual in Castilian who rarely code-switched

in conversational situations, due to the relatively high prestige of Catalan and the habitual switch to Castilian in the presence of a native Castilian speaker. “In this case”, she states, “codeswitching does not index a direct association between certain topics or social realms and a specific language” (p.72).

Generally, code-switching is thought to characterise “the usage of only those members of a community who find themselves at the boundary between social groups” (Heller 1988c p. 266). This observation would seem to describe the situation of the youth group; however, this was not the case. Heller (1988a, p.9) believes that “intra-utterance code-switching will not occur in situations where, for social reasons, it is important to maintain that separation, whereas it will occur when it is important to overcome the barriers.” However, she goes on to explain that in some communities, code-switching is not available because “group boundaries are so permeable that it is impossible to know for sure which individuals to assign to the mutually–exclusive domains” (Heller 1988b, p.83). It may be that this depicts the situation I encountered in this speech community.

Most likely, the reasons behind the lack of code-switching in this particular group are varied and combinations of multiple factors. Overall, there appeared to be common speech tendencies, gender associations, and several patterns within the specific language syntax used by these youth: complete discourses, complete sentences, and partial sentences. Gender was a factor in the amount of code-switching. For future studies more fully exploring this situation, I would require additional time for further data collection. Because this particular situation required uncontrolled observation, more contexts and observation time are necessary before drawing any more conclusions. In addition, I would quantify fluency levels of the language participants, such as through a standardised oral proficiency exam for both languages. Furthermore, more questions and data would need to be gathered in order to address other variables. For example, how does age play a factor? How do these youth view their bilingual identity? How does ESL education affect code-switching or reading? How does home language use affect the switching? Does power or dominance ever play a role in their code-switching? These questions would help create a more comprehensive study that would more effectively explore the use of code-switching by youth in this bilingual community.

However, in the data I collected, there are several hypotheses that might account for this apparent lack of code-switching in addition to those presented in the research above. Firstly, their particular community could have been influencing much of the code-switching. The youth might have not needed to use code-switching to establish a community or in-group as extensively as previous research suggested. Because the youth were in their home community, in the majority, and in a comfortably familiar environment, there was no need to set themselves apart by using Spanish. When they did so among their Spanish-speaking peers, it seemed akin to the communication tool of stepping aside to carry on a conversation. There were no boundaries or barriers that needed to be crossed, as indicated in the research above. Furthermore, it might have been that this particular Spanish community did not value code-switching as highly or use it as often in their daily activities in comparison to other communities, preferring to keep the languages separate and “pure” rather than allowing them to mix.

Secondly, the youth group, structured with leaders and a lesson, might have been too closely related to the school environment, where the youth daily experienced

academics and teaching exclusively in English. Therefore, they might have expected and even preferred communication to be in English. Furthermore, because English is the language of power in the US, the students might have been more comfortable using it in a multiplicity of situations. Some linguists have suggested that the church environment was potentially authoritarian and thus suppressed the youths' choice to use Spanish. However, because this was a supportive immigrant bilingual Spanish church which normally taught primarily in Spanish, it does not make sense that this would trigger the lack of code-switching in my findings.

Another possibility is that because the youth leaders were all native-English speakers, despite being bilingual, the youth automatically fell into the unmarked choice of English as the appropriate language for communication. Gumperz and Hernández-Ch note that Spanish code-switching only occurs when all parties are Mexican-American or the speakers are dealing with personal experience (1971 cited in Berk-Seligson 1980, p.100). Heller (1988b, p.93) observes that code-switching can backfire if interlocutors do not share frames of reference or background knowledge; the youth may have perceived this difference. This potentially could have influenced their decision to not wield code-switching in issues of power, because it was important that all parties understood and had similar backgrounds in order for complaints to be made and challenged. Their parents, on the other hand, often code-switched when talking to us so that we might understand; however, as soon as they learned that one or more of us knew Spanish, they often switched into that language to make conversation easier. Thus, it could be that their parents saw less of a difference in backgrounds than the youth understood.

Finally, the youth might have been comfortable and satisfied with their English/Spanish identity and did not need to code-switch in order to establish and maintain it among their peers. Because many of these youth were born in the United States where Spanish is no longer the national language, they may be following the pattern of language loss in immigrants by slowly using more of the national language than the home language, and thus were unable to code-switch smoothly. However, all the youth in the study demonstrated that they were completely fluent in their first language of Spanish and used it almost exclusively with their families and other adults, rendering this to be a weak theory. Scotton (1988 p.162) observes that typically "the ummarked choice for many speakers having two such identities, when talking with persons similar to themselves, is a pattern of switching between the two varieties." However, she then notes that this does not occur in all bilingual communities (p.165) For example, in a French-English bilingual situation, 7-8th grade (ages 12-13) students did not switch often either due to linguistic limitations or because they were content in their identity such that it made code-switching meaningless (Heller 1988b, p.90). Similarly, Berk-Seligson (1980 p.99) notes that balanced bilingualism is often strongly associated with a lack of code-switching. The students in the youth group may also be expressing a comparable perspective.

Whether or not the youth were aware of the factors surrounding their language choice, their use of both Spanish and English would have an impact both on the public and private parts of their lives. Their lack of code-switching during this particular setting indicates a unique trend that contradicts many of the typical expectations for code-switching among Latino populations in the US. As a result, it sparks much discussion and investigation in order to understand this particular language use, which most likely would spring from a combination of the above and other factors. Regardless of the continuing debate, it evidences that code-switching is indeed a

highly sophisticated and critical tool among bilinguals, who are able to either use or discard it skillfully in all manners of settings and relationships.

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