Introduction: Sociolinguistics and tourism – mobilities, markets, multilingualism

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In the introduction to this special issue on Sociolinguistics and Tourism, we focus on language in tourism as an important window into contemporary forms of economic, political, and social change. Our aim is twofold: (1) to establish and extend ‘sociolinguistics and tourism’ as another social and applied domain of sociolinguistic research; and (2) to use tourism as a lens for a broader discussion of the sociolinguistics of late modernity. To this end, we outline the contours of language and tourism research to date; we consider the (re)conceptualization of key thematics or notions in sociolinguistic research – such as ‘community’, ‘identity’, and ‘language’ itself – as particularly germane to the study of tourism’s fleeting encounters; we examine the inevitable tensions between commodification and authenticity; and we explore the links between performances of ‘self’ and ‘other’, and the contestation of different identity positions with regard to social actors’ multilingual repertoires. We illustrate these issues with data examples from several tourist sites, where multilingual resources are deployed for identification, authentication and commodification. Finally, we briefly introduce the papers in this special issue and conclude by commenting on some sociolinguistic consequences of the study of language/s in tourism.

KEYWORDS: Tourism, mobility, globalization, sociolinguistics, linguistic market, commodification of language, authenticity, identity, multilingualism, code-crossing

SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND TOURISM

In her book Contact! A Book of Glimpses, the travel writer Jan Morris brings together her memories of people encountered while travelling around the globe:

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In a lifetime of travel and literature I have written relatively little about people. Places, atmospheres, histories have figured far more in my all too often purple prose. But people everywhere, nevertheless, have been sparks of my work, if only in glimpses – a sighting through a window, a gentle snatch of sound, the touch of a hand – and it is mostly such fugitive moments and observations, scattered across half a century and forty-odd books, that I have here gratefully plucked out of their literary obscurity. (Morris 2009: 1)

At first glance, this passage might seem a little discouraging for sociolinguists intending to study language in tourism, especially given our central interest in face-to-face interaction. By Morris’ reckoning, tourism offers little beyond ‘fugitive moments and observations’ of contact. Yet, it is precisely the prevalence of fleeting, symbolic (or meta-symbolic) uses of language and other semiotic systems in tourism that makes it such an attractive domain for sociolinguists who are increasingly interested in the fluid and contingent aspects of meaning making. As we discuss below, few sociolinguists nowadays view language as a straightforwardly static and bounded entity, most favouring instead a view of language as a dynamic repository of flexible, mobile resources – codes, genres and styles – that are deployed as situated, emergent acts of identity construction, social boundary marking, and power formation. In their brief overview of tourism discourse, for example, Jaworski and Thurlow (2014a) identify the following, overlapping areas of work in ‘sociolinguistics and tourism’:

- the staging of interactions between consumers/tourists and service providers/hosts;
- the packaging of cultural forms or practices – including languages – as products for tourist consumption;
- the linguistic/semiotic framing and management of space and place; and,
- the recycling or remediation of tourist embodied practices beyond their immediate contexts of enactment, for example in newspaper travelogues, TV holiday programmes, online reviews of hotels by tourists, or posting of tourists’ own videos and photos on YouTube and Flickr.

Furthermore, all of these ‘levels’ of discursive production in/of tourism are encompassed by a broader framework of sociolinguistic research examining the circulation and commodification of language in the context of the ‘new’ globalized economy (see Heller 2010a; also Shankar and Cavanaugh 2012). As part of the commodified indexes and representations of local places, people, practices and products, linguistic and discursive resources are seen as easily, but not unproblematically, detachable from their traditional symbolic meanings. This often leads to a tension between the desire to capitalize on and mass produce languages, cultures and identities for their purportedly unique or exotic character, while fulfilling the need to retain (or claim) their authenticity, ownership and legitimacy. As such, the expression and
promotion of one’s national/ethnic identity and pride must be balanced with – or set at odds with – their being packaged and sold for profit (Duchène and Heller 2011; Thurlow and Aiello 2007).

Our aim in this introductory paper, and indeed in the whole special issue, is twofold:

1. to establish/extend tourism as an important social and applied domain of sociolinguistic research; and,
2. to use tourism as a lens for a broader discussion of the sociolinguistics of late modernity.

In the remaining part of this Introduction, we take up the themes alluded to above by considering some of the key themes and concepts in contemporary sociolinguistics as particularly germane to the study of tourism’s ‘fugitive moments’ of contact. In particular, we consider the salience of language in tourism and its significance for sociolinguistic inquiry, for example, by reviewing such terms as ‘community’, ‘identity’, and ‘language’ itself, by examining tensions between commodification and authenticity, and by exploring links between performances of ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ and the contestation of different identity positions with regard to social actors’ multilingual repertoires. We then proceed to illustrate these issues with data examples from our own fieldwork in several different sites focusing on tourist contexts, where multilingual resources are deployed for ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ construction, authentication and commodification. Finally, we introduce briefly the papers in this special issue, and we conclude by reflecting on the role of language in the construction of social relations and inequalities in tourist spaces.

**LANGUAGE AND/IN TOURISM**

In this special issue, we focus on tourism as an important window into the forms of political, cultural and social change characteristic of the contemporary era (cf. Zygmunt Bauman, in Franklin 2003). Tourism is unquestionably one of the world’s largest international trades – a truly global cultural industry – and a powerful site (or vehicle) for the mobility of money, people and culture. Crucially, tourism is also a major domain for the always uneven, often erratic or unexpected ‘flows’ of linguistic materials and other semiotic resources (Heller 2007; Pennycook 2012; Thurlow and Jaworski 2010a). Nor is it simply its scale, its far-reaching impact that warrants tourism as a worthy topic. As the papers in this special issue show, tourism is also an ideal site for sociolinguistic analysis, because the regular practices and exchanges (both material and symbolic) of tourism consistently destabilize otherwise sedimented notions of insider/outsider, authenticity, culture and place; it also challenges received meanings of language(s), interaction, multilingualism, and community.
Since the globalized (or post-industrial) ‘new’ economy foregrounds an intensified circulation of human, material and symbolic resources, sociolinguists too have begun to recognize how mobility, multiplicity and fluidity are the normal state of affairs, rather than simply marked processes to be explained (Blommaert 2010; Sheller and Urry 2006). Central to this ‘paradigm shift’ within sociolinguistics is a concern to rethink – perhaps even to deconstruct – our long-standing approaches to ‘language’ and ‘speech community’; most clearly encapsulated in the notion of ‘ethnolinguistic identity’, these ideas are rooted in the belief that culturally or ethnically distinct and bounded groups of people use distinct and bounded languages for communication (Blommaert 2005; Makoni and Pennycook 2007). According to this modernist ideology of language, multilingualism is conceived of and, at best, tolerated as two or more parallel monolingualisms, functionally and structurally separate from one another (Heller 2007; Stroud and Wee 2012). On the contrary, in post- and late-modern approaches to language and identity, language is no longer considered as neatly bounded to identity, nor does it simply ‘precede’ or exist ‘outside’ of identification (e.g. Kramsch 2009; Norton 2000; Pavlenko 2001; Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004). So too are languages increasingly being reconceived as less neatly or uniformly tied to predictable and stable places. In this regard, our own work in the field of tourism echoes a growing body of sociolinguistic writing that considers language practices and language localities to be mutually constitutive of one another (e.g. Johnstone 2010, 2014; Pennycook 2010).

Along these lines, ‘sociolinguistics and tourism’ aligns itself with – and responds to – calls elsewhere in sociolinguistics to rethink the bread-and-butter material of our work. For example, Rampton (1998, 2009; following Pratt 1987) bases his call for a reassessment of sociolinguistics on the shift from a ‘linguistics of community’ to a ‘linguistics of contact’ (2009: 705). In turn, Rampton aligns himself with the relatively recent ‘communities of practice’ and ‘language ideologies’ approaches to sociolinguistics that have diverted the attention of researchers from language as an autonomous system towards language as situated practice and to questions of links between individual agency and social structuration (cf. Heller 2003, 2007; following Giddens 1984). These newer ways of thinking are, of course, also in keeping with post-/late-modern discourses about the social construction of fundamental categories such as ‘human’, ‘society’ and ‘nation’, as well as ‘the ways in which representations of the “other” contribute to the ideological construction of “us”’ (Rampton 2009: 703). This is not to assume the decline of ‘mattering’ for most people of purportedly stable and essentialized categories like ‘national culture’, ‘ethnic identity’, or ‘gender identity’, nor do we assume, after Clifford (1997: 10) ‘that crossover practices are always liberatory or that articulating an autonomous identity or a national culture is always reactionary’. Rather, social diversity calls for
a sociolinguistics that accounts for an emerging mosaic of locally situated practices where social actors strategically orient to, appropriate, recycle, challenge or ignore a wealth of semiotic resources, imbuing them with symbolic connotations and indexicalities, linking linguistic variables with specific groups and contexts (Bell 2001; Coupland 2007, 2010; Rampton 2009: 704). Following Nuselovici, Davidson and Mason (2009), we refer to this semiotic meshing or laminating of translocal and transcultural identities, processes and connections as a moiré effect – the swirling, watery or wavelike patterns on textiles or fabrics, or chequered, multiply layered digital patterns. For example, the moiré effect of the multilingual linguascapes of tourism can be seen in the multilingual displays and spectacles as shown in Figure 1. Here, an imagined community (or mass market) of tourists are accommodated and synthetically personalized by being welcomed in their ‘own’ languages (cf. Jaworski 2014a). Similar patterns of alignment can be found in tourists’ adapting their repertoires to the local normativities with frequent instances of code-crossing, for example in bilingual performances of greetings (see Extract 1, below, and Thurlow and Jaworski this issue).

Tourism has, of course, long been available as a terrain for sociolinguistic enquiry; its neglect is very much in keeping with the field’s historic preference for the fixed over the mobile and, perhaps, its preoccupation with the

Figure 1: Advertising banner, North Point ferry terminal, Hong Kong; 28 March 2014

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seemingly more ‘serious’ (as opposed to ‘leisurely’) stuff of life, and with subcultural, grassroots (as opposed to elite or privileged) constituencies (although see Pennycook 2010: 11). At the same time, however, globalized, high, late, or ‘liquid’ modernity now increases tourism’s salience (Bauman 2000). As Zygmunt Bauman notes, tourism is both a major system of mobility and a metaphor for contemporary life – what he calls ‘the tourist syndrome’ – specifically with regards to ‘being in a place temporarily and knowing it, not belonging to the place, not locked into the local life “for better or worse” . . . with the way we are all “inserted” in the company of others everywhere – in the places we live or work’ (Franklin 2003: 207; Bauman 1998). In more literal terms, the increasing delocalization of primary and secondary industries from the so-called First World to the so-called Third World has obliged many communities and regions to reinvent themselves through knowledge/service economies, in which tourism plays an increasingly central role. In addition, the saturation of markets characteristic of advanced capitalism leads to greater emphasis on the development of symbolic ‘added value’ and of niche markets, in which the consumption of symbolic goods become important sources of cultural capital and distinction (Bourdieu 1979). Starting with producers and consumers from the First World who have turned increasingly to the tertiary sector, tourism has conscripted actors, with their diverse repertoires, from around the globe. Indeed, for many, the only opportunity they have for accessing the global market is to identify (or create) and to ‘monetize’ their touristic potential (cf. Urry 2002 on ‘tourism reflexivity’).

Tourism has, accordingly, mobilized modernist markers of social difference as resources for generating the kind of ‘authenticity’ which guarantees the value of distinctive products (Coupland and Coupland this issue; Coupland, Garrett and Bishop 2005; Duchêne and Heller 2011; Heller 2011; Heller, Duchêne and Pujolar this issue). Indeed, tourism is unavoidably in the business of not only staging but also producing difference (Thurlow and Jaworski 2010a). Touristic experiences and encounters of/with the Other now take place in both their established frames (e.g. hiking in the Black Forest, embarking on colonial missions) and also in new (re)commodified terrains of unequal production, and through the consumption of newly reconfigured identity narratives. Older forms of categorization (sexualization, gendering, racialization), long inscribed in the construction and legitimization of inequality, are resituated and resemiotized as valuable markers of difference. In fact, as bell hooks (1992) observes, the ‘eating of the Other’ continues largely unabated as the ‘spice’ of contemporary life. Wrapped in its celebration of intercultural contact and multicultural difference, tourism is, in many ways, a prime site of social categorization and distinction (Heller, Duchêne and Pujolar this issue; Thurlow and Jaworski 2010b). Needless to say, language and languages play a central role in the marking and making of social difference.
Languages and, in particular, languages constructed as local, often feature no less heavily than other visual (objects), gustatory (food) or auditory (music) artefacts when it comes to tourists’ search for authenticity and difference, and hence as products that can be developed when areas suffering the decline of the primary and secondary sectors search for new economic bases. In a service-based economy dependent on what Hochschild (1983) famously called ‘emotional labour’, products or services are largely delivered by ‘in-person servers’ (Reich 1994), whether these are people who perform their generally routine tasks in the presence of those consuming their services, or people whose service delivery becomes part of the product itself. This has created new economic value for different ways of speaking and writing (cf. Cameron 2000; Heller 2003, 2010a, 2010b; Piller and Takahashi 2013; Thurlow and Jaworski 2010a, 2011b). In tourism, the range of communicative events and textual objects that mediate as well as constitute part of the tourist consumption of various destinations and attractions is vast and always multimodal (Coupland and Coupland this issue; Jaworski and Thurlow 2014b; Thurlow and Jaworski 2011a, this issue). And a growing body of literature in sociolinguistics, discourse analysis and social semiotics examines the objectification and commodification of languages as markers of cultural difference and distinction, typically underpinned by national language ideologies, across a wide range of contexts and genres. Some of the overarching themes in this work include:

- the ‘textualizing’ of the quotidian, ethnographic artefacts with museum labels and mixing of local languages and ways of speaking in festivals, pageants and theatrical shows of story-telling, singing and dancing (Heller 2011; Heller and Pujolar 2009; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998);
- emplaced discourses or ‘linguistic landscapes’ that frame spaces as distinctive and exotic, create a ‘sense of place’, and mediate the tourist ecosocial experience and its memory (Bowcher and Liang 2013; Coupland 2012; Jaworski 2014a; Jaworski and Thurlow 2013; Kallen 2009);
- national and regional languages and iconography ‘attached’ to mass produced, standardized objects and local produce imbuing them with symbolic added value of localness, tradition, qualifying them as transportable ‘tripper objects’ (Lury 1997; Pietikäinen and Kelly-Holmes 2011);
- displays and performances of local talk in service encounters and guided tours (Jack and Phipps 2005; Jaworski and Thurlow 2010a; Kelly-Holmes and Sari Pietikäinen this issue);
- performative re-mediation and re-contextualization of local languages in print, broadcast and online travelogues, guidebooks, postcards and other promotional materials (Cordeiro 2011; Jaworski 2010; Kelly-Holmes,
Pietikäinen and Moriarty 2011; Thurlow and Jaworski 2010; Xiaoxiao 2013);

- ‘language tourism’ operating between the discourses of commodification of language, national identity and personal pursuit of the cultural distinction (Atkinson and Moriarty 2012; Phipps 2007; Yarymowich 2005).

Spoken and written discourses in the above examples add up to what we would call the tourist *linguascape* (Jaworski et al. 2003), ranging from relatively spontaneous, noisy and sometimes disorienting talk or signage in heterogeneous spaces, to the highly managed, hushed and silent environments of ‘elite’ mobilities in enclavic spaces (Thurlow and Jaworski 2010b; cf. Edensor 2001). Regardless, the linguistic landscape of tourism is shaped by the *tourist gaze* (Urry 2002; after Foucault 1976) – the socially organized, systematized and disciplining ways in which tourism is structured and learned. In the case of language, tourists and tourism providers are also drawn into a regime of truth about the nature of language and ‘linguaculture’ (Agar 1994), as well as the relative value of languages (‘local’ and otherwise) in the global linguistic marketplace (Duchène and Piller 2011). Like places to be visited, ‘local’ or ‘minority’ languages are *souvenirized* by being ‘miniaturized’ or simplified to a few recognizable phrases or features (Corderio 2011).² In our discussion of Extract 1 (below), for example, we demonstrate how an agent of the global tourism industry (in this case, a radio travel show host) deploys linguistic resources to rehearse certain tourist ways of knowing places and ways of performing the role of tourist. Importantly, all the papers in this special issue detail the contours (and specificities) of similar regimes of truth, accepted ways of seeing and listening, with a shared commitment to exploring how languages are taken up – sometimes simultaneously – as markers of authenticity or heritage, as resources for asserting self and framing other, and as commodities or trinkets for sale. Such are the complex agendas that underpin the symbolic and economic exchanges of/within tourism.

**LANGUAGES FOR SALE: TOURISM AS A SYMBOLIC MARKETPLACE**

So far, we have noted how the expansion of tourism as a major global cultural industry – if not the world’s largest even – makes it a key domain of economic and social activity under globalization. We have also indicated the significance of the commodification of language and identity in tourism, and its interest as a site for studying shifting identities, interpersonal relations, and group structures in contemporary life. Consumer culture, that overarching (but by no means monolithic) pattern of values, beliefs and behaviours in post-industrial, capitalist societies, has linked the economic and symbolic systems in two inextricable ways:
1. material goods have acquired cultural values that index, or communicate, meaning beyond their use value, e.g. status, group membership, sophistication, rebelliousness, and so on; and
2. cultural goods that were not originally associated with economic exchange, e.g. linguistic codes and varieties, have come to be produced, distributed and used in accordance with the principles of economic markets (Featherstone 1991; see also Fairclough 1992; Harvey 1989; Lash and Urry 1994).

Following Bourdieu (1977, 1991), we see all linguistic exchanges as also economic exchanges; however, under the reorderings of global capitalism, existing language forms and configurations (e.g. multilingualism) are put to new uses, gain new value, and become objects of intense scrutiny, as well as vehicles and sites of ideological struggle, contestation, legitimation and authentication of ethnic, national and other subject positions. In the context of tourism, this is especially clear in the proliferation of theme parks, open-air museums, festivals and spectacles laying out displays of ethnicity, nationality, culture, urban or industrial heritage through the (re-)invented narratives of group origins, history, and present-day lives (e.g. Bruner 2005; Feighery 2008; Heller 2011; Jaworski and Pritchard 2005; Kirshenbatt-Gimblett 1998; Wang 2014). This is not to say that these are solely or simply contemporary phenomena – they certainly trace their origins to colonial spectacles such as the Great Exhibitions, Expositions or World’s Fairs (Kemp and Wallace 2000), or the historical pageants so prominent in nation-building exercises from the nineteenth century on (Hobsbawm 1990).

These are also the most obvious areas of tourism-driven activity, where language (and other semiotic codes) become vehicles for explicit staging (Edensor 2001) or ‘high performance’ (Coupland 2007) in which gathered (rather than simply co-present) participants overtly orient to and evaluate the formal, or ‘poetic’, properties of code through metapragmatic labelling, commentary, explanation, and translation. To be clear, such performances are heavily marked by some quite ‘traditional’ claims to ownership, belonging and ‘authenticity’; they are, however, also rooted in pragmatic instrumentalism, playfulness and appropriation. Not infrequently, touristic stagings of language – the production of the linguascape – are structured by a mixture of all these positions, dynamically and dialectically negotiated in the process of ritualized enactments and interactions. The role of language in tourism is crucial, then, but not as straightforward and clear-cut as might be assumed; there is no one-to-one correspondence between linguistic units and ethnic, social or cultural formations (Coupland 2006; Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985). Rather, as part of their tourist linguistic labour, and in the process of consuming the linguistic product of tourism, social actors activate and deploy their multilingual resources drawn from repertoires built up across the lifespan (Blommaert and Backus 2013; Busch 2012; Pennycook 2012).
As such, we find ‘old ways’ and ‘new ways’ of doing language complexly intertwined, just as we (and others) have found tourism skilfully managing the tension between old/stable and new/fluid notions of culture, identity, heritage, and place (again, see Bruner 2005, amongst others).

Sociolinguistic items, be they language codes or subtle phonological variants, may be strategically deployed as indexes of specific identities, but their projection and interpretations are always filtered through a plethora of objective and subjective dimensions of Self- and Other-perception, uptake, interpretive frames and communicative goals, within the political economy of difference (Blommaert 2005; Heller 2003; Lawson and Jaworski 2007). For example, as observed by Rampton (1995), traditional conceptions of what it is to be a native speaker break down when instrumental language use is separated from its symbolic value as a means of manifesting and asserting one’s ethnic or national allegiances or loyalties, or when language inheritance is separated from language allegiance and the degree of linguistic expertise. Others working in much the same vein include Otsuji and Pennycook (2010, on ‘metrolinguism’), García (2007, on ‘translanguaging’) and Jørgensen (2008, on ‘polylingual languaging’; see also Bailey 2007; Creese and Blackledge 2010, 2011; Jacquemet 2005; Jaworski 2014b; Li Wei 2011; Møller 2008).

Likewise, in the context of tourism, we see speakers deploying ‘old’, well-established linguistic resources in novel forms, styling Self and Other in new, often surprising ways, playing with social norms. In doing so, they sometimes ‘speak back’ to power and challenge tourism discourse’s ‘regimes of truth’ by, for example, unexpectedly conflating instrumental and emotive uses of language, or shifting between use-value and exchange-value. It is in this way that tourism focuses our attention on linguistic practices as performances (cf. Bell and Gibson 2011) and sharpens long-standing concerns about whether all social practice needs to be understood in those terms (following both Goffman 1959 and Butler 1990). Tourism raises questions about whether there are important distinctions to be made between marked and unmarked practices or displays which help us discover, for example, how and why specific kinds of linguistic resources get mobilized to construct hegemony (through normalization), or how practices can be invested with multiple, even contradictory, voices and stances (cf. Bakhtin 1981; Bauman and Briggs 1990). Beyond this, tourism offers a useful corrective – or at least alternative perspective – on the kinds of ‘metrolingual’, ‘polylingual’ or ‘translingual’ practices that concern many contemporary sociolinguists (see references above). In tourism, we find a world of multiple, translocal, resourceful languaging in the context of (relatively) elite mobilities. At least in global terms, this is the privileged face of cosmopolitanism which, as Gogia (2006) reminds us, is dependent on – and constitutive of – the less fortunate modes of mobility and immobility of migrant workers, refugees and those ‘locals’ who serve tourists.
MULTILINGUAL RESOURCES IN TOURISM:
AUTHENTICATION, COMMODIFICATION, (DIS)PLAY

We now turn to four examples from our own work, which have contributed to our formulation of the types of sociolinguistic/multilingual issues articulated above. Our examples are chosen to highlight the role of different ‘stakeholders’ (most notably, tourists/visitors and hosts/locals), different stages in the tourist experience (e.g. guided tours and industry planning meetings), and different degrees of scriptedness (e.g. media representations and informal host-tourist banter). Together, these concrete, ‘lived’ examples point to shifting ideologies of language viewed as a commodifiable resource, a marker of authenticity and a means of social difference/distinction. They also direct attention to the performative nature of language, which is to say its uptake as a marked or ‘spectacular’ resource, as well as its relatively unmarked, normative deployment for hegemonic effect (Thurlow and Jaworski this issue). Although they are clearly interrelated in certain ways, we present the examples under three distinct headings:

1. ‘Languages for play: Mediatization and the commodification of the “Other”’;
2. ‘Languages on display: Performance and self-authentication’; and
3. ‘Language contests: Struggling for authenticity and commodification’.

It is in this way that we mean to show how languages are oriented to in different ways depending on the communicative event (or genre), but also on the authority of the speaker as insider (local) or outsider (visitor), on the degree to which the exchange is spectacular and/or consciously scripted, and on the extent to which semiotic material is understood as heritage which becomes commodifiable, or produces that heritage in the process of creating tourist commodities. The dual – and sometimes competing – tasks of authentication and commodification are, it seems, always at play. Our examples do not allow us to make predictions about how this will all work out; instead, what we try to do here is to point to a transformation in the conditions of production of ‘language’, ‘identity’, ‘culture’ and ‘place’.

Languages for play: Mediatization and the commodification of ‘Other’

The print, broadcast and online media offer some of the quintessential ways in which tourism is pre-figured as ‘the preparation of people to see other places as objects’ (Franklin and Crang 2001). People learn what the value of tourism is, what it means to be a tourist and the ‘rules of engagement’ with places, people and languages constructed as alternatively ‘local’ or ‘universal’/‘dominant’, that is, speaking from the point of view of the consumer, the consumed or the producer. The object, or commodity, gets anchored to specific place, and often rendered timeless; this is what we will be referring to as ‘local’ (although we will henceforth spare the reader the scare quotes).

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Take a look at the following extract from the start of one episode of the popular U.S. radio show *Travel with Rick Steves* (see Thurlow and Jaworski 2011b for evidence that this singular moment of tourism discourse is by no means limited to Rick Steves, to radio, or to the U.S.A.). This episode first aired in May 2008 and was repeated in January 2010; it is Steves’ *Rome City Guide*. After a short preamble (lines 1 to 7, edited from the original), Steves takes a moment to introduce two city guides/friends, starting in line 7.

**Extract 1:** From *Travel with Rick Steves* (10 May 2008), U.S.A.

RS = Rick Steves (radio host)
SP = Susanna Perucchini (Tourist Guide in Rome)
FC = Francesca Caruso (Tourist Guide in Rome)

1 RS: as you peel through its fascinating and jumbled layers
2 you’ll find Rome’s buildings cats all that laundry crazy
3 traffic and two and a half million Romans endlessly
4 entertaining (.) and of course the thing about Rome is it
5 has so much history. Not only does it have a lot of
6 history but it’s a vibrant opportunity to connect with
7 today’s Italy (.) today I have joining me two Roman
8 guides friends of mine who have helped me with my
9 tours and my guidebook research and today are joining
10 us (.) Susanna Perucchini is here in our studio and
11 Francesca Caruso joins us by telephone from Rome (.)
12 do I say benvenuti?
13 SP: benvenuto si
14 RS: benvenuti
15 SP: (laughs)
16 RS: Francesca come va?
17 FC: (laughs) molto bene e tu?
18 RS: ciao bella (laughs)
19 FC: (laughs) ciao
20 SP: (laughs)
21 FC: (laughs)
22 RS: I gotta say ciao bella
23 FC: si
24 SP: yeah you said it well
25 FC: yeah that was perfect
26 RS: ciao bella because I wouldn’t want to say ciao bello
27 FC: (laughs) no you wouldn’t
28 RS: I’ve learned (.) no
29 FC: definitely not (laughs)
30 RS: OK thank you (.) well it’s great to have you both here

Steves’ performance of Italian (and *Italianicity* more generally, cf. Barthes 1977 [1964]) confirms his relatively limited grasp of the language; for example, his incorrect gendered inflection of ‘benvenuti’ (line 12), his inability to recognize
the correction offered (lines 13 and 14), the arguably pragmatic inappropriateness of ‘ciao bella’, and, by the same token, his slightly awkward (if not also heteronormative) game with ‘bello’. This is not to say that he has no Italian. Nor is it to deny credit where credit is due: at least, some might argue, he’s having a go. This is hardly, however, a serious or committed attempt to take up or to move into Italian. Indeed, the framing of this local language as a largely playful resource for use by Steves is keyed as ‘endlessly entertaining’ (lines 3–4) in his preamble, and by the laughter throughout (lines 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 27 and 29). It’s a low-stakes game, all part of a pleasurable encounter with otherness. Steves rests comfortably in the knowledge that after his dabble with Italian he may return safely to English – after all, both his Italian guests are fluent English speakers. Note also the promise of contact (see ‘opportunity to connect’, line 6) which sits at the heart of so much tourism discourse. In a world, or interactional frame, marked as play, grammatical accuracy is clearly less important – if at all – and the consequences of pragmatic failure – the need for serious conversational ‘repair’ – mitigated by largely one-sided relationships of power. At least this is how these encounters are presented to listeners.

In fact, what appears to be the aim of this exchange and the dis-play of and with Italian is to create for the listeners a pleasing sense of belonging to an imagined community of tourists and cosmopolitan global citizens. This is achieved largely through the presenters’ specific exploitation of the sociolinguistic resource of crossing (Rampton 1995), the use of a language (or variety) of a group which the speaker cannot legitimately claim membership of. It is through his playful, transient crossing into Italian that Steves (and many other presenters of travel/holiday shows on radio and TV) positions himself as a cosmopolitan – not in the sense of his being culturally engaged with or embracing of local people (cf. Hannerz 1996), but rather with respect to his appeal to the elite cachet of global citizenship. He is one of the people freely traversing national boundaries while remaining firmly rooted in his ‘home’ identification as an American national. Ultimately, it is in this way that, as powerful ideological mediators, shows like this one, and their style-setting presenters, commodify local languages and promote a regime of touristic and intercultural truth: this is what it means to be a tourist, this is what counts as the place you are visiting or the experience you are consuming, these are the local language and culture and their legitimate performers, this is where the value of local languages lies.

Languages on display: Performance and self-authentication

In our next example, a tour guide in the Maori village of Whakarewarewa, Rotorua, New Zealand stops with a group of tourists in front of a sign explaining the name of the village. This is one of many such stops which include accounts of local customs, traditions, way of life, nature, and material
culture. The guide stands next to the sign facing a small group of tourists, occasionally orienting to the sign and pointing to various parts of the name of the village as he speaks, making it a fully multimodal display engaging the tourists in a spoken, written and embodied performance of the place-name.

Extract 2: A tour of Whakarewarewa, Rotorua, New Zealand

G = Guide
A = Audience, a small group of tourists

1 G: but firstly folks can you all say Whaka?
2 A: (different voices) Whaka
3 G: Whaka yeah that is the name of this valley (.) and the
4 village (.) and that’s been the name for a long long
5 time the common name (2 sylls. unclear) true name folks (.)
6 is a lot
7 with tip of his umbrella) Te Whakarewarewa-tanga-o-
8 te-ope-taua-a-Wahiao
9 A: (laughter)
10 G: very very long name isn’t it folks? (.) Whaka W-H-A-
11 K-A (.) (uses hands to frame the first five letters) is the
12 shortened version (.) but folks the long version (.) Te
13 Whakarewarewa-tanga-o-te-ope-taua-a-Wahiao (.)
14 Wahiao the great chief (.) Ope-taua war party (.)
15 Te Whakarewarewa-tanga the uprising of the war
16 party of Wahiao (.) and uh folks (.) how you get that
17 name actually comes about by the actions of a haka and
18 the surrounding activities so you saw the haka on
19 stage?
20 A: yes=
21 G: =three or four men on there just imagine three or
22 four hundred? doing (unclear) a haka folks (.) when kicking
23 their feet up and making all the dust rise around the place (.)
24 and the dust rising was likened to the steam all over the
25 valley (.) now out of the dust rising the men would leap
26 as high as they could (.) and the men leaping all over
27 the place folks (.) was likened (.) to the steam
28 (.) oh sorry to the geysers shooting out of the ground (.)
29 up to two hundred years ago thirty-six geysers in this
30 valley so that would’ve been [drop out] so folks by the
31 action of that haka (.) the rising dust (.) jumping men
32 (.) likened to the rising steam (.) geysers shooting out
33 (.) and all the action over the valley (.) that is how you
34 get the name (.) the uprising war party of Wahiao (.)
35 shortened to Te Whakarewarewa (.) shortened even
36 more folks to W-H-A-K-A (.) when we shorten it to this
version we try not to pronounce the W-H as F (2.0)

(smiles and looks across the crowd) for obvious reasons

[...

A: (laughter)

G: we don’t want anyone getting the wrong ideas (.)

especially the young ones I guess so um that’s why we

just say Whaka anyway let’s go and have a look at

these geysers folks

In Extract 2, the tourists are invited to ‘consume’ the Maori name of the village they are visiting. The multimodal display and interactive performance involves the repeated pronunciation by the tour guide of the whole place or its constituent parts (lines 1, 3, 7–8, 12–13, 14–15, 35), and the tourists’ own attempt at pronouncing the short version of the name (line 2). The significance of the name and its particular value as a tourist text lies partly in its length. On hearing the full version of the name of the village, the tourists respond with laughter (line 9). No doubt, the source of humour lies in the ‘unimaginable’ complexity and ‘difficult’ pronunciation of the name, which the guide confirms with his rhetorical question ‘very, very long name, isn’t it folks’ in line 10.

Long place names are not infrequently turned into tourist attractions in other parts of the world, especially if they happen to belong to lesser spoken languages, helping to ‘exoticize’ the destination (cf. Jaworski 2010; Jaworski and Thurlow 2010 for discussion of a related example from North Wales; also Coupland 2012). In Extract 2, the guide does not simply use the name of the village as an index of place; he performs it, puts it on display, shows off his own skill in pronouncing it and implies that the tourists do not belong, because they are only able to repeat the shortest and simplest version of the name, and they find the full name baffling and amusing. The place-name becomes a shibboleth separating the locals/the Maori from visitors/non-Maori, Self from Other.

The performance continues with an added layer of meta-commentary: translation and explanation of the meaning of the place-name, and weaving into it the military past of Maori people, the actions of the ritualistic dance of Maori men (the haka), and the evocative scenery of the surrounding environment (lines 12–36). This long section, which introduces profound imagery based on Maori heroic history, old heritage and unique landscape, is delivered in a rather solemn voice, almost poetic tone. The frequent lexical and phonological repetition and parallelism introduce internal rhythm, rhyme, and semantic and structural coherence, for example, ‘dust rise’ (line 23), ‘dust rising’ (lines 24, 25), ‘the rising dust’ (line 31), ‘rising steam’ (line 32), ‘uprising’ (lines 15, 34); ‘men would leap’ (line 25), ‘men leaping’ (line 26), ‘jumping men’ (line 31); and repetition of ‘likened’ (lines 24, 27, 32). These are formal features of ‘public oral poetry’ (Tannen 1989: 82; cf. R. Bauman 2001), used in conversational discourse to communicate ideas in a vivid and
moving manner. Clearly, the guide engages here in more than a bit of metalinguistic translation and explanation; he creates a sense of place for the tourists by putting on an aesthetically pleasing and emotionally involving performance.

That the guide’s account of the name of the village is an artful performance to be admired rather than a ‘lesson’ in Maori pronunciation for the benefit of the tourists is evident in his style-shifting from his normal speaking voice to a more melodic, sing-song voice. Figure 2 is a musical transcription of the text between lines 31–38. The guide appears to perform this section in the Aeolian mode and remains largely in tune, except for the note C, which he hits in the last line of the musical transcript (bar 15) as an ingenious metaphor that renders the pronunciation of the name of the village as ‘Faka’, an ‘out-of-tune’ obscenity.

In bar 9, the guide creates a tonally traditional I–V close by hitting the note E (the ‘o’ in ‘Wahiao’). The cadence point falls just before the gap preceding a change of modulation to a dominant mode (in bar 10). The apparent shift in modulation may indicate a shift to another mode, possibly hyper-Aeolian. Then, in bar 16, the guide seems to re-establish the original Aeolian mode, although he begins to sound somewhat out of tune at this point, which marks gradual return to his normal, speaking voice.

Figure 2: Musical transcription of lines 31–38 in Extract 2; NB the words in the transcript are spoken rather than sung
The musical features of this short extract as outlined above mark three stages in the guide’s metalinguistic performance of place:

1. bars 1–9: Poetic rendition of how the haka gave rise to the name of the village and the valley which corresponds to the metronome speed maintained at crochet (approximately 88), which is ‘at a walking pace’;
2. bar 9: The cadence point indicates a shift in focus (re-keying) from a solemn to joking tenor;
3. bars 10–15: Explanation of the shortened version of the place name and a joking suggestion of a possible obscene rendition of the place name. In bar 11, all notes bear a tenuto marking indicating slightly more weight in the initial articulation of the note, which thematizes the place-name by stressing it more than other words in its immediate vicinity; the note C in bar 15 is hearably out of tune with the rest of this passage indexing its potentially taboo status.

What is particularly noteworthy in this example is that the transformation of a living Maori village into a tourist destination has been accompanied by a transformation of a place to a place-name, which has subsequently been transformed to a tongue-twister and possibly an obscene word play (lines 36–38). But above all, the guide’s rapid shifts from the lofty and poetic tenor to a ribald, frivolous one are part of the deliberate, scripted performance aimed at creating a degree of spectacle, drama, and audience participation. The ‘new’ truth of ‘Whakarewarewa’ is that its indexical function as a place-name has given way to the symbolic one as part of the tourist linguascape.

Language contests: Struggling for authenticity and commodification

In each of the examples so far, we have looked at quintessential moments in the organization of tourism – two definitive genres: the pre-figured, mediatized framing of travel, and the in situ scripted banter of a tour guide. We see language – or rather local languages – being, in the first instance, fully commodified as an exotic marker of Otherness, and, in the second instance, ‘spectacularized’ as a performance of place-based authenticity by a local (still understanding locality as something relational that requires production). The line between commodification and authentication is not, of course a clear one; nor is it without contestation. Indeed, the commodification of authenticity presents unresolvable contradictions for hosts and tourists (cf. Bunten 2008). The tension (or dialectic) is not unlike the kind of balancing act required for a job interview where candidates must simultaneously ‘just be themselves’ and produce themselves for the market. With this in mind, our next two examples are also instances where language/s is/are being explicitly thematized, but where we find hosts and tourists (or insiders and outsiders) struggling to manage a (political) desire to authenticate themselves with the (economic) need to
commodify themselves. The tension is played out in language (i.e. discursively) and over language (i.e. metadiscursively).

The first example concerns minority francophones in Canada, caught between militant linguistic nationalist stances which construct them as communities having an authentic language and an authentic culture, and contemporary economic pressures from neoliberal governments, in the context of globalization and tertiarization, to commodify that authenticity. Central to nationalist discourse (and typical of minority language movements everywhere from the 1960s to the 1990s), is the staking out of monolingual spaces ‘protected’ from the encroachment of the majority language English. Over the course of the 1990s and in the early 2000s it became increasingly difficult to find funding for activities focussed on the maintenance of minority language and culture, as the Canadian state shifted its concerns to neoliberal understandings of economic development.

We see these tensions in an interview conducted in 2009 by Mireille McLaughlin and Joan Pujolar, with the mayor of a New Brunswick town long constructed as the cultural and political capital of French-speaking Acadians. The mayor talks about how this shift introduced cultural heritage tourism into the area, initially as a way of diversifying an economy otherwise at the mercy of the vagaries of fish stock:

**Extract 3**

À l’époque, on ne vivait que de la pêche ici. Et déjà dans les années la pêche était des hauts pis des bas, alors le gouvernement fédéral avait créé une entente spécial au niveau économique avec des argents disponibles pour développer autre chose. Alors ici naturellement (...) on est reconnu comme les Gaulois de la langue française (...) Parce que tout ce qui a trait à la francophonie non seulement au Nouveau-Brunswick mais aux Maritimes ça a débuté ici (...)

At the time, we lived only off of fishing. And already in those years fishing had its highs and lows, so the government made a special economic agreement with some available funds to develop something else. So here naturally (...) we are recognized as the Gauls of the French language. (...) because everything related to la francophonie not only in New Brunswick but in the Maritimes [the entire region comprising three provinces] started here (...) (our translations throughout)

The initial tourism project resulted in an open-air living museum reconstructing the life of French-speaking Acadians in the area from the 18th century to the present, as well as a series of festivals and other cultural activities. The mayor insists that the project was not only, in fact perhaps not even, about commodification, however: Il y avait deux volets dans ce projet-là. Il y avait l’aspect éducationnel pour notre peuple acadien et l’aspect touristique pour démontrer au monde qui on est (‘that project had two aspects. There was the
educational aspect for our Acadian nation, and the touristic aspect to show the world (people) who we are’.

But producing producers proved difficult (c’est pas facile changer les habitudes ‘it’s not easy to change people’s habits’). Locals had to learn that their food was a product, not a symbol of poverty and premodernity to be rejected in favour of cette américanisation de fast food with its connotations of modernity and a bigger world beyond a small fishing town; they also had to be taught how to receive people other than relatives, on a schedule not always under their control, and of people using unfamiliar language.

We see similar tensions displayed in Heller, Duchène and Pujolar (this issue), in a discussion of a long debate in a meeting of a small group of francophones in an Ontario village long known for its militant stance on minority language rights. In 2001, village leaders came together to develop a local museum and festival, which was held for the first time in July 2002. This first experience immediately generated debate over whether to keep the museum and festival monolingual French (a sign of authenticity and key to its internal community consciousness-raising aspect) or to introduce some English to facilitate access to tourists who do not speak French. (Indeed, one of the committee members uses exactly the same phrase as the Acadian mayor, referring to the event as one which is supposed to show people ‘who we are’). Almost paradoxically, the French monolingualism which is the guarantee of ‘authenticity’ (not to mention the ‘cause’ to which many participants still adhere) becomes an obstacle to its commodification. The problem here is clearly one of positioning and control: when you choose to commodify yourself, who gets to decide what the commodity should look like? Who sets the terms of the market? How do you make not only products and consumers, but also producers?

In our fourth and final example, we turn to another instance in which players are engaged in a struggle to satisfy the touristic demand for both authenticity and commodification: in this case, however, we shift from the formal, behind-the-scenes planning stage to an informal moment of in situ face-to-face small talk between hosts and locals. Here, we demonstrate how a strip of familiar activity of doing small talk as a relatively straightforward act of achieving sociability among participants (cf. Coupland 2000) may turn out to be a more problematic and unsettling type of exchange in a tourist encounter. Once again, languages are oriented to in more complex ways that are simultaneously spectacular and banal (‘spectacularly banal’? ‘banally spectacular’?), and which complicate the performance/performativity of both language and social categories.

In Extract 4, a group of tourists gather at a ‘cooking hut,’ where a demonstration of traditional Zulu food preparation is about to take place. This is done as part of a commercially produced cultural performance at a venue called PheZulu Safari Park, about 40kms from Durban, South Africa (cf. Bruner 2005, on Myers Ranch, a very similar ‘cultural village’). The tourists and the guide (Peter) are sitting in a circle and, while waiting for the demonstration to start,
Peter feels compelled to fill the time by initiating a phatic sequence with the tourists. This is a typical example of a group of relative strangers gathered temporarily in close proximity in a small, confined space where substantial stretches of time are filled with talk while waiting for a demonstration of ‘traditional’ Zulu cooking. In other types of close contact service encounters, of which tourist interchanges are prime examples, McCarthy (2000) refers to such participants as each others’ captive audience. Relying on the repertoire of stock formulaic phrases typically used in small talk sequences, the guide settles on the question ‘Where are you from?’—found in a wide range of similar contexts in our data, as well as in many other conversational encounters (Myers 2006).

**Extract 4**: In the cooking hut; a tour of PheZulu, South Africa

Peter = Guide  
TZW = ‘Traditional Zulu Woman’  
PT1, PT2 = Tourists from Poland  
ET1, ET2 = Tourists from England  
HT = Tourist from Hillcrest (a town nearby)  
ZT1, ZT2, ZT3 = Tourists from KwaZulu Province, South Africa  
CT = Tourist from Cape Town, South Africa (female)

The guide (Peter) initiates small talk with tourists while waiting for a cooking demonstration to begin.

1. Peter: (to PT1 and PT2) niphumaphi? phuma kuyiphi icountry? *Where are you from? from which country?*
2. PT1: (2) (looks quizzically)
3. ZT1: (translating) where have you come from?
4. PT1: ah Poland
5. Peter: ah: now (points at ET1) wena? *and you?*
6. ET1: UK England
7. Peter: OK (points at ET1’s sons) nina bafana? *what about you boys?*
8. ET1: all of us
9. Peter: UK (. ) nalomfazi? UK? *and this woman? [is she from the UK?]*
10. ET4: England as well
11. Peter: OK umfazi wkhe *this is his woman*
12. ET1: we are all together
14. HT: er Hillcrest [=a town nearby]
Although the working language of the guide is English, he unexpectedly starts the conversation in Extract 4 by asking two of the Polish tourists the ‘Where are you from?’ question in Zulu. This clearly baffles PT1, and her quizzical facial expression and a two-second silence in response to Peter’s question elicit a translation from ZT1 (‘where have you come from?’ in line 3). Visibly relieved, PT1 responds ‘Poland’ (line 4), and this is preceded by the discourse marker ‘ah’ which indicates a change in the state of knowledge (see Heritage 1984; Schiffrin 1987): the realization of what Peter’s question actually ‘means’, and probably relief that no other demands on her comprehension or linguistic performance are being made.

Setting the tone for the tourists’ authentication (qua self-identification) through their country of origin, Peter moves on to the next person (ET1), who infers (correctly) that Peter’s turn in line 5 is a request for the same information from him. This pattern of code-switched interrogation of the tourists continues throughout, until Peter addresses tourists from South Africa, who speak Zulu partially (HT) or as their first language (ZT1, ZT2, ZT3). The self-identification of these tourists as ‘locals’ creates much laughter and further banter, which partly suggests the non-normativity of the local residents’ visiting tourist attractions on their own turf. Interestingly, Peter ignores the
researcher (Crispin), to whom he had talked before entering the cooking hut; he already knows that Crispin is British/South African. His known role as ‘professional’ (rather than ‘tourist’) probably exempts him from taking part in Peter’s act aimed as a slight tease of the other tourists.

What is interesting for us here, however, is not the nature of the ostensibly sociable talk initiated by Peter to kill the time. Small talk generally and ‘Where are you from?’ questions specifically are unremarkable in the context of tourist–host encounters. What is remarkable and noteworthy is Peter’s use of Zulu with the tourists whom he knew (or whom he should expect) could not understand him. We suggest that, as a sequence outside of the transactional part of Peter’s performance in the cooking hut (which is to explain the meal preparation), his code-switching to Zulu is a playful, if somewhat teasing act of language (dis)play. Because of its relational rather than instrumental focus, the ‘Where are you from?’ question in Zulu does not carry much propositional weight. However, it visibly unsettles PT1, who may have felt marginalized by Peter’s use of Zulu, having her entire linguistic repertoire obliterated, if only for a few seconds. PT1 is positioned almost as an intruder toward the local space, which requires at least a rudimentary knowledge of Zulu to claim legitimacy. She is then ‘rescued’ from her sociolinguistic angst by ZT1 and responds in English – the lingua franca of international guides and tourists in many destinations. Peter’s code-switching to Zulu, then, produces the cooking hut as localized and the tourists’ responses in English and the subsequent restoration of English as the lingua franca of the encounter for all, re-define it back to what the PheZulu Safari Park was meant to be in the first place – part of a global, transnational tourist playground.

Peter’s relatively unaccommodating stance is compounded by his apparently impertinent – or at least cheeky – forms of address and reference used throughout: ‘nalomfazi’ (‘this woman’) in line 9, ‘umfazi wkhe’ (‘this is his woman’) in line 11, and ‘gogo’ (‘granny’) in line 30. Such usage of (or even insult in) a local language by guides/performers in addressing foreign tourists is not uncommon (see, for instance, Senft 1999). It appears to be an effective strategy for destabilising/disempowering tourists who may be perceived as disproportionally wealthy, privileged, and disrespectful to their hosts (Abbink 2000), while being relatively harmless if the tourists, through their linguistic ignorance, remain oblivious to such verbal attacks (see, again, Senft quoted above; also Löfgren 1999: 124–128 on ‘meeting the locals’). What makes Peter’s behaviour even more ‘daring’ is that some of his addressees are fluent Zulu speakers. Just the same, the sequence in Extract 4 demonstrates that social banter and verbal play in the context of tourism appear to assume positions of familiarity (teasing, mild insults) normally reserved for intimates, for whom the safety of their close relationship overrides the threatening nature of such verbal attacks (acts of ‘positive politeness’ in terms of Brown and Levinson 1987).
It is here that we see momentary reversals of power relations between hosts and tourists in the symbolic drawing of boundaries around such categories as ‘local’ and ‘stranger’. First, Peter seems to be Othering ‘local’, Zulu-speaking visitors by employing derogatory terms of reference and address. Second, he subverts the tourism industry discourse that is replete with hyperbolic promise of unconditional hospitality and tourists going ‘native’ (Thurlow and Jaworski 2010a). His divergent use of Zulu in addressing PT1 (a non-Zulu speaker) out-groups and de-authenticates her as ‘one of us’, and closes off her ‘route to communitas’ (Turner and Turner 1978). Rather than foster an enhancement of PT1’s experience and a heightened intensity of communicative interaction that is characteristic of artful performance (Bauman and Briggs 1990; see also our discussion of Extract 2), Peter shows PT1 ‘who he is’ and ‘who she is not’ (cf. our discussion of Extract 3).

PAPERS IN THIS SPECIAL ISSUE

While each paper in this special issue can be read as a stand-alone piece, we have arranged them to indicate a progression from the most localized, emplaced and multimodal performances of tourism and the tourist experience, to the more comparative perspective of broader processes working on a global scale. Of course, all tourism is always local and follows the principles of the global industry of tourism. The difference is in the analytic focus and perspective.

Employing on-site and media ethnography, the paper by Crispin Thurlow and Adam Jaworski offers a situated analysis of tourist practices in a quintessentially mass-tourist context – on and around the Leaning Tower of Pisa in Italy – as a site of touristic exchange and communicative politics. The authors demonstrate how ‘sightseeing’ at this particular location engages tourists in a series of locally embedded, multimodal, structured performances that give basis for subsequent remediations and for the global circulation of these performances.

The second paper by Bethan Coupland and Nikolas Coupland hones in on the metacultural frames for performing authenticity in the context of two mining heritage sites in Great Britain: Geevor Tin Mine in Cornwall and Big Pit coal mine in South Wales. The paper takes up again the negotiation of place and experience but turns to the other key actors in the host–tourist relationship/pact – former miners turned tourist guides situating themselves as custodians of tradition and conduits of memory under the new conditions of the commodification of their own industrial heritage. Here, we see tourist sites from the perspective of locals who must commodify themselves and perform for tourists; cashing in while holding to their ‘true’ Selves – their strongly held narratives of self.

The third paper is another ‘on-the-ground’ insight into the interactional mediations of the tourist experience. As part of their ethnographic research in

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Finnish Sámiland, Helen Kelly-Holmes and Sari Pietikäinen discuss the staging and managing of a tourist attraction. The reindeer farm in the village of Inari is a site of its owners’ control maximizing the efficiency of the tour, as well as the tourist–host collusion in constructing a viable and enjoyable cultural experience. This paper emphasizes how tourism is not about ‘bad tourists’ and ‘poor locals’ but a complex, interactionally accomplished exchange.

Finally, the paper by Monica Heller, Alexandre Duchêne and Joan Pujolar takes up three local sites of engagement in Switzerland, Catalonia and different parts of francophone Canada, but it also scales up the political economy and the human consequences of the commodification of languages in tourism. By re-focusing on the spread and mechanisms of global capitalism, the authors use ethnographically-situated evidence to demonstrate how the ‘new’ service- and knowledge-based industries, of which tourism is a prime example, transform more and more symbolic resources into commodities, more and more people into commodity producers, and even to commodities themselves, with resulting tensions in ideologies and practices of language.

CONCLUSION: MOBILITIES, MARKETS AND MULTILINGUALISM IN THE FUGITIVE CONTACTS OF TOURISM

At the outset of our introduction, we suggested that tourist markets often create value by converting signifiers of modernity, national characteristics and ‘different ways of life’ (Hebdige 2000 [1988]) into signifiers of distinction. This implies re-inscribing traditional social categories such as gender, sexuality and ethnicity in ways that foster tourist consumption of destinations as authentic, pre-imagined and tamed. As is true for many service industries (see Cameron 2000), tourism engenders the objectification and commodification of a number of social processes such as interactions, relationships, and, of course, language/s. In this final section, we want to reflect on how the construction of social difference and concomitant inequalities are re-imagined in tourist spaces, and the particular role of language/s in realizing these acts of differentiation and categorization. In doing so, we want to be clear that, within otherwise normative practices and hegemonic arrangements, there are always opportunities for participants (hosts, locals and tourists alike) to ‘speak out’ and to ‘speak back’. Within the constraints of tourism discourse – its economic structures – there is necessarily room for creativity by which, for example, local communities may promote their own political and personal agendas and may find ways to resist (or just rework) the hierarchies of the symbolic marketplace.

In our data examples, a great deal of social differentiation and categorization is present either through explicit commentary or through more subtle inferential work. For example, in Extract 1, Rick Steves plays a powerful game by inviting in his two ‘guides friends’ only to render them outsiders. He also genders his
exchange with the two Italian guides by introducing the vocative Italian ‘bella’ for addressing his female interlocutors (Extract 1, line 15). This gendered, if not sexist, move on Rick Steves’ side sexualizes the two Italian guides and, by extension, Italy as a tourist destination. To leave no doubt of the intended sexual overtones, Rick Steves positions himself as a heterosexual implied tourist, emphasizing his interest in women and disinterest in men with his comment in line 23 ‘ciao bella because I wouldn’t want to say ciao bello’. These are, of course, acts of identity/ideology that are certainly not bounded by or exclusive to tourism discourse. Also, Susanna Perucchini and Francesca Caruso (the ‘guides friends’) are clearly humouring Steves and staging themselves as hospitable representatives of Italy and agents of the Italian tourism industry.

In Extract 2, the guide links the etymology of the name of the village to the heroic past of the Maori people as a distinct ethnic group which sets up a sharp dividing line between those who can pronounce the name of his village (Self / the Maori) and those who can’t (Other / the Tourist). In Example 3, francophone Canadians debate the viability and desirability of displaying and promoting their ethnicity through languages other than French (most notably English), or even through non-linguistic systems of representation. Finally, the guide in Extract 4, not unlike his counterpart in Extract 2, sets up a momentary ethnolinguistic contrast between himself and some of the tourists by addressing them in Zulu and exposing their inability to respond in kind. Later on in the extract, the guide continues to address other tourists with vocatives marked somewhat disrespectfully for age (e.g. ‘gogo’, in line 31), and in line 33 he invokes another salient ethnolinguistic distinction in the context of South Africa between Afrikaans and non-Afrikaans speakers.

All of these exchanges appear to be quite good-natured, with much humour and laughter throughout. The humorous key that dominates our examples, and, we suggest, much of tourist–host interactions, centres on linguistic or metalinguistic play with local languages and includes acts of seemingly innocent code-crossing by implied tourists (Extract 1), performative displays of local languages by hosts (Extract 2), and orientation to the limits of ethnolinguistic integrity, legitimacy and language rights (Extracts 3 and 4). In each case, there is a strong sense of language ownership and associated boundary marking between social groups along the lines of ethnicity, nationality and gender. Multilingualism in tourism is, then, an important resource whose distribution and deployment are quite apparently not simple indexes of predictable relations between members of stable speech communities (Pratt 1987, 1992; Rampton 2009; see the opening paragraphs of our introduction above). Nor are the places of language so neatly located. Having said this, languages are everywhere (stage-)managed as fixed, stable, and bounded, in order to satisfy performances of difference and distinction. Multilingualism thus becomes a resource for stance-taking such as the appropriation of a local identity, the anticipation of a possible, casual sexual or fictive kin relationship, or the distancing of local people from visiting tourists.
This stance-taking is also relevant to the struggle over who gets to decide what the nature of the commodity is (what will count as ‘place’, ‘language’ and ‘identity’) and who can legitimately participate in its production, distribution and circulation.

Multilingualism conceived of as a mélange of intermixed, syncretized, and recontextualized words and expressions gives linguistic items indexical functions independent of their denotational meanings, transforming identities and becoming emblematic of spatial stratification in the political and economic local–global order (Silverstein 1998). Tourists may pass as ‘locals’ by mastering only minimal amounts of the hosts’ language (Pennycook 2012; Piller 2002); tourists may become interpreters for other tourists; tourists may lose their linguistic confidence and have their self-assured status put into question and undermined. Such discursive formations are indicative of the moiré effect of multilingual practices ignoring the purist precepts of national and standard language ideologies. In these fleeting, or fugitive, moments of sociolinguistic contact, multiple identities, relationships, and communities come to life working across national and ethnic boundaries, refocusing social difference and social inequality, and redefining power relations through the negotiation and definition of meaning (Heller 2008; Jaworski and Thurlow 2010).

Tourism is thus an important field for the working out of the fate of social categories (or discourses), including the very category (or discourse) of ‘language’, and of their implication in relations of power under current political economic conditions. At the same time, tourism can help reveal what is new and what is not about the ‘new’ economic order, and how to approach classic sociolinguistic questions of the role of language in the construction of social difference and social inequality (see above) from the perspective of the concepts of mobility and multiplicity. By the same token, we believe that sociolinguistics is particularly well equipped to deal with the tensions and ambiguities inherent in the harnessing of established, conventionalized categories, repertoires and communicative practices by tying them to the ‘spectacle’ at the core of the tourist experience, and to its marketization.

Indeed, tourism seldom merely represents cultural difference or reflects existing socio-economic relations within and between countries (or regions); instead, it is instrumental in producing the very culture that tourists set out to know, and in (re)organizing relations between groups, communities and entire nations (Bauman 1998; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998; Lash and Urry 1994). Or, as has been noted by two cultural geographers engaged in critical tourism studies,

Touristic culture is more than the physical travel, it is the preparation of people to see other places as objects of tourism ... the touristic gaze and imaginary shape and mediate our knowledge of and desires about the rest of the planet. (Franklin and Crang 2001: 10)
We can see this process in *mediatized* representations of commodified experiences tourists plan to consume (or people dream of consuming as tourists), in face-to-face (or more mediated) forms of visitor–host interaction, in goods purchased by tourists, or in their own mediated production of their experiences (Thurlow and Jaworski 2011a, this issue). We can see this as well in the production and circulation of tourist products, which we understand as processes involving differentially-situated social actors in more or less institutionalized spaces, including, almost always, the state (Heller and Pujolar 2009). It is important, then, not to read off tourist texts or activities as representative of something (such as a contested or commodified category), but rather to understand tourism as a discursive space centred on resources which are produced, valued and exchanged unequally but also creatively, positioning actors in different and sometimes unexpected ways.

**NOTES**

1. This special issue has its origins in two events: first, a colloquium on *Tourism, Multilingualism and Sociolinguistics* organized by the three of us at the International Symposium on Bilingualism 8, Oslo University, Norway (June 2011), with presentations by Alexandre Duchène, Kellie Gonçalves, Helen Kelly-Holmes, Mireille McLaughlin, Sari Pietikäinen and Joan Pujolar; second, a taskforce panel on *Language and Tourism* organized by Crispin and Adam at the 13th International Conference on Language and Social Psychology (ICLASP), Fryske Akademy, Ljouwert/Leeuwarden, Netherlands (June 2012), with presentations by Bethan Coupland, Nik Coupland, Alexandre Duchène, Howard Giles, Monica Heller, Helen Kelly-Holmes, Mairéad Moriarty, Hiroshi Ota, Sari Pietikäinen and Joan Pujolar. We are grateful to all these colleagues for their contributions to the two events, and to Itesh Sachdev for his invitation on behalf of the International Association of Language and Social Psychology and the European Research Center on Multilingualism and Language for Adam and Crispin to organize the taskforce and to deliver a keynote lecture at the ICLASP conference. We thank the journal editors, Allan Bell and Lionel Wee, and our anonymous reviewer for their useful comments on an earlier draft of this introduction paper. We also grateful to Andy Gibson and Trish Brothers for their behind-the-scenes support with putting the special issue together. Special thanks to composer Nirmali Fenn (www.nirmalifenn.com) for the musical transcription in Extract 2 and for her explanatory notes.

2. Graburn (2006 [1976]: 422) notes similar symbolic and formal transformations of indigenous arts adapted for the tourist market as souvenirs that may lead to ‘changes in size, simplification, standardization, naturalism, grotesquetry, novelty, and archaism’. Such minority artefacts and visual motifs are commonly appropriated by nation states as symbols of their national identity and branding.

3. In a personal note, Allan Bell explains that the Maori ‘wh’ grapheme is classically an unvoiced bilabial [ʍ] but can also be [f]. And the Maori ‘a’ is phonetic [a], therefore close to [ʌ]. So, while a natively-pronounced ‘whaka’ is
near homophonous with ‘fuck a’, a non-native/Pakeha pronunciation does not run the same risk and is probably less easily retrievable for some visitors.

REFERENCES


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