I. Theorie, Methode und Wissenschaftsgeschichte

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Perceptual Dialectology in the 21st Century

In the _Critique of Pure Reason_ Immanuel Kant says that “concepts without percepts are empty, percepts without concepts are blind” (1781/1965). Many studies in Perceptual Dialectology (PD) aim for folk linguistic concepts, but one hopes they are not empty, for they surely involve perception in some way. Increasingly, PD studies have more directly addressed perception, but one also hopes they are not blind to the conceptual world. I want to offer a taxonomy related to percepts and concepts in PD, indicate ways in which they interact, and evaluate long-standing and newer work in order to suggest how we may go forward in studying what nonlinguists believe about the areal distribution of languages and varieties and the accompanying beliefs and ideologies that stand behind such characterizations.

1. Percepts and concepts

When I say that much PD has stressed the conceptual world, I mean that in it respondents have been presented with tasks in which they rely primarily on inner resources. For example, when respondents are given a blank or minimally detailed map and asked to “[d]raw boundaries around [...] speech areas” (Preston 1982: 21), we elicit their internal concepts of the divisions to be made and what it means for people to speak differently in different places, for we have given them no examples of people speaking. Such techniques go directly to the conceptual world of the respondents as regards language variety rather than subjecting them to the morass of perceptual data involved in the presenting regional voices.
In contrast, the perceptual focus of PD relies on respondent reactions to actual linguistic data, although such techniques are associated with the study of language attitudes (e.g., Lambert et al. 1960). Regional differences have, however, often played a part in such work (see Giles 1970 for an early example), and, in these cases, researchers hope that some aspect of the data presented will awaken an association with region and that that association will, in turn, trigger other responses. Since social psychological attitude studies are evaluative by definition (e.g., Eagly & Chaiken 2005: 745), many have focused on that aspect of variety perception alone.

I think Kant would be justifiably disgruntled with any research that pretended to reveal concepts without percepts or vice versa. The conceptual world that some PD studies try to access cannot avoid perceptions, which are provided by the respondent and cannot be controlled or often even elicited by the researcher. Respondents who draw boundaries around an area where they believe people speak differently have accessed some previous perception(s) of linguistic difference, at any linguistic level (or several such levels): “I’m going to draw a boundary around the Great Lakes area of the US because they all talk through their noses there.” “I’m going to draw a boundary around the whole north of England because ‘stud’ rhymes with ‘stood’ there.” “I drew a circle around Rio Grande do Sul because the people all sound Spanish there.” Although I have invented these internal protocols, they are derived, in some cases quite directly, from comments respondents have written on maps when carrying out PD tasks. Would that the respondent protocols were always so detailed! When queried, respondents often say that people in some areas sound ‘funny’ or ‘strange’ but can offer no distinctive linguistic feature (or imitation of any feature) that led to their response.1

In addition, the perceptual protocols used by respondents often refer to demographic rather than linguistic facts: “I drew a circle around Liverpool ‘cause there’s a lot of chavs there.” “I drew a circle around Detroit because there’s lots of Blacks there.” Such general transfers of speech facts to groups are a result of iconization (in which linguistic facts are related to nonlinguistic characteristics of a group, more recently called rhetmatization in Gal 2005) and may lead to recursivity (in which even small differences between groups, such as minor linguistic ones, may be projected outwards to define wider oppositions between groups), and erasure (in which similarities between groups or the nonsalient features of a stereotyped group’s behavior are ignored) (Irvine 2001: 33). Silverstein (e.g., 1996) refers to such transfers as second-order indexicalities, for they

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1 See Silverstein 1981 for a survey of the sorts of linguistic facts that nonlinguists are likely to be aware of and Preston 1996a for an account of how such awarenesses are triggered in various modes of ordinary discourse and folk linguistic investigation.
index not just a group identity (the first order) but provide a new linkage between some aspect of a group’s stereotypical behavior (e.g., Northern US ‘unfriendliness’) and a linguistic feature (e.g., ‘nasality’) so that the linguistic feature itself indexes the behavior, (“Nasal speech is so unfriendly sounding.”) In such cases, a conceptual world of language ideologies lies behind the more superficial categories of language differentiation.

PD was developed, however, at least in part, to address the failure of language attitude work to take into consideration important aspects of the conceptual worlds of respondents. Preston (1982: 6-7), for example, complained that voices presented for judgments were known to the researchers to be ones from a particular dialect area, but the researchers did not know if the respondents would have agreed with the professional taxonomy. For example, if a ‘Tohoku’ voice is presented to Japanese respondents, and the results show that the voice is judged to be more or less friendly, intelligent, sincere, etc., researchers would accurately report that the respondents have judgments of that sort with regard to Tohoku speech, but one does not know if the respondents have the folk category ‘Tohoku speech area’, and, if so, what its folk boundaries are, and what linguistic features are associated with it. Proponents of PD worried, therefore, that only half (perhaps less) the job had been done in traditional language attitude studies. Even with the addition of research techniques that would have allowed the researchers to determine what specific features of Tohoku speech triggered the identification/evaluation, they could not be sure that Tohoku speech and an associated geographical area were part of the Japanese folk linguistic conceptual world. Very few language attitude studies have even bothered to determine where the respondents thought the voices presented to them were from, and, in the few that have, the identifications have not been impressively accurate (e.g., Tucker & Lambert 1969), although, as Milroy & McClannahan (1977) have shown, consistent evaluative responses to voices may result, even when they are misidentified, a strong indication that such research efforts need to include consideration of the specific linguistic features that trigger responses.

It is clear, however, that in perception oriented tasks respondents access their conceptual worlds, calling up such things as mental maps of dialect regions and other deeply-held or presupposed beliefs about the nature of language diversity and even language itself. In the same way that the conceptually oriented techniques of PD may have hidden the respondents’ internal reliance on previous perceptions, traditional language attitude surveys seemed to mask any glimpse into the respondents’ folk beliefs about language, a rich and revealing area approached in recent years from both the perspective of ‘language ideology’ (e.g., Schieffelin et
2. Conscious and Subconscious

Before I survey PD techniques, let me introduce another related dichotomy. In PD, as in most folk linguistic work, researchers have unabashedly sought data from respondents who are fully aware that language and language variation is the topic of investigation. I say unabashedly since such investigation flies in the face of the “observer’s paradox”, Labov’s dictum that the more speakers are aware that they are being observed, the less likely they are to use their vernacular, first-learned, most consistent language rules (Labov 1972: 121). The parallel in studies of regard (as opposed to those of performance) has led language attitude researchers to develop such techniques as “matched-guise” (e.g., Lambert et al. 1960), in which respondents were made to believe that they were rating different speakers rather than the linguistic features that varied between two presentations. By using the same speaker for both presentations, it is assumed that the respondents’ evaluations of the linguistic differences are subconscious. Recent work in attitude studies outside language also stresses the importance of acquiring covert (i.e., subconscious) responses (e.g., Fazio et al. 1986).

One might complain that both positions are naïve; surely subconscious factors play a role in the accounts respondents give in folk
linguistic interviews, and discourse analyses that look for clues in, for example, the presuppositions that such texts encode may hope to uncover them (e.g., Preston, in press). Similarly, how can even a matched-guise presentation assume that the linguistic facts involved have not been taken into conscious consideration by the respondent when such facts are often stereotypes (e.g., the presence or absence of postvocalic \( r \) in New York City, Labov 1966)? I will, nevertheless, ignore these subtleties and assume that folk linguistics highlights conscious language regard and that language attitude studies focus on the subconscious, a distinction represented in Niedzielski & Preston (2003: xi) as a continuum, rather than a dichotomy, between the two fields of research.

This distinction is especially important if language regard is central to questions of language variation and change. Kristiansen (2007) reports that folk linguistic studies of attitudes towards varieties of Danish found the local variety most desirable but that matched-guise techniques revealed a country-wide preference for the Copenhagen variety. Other work has shown a decided shift towards that same Copenhagen variety in language use, also country-wide. This has led Kristiansen to suggest that the covert attitudes revealed when subconscious domains are accessed are the only ones that correspond to the direction of language change. We do not know if this distinction exists in other settings, but since it is at work in the Danish situation, it will be very important to test it elsewhere.

3. Production and Regard

In what follows I will reduce this complexity to two gross aspects of PD research – production and regard. On the production side, I will distinguish between research modes that have submitted linguistic samples to respondents (external) from those that have not (internal). On the regard side, I will distinguish between research modes that have used techniques that elicit a respondent’s declarative knowledge of language (conscious or explicit) from those that have sought to deflect attention from the fact that responses to language were being sought (subconscious or implicit). Figure 1 shows the four possibilities that these dichotomies entail.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two Modes of PD</th>
<th>Production Source</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>External</td>
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<td>Regard Type</td>
<td>Internal</td>
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<td>Conscious</td>
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<td>Subconscious</td>
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Fig. 1: Data presentation modes and response types sought in PD

These four modes do not exhaust the interests of PD nor the techniques used, but they may help us focus on and evaluate what has been done and what remains to be done. I will begin historically and in the upper right of Figure 1 (the internal-conscious), but I will be more interested in methodologies, interpretations, and opportunities for future work than in a thorough historical review.

Internal & Conscious

Early Dutch and Japanese studies asked folk respondents to rate differences and similarities between their own language variety and others. This PD was, therefore, based on respondent-supplied data at a fully conscious level (although, as outlined above, we have no idea what subconscious protocols might have been induced in the respondents). Figure 2 shows the Dutch use of the “little-arrow” method, which indicated where respondents identified another site as “the same”. When clusters of these connections were identified, perceptual dialect areas were determined, as shown by the heavy lines in Figure 2.

Although interesting and important differences existed between Japanese and Dutch studies related to perceived differences and similarities (e.g., Preston 2002), the Japanese tradition eventually incorporated quantitative procedures into such investigations. Figure 3 shows the first step in how Mase (1964) accomplished this.
Fig. 2: The westernmost section of the West Brahaat, showing the use of "little arrows" to indicate which sites respondents indicated as similar and darker lines to construct "perceptual" dialect boundaries (enlarged and modified from Weijnen 1946: inserted map between pp. 14-15)

Fig. 3: Subjective dialect boundaries indicated by a respondent at site #57 (Mase 1964 [1999: 5])
A respondent at site #57 has indicated that sites #58 and #59 are the same. He has also named sites #62, #63, #56, #55 and several sites in Nagawa as 'a little different' (the toothed-arcs). Speakers from sites #58 and #59 agree (not only that they are similar to one another and #57 but also that the same sites are 'a little different'). Finally, not shown, respondents from surrounding areas also classify sites #57, #58, and #59 as "the same." The circular "perceptual dialect area" made up of these three sites is based on reciprocal perceptions of similarity, on similar perceptions of a degree of difference, and on the perception by surrounding areas of their similarity to one another.

In many cases, however, there was no such nice agreement among sites as in Figure 3. When that occurred, Mase relied exclusively on difference ratings and used two-thirds and one-third ratios to determine boundaries.

![Map of Nagano region with perceptual dialect areas](image)

Fig. 4: Mase's perceptual dialect areas for a section of Alpine Japan (1964 [1999: 80])

Such a relationship arose among sites #11 though #26 shown in Figure 4. Mase counted a full point for any site where a respondent mentioned a first degree of difference ("a little different"). He counted a half-point if a respondent modified that degree downward ("a very slight difference"). He then calculated the points for all respondents in the region. If they equaled
two-thirds or more of the respondents, he considered the boundary major; if they equaled more than one-third but less than two-thirds, he considered it minor. In the above, 11.5 points were given to the difference between sites #14 and #15. Since 11.5 is greater than two-thirds of sixteen (the total number of sites, i.e., #11 through #26), sites #11 through #14 are grouped into one major region (d) and sites #15 through #26 are grouped into a second (e). Within those regions, however, seven points were given between sites #24 and #25, six between #25 and #26, and 5.5 between both #12 and #13 and #19 and #20. These subdivisions are indicated by dashed lines since their points amount to more than one-third but less than two-thirds of the total.

Following this Dutch and Japanese work, Preston (e.g., 1989) used numeric assignments for four degrees of similarity-difference (from 'the same' to 'unintelligibly different'), allowing even more sophisticated statistical treatment. Figure 5 shows Hartley's (1999) treatment of perceived degrees of difference of the US states from the point of view of Oregon respondents. The multidimensional scale, isolating two dimensions (horizontal and vertical), shows the dramatic difference in perceived similarity to Oregon speech from the west (the left hand side of the horizontal dimension), where Oregon (OR) and the adjacent state of Washington (WA) are ranked 'the same', to the south (on the far right), where there is a cluster of such southern states as Mississippi (MS), Georgia (GA), Texas (TX), Louisiana (LA), and Alabama (AL), interestingly close to the New York City (NYC) area. The second dimension (the vertical) shows the very interesting separation of Hawai'i (HI), perhaps isolated due to the suspicion that English is not spoken there, or, as many hand-drawn maps in US PD research reveal, the awareness of a pidgin-creole variety of English. A further statistical sophistication, K-means cluster analysis, here set to identify eight clusters, allows a grouping of the states into sets of similarly-rated ones, providing yet another perspective on the similar-different task. Here, for example, it is interesting that New York (NY) is clustered with New York City, along with a large number of southern states, but that New Jersey (NJ), usually stereotypically associated with New York City, is isolated.
This 'same-different' technique is one of several that belong to the Internal & Conscious section of Figure 1; hand-drawn maps also belong there. So far as I know, Preston (1982) was the first study based on earlier practices in cultural geography, (e. g., Gould & White 1974) in which respondents were asked to draw and label dialect areas, but there are now many other examples of the technique, with important modifications, from around the world (e. g., Preston 1999a, Long & Preston 2002). Unlike the 'same-different' technique, comments on hand-drawn maps often indicate what features the respondents had in mind.

Figure 6, for example, a hand-drawn map of US speech areas by a young Chicagoan (who finds his own area Normal talk for the average person), reveals that one of the distinguishing characteristics of Jerseyites Slang is that they are always saying soda instead of pop (for nonalcoholic, carbonated beverages, an apparently correct perception; see Campbell, <http://tinyurl.com/pd-preston1>, date: 04-07-2009).
This suggests that this conceptually oriented PD task has, nevertheless, taken this respondent to a part of his experiential, perceptual storehouse, but I have already discussed the likely inevitability of such transfers. Hand-drawn maps also dig deeply into the conceptual world, not only for the concepts of dialect areas but for the associated beliefs about speakers and their varieties (e.g., here California is the homeland of *High class Party-ing slobs and Stuck up Sound*).

Since the original intent of hand-drawn maps in PD was to arrive at the folk dialect areas conceived of by a local group, computer techniques were developed to generalize the boundaries of individual maps (Preston & Howe 1987). Figure 7 shows the results of such a computer-aided generalization for 147 hand-drawn maps from southeastern Michigan.

The fourteen areas outlined in Figure 7 (generalized from hand-drawn maps in which fifteen percent or more of the respondents had outlined an area) provide just such a mental map of regional US speech according to southeastern Michigan respondents. If one applied this map to language attitude studies, these would be the areas where voices ‘could’ be from (and such an attempt was made directly in Preston 1999b; see below).
The quantitative aspects of this generalization, however, add a great deal to the interpretation. Although these respondents are from the north of the United States, they most frequently outline a southern area (ninety-four percent), while only sixty-one percent regard the local area as distinctive. Just as linguistic elements themselves may be more or less salient for folk awareness (e.g., Errington 1985), it appears that regions and/or demographic groups may be more or less salient as well.

Montgomery (2008) has recently applied this hand-drawn map technique to studies of England among respondents from the north of the country, and, following practices introduced by Preston & Howe 1987 and Long
1999, used shadings to indicate degrees of agreement among his respondents. The contrasting darker and lighter areas in Figure 8 show the decreasing agreement on the location of 'London speech', from 80 to 100 percent (in the dark center) to 1 to 20 percent (in the medium grey surrounding area that spreads surprisingly far to the west, while the northern edge is very much more circumscribed).

Much more than different speech areas is represented in hand-drawn maps; many respondents seem to care about something else. The Chica-goan who drew Figure 6 has made folk sense of the task by applying a strategy from his attitudinal (i.e., evaluational) area of regard that reformulates the task into one about the regional implications of good and bad English. Such attitudinal reformulation explains why Figure 7 tallied so many outlines of the south of the US. It is not just linguistically distinct; it is one home of stereotypically 'bad English' (and so is New York City, the third most frequently outlined area); Michigan, the local area, where the respondents believe good English is spoken, is the second most frequently outlined area. These facts led to a third technique: respondent ratings of areas for language 'correctness' and 'pleasantness', the same concepts that social psychologists found to be at the center of personal characteristic ratings of voice samples (e.g., Ryan 1979).

![Map of the United States with shadings indicating levels of agreement on the location of 'London speech'.](image)

Fig. 9: Means scores of southeastern Michigan respondent ratings of 'correct English', on a scale of 1 (least correct) to 10 (most correct) (Preston 1996b: 312)
At first this was done very simply; respondents rated (on a scale of one to ten) where the ‘most correct’ and ‘most pleasant’ varieties of a language were spoken. As Figure 9 shows, Michiganders were not reticent to assert that Michigan has the very best English and that places like Alabama and New York City have the worst.

In later work (e.g., Preston 1999b), evaluations were extended to the paired opposites more often used in language attitude research, and the folk dialect areas determined in such work as that shown in Figure 7 were given to respondents to be evaluated. These studies revealed even more detailed stereotypes than the ‘correct-pleasant’ dichotomy, showing in this case, for example, that Michigan northerners actually preferred southern speech along some ‘solidarity’ dimensions (e.g., down-to-earth, friendly).

However they are conducted, PD areal evaluation techniques also belong to the Internal & Conscious section of Figure 1. The final technique in this category is that of speech imitation.

Markham (1997) is an excellent survey of phonetic imitation in general and contains intriguing results for accent imitation experiments, but his work was primarily concerned with the capacity for and accuracy of imitation, not with its sociocultural position. Preston (1992) looks at European-American and African-American imitations of the opposite group and analyzes phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical successes and failures as well as the stereotypical roles selected by respondents for their tasks. There is no doubt that such data, although difficult to acquire when stereotyped groups are also stigmatized, is extremely revealing about the perception of the ‘other’ (e.g., Rampton 1999) and the linguistic elements involved. Evans (2002) combined an acoustic study of an imitator of West Virginia US speech (which showed the imitator to be successful at detailed phonetic levels of performance) with an investigation of the degree to which such imitations succeeded in convincing local judges that the imitation voice was authentically local (also very successful in her study). More recently, however, Purschke (2008) asked Hessian dialect speakers to imitate the local standard and local standard speakers to imitate the Hessian dialect. He found that the imitators met about midway in terms of their employment of distinguishing linguistic characteristics of the two varieties. That meant that the imitations should have been indistinguishable, but local judges were still able to identify the dialect and standard speakers. A great deal of work needs to be done in this area, and I have no doubt that it will be productive in identifying features and ranking their salience.
In this mode respondents are provided with actual linguistic data rather than letting them imagine the details, and, in much of this research, respondents have been asked to identify the area (or some other demographic characteristic) of the speaker. There is no attempt to delve into their subconscious reactions. Figure 10 shows where nine middle-aged, middle-class European American male voices were recorded in the US.

The respondents were asked to associate a voice with a site, and the site numbers were used for statistical treatment. A cluster analysis shows how southeastern Michigan respondents did in this task (Figure 11).

Fig. 10: Sites where nine middle-aged, middle-class European American male voices were recorded (Preston 1989: 349)

Fig. 11: Cluster analysis of southeastern Michigan respondent placements of the voice samples in the sites shown in Figure 10 (Plichta & Preston 2005: 118)

As the lower left of Figure 11 shows, the respondents were very good at identifying the southermmost voices as closely related to one another, and the attachment of the northernmost voice (Saginaw) last (at the top of Figure 11) in this cluster tree suggests it was seen as most distinctive at the other end of the continuum. In the middle, however, there is considerable
confusion; although Coldwater and South Bend are adjacent in place as well as in this cluster, they are clustered next with Bowling Green, a voice which should have been clustered with the southern voices. Such results as these suggest again that regions themselves (the south in the US in particular) have considerable folk salience but that only certain features (not controlled for in this experiment) may trigger associations between voices and areas. In more recent work, Montgomery (2008) has developed new techniques to show the variation among several respondents in placing regional voices. Figure 12 shows the sites in England where several voice samples were taken.

In this task, Montgomery allowed respondents to place an “X” at any point on the map where they believed the voice was from. He then drew a line from the accurate site to the placement and later combined all such lines on a single map. Figure 13 shows where respondents from Carlisle (H in Figure 12) placed a Barnsley (A in Figure 12) voice sample.

![Map of England with sites marked](image)

**Fig. 12: Sites in England where voice samples were recorded (Montgomery 2006: 260)**

This composite map shows that the majority of Carlisle respondents are very likely to misplace a Barnsley voice as much closer to their own variety, and nearly all of them place it to the north of its actual location. Further study of the features of the variety will help in interpreting such interesting data, and I offer one example of that mode of investigation.
Fig. 13: Lines drawn from the site of the voice sample (Barnsley) to the center of each Carlisle respondent’s “X” location of the voice sample (Montgomery 2008)

Figure 14 shows the results of asking Norwegian and Dutch respondents to identify the regional home of dialect voice samples.

Fig. 14: Accuracy percentages for Dutch and Norwegian local and nonlocal identification of plain and monotonized dialect samples (Gooskens 2005: 55)
Gooskens (2005) played dialect samples for Norwegian and Dutch respondents, including respondents from the same area as the samples ("endogenous"), who are much more successful in both language areas (Figure 14). When the voice samples are monotonized, however, there is only a minor loss in Dutch identification accuracy, but the Norwegian respondents do much worse, whether from the same region as the voice or not ("exogenous"). Since Norwegian is a lexical pitch-accent language and since such pitch accent varies by region, we can conclude that pitch-accent contours (erased by monotonization) are important clues to regional identification in Norway but that intonational characteristics in Dutch are not.

Such identification tasks are not, however, immune to secondary associations that may influence identification itself. It will be necessary, therefore, to add PD research strategies that involve discrimination and/or comprehension to those that occupy the External-Conscious territory, although, as the following example will show, subconscious activity may be involved.

Plichta & Preston (2005) used the same sites shown in Figure 10 in a website experiment in which respondents from all over the US were asked to associate a pronunciation of the word 'guide' with one of these sites. The experiment focused on the well-known southern US speech stereotype of /ay/ monophthongization, and the respondents heard a male and female speaker produce fully diphthongal /ay/, five resynthesized increasingly monophthongized tokens, and a fully monophthongal one. Table 1 shows the overall results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Region</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>Saginaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>Coldwater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>South Bend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.89</td>
<td>Muncie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.99</td>
<td>New Albany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.58</td>
<td>Bowling Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.02</td>
<td>Florence</td>
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Tab. 1: Mean scores derived from numbered sites (1 = northernmost) for the seven samples of ‘guide’ presented to respondents (1 = no monophthongization) (Plichta & Preston 2005: 121)
This experiment confirms the association of monophthongization with southern US speech and adds the interesting fact that degree of monophthongization is associated with degree of regional southernness. Figure 15, however, shows an even more surprising result. At each step of the seven-step monophthongization continuum, men are identified as 'more southern' than women, although the male and female voices were resynthesized with exactly the same characteristics.

Perhaps not surprisingly, nonlinguists also know what sociolinguists know: women are more standard speakers than men (e.g., Labov 1990: 205), and readers who do not believe that a stereotype of southern speech is that it is nonstandard are invited to look back at Figure 9. Discrimination of regional varieties in general, of the linguistic elements within them, and even of the appropriateness of such elements to social subdivisions play an important role in the External-Conscious mode of PD investigation.

Another PD research technique in this mode has tested respondent comprehension of variety (e.g., Labov & Ash 1997), in some cases with surprising results. Most phoneticians' studies of single-word comprehension (on the basis of the vowels) by native speakers have shown very good results. Peterson & Barney (1952) report comprehension of single word tokens (in the hVd environment) that range from 87 % correct (for /α/) to 99.9 % correct (for /i/). Hillenbrand et al. (1995: 3108) also report very good comprehension scores of the same sorts of tokens: from 82 % correct (for /α/) to 99.6 % (for /i/). Cutler et al. (2004), however, reports comprehension scores that ranged from a low of 34.9 % correct (for /α/)
and 58.1% correct (for /æ/) to 97.2% correct (for /ɔ/), with the vowels in a variety of consonant environments, but she notes that the reader of the tokens was from the ‘Mid West’ while the listeners were all students at a Florida (southern) university. There is little doubt, however, that reader and/or listener weakness in or a total lack of the /ɑ/-/ɔ/ distinction was the primary cause of the lower scores. More recently, Preston (2005) has studied comprehension of vowel tokens by speakers within their own dialect territory, but in an area undergoing a dramatic and rapid vowel shift (i.e., the Northern Cities Chain Shift, e.g., Labov 1994: 177-201). In this study, correct comprehension of /ɪ/ and /ɔ/ was at surprisingly low 42%, even though the listeners were from the same area as the speakers. Such work suggests that historical and ideological forces may be at work in the progress of linguistic change, perhaps to such a great extent that older and more conservative (and ideologically privileged) phonological categories persist in the minds of speakers who have, nevertheless, gone through considerable phonetic change.

This last study, as well as other interpretations in this External-Conscious section, highlights the fact that, although the focus of a study may be directed towards a respondent’s conscious processing, subconscious factors characteristically intervene. We turn, therefore, to researcher attempts to tap subconscious modes.

External & Subconscious

I will return here to another experiment involving the Northern Cities Chain Shift, a radical repositioning of the vowels taking place in the Great Lakes area of the US in such cities as Rochester and Buffalo New York, Cleveland and Toledo, Ohio; Detroit, Lansing, and Grand Rapids, Michigan; Chicago, Illinois, and Milwaukee and Madison, Wisconsin. In the Northern Cities Chain Shift, /æ/ is raised and fronted, often with an onset reaching the height of [ɨ], although usually accompanied by a centering offglide (e.g., [ɪ]). This led Niedzielski (1997) to present three resynthesized tokens of the word ‘last’ to southeastern Michigan respondents. The first (a typical local token) contained a raised and fronted version of the vowel (F1 700 and F2 1900); the respondents were also presented with a ‘canonical’ token (F1 775 and F2 1700), typical of many varieties of American English, and a ‘hyperstandard’ token (F1 900 and F2 1530), one that might awaken a ‘British’ caricature in Americans. The respondents were first presented with the local token followed by all three and were then asked to match the local token to one of the three. So far this is an External & Conscious experiment, having to do with sensitivity to vowel
differences, but Niedzielski wrote (in large red letters) the word CANADIAN or MICHIGAN across the top of the respondent's test page. When the respondents saw the word “Canadian”, they accurately matched the pronunciations ten percent of the time; when the word “Michigan” was at the top of the page, there were no accurate matchings. With the word “Michigan”, the respondents actually selected the ‘hyperstandard’ token ten percent of the time (and only three percent when “Canadian” appeared). The respondents’ ideology (that ‘correct English’ is spoken in Michigan) is at work here (see Figure 9), and, even though their own systems are shifted, they subconsciously refer to an ideological standard, perhaps the same one used in the comprehension experiment in southeastern Michigan described above, and avoid associating a “Michigan” speaker with any form that might not be prestigious or at least “standard.” I will call this External & Subconscious technique “misdirection”, although the next technique might also be so labeled.

PD has also been carried out in the classic matched-guise mode. As noted above, Kristiansen (2007) has found that Danish speakers of all varieties indicate a preference for the local variety when asked outright which sort of Danish they prefer. In a matched-guise experiment using a variety of paired rating scales (e.g., intelligent-stupid, conscientious-happy-go-lucky, cool-uncool), however, respondents from all over the country preferred conservative or modern Copenhagen speech for all these dimensions, and previous and ongoing research has convincingly shown that Danish dialects are moving in the Copenhagen direction (Pedersen 2003).

Internal & Subconscious

This is perhaps the most mysterious of the modes. How can we get respondents to use their own resources yet tap their subconscious? In fact, I believe that a number of techniques already outlined under External & Conscious produce data that reflect subconscious processing on the part of the respondent, but here I want to refer to analytic procedures that will access such data even more directly.

The most overt of the folk linguistic techniques is surely to simply talk to respondents about language, and, when we talk to them about variety, we are certainly doing PD. We might add such obviously conscious techniques to both the Internal (when respondents choose their own topics) and External (when we provide topics or examples for discussion) modes of conscious enquiry, and Niedzielski & Preston (2003) contains numer-
ous quotations and interpretations of just such folk linguistic conversations, many about language variety.

We are well-equipped, however, in linguistics to look beyond what is ‘said’ and to uncover what is ‘presupposed’, and such presuppositions are often the foundation of deeply-held folk beliefs. Preston (1994) reviews a number of ways that this might be accomplished in the analysis of folk linguistic discourses that may reveal subconscious processing – topic selection in imitation, referential specificity in argument, speaker-hearer footing, subtle discourse markers, and topic perspective.

Let me illustrate this potential for revealing the subconscious in discourse by pointing out the possibility of extracting “pragmatic presuppositions”, although I believe that many other approaches to background knowledge in folk linguistic discourses will also lead to richly rewarding understandings of individual, group, and cultural beliefs and ideologies.

Pragmatic presuppositions are related to lexical and structural triggers (e.g., Levinson 1983: 181-85). For example, the verb “start” in “Bill started smoking” presupposes that there was a time in the past when Bill did not smoke (e.g., Levinson 1983: 182), and the pseudo-cleft construction presupposes that an act did something, even under negation (a classic test for presupposition, e.g., Levinson 1983: 178). E.g., “Bill didn’t flunk Algebra” doesn’t presuppose that Bill flunked anything (although contrastive stress on ‘Algebra’ would activate such a presupposition), but “What Bill didn’t flunk was Algebra” suggests he flunked something (e.g., Levinson 1983: 182-83). When discourses turn to language and language variety (rather than smoking and flunking), such presuppositions prove even more interesting.

In the following exchange, a Taiwanese fieldworker (C) discusses African American English with an African American friend (D).

1 C: We uh - linguistics, in this field, uh - from the book I s- I mean, I saw from the book that - many linguists quite interest in black English. So could you tell me - a little bit about - your dialect?

2 D: Dialects.

3 C: Heh yeah

4 All: ((laugh))

5 D: Well, uh: - well - see the world’s getting smaller. There’s=

6 C: ((laughs)) I - I mean do you have -

7 D: -not - even among all the ethnic groups we’re- we’re getting -getting less and less of dialectual in- influence. (...) Uh I’m- happen - not to be - from the South, [...]. (Preston 1994: 286-287)

Without an account of certain presuppositions, this discourse is difficult to interpret, particularly the content of 5-7 D. The key is in the presuppo-
position(s) of “So could you tell me a little bit about your dialect” (1 C). “Your dialect” presupposes the existence of ‘dialect(s)’ and that ‘you’ are the speaker of one. D’s perception of C’s presuppositions leads to the otherwise difficult to understand assertions in 5-7 D: (1) The world’s getting smaller. (2) We’re getting less and less of dialectual influence (i.e., there are fewer and fewer dialects). (3) I happen not to be from the South.

“The world’s getting smaller” I take to be an explanation of why there are fewer dialects (education, media, mobility, etc...), but D’s assertion that there are fewer dialects is a direct response to C’s presupposition that there are such things (a ‘definite description’; e.g. Levinson 1983: 181). More subtly, D confirms C’s presupposition that there are indeed such things as dialects, but, for him (D), they exist only in such places as “the South”. In other words, if C had been lucky enough to encounter a speaker from the South, he might have had his request for information about “your dialect” fulfilled. This interpretation, however, lies more in the area of “relevance theory” than presupposition: How can we make sense of D’s observation that he is not from the South unless it is in some way related to his response to C’s request for information about D’s dialect (and embedded in D’s assertion that there are fewer dialects)? Recall that Michiganders, D included, find the South very salient as a regional speech area and that its salience is undoubtedly related to its incorrectness (see Figures 6, 7, and 9).

Presuppositional work, however, may explain why D ‘happens’ not to be from the South. Why does he not simply assert “I am not from the South”? “Happen” may belong to the set of implicative verbs (Levinson 1983: 181), one which, in this case, presupposes “inadvertence,” “lack of planning,” or “by chance.” D “happens” not to be from the South, I would maintain, because it is only a case of bad luck that C picked on a respondent who was not from the South (and could therefore not fulfill his request for “dialect” information).

Such work as this leads us to the building of a cultural model of D’s (as well as C’s) language ideologies, and I will leave it up to the reader to determine more details of that construction (although I provide a great deal more on this conversation in Preston 1994). Work on discourse, then, from many perspectives but surely from both formal and informal pragmatic ones, reveals not only what speakers have said or asserted (the conscious) but also what they have associated, entailed, and presupposed (the subconscious).

I will, therefore, put discourse in all four boxes of Figure 16; it may reveal what speakers have said about language varieties when no samples have been presented, but that data may have an overt (conscious) as well as covert (subconscious) background; I have not illustrated the possibility,
but discourses about language could also be based on language data actually presented to respondents (e.g., Garrett, Coupland & Williams 1999) with the same possibility for both conscious and subconscious reactions.

4. Summing up

I have, with misgivings, placed the various techniques outlined above in the production and regard taxonomy as shown in Figure 16.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two Modes of PD</th>
<th>Production Source</th>
<th>Internal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regard Type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscious</td>
<td>1. Identification</td>
<td>1. Same-different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>3. Evaluations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Discourse</td>
<td>4. Imitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Discourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subconscious</td>
<td>1. Misdirection</td>
<td>1. Discourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Matched-guise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Discourse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 16: The position of PD techniques in a taxonomy of production and regard

I have misgivings because, as I have pointed out all along, I believe the conscious and subconscious to be at work in any data gathering setting and that those regard types may be contradictory. More importantly, I believe language regard may in one setting or even at another time in the same setting reflect contradictory responses even within the same regard type; in short, I do not believe we can get at a real language attitude (or ideology, or folk concept, e.g., Coupland 2007: 99) any more than we can get at so-called authentic samples of speech. Language regard is surely as various as language performance, and, like performance, stems from a reservoir (i.e., a repertoire) of various (and conflicting and changing) cultural beliefs about language and language variety.

In PD, therefore, as in all folk linguistics, we have a better chance of a more complete understanding if we consider this entire tapestry of possibilities and not just the isolated occurrence of one or even several expressions of language regard.
5. References


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