

***Is the “new-speaker for Europe” a valid answer  
to globalisation led sociolinguistic phenomena?***

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# The plan

- ▶ Emergent debate in sociolinguistics
- ▶ Superdiversity and its conceptual wealth
- ▶ The socio-cultural context of my data
- ▶ **Episode 1: Sultana Bibiana**
- ▶ **Episode 2: The common room at day time**
- ▶ Considerations and conclusions

# Currently in sociolinguistics

## ▶ **From a sociolinguistics of spread**

- ▶ Static, synchronic, fixed, systematic, groups, places (Labov, Fishman, Spolsky and others)
- ▶ Looking at language to understand and explain a society that doesn't really exist

## ▶ **To a sociolinguistics of mobility (globalization)**

- ▶ From language switch, language loss, language
- ▶ Unscripted, unplanned, unpredictable, dynamic, chaotic (but not without order or structure)
- ▶ With a strong presence of the 'online'



# Currently in language policy



1. Language policy and planning in concomitance with decolonization processes
2. Language policy connected to preservation of immigrant minority languages
3. Language policy connected with the strengthening of national borders and hindering the entry of 'the other'

# In the meantime in migration studies

**Super-diversity** is not 'just' the 'diversification of diversity', rather:

Rather contemporary global societies are inhabited by various groups/networks among which those falling into the category 'migrant'

But how should we read and open up the category migrant?

# People with:

‘differential legal statuses and their concomitant conditions, divergent labor market experiences, discrete configurations of gender and age, patterns of spatial distribution, and mixed local area responses by service providers and residents. The dynamic interaction of these variables is what is meant by “super-diversity”. (Vertovec 2007:1025)



# Flanders





# The waiting room of globalisation





# Asylum seeking centre



A **place** where local happenings are shaped by events happening many miles away.

A **place** where several **combinatorial spaces** lend themselves to become object of fine-grained linguistic ethnographic investigation

(see also Blommaert, Slembrouck & Collins 2005 on the notion of poly-centricity)

# The 'guests' in numbers:

- ▶ Anno 2013
- ▶ 61 guests: 40 males and 21 females
- ▶ 11 unaccompanied minors
- ▶ 1 entered the centre in 2011 (during data collection he got an official rejection)
- ▶ Only two guests were born in the 50's
- ▶ Vast majority of the 'guests' are in their late 20's mid 30's > a potential active workforce



## Who are these guests?

- Mobile people
- People with a mobile
- Long term, short term, transitory, high skilled, low skilled, high educated, low educated
- Complex trajectories (A>B>A>C>B>A>D)
- High integration pressure from institution
- High insertional power in the margins of society
- Sociolinguistic; ethnic; religious; educational backgrounds are not easily presupposable

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- ▶ Attention in sociolinguistics is paid to language practices and ideologies rather than 'language' as a bounded entity
  - ▶ Still, it is 'Dutch as L2' that rules the institutional game of integration for newly arrived migrants
  - ▶ 'Dutch language' rules the practices of identities inhabitation taking place within and beyond the centre's walls
  - ▶ Everyday sociolinguistic practices, though, show that 'the guests' manage and negotiate pretty well.



# The point

- What kind of socio-linguistic, socio-cognitive and discursive regimes are at play in the waiting room of globalisation?
- Do the 'guests' go beyond the sociolinguistic regimes they encounter? And if so how?
- What are the consequences of their (trying to) trespass these sociolinguistic regimes? What is in the making then?

# Which languages, where?

- ▶ **The office:** Dutch, French and English as lingua franca BUT Dutch goes first at least from the side of the assistants
- ▶ **The corridor:** English, Farsi, Bengali, Urdu, Russian, French, Dutch, Mandarin
- ▶ **The common room:** English, Arabic, Dutch



# Sultana Bibiana Medley



# The internet as an Infrastructure of globalisation?

**Coagulation** (Guadeloupe 2008; Arnaut & Spotti 2017)

It stands for the act of making of meta-communities that transcend the boundaries of speech communities and of ethno-cultural grouping.

# The Activity Room at night

Urgesh: Look at this, Sir, look, look.

Wassif: These are cool bruv, these are cool.

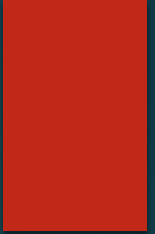
Urgesh: I have seen them on a gig.


Wassif: Yeah yeah, look at that, power,  
broer Max, pure power.

(Asylum 2.0, field notes 14102013)



# Dutch as L2 class in the activity room




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- ▶ Frida calls upon a notion of romantic monolingualism where the authority of the native speaker can hardly be challenged by the learner, although the learner might as well be right
  - ▶ Frida holds the license to cross
  - ▶ The Armenian student challenges her authority on a basic orthographic matter the use of caps for proper names
  - ▶ You treat us like children, fine, then let's ask a childish question to which she reacts as follows

# The authority of the native speaker

Dat is basis Nederlands , BASIS [Frida stresses the word with a higher tone]. Eerst starten wij met de basis, wij lopen niet ! wij stappen [...] na stappen, wij stappen vlucht, daarna gaan wij lopen , dus nu stappen wij. [Frida with a lowering tone] Maar dat is juist .





The situation presented is interesting from a linguistic anthropological perspective as well as, hopefully, from a language policy perspective in the context of globalisation led mobility and inherent sociolinguistic complexity of the category 'migrant to be integrated' / 'inburgeraar'

# New speakers in the making?

I don't know yet...but one thing is certain

it is all about the speaker  
not about the language

Next step

▶ **Illegals 2.0**

Stay tuned.



## Frida's lesson - Extract 1

01. Bold guy from Armenia {reading from the board}: if you find yourself [...] from my room an'
02. Frida: Niet, vandaag geen Engelse les he', vandag nederlandse les hey? Oke', dus we starten op bladzijde zes. Iedereen heeft een copie?

[No, today no English lesson, right? Today is Dutch lesson, right? Okay so we start on page six, has everyone got a copy?]

*[Coughing student in the background]*

03. Frida: hier is Nel [...] hier is Miel [...] [hi]hier is Sam [...], hier is een vaas, hier is en roos, hier is een noot, Nel en Miel, Miel en Sam, Sam en Nel, een vaas en een roos, een roos en een vaas, een rik en een muur,

[Here we have Nel, here we have Miel, here we have Sam, here there is a vase, here there is a rose, here there is a nut. Nel and Miel, Miel and Sam, a vase and a rose, a rose and a vase, a fork and a wall.]

04. Frida: een kat, een mus, een zon, een vis, een den, een roos, een vaas, een rik, een aap

[A cat, a sparrow, a sun, a fish, a [den], a rose, a vase, a [rik], a monkey]

05. Frida: dem [...] en [...] zon [...] hun [...] noot [...] nou [...] ness [...] en [...] vis [...] is [...] mus [...] roos [...] wijs [...] vaas [...] Sam [...] S [-] boom [-] wei [...] tak [...] lam [...] Jan [check this, Max] [...] haan [...] boom [...] wei [...] tak [...] haan [...]

[den, and, sun, then, nut, now, ness, and, fish, is, sparrow, rose, wisdom [note in Dutch the openness of the W] branch, lamb, hen, tree, meadow, banch, hen]

06. Frida: Lam [...] Jan [-]

[Lamb, Jan]

[time on taping 03:31, Frida then makes a pause till 03:36, she then proceeds with reading each word from the textbook that she is holding while standing on the right hand side of the whiteboard facing the class, which in the meantime has seen the entrance of another two African residents, who need to find their seat for joining the lesson.]

07. Frida: Haan [...] Jan [...] lam [...] tak [...] een boom [...] [with a descending intonation on the double vowel b{oo}m]

[Hen, Jan, Lamb, Branch, a tree]

08. Frida: Oke' [...] hier is Nel, hier [pointing to her the ground in front of you] hier, hier, hi[ii]er, hier is Nel. Nel is naam, naam voor vrouw, Fatima, Nel, Leen, naam voor vrouw

[Okay, here we have Nel, here, here, here, here is Nel. Nel is name, name for a woman, like Fatima, Nel, Leen, name for a woman]

09. Armenian guy {proficient in German and Russian}: Waarom naam voor vrouw me[]tz [uh] klein leter?

[Why then is the name for a woman in small caps?]

10. Frida: Dat is basis Nederlands, BASIS [Frida stresses the word with a higher tone]. Eerst starten wij met de basis, wij lopen niet! wij stappen [...] na stappen, wij stappen vlucht, daarna gaan wij lopen, dus nu stappen wij. Maar dat is juist.

[That is basic Dutch, BASIC. First we start with the basics, we don't walk, we make steps, after making steps, we step faster, and then we get walking, so now we make steps. But that is correct]

{time on taping is now 04:46} [A Slavic sounding language is spoken by the guy next to the bold Armenian who asked the question about the lack of caps in Nel]

## Frida's lesson - Extract 2 {08:35 audio taping}

01. Frida: Wat is kat?  
[what's a cat?]
02. Afghani (2012): Miauw
03. Frida: Een kat  
[A cat.]
04. Afghani (2012): miaaaaaaaaauuuuuuww
05. Frida: Mus, een mus, wat is een mus?  
[A sparrow, one sparrow, what is a sparrow?]  
{Frida writes the word 'mus' on the board}
06. Frida: Een vogel. Niet piep piep he', een vogel is een mus.  
[A bird, a bird that does not do miep, miep , right, a bird, that is a sparrow]
07. Frida: vogel, vogel, naam van een vogel, een mus  
[A bird, a bird, name of a bird, a sparrow]
08. Guinean guy [seating next to me]: une meus
09. Frida: Een mus, mus, een mus. Nee, nee, dat is niet een mus  
[A spa/r/row, sparrow, a sparrow. No, no, that is not a sparrow]
10. Guinean guy: m{ee}uus  
[Sp{aa}row]
11. Frida: een zon, vandaag we hebben beetje beetje  
[a sun, today we have it little little]
12. Frida: vis, fish, vis ja, fish, iedereen kent wat vis is  
[fish, fish, fish yeah, fish, everyone knows what is a fish]
13. **Frida:** een den, do you remember , een den, Christmas Tree, den  
  
[Paris enters the classroom, also from Africa]
14. Frida: goedemiddag.  
[good afternoon]
15. Paris: goedemiddag alles goe'?  
[good afternoon everything all right there?]
16. Frida: Mus vogel, roos flower  
[Sparrow bird, Rose flower]



GO EN VAAS why not using a capital & her

18/3/2013

VAAS

hier is een vaas → ENCEUNTEREN  
periods lesson

hier is nel  
hier is miel  
hier is sam

hier is een noot (nē)

voor van (to do Oliver)

nel en miel  
miel en sam  
sam en nel

een vaas en een roos  
een roos en een vaas  
een riek en een muur

TOACONE → RASOTA

Adieu  
een kat  
een mus  
een zon

een vis  
een den  
een roos

een vaas  
een riek  
een aap

klein  
vogel

den

vaas, heere  
vis > fish

[again English]

en  
zon  
een

is → CONNAER TO  
FALCIN

mus

roos

wijs → WIJZEN

vaas

noot

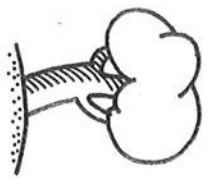
use of German to explain  
them it is ok  
to understand

sam

nis

s

van Rembrandt  
Xmas Tree



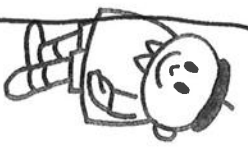
boom  
boom



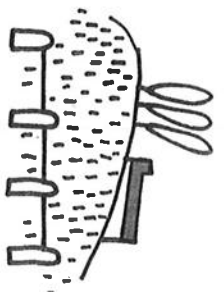
tak

take

Chien  
[Avien]



jan

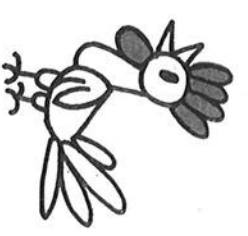


wei



lam

lam



haan

haan

boom  
wei  
tak  
haan  
lam  
jan

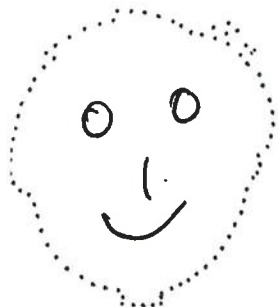
Appending to the bits  
of language they know

2

18/3/2013

# Eindletters

Plak eerst de ontbrekende stickers op de juiste plaats.  
Kun jij de eindletters uit het kader in de juiste woorden invullen?



hoofd

облик



schelp



golf

гольф



vriend



tent

палатка



melk

молоко



hond

собака



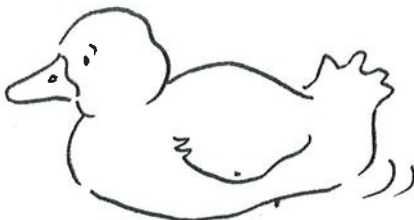
wesp

цвет



wolk

облако

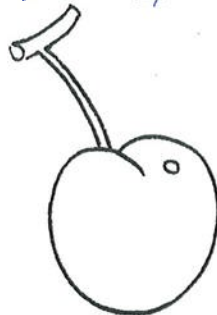


eend

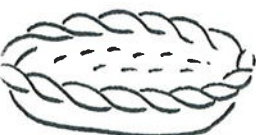
птица



heks



kers



taap

ks	3	lp,	5	nt	4	nd
lf	2	6	lk	7	nd	13. rt
9	lk	10	nd	12	rs	
8	sp	1	fd	14.	rf	



verf

краска