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Introduction: In the shadow of the standard. Standard language ideology and attitudes towards 'non-standard' varieties and usages.

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Abstract

This special issue provides new perspectives on how standard language ideology (SLI) informs and influences attitudes towards 'non-standard' language varieties. Standard languages are commonly viewed as uniform, minimally varying (homogeneous) forms of language (Haugen 1972), and existing research in the area of language standardisation has largely focussed on standard languages in (perceived) monolingual nations, mainly restricted to those in Western Europe. The theoretical frameworks used to discuss language standardisation have often assumed that speakers of standard languages are monolingual (even if tacitly acknowledging varieties related to the standard, which can differ in terms of their 'distance' from that standard). Yet standard languages always exist alongside other languages and language varieties (including 'non-standard' varieties of the standard itself), and many speakers use the standard as an acquired variety alongside at least one other variety or language. This special issue challenges the assumption of monolingual standard languages, by presenting evidence of the impact – linguistic, social and cultural – of standard language

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ideologies on 'non-standard' language varieties that exist alongside standard languages in various political and cultural contexts within and outside Europe.

Keywords: Standard language – Standardisation – Language ideologies – Language attitudes - Multilingualism.

1. Introduction[1][2]

The eight papers in this special issue provide new perspectives on how standard language ideology (SLI) informs and influences attitudes towards 'non-standard' language varieties, including regional and social varieties of English, diasporic regional varieties of Turkish and Greek, regional varieties of French, Turkish and Chinese and the minority regional languages Catalan and Occitan. The special issue thus contributes to a growing field of work that goes beyond a monolingual framing of language standardisation. Standard languages are commonly viewed as uniform, minimally varying (homogeneous) forms of language (Haugen 1972), and existing research in the area of language standardisation has largely focussed on standard languages in (perceived) monolingual nations, mainly restricted to those in Western Europe. The theoretical frameworks used to discuss language standardisation have often assumed that speakers of standard languages are monolingual (even if tacitly acknowledging varieties related to the standard, which can differ in terms of their 'distance' from that standard) (see Joseph 1987; Lodge 1993; Linn and McLelland 2002; Hickey 2012; Milroy

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and Milroy 2012). Typologies of standardisation have also assumed monolingualism. For example, Auer's (2005) typology (which is restricted to Europe) leaves out multilingual repertoires, by including only standard and regional varieties (2005, 7).

Yet standard languages always exist alongside not only other related language varieties (for example, the 'non-standard' varieties of the standard itself or the regional varieties that are included in Auer's typology), but also alongside other unrelated languages. Many speakers use the standard as an acquired variety alongside at least one other variety. Given both the highly diverse linguistic situations and the diversity of social, cultural, economic and historical contexts in which standardisation comes about, it is clear that monolingualism is not the default for speakers of standard languages, even in countries where it has long been assumed to be so, such as the UK or France.

One development in studies of standardisation in recent years is the emergence of the notion that standardisation may be best viewed as an ideology. This is particularly stressed by Milroy and Milroy (2012, 19), who claim that standardisation is 'a set of abstract norms to which usage may conform to a greater or lesser extent'. In the special issue of this journal edited by Nicola McLelland (*Language Standards, Standardisation and Standard Ideologies in Multilingual Contexts*, 2021), McLelland (2020) argues that drawing on the notion of language ideologies has helped to reveal that 'standardisation studies have, until recently, been largely ideologically monolingualist'. She asserts that refocussing attention onto language ideologies makes the socio-political dimension of standardisation explicit, and therefore pushes us to examine standardisation in the context of multilingualism, as 'the theoretical lens of language ideologies has helped us to recognize the monolingualist

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ideological paradigm underlying much work'. In recent decades, therefore, standardisation has begun to be seen as a highly complex process, with diverse manifestations, which need to be examined from multiple perspectives (Deumert and Vandenbussche 2003, 11).

This has led scholars to question whether existing models of standardisation are applicable to non-Western and/or multilingual contexts, which are far more common across the world than the 'monolingual' situation often seen as the default in Western societies (Smakman and Nekesa Barasa 2017, 23-4; McLelland 2020; Ayres-Bennett 2021). Research on standardisation has also begun to challenge earlier accounts, for example, focusing on multilingual contexts (Hüning, Vogl and Moliner 2012; Vogl 2012); taking minoritised and regional language varieties and new speakers of such varieties into account (O'Rourke and Ramallo 2011, 2013; Hornsby 2015; O'Rourke, Pujolar and Ramallo 2015; Lane, Costa and De Korne 2017); seeking to examine the linguistic prejudice and discrimination caused by SLI (O'Neill and Massini-Cagliari 2019); or seeking to acknowledge variability or flexibility in standard varieties (Jaffe 1999; Hickey 2012) and change in standard varieties, including destandardisation (Kristiansen and Grondelaers 2013; Kristiansen 2016) (see Ayres-Bennett 2021 for a thorough overview of models, frameworks and theories of standardisation).

The eight articles which make up this special issue acknowledge the complex and diverse manifestations of standardisation and continue the challenge to traditional accounts. In particular, they present evidence of the impact – linguistic, social and cultural – of standard language ideologies on 'non-standard' language varieties that exist alongside standard languages in various political and cultural contexts within and outside Europe. While the articles here all acknowledge and account for multilingualism, their focus is not on

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multilingualism itself. Rather, they concentrate primarily on how language ideologies influence how 'non-standard' varieties are viewed by speakers, that is, on their role in forming language attitudes (see Baker 1992; Edwards 1999; Garrett, Coupland and Williams 2003; Kircher and Zipp forthcoming). They consider the impact of SLI itself (see Silverstein 1979; Woolard and Schieffelin 1994; Lippi-Green 2012; Kroskity 2000; Milroy and Milroy 2012), but also related ideologies, such as 'authenticity' and 'legitimacy'. This introduction discusses these key concepts, before introducing the papers in this special issue.

2. Language ideologies

Ideologies can be viewed broadly as sets of beliefs that are shared by members of a community. Language ideologies, more specifically, are 'sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use' (Silverstein 1979, 193). These beliefs are never about language alone, rather they link linguistic features to social factors. The ideological nature of the beliefs, however, is not always apparent, because the beliefs become naturalised to the point that they are viewed as common sense (Milroy and Milroy 2012, 135). Language attitudes and language ideologies share many features. Both go beyond language itself, taking linguistic features (such as spelling or accent) to index non-linguistic ones (such as a speaker's ethnic, social or geographic background). However, while language ideologies tend to be shared across communities, attitudes are manifested at the individual level, not only as beliefs but also as feelings and behaviours (see Garrett 2010; Kircher and Zipp forthcoming). Attitudes are also

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often influenced by ideologies, particularly those which have become normalised as common sense.[3]

Standard language ideology (SLI) is the belief that one particular form of language is the 'most correct' or the 'best' form and that all other forms of language are 'incorrect' or somehow less valid. This belief is spread via powerful institutions, including the education system, mass media and the employment sector (see Lippi-Green 2012, 67; Kroskrity 2000, 26). Because SLI causes speakers to believe that the standard form is superior, this leads to a related assumption that standard languages should be fixed and unchanging and, therefore, to a resistance to change in the standard language and to variation in general (see Milroy and Milroy 2012; Tieken-Boon van Ostade, this volume, on negative attitudes towards variation from the standard in English). Standard languages have also become very closely linked to nationality, a factor which equally plays a role in the aversion to variation. Since the late 18th century, a close link has been drawn between belonging to a nation and speaking the language of that nation (Vogl 2018, 189). Even nowadays, language is often still viewed as an important factor in national identity. All members of the nation need to speak the *same* language to ensure social and political unity; variation therefore becomes something to suppress and multilingualism something to ignore (McLelland 2020; see also Schluter, this volume, on the links between strong nationalism and the suppression of language variation in Turkey).

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[3] See Kircher and Zipp (forthcoming) for a fuller discussion of the similarities and differences between language ideologies and language attitudes.

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SLI also draws on ideologies of power and legitimacy. For example, the belief that one language variety is 'superior' accords that variety a higher prestige value than the other varieties spoken in a given culture. This belief is the result of specific socio-cultural, political and economic conditions (Milani and Johnson 2010, 4) and is contingent upon the power ideologies that are at play in that culture. As Joseph (1987, 14) notes: 'The interaction of power, language, and reflections on language, inextricably bound up with one another in human history, largely defines language standardization'. SLI assigns standard language varieties not only a greater level of prestige, but also a greater legitimacy than non-standard varieties. In fact, standard languages act as 'normalised products' (Bourdieu 1991, 46) and SLI acts to maintain hegemonic order by privileging the language variety of those in positions of power and marginalising speakers of varieties different from the standard. One means of creating legitimacy is by ensuring that the standard variety is used in all 'official' situations, such as institutional settings including schools (see both Çavuşoğlu and Karatsareas, this volume), public administrations and political institutions. This in turn further reinforces the legitimacy of that particular variety (Bourdieu 1991, 45) at the expense of other varieties, whose symbolic value is further reduced (see Zhao & Liu on Putonghua (Standard Mandarin Chinese), this volume).

This leads to the hierarchisation of language varieties, which can also cause what has been termed the 'invisibilisation' of non-standard or minority varieties (see Langer and Havinga 2015), or what Irvine and Gal (2000, 37-38) call 'erasure', part of their semiotic model for the study of language ideologies, which also includes 'iconization' and 'fractal recursivity' (see Kircher & Fox; Hawkey & Mooney, this volume). SLI, in particular, often leads to the multilingual nature of most standard language contexts being ignored and therefore 'erased'

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or 'invisibilised'. This 'erasure' could also be said to apply to the various types of 'hidden multilingualism' in Europe (Vogl 2012, 6), in particular, multilingualism involving non-standard varieties (Vogl 2012, 8), diaglossia (internal/regional variation) (Vogl 2012, 27-28) or migrant varieties (Vogl 2012, 32-34), since they do not serve the SLI (see in particular Çavuşoğlu, Karatsaras, and Schluter, this volume, on the 'erasure'/'invisibilisation' of multilingualism/multidialectalism within minoritised or migrant varieties). The erasure of non-standard varieties has several repercussions. It affects speaker attitudes towards those non-standard varieties and also when, how and where they are used, and it can translate into different types of discrimination in real-life contexts (see Kircher & Fox, this volume, on Multicultural London English as an obstacle to success and social mobility).

SLI does allow, however, for some regional variation, in that pluricentric standard languages, spoken in different nation states and consisting of two or more national standard varieties, are generally widely accepted (Vogl 2012, 11). However, even in these cases, there is much debate about the legitimacy of those varieties spoken outside the nation state with which the language is most strongly associated. For example, the variety of French spoken in Quebec has been subjected to much criticism for its 'deviation' from the standard French of France (see Walsh, this volume). Pluricentric varieties may be acknowledged, but the SLI has nevertheless caused the legitimacy – and indeed the authenticity – of some of these varieties to be called into question and placed them further down the hierarchy of 'acceptable' language varieties.

The perceived legitimacy and authenticity of language varieties also comes into play when the SLI is transmitted to new language varieties and contexts, for example, to regional and

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minority languages (RMLs). There have been movements to standardise many RMLs in recent years, often partly motivated by a desire to improve the status of these language varieties in order to ensure their vitality and continued existence (see Lane, Costa and De Korne 2017). But standardising these varieties can lead to the suppression of the variation found in them and to the formation of new hierarchies, with the newly standardised form at the top, which call into question the legitimacy of the other varieties (Ayres-Bennett and Bellamy 2021). This is highly problematic, given that RMLs already exist alongside a standard language that has been established for much longer, and their legitimacy is already often called into question (Ayres-Bennett and Bellamy 2021). The authenticity of new standardised RMLs can also come under scrutiny when the standardised form is spoken mainly by new speakers, who may feel that their variety is not truly 'authentic' compared to native speakers (see Hawkey & Mooney, this volume). New approaches to standardising RMLs seek to allow for an approach that tolerates diversity. For example, the polynomic model is seen as a way to account for pluricentric situations (see Marcellesi 1983; Jaffe 1999, 2008; Ó Murchadha 2016 on the polynomic standard in Irish).

3. Introducing this special issue: non-standard language varieties and SLI

The eight papers in this special issue present case studies of how SLI has affected the ideologies surrounding, and attitudes towards, a broad range of non-standard language varieties, from regional and social varieties of English, to diasporic regional varieties of Turkish and Greek, the minority and regional languages Catalan and Occitan, and regional varieties of French, Turkish and Chinese. They include examples of how SLI is enacted in situations of contact with long-established standard languages such as English, French and Greek; with more recently standardised languages such as Turkish (early 20th century) and

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Mandarin Chinese (Putonghua, mid-20th century); and for RMLs in the process of standardisation, such as Catalan and Occitan. This special issue therefore shows that a new generation of scholars is already undertaking the kind of 'third-wave studies of language standardisation' called for by McLelland in her special issue of this journal referred to above (2021), that both consider multilingualism and take account of language ideology, and that therefore challenge traditional accounts of standardisation. This issue equally highlights the benefits of using a range of methodological approaches (including linguistic ethnography, heritage linguistics, corpus linguistics, discourse analysis and social psychology) and data sources (including interviews, questionnaires, speaker observations, matched-guise tests, newspaper articles and textual and audio-visual internet data) to examine language ideologies.

In her analysis of Caroline Taggart's 2010 English usage guide, included in the Hyper Usage Guide of English (HUGE) database, Tieken-Boon van Ostade examines the reasons why groups of speakers may be stigmatised for certain perceived linguistic errors, in particular, errors associated with certain groups of people, such as the so-called greengrocer's apostrophe (Beal 2010). Tieken-Boon shows that usage guides such as Taggart's – that is, general language advice manuals aimed at educated lay people that 'bridge the traditional divide between a grammar and a dictionary' (Busse and Schroder 2009, 72) – show a clear adherence to an ideology that sees only one language variety as 'good' or 'proper', with all other varieties being viewed negatively. Taggart explicitly refers to 'Elegant English' in her book, which she views as the opposite of 'the vulgar, the ugly and the inaccurate in language' (Taggart 2010, 7). Tieken-Boon van Ostade concludes that social class is an important factor in such usage guides, which act as a type of gatekeeper, keeping out those speakers who do

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not conform to a narrow standard. Such guides are, in fact, part of an enactment of SLI, reinforcing the legitimacy of the standard variety. Tieken-Boon van Ostade argues that linguists need to be more pro-active in critically evaluating such guides, to counter this negative and prejudiced adherence to SLI, which can have such a deleterious impact in real life on attitudes towards speakers of certain social varieties.

Kircher & Fox also look at non-standard English, using corpus-informed discourse analysis (a combination of quantitative corpus methods and qualitative data analysis) to examine attitudes towards Multicultural London English (MLE) amongst both its speakers and other speakers of British English. The study of multiethnolects such as MLE – urban contact varieties that have evolved in multi-ethnic and multilingual areas – is relatively rare in the context of British English. Studies on multiethnolects in countries such as Germany (Kiezdeutsch; see Wiese 2014) and Sweden (Rinksby Svenska; see Stroud 2004, Milani 2010) have shown that they are generally viewed as 'faulty' or 'broken' speech in opposition to 'legitimate' or 'good' language (Wiese and Rehbein 2016, 46); that is, they are framed in opposition to standard language, and their speakers are 'othered'. Kircher & Fox show that this is also true of MLE. However, while there is evidence of SLI influencing attitudes towards MLE in both groups of speakers, the influence is much stronger amongst non-MLE speakers. Also, while both groups view standard English as the 'correct', 'grammatical' variety and see MLE as an obstacle to success and social mobility – which clearly demonstrates the real-life consequences of the gatekeeping function of the SLI – MLE nevertheless holds considerable covert prestige amongst its speakers. This is a finding mirrored in other studies in this special issue (Çavuşoğlu, Karatsareas, Schluter, Zhao & Liu)

which highlights the competing ideologies that must be negotiated by speakers of non-standard varieties and the complex nature of SLI.

Both Çavuşoğlu and Karatsareas examine complementary schools in London and show that educational systems – including complementary schools – legitimise and privilege standard varieties, while stigmatising and marginalising non-standard ones. Both also highlight the fact that diasporic communities are not homogenous but rather culturally and linguistically diverse. Çavuşoğlu takes a micro-ethnographic approach to her study of Cypriot Turkish in Turkish complementary schools in London. She examines the complex attitudes that speakers of minority languages may have towards their language, due to the relationships between not only the minority language and the majority language (in this case Cypriot Turkish and English) but also between the standard and non-standard versions of the minority language (in this case Standard Turkish and Cypriot Turkish), often presented as 'legitimate' vs. 'non-legitimate'. She demonstrates that teachers' discourses around Standard Turkish and Cypriot Turkish are dominated by SLI; these discourses prioritise or 'legitimise' one version of Turkish language over other versions, thereby 'silencing' or 'invisibilising' the non-dominant varieties. This highlights the instrumental role that schools play in consolidating and maintaining the hegemony of the standard (Bourdieu 1991) and the marginalization of those varieties viewed as non-standard, although Çavuşoğlu also shows how students 'resist' this narrative, raising 'alternative discourses around the legitimacy of Standard Turkish and the (de)legitimacy of Cypriot Turkish' (Çavuşoğlu, this volume).

Karatsareas' article also examines language attitudes in a complementary school, in this case a Greek school attended by the Cypriot Greek community in London. He draws on classroom

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observations to examine how language ideologies can change when they are transplanted to diasporic settings as a result of migration. He suggests that Cypriot Greek is labelled as slang by young British-born speakers of Greek Cypriot heritage; a process of re-enregisterment redefines the contrast Cypriot Greek forms with Standard Greek on the model of the slang vs. posh English binary particular to the London context. This binary in turn matches the binary implied by the SLI and shows that students' experiences of discourses about standardised and non-standardised varieties of English have impacted their understanding and discussion of Standard and Cypriot Greek. However, as with Cypriot Turkish, Cypriot Greek is not always negatively indexed by speakers. Although it does not necessarily hold covert prestige, as noted for MLE above, it can be indexed positively, being used, for example, 'performatively and in a non-stigmatising way to index novel and emerging identities, including hybrid identities' (Karatsareas, this volume). This once again highlights the complexity of the competing language ideologies that must be negotiated by speakers of minority varieties.

Schulter's article broadens the perspective of regional varieties of a standard language to outside the diasporic sphere, in her examination of attitudes towards standard-accented vs. Kurdish-accented Turkish in Turkey. She demonstrates how results from a Matched Guise Technique (MGT) study to measure language attitudes can be usefully informed by an examination of the language ideologies at play in a given culture. She finds that standard Turkish speakers are perceived as younger, more attractive and more successful than speakers with a Kurdish accent. There is a clear binary between 'correct' (standard) Turkish and any other forms of regionally influenced Turkish, including Kurdish-accented Turkish. This is due to a very strong orientation towards the SLI in Turkey, based on a strongly monolingualist language ideology linking language with nation, dating from the 1920s, which

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acts to legitimise standard Turkish only. Schluter's findings suggest that the persistence of this monolingualist language ideology 'invisibilises' not only any regional varieties of Turkish but also the multilingual, multidialectal repertoires of Kurdish-Turkish bilingual speakers in Turkish-dominant settings. Similarly to Çavuşoğlu and Karatsareas, therefore, Schluter shows that plurality in the non-standard variety is 'invisibilised' by SLI. Schluter, similarly to Karatsareas, also highlights the fact that Kurdish-accented Turkish can be indexed positively by its speakers, rating highly on solidarity factors, for example.

Both Hawkey & Mooney and Walsh examine the question of pluricentricity and the legitimacy of regional varieties or regional/minority languages (RMLs). Hawkey & Mooney present a qualitative analysis of interview data with Occitan and Catalan speakers in France to examine the role played by SLI in the standardisation of these languages, both of which display widespread variation. Hawkey & Mooney outline the complexity of applying SLI to RML situations, noting that rather than leading to the coherence and maintenance of such languages, standardisation processes can cause a communication barrier for those speakers who do not have access to the standardised variety, sometimes causing communicative breakdown within linguistic communities and exacerbating feelings of division and difference. Standardisation processes can also lead to increased insecurity, because speakers of RMLs can sometimes feel that their language falls short not only when measured against the official standard language but also when measured against the newly standardised form of the RML (see Costa, De Korne and Lane 2017, 2). In addition, new speakers of standardised varieties may feel that their variety is rejected as inauthentic when compared to native speakers of the RML (Hawkey 2018, 162-65). These issues can mean that the intended effect of standardisation – ensuring the maintenance of the variety – fails. Hawkey & Mooney also

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acknowledge the challenges in acknowledging plurality when attempting to standardise a variety and highlight the usefulness of the polynomic model (see Jaffe 1999) in such situations.

Walsh takes a detailed discourse analytical approach to examine the question of pluricentric standard languages from the point of view of a regional variety, looking at the changing focus of the variety of French viewed as 'standard' in Quebec in language advice columns in 20th-century newspapers. Walsh's study shows that, while all of the authors of language columns examined adhere in varying degrees to a monocentric view of standard French strongly influenced by SLI, there is nevertheless a shift over the course of the 20th century towards an acceptance of a more pluricentric model of standard French. There is also change over this period in the variety of French which is viewed as the most legitimate, from a French that is defined by its closeness to the French of France, to a French which is defined by its distance from English. This suggests a weakening in Quebec of the strongly monolingual SLI commonly associated with the French language, and a change therefore in the traditional hierarchy which placed the French of France firmly at the top as the only legitimate variety.

Finally, Zhao & Liu use an online corpus to examine the role played by SLI in informing attitudes towards the regional varieties of Putonghua (Standard Mandarin) spoken in Ningbo and Shanghai, as found on Weibo (the Chinese equivalent of Twitter). Zhao & Liu highlight the fact that even in a culture which is very strongly oriented towards imposition of the standard, such as China, there are numerous competing varieties, including regional language varieties and regional varieties of the standard (variation within the standard). Their results show that both implicit and explicit attitudes to regional varieties of Putonghua are influenced

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by SLI, with standard Putonghua being evaluated as more prestigious and more useful than regional varieties, that is, more 'legitimate' and with higher linguistic and social capital (Bourdieu 1991, 45). However, speakers nevertheless often display very positive attitudes towards regional varieties of Putonghua; indeed, in Shanghai the regional variety is often evaluated even more highly than standard Putonghua. This may suggest a move towards 'destandardisation' (Coupland and Kristiansen 2011).

4. Conclusion

Together, the papers of this special issue demonstrate how examining a diverse range of non-standard language varieties, using a broad range of methodological approaches and data sources, allows us to understand not only how language standardisation ideologies and processes are discursively constructed and enacted in multilingual contexts (McLelland 2020), but also how these ideologies may be contested. All of the articles show how a strongly monocentric SLI has had similar impacts in a diverse range of linguistic and cultural situations, labelling one particular variety of language the most legitimate variety, placing it at the top of a hierarchy of language varieties and assigning it high linguistic and social capital, while at the same time marginalising and, frequently, 'invisibilising' or 'erasing' other language varieties. However, they equally show that SLI may be enacted in slightly different ways in different situations, that there is varying tolerance of variation, and that other ideologies, such as authenticity, also play a role in determining attitudes towards different language varieties. Of particular interest is that fact that several of the articles note that there are competing attitudes amongst speakers of non-standard varieties, with both negative attitudes (influenced by SLI) and positive attitudes (often related to solidarity) co-existing. While it has long been acknowledged that standard varieties score higher on status

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ratings and non-standard varieties on solidarity ratings (see Ryan, Giles, and Sebastian 1982), the data from the studies in this special issue appear in some cases to show speakers of different non-standard varieties displaying a non-compliance with (or even contesting) the SLI (see Kircher & Fox on speakers of Multicultural London English, Çavuşoğlu on speakers of Cypriot Turkish, Walsh on Québécois French and Zhao & Liu on regional varieties of Putonghua, this volume). This indicates the presence of competing – and perhaps even partly irreconcilable – language ideologies amongst these speakers. It may even indicate that a weakening of SLI may be in progress in some of these situations, that is, that a process of 'destandardisation' (see Kristiansen and Grondelaers 2013; Kristiansen 2021), may be beginning. However, the articles equally demonstrate the urgent need for a more diverse approach to language education and language discourse in all situations, to avoid linguistic discrimination and prejudice and to ensure the continued transmission and maintenance of regional, minority and community languages. Acknowledging the plural nature of languages, cultures and identities in standardisation efforts is necessary to allow for a world in which all language users can thrive, regardless of the variety that they speak.

Word count: 4416

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