PERFORMING BILINGUALISM IN WALES: ARGUING THE CASE FOR EMPIRICAL AND THEORETICAL ECLECTICISM

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Abstract

This article examines Welsh young people's "performance" and construction of their bilingualism with the help of empirically grounded conversation analysis (CA) and performativity theory grounded in poststructuralism. Some of the incompatibilities, particularly conversation analysts' narrow conception of context are resolved with reference to dialogical theory. It is argued with the help of video-recorded empirical data that a fine-grained analysis using CA is able to trace the emergence of varying bilingual identities as well as the negotiation of meaning *in situ*. To take the analysis beyond single situated actions, however, it is argued that we need recourse to the broader situation-transcending constructs offered, for example, by dialogical and performativity theory.

Keywords: Performativity; Conversation analysis; Dialogism; Bilingualism; Wales.

1. Introduction

The title of this article "performing bilingualism" refers to constant "performances" of discursive practices that can become sedimented and congeal over time. This conception of bilingualism takes Judith Butler's eclectic adaptation of performativity theory as its point of departure (e.g. 1990a, 1993). Performativity theory is itself situated within a poststructuralist paradigm, which takes a sceptical stance towards accepted and takenfor-granted categories such as "language" and "bilingualism" in the structuralist tradition of linguistics. Yet Butler's own work on the social construction of gender is more theoretically fully fledged than it is empirically grounded. In order to offer a more rounded picture of how bilingualism is constructed in real contexts, this study draws on the strongly empirical tradition of conversation analysis with its roots in ethnomethodology.

The benefit of using conversation analysis is that it has well developed and finely tuned analytical tools to show how bilingual discursive practices actually emerge in situated spoken interaction. These practices comprise both the everyday language practices of bilinguals - how they deploy their linguistic resources *in situ* - as well as how they talk about or discursively (re)construct their own language practices, those of their bilingual school and those of society as a whole. There are, however, limitations to what conversation analysis can tell us about the nature of bilingualism beyond each instance of situated interaction, especially when it comes to the broader picture of the

embedding sociocultural contexts at different scales of Welsh society. For this reason, a dialogical theory of contexts is used (cf. Linell 1998), which allows for the consideration of different types of contextual resources. Dialogism also offers an approach to meaning, which can account for variation and change, whereby one can account for any shifts in the lexical meaning of words, for example those associated with bilingualism, and the values ascribed to such words.

In the next section, the theoretical and empirical frameworks of this study will each be dealt with in turn. Most space will be devoted to dialogical and performativity theory, which may be less familiar to readers of *Pragmatics*. Following this, there are brief sections presenting the Welsh context and the data from a bilingual school in Wales. The "performances" of bilingualism will then be illustrated by a couple of excerpts of focus group discussions among bilingual pupils. Finally, these excerpts will be used to discuss how an understanding of bilingualism in Wales can be enhanced by combining performativity and dialogical theory with CA's empirical approach.

2. Theoretical underpinnings

The claim at the heart of this article is that bilingualism is a socially constituted phenomenon, "performed" through discourse pertaining to the phenomenon as well as through the everyday situated practices of bilinguals. In order to support and expound this claim, I draw on both performativity theory within a poststructuralist paradigm and empirically grounded conversation analysis. We shall start with the empirical basis of this study, before moving on to the more theoretical frameworks of dialogical theory and performativity theory. More specifically, I turn to dialogical theory to revisit the notion of context, in an attempt to resolve a clash of perspectives on what contextual resources may be legitimately used in the analysis.

2.1. Conversation analysis

Conversation analysis adopts a strictly microanalytical approach. To this means, CA has developed a set of rigorous analytical tools and a sophisticated systematic procedure for analysing situated spoken discourse. Although this paper aims to go beyond situated interaction, this is where the analysis starts, using the tools honed by conversation analysts, *before* attempting to venture into situation-transcending constructs.

CA focuses primarily on the *sequential organisation* of talk, taking ordinary everyday conversation as its benchmark (Heritage 2008: 304). The sequentiality of turns at talk is constitutive of understanding talk as social action, insofar as a next turn is not only where the next speaker demonstrates an understanding that the prior turn is (sufficiently) complete to open up a space for a potential new speaker, but the next turn also indicates how the next speaker has interpreted the previous turn (Hutchby & Wooffitt 1988: 38). The sequential unfolding of turns is thus the site for the negotiation of meaning and the development of intersubjectivity (Heritage 2008: 304). Should the next turn display a misinterpretation of the prior turn, it may be subject to adjustment or *repair*, to use the CA term (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks 1977).

Although much of CA focuses on turn taking and other structural resources of conversation that underpin all spoken meaning-making, CA is also concerned with

"what participants take it that they are actually doing in their talk", or "the kinds of cultural and interpretive resources participants rely on in order to understand one another in appropriate ways" (Hutchby & Wooffitt 1988: 39). In this vein, talk-ininteraction is to be seen as social action, which is in keeping with CA's ethnomethodological roots (Heritage 2008: 303).

Also in tune with ethnomethodology is CA's striving to adopt an *emic* or *participants' perspective*. This involves treating each turn at talk as an empirical "document", which includes a "display of a cognitive, emotional, and attitudinal state, an analysis of context and of the previous turn(s) in the sequence and a social action that renews the context" (Seedhouse 2004: 8-9).

The final principle of CA to receive attention here is that the analysis is data driven rather than made by reference to *a priori* theories or hypothesising. In other words, CA is an inductive rather than a deductive research method; the former involves searching for recurrent patterns in the empirical data. Building collections of recurrent patterns in talk-in-interaction therefore makes CA a pursuit of potential cumulative empiricism, insofar as the database of such collections is continually expanding (Norrby 1996: 31).

Whether CA is used to analyse single cases or to build collections, the conversation is always recorded (preferably video-recorded) and transcribed using conventions that are geared towards making visible the relevant features of the interaction. In this regard, it should be mentioned that no features are deemed to be irrelevant before the analysis has taken place. Yet however broad or narrow the transcriptions are, they can never replace the original recording as the primary data.

2.2. A dialogical approach to meaning and context

In line with the poststructuralist view of meaning, a dialogical¹ approach would question the structuralist position that meaning "resides" in a fixed common linguistic code. Instead a dialogical approach would stress the importance of *joint construction*, i.e. that the process of meaning-making is fundamentally social and interactional in nature (Linell 1998: 86). What this entails in practice is that talk must be mutually coordinated, insofar as speakers are not sole authors of utterances. Indeed, interactants are active both in coordinating each other's participation as well as monitoring and fine-tuning each other's understanding, and hence managing the production of meaning. Another fundamental dialogical principle, according to Linell's theory of spoken interaction, is *sequentiality*, which has already been referred to in section §2.1 above. In

¹ Dialogism and dialogical theory, as Linell (2009) points out, cannot readily be characterised as a single coherent school or theory, but rather as a way of "referring to several mutually related (or sometimes not so very much related) approaches to language, communication and cognition", which nevertheless "share many understandings of the activities and processes of sense-making" and stand in opposition to "monologism" (8). To take the critical words of a notable proponent of dialogism, the Russian philosopher and literary scholar, Mikhail Bakhtin, a monological perspective entails that meanings would reside in "the two poles in the life of language, between which are located all the linguistics and stylistic phenomena: on the one hand, the system of a *unitary language*, and on the other the *individual* speaking in this language" (1981: 269, italics in original). In other words, questions of meaning can be resolved by recourse to an assumed coherent language system with fixed and stable meanings and to the sole independent author of an utterance, both of which presuppositions dialogism rejects (see also Linell's critique of monologism (2009: 35ff)).

terms of meaning, this stresses the importance of the local context, in that significant aspects of meaning are *situated*, that is, contingent on their sequential position in prior and ongoing turns for their interpretation. A third dialogical principle is *act-activity interdependence*, whereby "[a]cts, utterances and sequences in discourse are always essentially situated within an embedding activity" and therefore the contextual resources of the activity contribute to the meaning (ibid.: 87-8).

If we take the joint construction and situatedness of meaning seriously, it should not be hard to see the meaning of lexical resources as open potentials, where "vagueness, ambiguity and incompleteness [...] are inherent and essential characteristics" (Rommetveit 1984: 335). This is not to deny that there are pre-existing lexical meanings, which serve as dynamic resources with *meaning potentials* for interactants to use in their local communicative projects (Linell 1998: 118-119). Yet dialogism would reject the premise of default or context-free meaning. Instead, it would rather speak of interactants' meaning-making as a temporary, situated and joint process of *meaning fixation* (ibid.: 121-122).

2.2.1. Context revisited

According to Linell, the superordinate dialogical principle is *reflexivity* between contexts and (both spoken and written) discourse (Linell 1998: 4), that is, they mutually constitute each other. It therefore follows, Linell posits, that a theory of discourse requires a theory of contexts. His theory of contexts distinguishes between three types. Firstly, there are *co-textual resources*, which are limited to the embedding context of preceding turns. The second category is situational resources, which refers to the surrounding concrete situation or setting, including physical spaces, persons, objects and artefacts. CA confines itself to these two categories of contextual features, and generally only the features to which members can be shown to orient are deemed to be relevant in the analysis. Yet Linell claims that "an utterance or action 'cannot be properly understood [...] unless one looks beyond the event itself to other phenomena (for example cultural setting, speech situation, shared background assumptions) within which the event is embedded' " (ibid.: 127). This brings us to the third contextual category: Background assumption resources, which encompasses assumptions, beliefs, knowledge or an understanding of whatever is being talked about and the broader cultural frame or setting. Together, these different types of resources constitute a matrix of embedding contexts, which can be potentially activated or made relevant, either explicitly or implicitly, by interactants. Indeed, Linell highlights the double dialogicality of talk (ibid.: 54), that it is embedded in both sociocultural practices and situated interaction. In a later volume, Rethinking language, mind and world *dialogically*, Linell expands on this:

These sociocultural practices, whether every day or not so literally every day, are sustained by social life, and sociohistorically maintained over longer time periods. Participants in situated interactions contribute over longer time periods. Participants in situated interactions contribute over time to sustaining or changing the more long-term, situation-transcending practices. These practices are dynamic too, and may be altered, most often due to the cumulative effects of many small adjustments, but in exceptional cases as a result of abrupt, "revolutionary" changes. (Linell 2009: 52)

As outlined above, the dynamism and instability of lexical meaning and the dialectal relationship between situated and situation-transcending practices have obvious resonances with performativity theory, which will be dealt with in the next section.

2.3. Performativity theory

The concept of performativity adopted here draws primarily on Judith Butler's application and adaptation of Austin's notion of the performative to gender (Butler 1990a, 1993; Austin 1962). According to Austin, performatives do or perform what they enounce. For example, when a vicar declares "I pronounce you man and wife" at the end of a wedding ceremony, the couple actually become married. Thus "a performative is that discursive practice that enacts or produces that which it names" (Butler 1993: 13). Butler's perspective can be situated within a poststructuralist paradigm, which entails a sceptical and critical stance not only to gender, but to many of the widely accepted terms in linguistics, such as "bilingualism", "mother tongue", "native speaker" and even "language" itself. Poststructuralists would contest the assumed objectivity of such categories on the grounds that they are sociohistorical constructs that have been honed and (re)shaped over time in discursive practices (Pennycook 2001: 107). It thus becomes the task of the analyst to deconstruct concepts such as bilingualism and examine how they are constructed in and through discursive practices in and across different contexts.

Butler's theoretically eclectic approach to gender recontextualises and extends Austin's notion of performativity. She writes for example that "[g]ender reality is performative which means, quite simply, that it is real only to the extent that it is performed." (1990b: 278) Thus by questioning the essentialist or foundationalist category of gender, she claims that it is a social construction, whereby a body takes on its gender only "through a series of acts which are renewed, revised and consolidated through time" (1990b: 274). Likewise, bilingualism can be claimed to be a category that does not predate the concept; instead, it is produced by means of repeated discursive acts, "which congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural type of being" (Butler 1990a: 33). Hence performativity can be seen as a key concept in understanding the role of language in the dynamic constitution of social categories such as bilingualism and their linked ideologies in terms of repeated and ongoing "performances".

This article is not alone in applying Butler's performativity to language and bilingualism. Pennycook, for example, places the notion of performativity at the heart of a critical approach to applied linguistics (Pennycook 2001, 2004). Other linguists have incorporated performativity theory in their analysis of multilingual contexts as diverse as Mozambique (Stroud 2004), Sweden (Milani 2005, 2006), Wales (Musk 2006), Canada (Sarkar & Winer 2006) and Malta (Grixti 2008).

Particularly in Butler's work on the performativity of political discourse (1997), she identifies and develops three key discursive processes which together contribute to the construction of social categories: *Iterability, interpellation* and *censorship*. These in turn draw on the work of Derrida (1977), Althusser (1971) and Foucault (1990), respectively, and will be outlined below.

At the very heart of the power of the performative is repetition or iterability. Butler also explains it in terms of "renewable action" (1997: 40), which can potentially sediment over time through repeated discursive "performances". At the same time, repetition unavoidably entails *re*contextualisation, whereby the break in context and speaker allows for the potential slippage in meaning of a label such as "bilingual". Over time this may even occasion a discursive revaluation and thereby a social reconstitution of the subjects that it names.

The term interpellation refers to the performative act of addressing someone and thereby hailing the subject into being in terms of ascribing him or her certain social and ideological positions. In Butler's words, the "mark interpellation makes is not descriptive, but inaugurative. It seeks to introduce a reality rather than report on an existing one; it accomplishes this introduction through a citation of existing convention" (Butler 1997: 33). Thus when the midwife utters, "It's a girl." to a mother who has just given birth it is inaugurative, insofar as it hails the subject into being. The interpellation threeby "initiates the process by which a certain girling is compelled" (Butler 1993: 232). If we transfer this to bilingualism, the process of calling someone bilingual may, for example, invoke a response from the subject, e.g. by accepting it (implicitly or explicitly) or contesting it. At the same time, it will invoke an array of social practices and values and their associated norms and ideologies.

According to Butler, not only can an explicit act of interpellation hail a subject into being, but the subject can also "be interpellated, put in place, given a place, through silence, through not being addressed" (Butler 1997: 27). The power of censorship is thus to be seen as "discursive regimes" that "seek to produce subjects according to explicit and implicit norms" (ibid.: 133). Butler's claim is that implicit forms of censorship are more efficacious than explicit ones, precisely because of their invisibility and taken-for-granted-like quality. The monolingual norm, whereby languages should preferably be kept separate and not mixed, serves as a prime example of the performative force of implicit censorship. This is not to say that unspoken rules are always invulnerable to contestation and change. Indeed, since even an act of implicit censorship "must be repeated to reconsolidate its power and efficacy" (ibid.: 139), its iterability paradoxically also bears the seeds for change.

3. The Welsh context

The National Assembly for Wales was established in 1999, following a referendum favouring the devolution of power from Westminster to Cardiff, the Welsh capital. This led the way for a more integrated policy for Wales as a whole, especially with regard to education and language issues. With its new powers, the Assembly Government opted for a more proactive stance vis-à-vis the Welsh language than Westminster had done. This stance is particularly evident in *Iaith Pawb* ('everyone's language'), the national action plan for achieving the goal of a bilingual Wales (WAG 2003).

One of the main means of implementing this goal has been through the steadily increasing Welsh-medium and bilingual education provision. In fact, this trend had already been underway for decades, partly due to an increase in parental demand, but also due to proactive Welsh language policy by certain local education authorities with greater proportions of Welsh speakers, particularly those in West and North-West Wales. The effect of this trend - against the backdrop of almost a century of widespread language shift in Wales from Welsh to English - has been a dramatic growth in the number of young Welsh speakers, today the largest Welsh-speaking age cohort. According to the latest National Census figures from 2001, over 40% of all 10 to 14year-olds in Wales are estimated to be able to speak Welsh, compared to only 17% in 1971.

The data presented in this article focuses primarily on one bilingual secondary school, which is situated in Ceredigion, one of the counties with the highest proportion of Welsh speakers (just over half compared to a fifth for Wales as a whole). Ceredigion (and formerly the larger county of Dyfed) was one of the local education authorities that adopted a proactive language policy vis-à-vis Welsh, not least in the area of education, so that today the great majority of the county's secondary schools are either Welsh medium or bilingual, irrespective of the pupils' home language background (CCC 2001: 5). In the bilingual school featuring in this study, a little over half of the pupils come from English-speaking homes.

4. The data and methodology

Before we examine the empirical data to explore how bilingualism is discursively performed by pupils at a bilingual school in Wales, it is necessary to present briefly the empirical data reproduced below and to make some additional remarks about the methodological approach adopted in this study. Let us start with the data.

4.1. *The data*

The empirical data consists of video recordings from the second of two group discussions, each of about one hour's duration, conducted by two focus groups of four pupils from year 12 (17-year-olds) of a designated bilingual school in Wales. Despite the inclusion of some details in §3 above, the name of the school and the town in which it is situated are omitted here in order to protect the anonymity of the school. Likewise, to protect the anonymity of the pupils (four girls in one group and four boys in the other), I have adopted the pseudonyms they themselves have chosen. The group discussions were conducted without the presence of the researcher².

4.2. Conversation analysis

As indicated in §2 above, the approach adopted to analyse the spoken video-recorded data is conversation analysis (CA), not least because of its fine-grained attention to the interactive and situated properties of talk. In keeping with CA practices, the talk has been transcribed according to commonly accepted transcription conventions developed by Gail Jefferson (e.g. 2004), but augmented slightly in the excerpts below to render the bilingual nature of the talk. This has primarily meant the addition of two translation lines for the excerpt in Welsh: One word by word and one idiomatic. A key to all the conventions can be found in the appendix.

² See chapter 4 of Musk 2006 for fuller details of the data and data collection methods.

5. The performance of bilingualism in practice

In this section we shall be examining two examples of how the "performances" of bilingual pupils emerge in spoken interaction. The setting for each excerpt will be sketched first, to be followed by close "readings" using conversation analysis. Finally, each excerpt will be revisited with dialogical and performativity "spectacles" in light of the notions presented above.

The first excerpt constitutes the third in a series of five stories or narratives. The stories have been seeded by a discussion question which Katy paraphrases as "Think of different situations where it's useful to know Welsh." The first, more generalised account is told by Tina, who works part time at a cafe. She relates how Welsh-speaking customers react in a rather put out and snooty way when they order in English and Tina replies in Welsh. Sally then proceeds to tell a far more damning story about Welsh speakers, this time drunk Welsh nationalist male students (the "worst Welshy people"), who "started slagging [her] off in Welsh to [her] face" without realising she could understand them. When Sally answered them in Welsh, they were shamed to silence, forced to leave the fish and chip shop where she worked with their tails between their legs. Tina's comment in the overlap in line 3 of excerpt 1 is in fact a response to Sally's story, wishing she could also have witnessed their shame. Line 1 is Claire's third bid to gain the floor to tell her story, which is about how she pretended not to understand Welsh and was then brought to account for her actions.

Claire: y' know what \underline{I} did the other $d\underline{a}y_{\Gamma}$: in the in the 1 2 Sally: (it was xx) ah: I'd love to've bin there-3 Tina: [pub], someone (.) one of [glyn jones's] [brother's] friends [\$yeah:\$] 4 Claire: 5 Tina: Claire: came over an' they've 6 oh: [^{\$yeah\$} [glyn jones's]] brother had to go to ↑court an' [stuff] 7 Sally: 8 Claire: 9 (.) Claire: 10 11 Katy: speaks [to me in welsh;] (.3) an' I jus' went y' know z z z uh $\binom{(coughs)}{(coughs)}$ 12 Claire: 13 Katv: hu:h° ((half closes eyes, lifts head & opens eyes slowly)) an' 14 Claire: I jus' went [mm yea:h?] sorry what? an' 'e goes o:h sorry an' 15 Tina: 16 'e asked me in english said you know, d' you go to th' same school as [glyn]? an' I said yeah; 'e goes you to: understand welsh an' 17 Claire: 18 I said yea:h; I just don't really ↑speak it (.) [f:-I don't 19 20 Tina: choose to speak it 21 Tina: as i- if- ((forms more words with her lips)) [okay no you (actually) choose not to [speak it.] 22 Claire: 23 Sally: 24 Claire: choose not to speak it (.) an' that was the worst possible \$thing I could've said to a NATionalist; bloody BIG welsh 25 26 Sally: national ist who lives in cardiff. I know who it is I know; I kn<u>o:w</u>; Sally: 27 28 Katy: get arRES:ted, 29 Claire: 30 no ↑NOT [glyn's] brother 'is brother's friend. Claire: (.3) but they he $\begin{bmatrix} is as well \\ oh yeah I think you know \\ ((coughs)) \end{bmatrix} mm$ 31 32 Katy: 33 Claire: 34 Katy: "but mm dear" that \$was quite funny really\$ (.) ; twell I don't care because I jus' (.) I'm just thonest?! (.5) ; I haven't got 35 Claire: 36 37 nothing $again_{T}st$ them speaking welsh; but, it doesn't mean

Excerpt 1	(Focus Group Discussion 2, Focus Group 2: 13:38-14:25)
Participants: Claire (C), Sally (S), Tina (T), Katy (K)	

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38 Katy: L([cynan] speakin' here now:, $hh$ J((slam-
ming hand on desk and smiling at Sally))
39 Claire: L<sup>I</sup> have to.]!
40 Sally: L<sup>I</sup> hove to.]!
(.) NO:::¿! ((slamming both hands on desk))
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CA approach

Here we do not have the original conversation between Claire and the new acquaintance, but rather a retold story. Applying the CA mantra "why this, why now?" to this story and focusing on its sequential position, we find that there has been a drift away from the original question of "where it's useful to know Welsh" to thematise what happens to Claire when she refrains from acknowledging that she knows Welsh. In this respect, Claire's story differs from Tina's and Sally's, where they do speak Welsh to customers (and catch them unawares). What it shares with the first two stories is exemplified reprehensible behaviour by Welsh speakers, in Claire's case by associating Welsh language nationalists with illegal (incriminating) action. She achieves this association in her story preface by linking the antagonist of the story with his brother's court case (line 8) by suggesting that it was "'cause of this" (line 10), i.e. acting like a volume, this interpretation is strengthened by the fact that it was in the first transitionrelevance place (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson 1974: 703) immediately following Sally's turn mentioning Welsh nationalists that Claire makes her first (aborted) attempt to tell her story (10 lines before the start of excerpt 1).

Considering CA's concern with social action, it is pertinent to ask what action this story is performing as it emerges turn by turn. What is evident from an emic perspective from Claire's retelling of the story is that rather than focussing on the content of the conversation with the new acquaintance, there is a focus on the language of the exchange. After the acquaintance's opening question in Welsh, Claire re-enacts her pretence not to have heard/understood his question and initiates a repair, whereby he switches to English. However, Claire's repair initiation is reinterpreted when the acquaintance ascertains that she must in fact know Welsh because she goes to the bilingual school. She is then obliged to give an account for her dispreferred response in English in line 19. Rather than admit that she does not want to speak Welsh, Claire opts for a more modulated response: Understanding but not really speaking Welsh³.

It is clear that both Tina and Sally recognise Claire's attempt to mitigate her faux pas through their blatant other repairs. The first person "I" in line 20 does not refer to Tina herself, but is a repaired version of what Claire should have said. In line 23, Sally then endorses Tina's repair that Claire just chooses not to speak Welsh. After conceding to Tina and Sally's correction, Claire proceeds to expand on her transgression, acknowledging that not replying in Welsh is an accountable act (Garfinkel 1967: 1), especially to a Welsh nationalist. Although she gives this an extreme-case formulation (Pomerantz 1986), "the worst possible thing I could've said" (lines 25-26), she delivers this in a chuckling voice (marked by the flanking dollars signs), and thereby indicates

³ In the overlap following the micro-pause at the end of line 19, Claire's prolonged cut-off "f:-" might possibly indicate that she was going to say "fluently", which presumably would have been more acceptable to her interlocutors. All the same, Claire concedes to Tina's and Sally's repairs in lines 20-21 & 23, respectively.

her own amusement at not complying with expectations. The continued lack of backchannelling or any other response - despite the pauses in lines 35-36 - is accompanied by Claire continuing to adamantly justify her actions (lines 36-39). Thus here the interpretation of Claire's action is laid bare; despite expectations she refuses to speak Welsh. Sally proceeds to exaggerate Claire's vehemence in a tease by exclaiming "NO!" and simultaneously slamming both her hands on the desk in line 40, and thereby aligning with Katy's similar action in line 38.

Here in overlap with Claire, but looking at Sally, Katy tries to launch a strongly disaffiliative story, by giving voice to Cynan, her Welsh nationalist boyfriend. When she gains the floor just immediately after this excerpt, Katy goes on to tell two stories, one about an English woman and the other about an English man, whom she and her boyfriend Cynan know, both of whom are portrayed as morally reprehensible. At various points during these two stories, Claire demonstrates her disaffiliation both verbally and non-verbally (e.g. by rolling her eyes).

Dialogical approach

The analysis above has remained close to the contexts explicitly oriented to by members, that is, the cotextual and situational resources (see §2.2.1), in accordance with conversation analytic practice. Yet there are additional background assumption resources, which would add to our contextual understanding of what is going on in the excerpt above. We are told that Glyn Jone's brother's friend is a Welsh nationalist and that Glyn Jones's brother had to go to court and that there is some kind of connection between this information. What is not made explicit here is that the Welsh brand of nationalism tends to focus on language issues, especially promoting the linguistic rights of Welsh speakers. Glyn Jones's brother and his friend are no doubt active members of *Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg* ('the Welsh Language Society'), which urges its members to take part in acts of civil disobedience or even carry out illegal acts, such as defacing English-only signs. Bearing this in mind, a Welsh language activist such as Glyn Jones's friend would be expected to take exception to Claire's refusal to reply to him in Welsh.

Moreover, the very meaning and connotations of what constitutes a Welsh nationalist is being negotiated in these stories. First, Sally's story portrays Welsh nationalists in no uncertain terms: "you can't get worse Welshy people honestly they are terrible they're so fuckin' patronising." This is backed up her being called names to her face in Welsh. When Claire then introduces her story, also involving Welsh nationalists (one of whom has gone so far as to be in court), the label is already very negatively charged. Indeed, as soon as Sally predicts that Claire is about to say nationalist in line 26, Sally chimes in and ups Claire's amused indignation at being found out and having to explain herself, to "bloody big Welsh nationalist" on grounds that do not seemingly match Claire's complaint. Katy's two stories on the other hand, with her Welsh nationalist boyfriend at centre stage, serve to renegotiate the negativity which has been associated with Welsh nationalists (and Welsh speakers) in the previous three stories. Here roles are reversed and the immoral behaviour is ascribed to English people who either sponge off Welsh taxpayers' money or cheat on their wives. By contrast, the Welsh nationalist is portrayed as righteously indignant.

Performativity approach

Not only is the word Welsh nationalist undergoing temporary fixations of meaning here, but the identities of these friends are also being performed and played out in the stances that they take. If we go beyond the confines of this sequence, a more stable picture of situation-transcending practices has been emerging. Despite the fact that all four girls speak both Welsh and English, they always speak English together and three of them (Claire, Tina and Sally) tend to avoid speaking Welsh unless they have to. Katy is the exception, and the disalignment in her story telling here is in keeping with her divergence with the others over language issues at several junctures. In the anecdotes they tell each other, there is a performative iterability in play, whereby certain behaviours are being sustained across contexts. For example, about five minutes before this excerpt, Claire has said: "I haven't got anything against people speaking Welsh to me if they're comfortable with that as long as they don't expect me to speak Welsh to them back 'cause I'll speak whatever language I DAMN well want to." Elsewhere, Claire tells other stories which indicate the lengths to which she sometimes has to go to avoid having to speak Welsh, whereas Katy at one point "confesses" to the others that she loves speaking Welsh while at the same time burying her head in her hands in mock shame. In other words, although there are many performative acts of identities in the focus group discussions which show either affiliations and/or disaffiliations with one individual or the other, certain patterns are reiterated more than others and appear to become more sedimented and "congeal". However, this is not to say that they are fixed, but just more stable during the couple of weeks when the two discussions were held. The language preference of this group to speak English, for example, is remarkably stable and it is noteworthy that Claire's, Sally's and to a lesser extent Tina's stories are re-enacted in English, including any quotations which must have originally been delivered in Welsh. This is in marked contrast to the story telling of the other focus groups. Also, when it comes to performativity, these bilingual young people are interpellated as Welsh speakers both at school and in their local community. In excerpt 1, Claire resists the interpellation, but she is held accountable for not responding appropriately, i.e. in Welsh. This is also interesting since it is not just a question of exercising one's linguistic rights, but it is demonstrably the case that there are also linguistic duties associated with being bilingual. The failure to recognise these duties may also be sanctionable. Moreover, linguistic rights are usually expressed in relation to Welsh speakers, but not usually when it comes to English speakers in the Welsh context. Here there appears to be a "limit on speakability" in operation, or implicit censorship to be more precise. For the most part, the right to speak English does not surface, largely because in Welsh society English is the dominant language and its status is taken for granted. However, for those who are bilingual (and even those who are monolingual English speakers), Welsh speakers and speaking Welsh may be prioritised/preferred, e.g. in certain jobs and in certain situations, such as their "bilingual" school, where Welsh is supposed to be the official daily language. Even though the four girls in this group flout this rule, they rarely go as far as Claire in claiming that she has a right to do so. In the excerpt above, for example, Sally teases Claire about her adamance not to speak Welsh, whereas Sally and Tina speak Welsh in their stories and can therefore adopt a position of moral high ground.

Let us now move on to the second excerpt involving a different focus group, this time four boys. The language of the group discussion is mostly Welsh, though this was the outcome of an extended language negotiation sequence on the occasion of their first discussion session. The backdrop for this excerpt also concerns *Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg*; Cornilov has asked the others about whether they support the aims of this language pressure group and three of them have by and large expressed favourable views, whereas Wesley has given an outright "no" (*na*), after which he is obliged to account for his dispreferred response. In doing so he complains about society members (and one person in particular) who correct people's Welsh whenever they use a word of English or make grammatical mistakes in their use of mutations⁴. What follows is a general census of opinion that these kinds of corrections put people off making an effort to speak Welsh, at which point Cornilov takes his turn in line 1 of excerpt 2.

Excerpt 2 (FGD2, FG413:35)

Participants: Action Man (A Man), Cornilov, Wesley, Batman⁵ Cornilov: a fi'n rmeddwl rsiarad cymraeg nawr naturally yn 1 and I part. think speak Welsh now part. and I think speaking Welsh now naturally 2 Batman: La-? Lie Т 3 A Man: yeah golygu ((points at himself with both hands & smiles)) 4 means 5 naturally yn golygu ca'l geirie saesneg part. mean get words naturally means having English words 6 ynddo rfe h<u>e</u>jfyd rie?j= him in him yeah in it too yeah? 7 A Man: Lie yeah Lie J= 8 Batman: yeah Wesley: q =mm rchi d<u>e</u>rbyn '<u>w</u>nna achos ma'r Cornilov: on' ma' ma' rai' 10 is necessity but is you accept that because is but you have to accept that because it's ں ل L's- 'sdim rî:li 11 A Man: ots th[ere] there's not really matter of th- that doesn't really matter 12 hwnna achos os ni'n achos os chi'n siarad fel 'na because if we part. because if you part. speak that like because if we because if you speak like that, 13 (.6) fel chi dal gallu s::- (.) fel sgwennu n- yn like still can wr[ite] like o[r] like you can still wr-, like write o- in cymraeg neu siarad cymraeg yn ffurfiol os chi rîli 14 Welsh speak Welsh or part. formal if you really Welsh or speak Welsh formally if you really rmoyn ni jys' fel (.3) ghetto slang (.3) fan 'yn
want we justij like here
want we're jus' like, ghetto slang, here 15 16 Wesley: Lmm 17 (.) 18 A Man: rni'n siarad fel ghetto \$ehehe-he\$ we part. speak like we speak like ghetto eheheheh 19 Cornilov: Lni dd<u>i</u>m yn gh<u>e</u>t- ni dd<u>i</u>m yn gh<u>e</u>tto not we part. we not. part. we're not ghet- we're not ghetto

⁴ The initial phoneme of a word can be subject to up to three different *treigladau* 'mutations' according to complex syntactic rules, e.g. \underline{ci} (=default form), \underline{gi} , \underline{chi} , \underline{nghi} 'dog'.

These pseudonyms have been chosen by the participants themselves.

```
20
                        (.4)
                       rie fi'n j<u>ô</u>co (fe) [cornilov] $hehe hh$<sub>7</sub>
yeah I part. joke (him) [fictitious name]
        A Man:
21
                        yeah I'm joking [about] it [Cornilov] heheh hh
22
        Wesley:
                        ioio fi'n ghet-
                                                      ioio f<u>i</u>'n ghetto | slang.
                          yoyo
                                l part.
                                                         yoyo l part.
                       yoyo I'm ghet- yoyo I'm ghetto slang
                                                                                 L
23
        Cornilov:
                                                $hehehehe$
                                                heheheheh
```

CA approach

Between lines 1 and 6, Cornilov makes the point that Welsh "naturally" contains English words. While he is making this claim, he realises that his utterance even demonstrates this, since he inserts the English word *naturally* in his otherwise Welsh utterance. He then drives the point home by gesturing, smiling and then repeating the English word once again before completing his turn (lines 4-6). After receiving affiliative back-channelling tokens from the other three (lines 7-9), Cornilov uses the generic plural *chi* 'you' to assert that people need to accept this (line 10), including members of *Cymdeithas yr Iaith*. Without allowing Cornilov to finish justifying his assertion, Action Man provides his own justification in lines 11-15, i.e. that even if they put English words in their informal everyday Welsh, they are still able to write and speak formal Welsh - by implication - without using English words. Note too, that there is a shift in Action Man's repaired use of personal pronouns from *ni* ('we') in line 12 to the generic *chi* ('you') from line 12 onwards and thereby aligning with Cornilov's use of *chi* in the previous turn.

In line 15 Action Man then adds a jocular comment, repairing it in line 18 to say that they speak "ghetto (slang)". Cornilov rejects this in a po-faced manner in the overlap with Action Man in line 19 with a dispreferred other-inititiated other repair, which he also repeats. At the end of the overlap, Action Man laughs, indicating that it is not meant to be taken too seriously and then makes a meta-comment in line 21 to say that he is joking, addressing Cornilov by name before laughing again. Now Wesley has joined in the joke by chanting "yoyo" in the style of a hip-hop artist with the accompanying hand gestures before repeating what Action Man said in line 15 but substituting fi 'I' for ni 'we. When Wesley repeats this in the overlap with Action Man, Cornilov also joins in the laughter.

Dialogical and performativity approaches

Let us now consider the contextual resources that are brought into play here. It is clear that the correction practices of members of the Welsh Language Society are being challenged here on the grounds that it is natural to insert English words when speaking Welsh. What underpins this ideological stance on what constitutes acceptable Welsh belongs to the sociohistorical context of Western society, which upholds a monolingual norm (cf. Jørgensen & Holmen's "double monolingualism norm", 1997: 13), i.e. that we should stick to one language at a time. This monolingual norm is also reinforced by the school, which legitimises formal Welsh. The formal standard is, in turn, characterised by linguistic purism harking back as far as 16th and 17th century Europe, reflected for example in the statutes of *Académie française* (Statuts et règlements no. xxiv). It is no accident that Action Man defends their casual use of mixed-language Welsh by stating

that they are in any case able to write as well as speak formal Welsh. It is precisely in the standard written language that language mixing is deemed poor and crude, and at worst proof of a lack of linguistic competence. The performative iterability and sedimentation of these written language practices over time have made them invisible for the most part. Linell calls this sedimentation of practices a *written language bias* (2005). The written standard thus gains a taken-for-granted status to such an extent that it even regularly serves as a benchmark for "good" spoken language, the formal spoken Welsh that Action Man also refers to. The fact that Action Man justifies their not speaking pure Welsh because they can when they need to (e.g. for school purposes) paradoxically reproduces the legitimated monolingual norm by a process of implicit censorship.

Having said that, this monolingual norm is being contested, not only by these boys but by the members of other focus groups. This is most evident in their informal language practices, where their default Welsh is a mixed code/language (c.f. Musk 2006: 287-292; cf. Auer 1999). Indeed, the gap between standard written Welsh and spoken Welsh is so great that it can be characterised as a classic case of *diglossia*⁶, with standard written (literary) Welsh as the high variety and spoken Welsh as the low variety (Musk 2006: 78-82; cf. Ferguson 2000 [1959]). This diglossic situation surfaces when Action Man, albeit jokingly, refers to their Welsh as "ghetto slang". What then ensues is a renegotiation of what Welsh is, through their meta-discourse. Not only does Cornilov resist the monolingual norm through his meta-comment about natural Welsh containing English words (as opposed to formal Welsh, a contrast made by Action Man), he also initially resists Action Man's label for their Welsh. However, Wesley's new spin on ghetto slang portrays them as cool and hip speakers of a modern idiom (cf. Pennycook 2003). Excerpt 2 also exemplifies the negotiation of identities; in the eyes of Welsh Language Society members, they are purportedly poor Welsh speakers, but in their own eyes they are "natural" or cool and hip speakers of Welsh. It is precisely the iterability of "performances" and discursive practices such as these that provides the potential for change through the performative force of decontextualisation and recontextualisation. The first step towards change is seeing the invisible taken-forgranted values previously held in place through implicit censorship. The next step is to challenge and contest these values through discursive practices, as exemplified here.

6. Concluding discussion

This article has combined performativity theory, a theoretical framework situated within a poststructuralist paradigm, with conversation analysis, an empirical approach to pragmatics. Performativity theory à la Judith Butler generally lacks a finely tuned empirical method, as Speer and Potter point out:

> Butler offers a theoretically sophisticated route into an analysis of gendered and prejudiced talk. What her approach lacks, however, is an examination of the local accomplishment of gendered and prejudiced actions in real-life situations. Instead of relying on abstract, idealized speculations about speech acts separated from their use

⁶ Welsh diglossia meets all of Ferguson's original nine categories of features: Function, prestige, literary heritage, acquisition, standardisation, stability, grammar, lexicon and phonology (Ferguson 2000 [1959]).

in specific contexts, D[iscursive] P[sychology] details the precise mechanisms through which certain forms of hate speech are constituted and managed in speakers' talk. (2002: 174)

Although Potter and Speer refer to the merits of Discursive Psychology (DP) to account for how gender and prejudiced talk is performed in situated interaction, DP does in fact have much in common with ethnomethodology and CA⁷. I therefore concur with Potter and Speer that performativity theory needs the empirically grounded analytical tools that DP and CA share. In the examination of excerpts concerning the "performances" of bilingualism in the context of a Welsh bilingual school in section 5, the close attention to detail in applying CA as well as the adoption of an essentially emic (or members') perspective allow us to observe the dynamic emergence of identities, e.g. who should be seen as a legitimate Welsh speaker (excerpt 2).

Nevertheless, combining CA and performativity theory is problematic, since CA generally steers clear of *a priori* theoretical constructs. Yet if we are to be able to say anything about the sedimentation of social practices at a community or societal level, we are forced to look beyond CA. Therefore, in order to reconcile the two, I have turned to dialogical theory and Linell's theory of spoken interaction, most of the principles of which are in tune with those of CA. Nonetheless, Linell critiques the narrow view of context adopted by conversation analysts, claiming the importance of the double dialogicality of talk, i.e. that both situated interaction and situation-transcending sociocultural practices should be part of the contextual analysis of talk-in-interaction. In the analysis above, I have first offered an analysis remaining close to the contextual resources oriented to by the participants. This analytical discipline does have the advantage of forcing the analyst to take an emic perspective and tease out the aspects of context that members explicitly make use of. However, I have also ventured beyond these constraints to include broader sociocultural notions or phenomena, such as linguistic rights, the monolingual norm, the written language bias and diglossia. The situation-transcending nature of these constructs is difficult to capture in single (or even a few) sequences of talk, yet I argue that they are relevant to painting a fuller picture of Welsh bilingualism.

Dialogical theory also allows for a dynamic approach to meaning and situated meaning-making in a poststructuralist vein. In the excerpts examined above, the meaning and associations of Welsh nationalists and even the Welsh language were matters for negotiation with competing attempts at temporary fixations of meaning. Here CA provides useful analytical tools for examining the emergent nature of meaning-making in interaction.

Performativity theory itself also offers a dynamic framework, insofar as it allows for the emergent nature of the subject through continual "performances" or acts of identity. The concept of interpellation may be useful in highlighting, for example, how Welsh bilinguals can be called upon to use their Welsh under certain circumstances (such as the one in which Claire finds herself in excerpt 1), even if they prefer not to. Failure to do so may be accountable and even sanctionable (especially in the context of a bilingual school). The performative operation of implicit censorship, whereby invisible and taken-for granted norms are sustained, is also useful to explain how the monolingual norm or written language bias is held in place, for example. The concept

 $^{^{7}}$ To quote Potter and Speer, "it could be argued that there are more similarities than differences between DP and CA" (2002: 156).

with most powerful explanatory force is iterability, whereby repetition holds the key to potential change over time, since the contexts for repetition are never identical. This can allow for situation-transcending discourses to be contested, e.g. how the nature of the Welsh language is both constituted through sedimented language practices and metadiscourse about what counts as good, natural, cool or hip Welsh, as discussed in excerpt 2. Moreover, looking beyond the situated context of each discursive act and acknowledging that some sociocultural practices may be more stably sedimented and therefore more sustainable over time is a view that is shared by performativity theory and Linell's theory of contexts. Yet in neither framework does this deny the dynamics of variation and change. In particular, it is this juxtaposition of scales, the combination of each dynamic social action and its place in the bigger scheme of things that offers a fruitful cross-fertilisation of empirically grounded conversation analysis and performativity and dialogical theory.

Appendix

Key to transcription conventions

(.5)	Pauses in tenths of a second
(.)	Pause of less than 0.2 seconds
yeah= =yeah	Equal sign: Latching between utterances
[^{yeah}]	Square brackets between adjacent lines: Overlapping talk
lis-	Dash: Cut-off word
sh::::	Colon: Prolonged previous sound
(swap)	Words in single brackets: Uncertain words
(xx)	Crosses in single brackets: Unclear fragment; each cross corresponds to one syllable
dim ots	Words in 2nd line: Literal English translation of 1st line
no odds doesn't matter	Words in bold in 3rd line: Idiomatic English translation of 1st line
it's uhm, because	Comma in translation line: A pause (marked in the 1st line)
[=soap opera]	Square brackets: Changed names or supplied extra information
naturally naturally	Words in italics/ Words in bold italics: Code-alternation
((slaps desk))	Double brackets: Comments on contextual or other features, e.g. non-verbal activities
[glyn]	Names in square brackets: Changed for reasons of confidentiality
°crap°	Encompassing degree signs: Noticeably quieter than surrounding speech
\$yeah\$	Encompassing dollar signs: Smiley or chuckling voice
;I don't	Encompassing exclamation marks: With more force than

r <u>ea</u> lly	Underlining: Speaker emphasis
AND	Capitals: Noticeably louder than surrounding speech
•	Full stop: A stopping fall in tone
,	Comma: "Continuing" intonation
?	Question mark: Rising inflection
ż	Upside-down question mark: Slightly rising inflection
↑	Marked rising intonational shift at this point
\downarrow	Marked falling intonational shift at this point

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