



Islands, Valleys, Screens: Language Contact and Contact Languages

Introducing Issue # 2

Editorial

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After the first issue of 10PLUS1 investigated language in media landscapes, the second issue now looks at a variety of ‘real-world’ landscapes around the globe – and how multiple languages get in contact there. Like the field of contact linguistics itself, this issue is a colourful and varied one that combines contributions dealing with a number of different languages and language contact situations, focusing on different aspects of language contact, contact languages and contact induced change, and employing different methodologies. There are contributions on language contact between English and Irish, English and Arabic, German and Swedish, dialect contact between different varieties of German, English and indigenous Asian languages, Spanish and Nahuatl, English and German, and German and Romance languages. These contact situations occur in Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe. The various research sites and locations of language contact that feature in this issue are illustrated on the map in Figure 1.

Because 10PLUS1 encourages a variety of contribution formats, we don’t just have research articles, but also a project presentation, an essay, a fictional dialogue and a brainstorming piece. One of these is written in Spanish, so this journal does not only deal

with contact linguistics, it is also itself a platform for language contact.

We start this issue with two articles on code-switching. Code-switching is a well-known phenomenon that is pervasive in the communication of multilinguals (e.g., Clyne 2003; Matras 2009). It is now the accepted view among linguists that code-switching does not occur because speakers are not able to speak a language proficiently enough to stick with it, but it is often a sign of flexibility and an excellent command of both languages (e.g., Appel & Muysken 2005: 120). Although this phenomenon is commonly observed in spoken language and often described as a prototypical phenomenon of oral language, it is mostly studied in written texts. **Heike Havermeier** addresses this mismatch by studying code-switching in spoken conversations between German/ Swedish bilinguals. Her article gives an overview of important literature in this area and focusses on methodology, as she adapts and expands currently used code-switching models to be used on oral data. **Frederic Zähres** provides a case study of code-switching in German/English bilinguals in Namibia. He investigates written language in keyboard-to-screen communication, a medium that is considered to be close to spoken language.

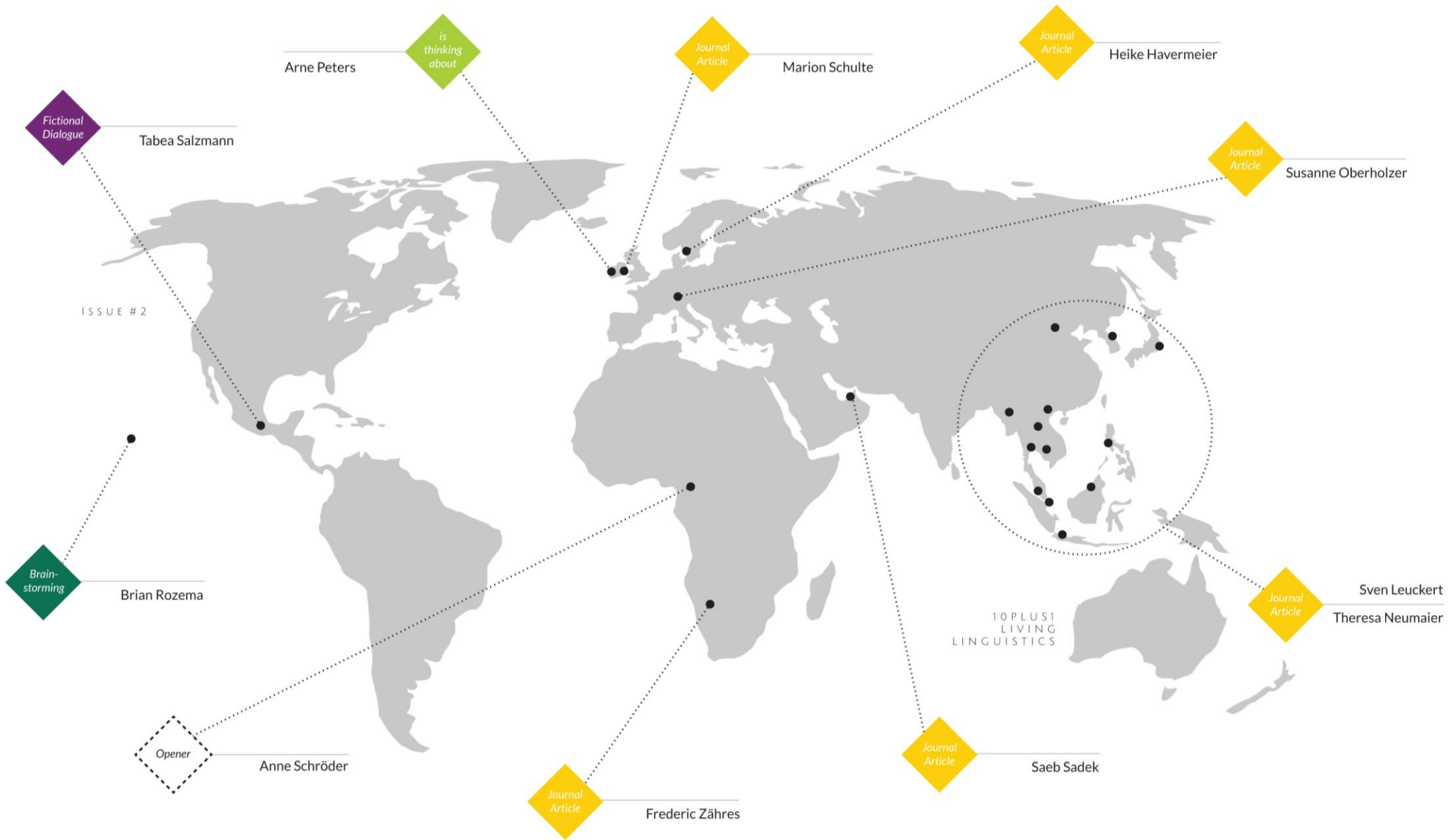


Figure 1 Overview of Contributions by Referenced Locations Based on Wiki Commons World Map | CC BY 1.0 Generic | Visualization: Jana Pflaeging

After two articles on language contact with German, we turn to a paper on dialect contact. **Susanne Oberholzer** presents a new research project she is about to undertake on the German varieties spoken in a remote valley in the Swiss Alps. She describes historical and present-day contact situations between different dialects of German and between these dialects and Romance languages also spoken in the area. It becomes clear here that natural borders can have considerable impact on language contact, as different dialects and languages are spoken in different valleys that may be geographically close, but difficult to reach at certain times of the year. As soon as closer contact between the people in these areas is made possible, for example by new roads or access to new media, linguistic change can be observed. In the cases described here, a valley's population might change the language it speaks completely, for example by shifting from a Romance to a Germanic language, they might shift to a different dialect within the same language family, or they might acquire a new dialect that is restricted to certain registers. This project presentation thus highlights the sociolinguistic complexities of language contact situations and shows that a variety of methods is needed to

gather data on language use in different population groups and usage contexts.

Tabea Salzmänn reflects on the sociolinguistic complexities of language contact in a completely different way. She has written a fictional conversation between sociolinguists that draws attention to language contact in Mexico. This piece also addresses some of the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to analysing bi- and multilingualism in general, such as, for example, the tendency of many frameworks to disregard conversational and situational context that goes beyond purely linguistic information.

All of the remaining contributions deal with contact situations involving English, but they do so in very different ways. The articles by Saeb Sadek, Sven Leuckert & Theresa Neumaier, and Brian Rozema investigate different aspects of English as a lingua franca in multilingual contexts. **Saeb Sadek** studies English as a second language in the United Arab Emirates, where English has a high prestige and is becoming more and more important within a traditionally Arabic speaking society. A large number of immigrants from a variety of non-Arabic speaking countries live in the United Arab Emirates and English is starting to be used as a lingua franca (Randall & Samimi 2010). This article describes the

sociolinguistic situation of this language contact situation and presents a case study of English article usage by Emirati students, who learn English as a second language. **Sven Leuckert & Theresa Neumaier** investigate English as a lingua franca in South East Asia, which plays an important role, both as a second language, but also increasingly as a first language in this highly multilingual setting (Buschfeld in prep.). Here, English comes into contact with a large number of indigenous languages from various language families, which provides an interesting research context for Leuckert & Neumaier to explore. **Brian Rozema** brainstorms about Hawai'ian Pidgin, an English-lexified creole language. Creoles are often based on pidgin languages and may thus originate in lingua franca communication. Rozema discusses the current status and possible future developments of this language.

The last two articles in this issue are both concerned with the English spoken in Ireland, and the contact between English and Irish. **Arne Peters** writes about the historical development of Galway City and the contact between the Irish speaking population in the west of Ireland and the English and Norman-French speaking, settlers from England after the Anglo-Norman Conquest of Ireland in

the 12th century. He shows how such political and linguistic developments are connected and still influence the languages spoken in Ireland today. **Marion Schulte** investigates the connections between linguistic policies and the languages that form a part of public spaces in the capital of the Republic of Ireland, Dublin. This article describes currently active language policies in Ireland, and links these with census data, linguistic landscapes from two locations in South Dublin, and interview data with people who live in these neighbourhoods. The last two contributions both investigate the connections between language use and change in a language contact setting, and political developments. They therefore create a transition to the next issue of 10PLUS1, which is going to focus on the various connections between language and politics.

References

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