

Overt and covert evaluation of language varieties in the Lithuanian speech community

Loreta Vaicekauskienė and Daiva Aliūkaitė

The Institute of the Lithuanian Language, Lithuania

THE OFFICIAL STANDARD LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY

The ideology of standardisation which is at work in the Lithuanian language¹, as in many other standard languages which were established during 19th century nation-state building, is rooted in the history of an oppressed nation and a dominated language. It is marked by the concept of national statehood which makes nation, people, and language indivisible and inevitably elevates the Standard Language (SL) to the highest rank in the hierarchy of language varieties. Late standard languages also share the specific quality of having been created by *conscious* efforts of cultural activists. Thus, the late establishment of the Lithuanian SL and its comparably short period of functioning have engendered a strong belief in a need for SL maintenance and authoritative expertise. This is vividly stressed even in today's official language ideology (Vaicekauskienė 2012a).

In the *overt* ideological discourse the superiority of the SL is motivated by the idea that only 'correct language' guarantees the survival of the nation. The ideal spoken standard is considered a learned rather than a native language: It is not straightforwardly linked to the South West Highlands, whose dialect constitutes the morphological and phonological base of SL (see Map 1). The norms of standard Lithuanian are codified by the experts of the Language Commission. Normative manuals are being issued, and the norms are supposed to be inoculat-

¹ The Lithuanian language is one of the two living Baltic languages (the other being Latvian) in the Indo-European language family. It is spoken by almost 3.5 million inhabitants of Lithuania, by the autochthonous Lithuanian populations in border areas of Poland and Belarus and by numerous Lithuanian emigrants in other countries (first of all, USA), nowadays expanding in Great Britain, Ireland and Spain. Due to well preserved archaic features in the grammatical structure Lithuanian is considered to be one of the most conservative living Indo-European languages and serves as a major source of information on Indo-European comparative grammar. The nominal system of modern Lithuanian distinguishes seven cases and 5 declensions of substantives. The stress system has preserved acute and circumflex pitch accent of long syllables; the stress is variable and follows four patterns for nouns and adjectives.

ed in the educational system (schools and universities), where courses in ‘proper language’ are offered. The ‘reference standard’ is established in *Būtiniausi tarties reikalavimai* (‘Indispensable requirements for standard pronunciation’) – a special chapter in *Didžiųjų kalbos klaidų sąrašas* (‘The List of Major Language Errors’), which is the main language regulation document, set by the Language Commission and covering lexicon and grammar. Groups of speakers with special education (TV announcers, actors, Lithuanian philologists) are referred to as speakers of this standard. The obligation to comply with the language requirements concerns state and municipal institutions and all other companies, organisations and institutions of the Lithuanian Republic, including mass media. It is enforced by laws and overseen by a specially established institution, the Language Inspectorate. The Language Inspectorate carries out the control according to the program *Valstybinės kalbos vartojimo ir taisyklingumo kontrolė* (‘Control of Use and Correctness of the State language’) which is approved by the Government, and it can issue warnings and fines for non-compliance with the regulations of the Language Commission (see Vaicekauskienė 2012a). Urban speech, and Vilnius speech in particular, is downgraded in the language planning discourse for being influenced by Polish and Russian and Lithuanian dialects, and it is therefore regarded as ‘impure mixture’ (Pupkis 2006).

While the official ideology promotes an *ideal* SL, strictly codified in normative publications, lay people emphasise that SL is regionally neutral, i.e. a language with no trace of dialect in phonology and prosody and morphology (as in written language), a way with language which is most often associated with the three biggest cities (Vilnius, Kaunas, and Klaipėda). Another frequent SL association is with it being the language of national broadcasting (Vaicekauskienė and Čičirkaitė 2011).

The current language of television and radio is indeed characterised by phonological and prosodic variation on ‘SL vs. Vilnius’ variables. At the one end of this variation, we have speech which adheres to the strict norms and exhibits most *ideal* variants. Being dependent on preparedness and reading it has a rather limited usage area and is mostly used by specially trained newsreaders. At the other end, we have *Vilnius speech*, an advancing variety which deviates from the established requirements of standard prosody and phonology, especially in terms of vowel length and tenseness. In between, we find a *mixed* way with language which exhibits more or less saliently and consistently expressed variants from both ends. Their distribution depends primarily on the communicative situation and the degree of preparedness of the produced speech.

The gatekeepers harshly condemn this variation in public language, altogether rejecting it as a possible manifestation of the *real* SL, since journalists, at least the professionals with an educational background in journalism, are supposed to learn the *ideal* norms of the SL. While the Language Inspectorate scrutinises the language used on TV and radio, writes reports, and sometimes even fines journalists who violate the prescribed norms, the journalists claim that the rigid SL has an aura of ‘dead’ language, and is far removed from ‘ordinary’ speech². In general, the practitioners of the media demonstrate that they are open to sociolinguistic diversity and may even take the risk of violating the prescriptive norms for the sake of style and naturalness of presentation (Vaicekauskienė 2011, 2012a).

Indeed, SL has to be conceived of and studied as an integral part of the ideological development of a society, where both official language standardization policies and ordinary language actors (the users of the language and their judgments, not necessarily overtly expressed) have to be taken into account if we are looking for the decisive force in processes of language standardisation.

[...] the attribution ‘standard’ must reflect social judgements and social practices in the community rather than descriptive details of varietal range and variation. [...] It is likely that the process of standardisation will be understood quite differently by those engaged in top-down agentive roles and by others, ‘the people’, who make on-the-ground assessments of the social implications of using different ways of speaking. Top-down discourses of language standardisation may not overlap with on-the-ground discourses, and the social judgments that matter most may even remain below the level of metalinguistic formulation (Coupland and Kristiansen 2011: 21, 22).

One might wonder if it is conceivable that any regiolect could compete with the official SL in the strictly standardised Lithuanian speech community. Earlier it was not relevant at all to consider the potential of any elements of vernacular speech finding their way into what is defined as standard, but during the last twenty years the situation has changed. In Lithuania, the democratisation of public language and growing prestige of dialectal and urban speech varieties which has been reported from other western countries (e.g. Blommaert 2009; Gronde-

² Adherence to the approved norms is not an easy issue for journalists, especially for those who speak spontaneously. Standard phonology and stress patterns raise the most difficulties. The accentual system of Lithuanian is characterised by a mobile stress and regular shifts of the place of stress in conjugation and declension paradigms. For speakers with a dialectal background which in this respect differs from the SL system, it is often rather difficult to abandon the patterns of their vernacular.

laers and van Hout 2010; Grondelaers, van Hout and Speelman 2011) coincided with the collapse of the Soviet empire and liberation of public language in general. Compared to the Soviet years, the dialects are experiencing an ideological renaissance which is connected with the resurrection of regional identities. However, it is difficult to say to what extent this trend is generated on-the-ground. In the Soviet tradition, the authorities encouraged a conservation attitude toward any ethnic symbol, and a continuation of this tradition is noticeable. As a follow-on from the regional society of ethnology from the Soviet time, the Association of Lithuanian Ethnic culture was established in 1989. On the basis of a Law of State, protection of Ethnic Culture (1999), a Council for Protection of Ethnic Culture, and local regional councils were set up (2000), and a State Program for the Development of Ethnic Culture (2003) was issued. Less institutionalised initiatives include publishing of regional histories and newspapers, and even fiction in dialect. The society in general is becoming more tolerant of diversity. The official language policy also concurs that dialects are valuable, and the government has made dialect research, and preservation of the linguistic heritage of Lithuania, a priority. The *National language policy guidelines for 2009–2013* states that:

The standard Lithuanian language as the uniting force for Lithuanian society has to be continually nourished, with the State and the society combining their efforts. Lithuanian dialects are the linguistic and cultural heritage, they serve important functions for the local community and therefore have to be protected and supported (see <http://www.vlkk.lt/lit/10110>).

However, in actual linguistic practice the use of dialect is curtailed: the institutions of education and media are required to produce pure SL. Tools are being created for learning of the ‘proper’ conservative pronunciation and standard stress patterns, and indignation is expressed at students and teachers who fail to learn the SL due to the ‘negative’ influence of the dialect (see the reports in Bukantiene 2006).

LAY ATTITUDES TO DIALECTS AND SL IN PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The purpose of this chapter is to study the SL construct as it appears in the judgements of lay people, and to shed light on how much this construct is affected by the official SLI. To that end, we are going to compare *overt* and *covert*

language-ideological systems among Lithuanian adolescents, and discuss how *consciously* and *subconsciously* offered values do reflect (or are reflected in) the changes that are noticeable at the level of language use. In the next, main section of the chapter, we will report results from an experimental investigation of *covert* perceptions of ‘best language’ in the Lowland region of Lithuania. Three ‘ways with language’ are studied as possible ‘best language’ in the experiment: (1) speech dominated by the codified SL features with inclusion of a few features of Vilnius speech – we shall call this *Slightly Conservative Standard* (SCS); (2) Vilnius speech, which figures prominently in the minds of lay people as SL and is spreading in the broadcast media – we shall refer to this as *Modern Speech* (MS); (3) and as a final element in the picture of lay SL conceptualisation, we need to include the evaluative position of regional speech – we shall call it *Local speech* (LS). But first, lay Lithuanian attitudes to SL and dialects will be presented in more detail as these are known from previous research.

Overt evaluations in survey studies using direct questioning

At first sight, large scale surveys based on direct questioning in the cities and towns of Lithuania³ seem to reveal rather conflicting attitudes towards dialects. Alongside claims to a limiting effect of using dialect, in both a geographical and social sense, people also subscribe to predominantly positive attitudes. For instance, 90% of respondents in large urban areas agree with the statement that ‘Dialects are our treasure and should be preserved and spoken’, 91% do not think that ‘Dialect is incompatible with the modern way of life’, and 70% disagree with the claim that ‘Speaking dialect is more appropriate for rural, not urban inhabitants’ (Vaicekauskienė and Sausverde 2012). Such responses may to some extent be coaxed by suggestive questions in the questionnaires, but in general it is becoming more and more common, in lay overt attitudes and public discourse alike, to assign positive cultural values to the dialects. The interviewees in qualitative research also underscore that dialects should be preserved for the sake of linguistic diversity, and should be seen as a historical treasure repre-

³ Reference is made to a large-scale survey study conducted in 2008–2009 in three largest Lithuanian cities, Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipėda, in which a total of 2037 respondents were visited in their homes and to more than 300 qualitative interviews conducted in bigger cities and smaller towns in 2009–2012. These investigations were part of two projects headed by Meilute Ramonienė, Vilnius University: *Cities and Languages 2007–2009* (supported by the State Science and Study Foundation of Lithuania), and *Sociolinguistic map of Lithuania: Cities and Towns 2010–2012* (supported by the Science Council of Lithuania).

senting the ethnic uniqueness of Lithuanian regions (*ibid.*). Interestingly, this positive attitude becomes especially prominent when people move away from dialect-speaking areas to urban areas and no longer see themselves as speakers of dialect. It seems fair to say that dialects are most positively evaluated when regarded not as a means of public communication but as items in a museum.

The use of dialect in Lithuania is primarily related to the *private sphere*. In the three largest cities, the majority of the respondents state that dialect is *acceptable* in communication with family members and close friends. Only 5% agree that a dialect could be used in commercial business, and only 8% think that it can be used in academic settings (*ibid.*). Responses in qualitative interviews lead to similar conclusions. Speaking dialect *in public* with people you do not know is considered inappropriate by most respondents, even in small towns, although the limitation on dialect use is thought to apply primarily to *urban areas* (*ibid.*; see also Aliūkaitė 2007; Jončaitė 2010; Merkytė 2011).

Aš būčiau labai nepatenkinta, jeigu nuėjus į kažkokią instituciją man pradėtų aiškinti tarme ką nors, nes tiesiog nesuprantu. Manau, jeigu šeimoj nori, tai gali šnekėt. Kaime su močiute. Su draugu, linksma su draugais pajuokauti, bet ne oficialiose, ne viešose erdvėse (31 m. moteris, teisininkė, Vilnius).

[‘I would be greatly displeased if I went to any public authorities and the representative there would try to explain something in a dialect, because I simply don’t understand. In my opinion, in your family, you can use it if you want. With your grandma in the country. With a friend, it’s fun to joke around, but not in formal, public places (31 year old female, lawyer, Vilnius)’].

Interview responses by people who have moved to urban areas, along with observations of their language use, reveal that the dialect is retained only as long as there is a group of people with *the same dialect* who communicate *in familiar settings* (Širvytė 2008; Bitinaitė 2009).

One of the motives for abstaining from dialect use in public in an urban setting is unwillingness to draw attention toward oneself. Dialect speakers report in the qualitative interviews that use of dialect in the city always provokes a reaction from the bystanders. Sometimes the reaction is neutral (questions arise about the birthplace of the speaker), sometimes positive (the person is requested to demonstrate his dialect because it is interesting and beautiful to listen to), but it can also be negative (the speaker can be ridiculed, or corrected). Negative attitudes are expressed in labelling dialect use as ‘non-correct’, ‘crude’, ‘curt’ and ‘ugly’, or, maybe more revealing, in claims by adolescents that they would ask

their parents ‘not to talk like farmers’ if they failed to code-switch to SL in public (Vaičekauskienė and Sausverde 2012).

The entertainment media, being especially sensitive to social stereotypes, exploit dialectal features to shape comic characters. For instance, one very popular TV comedy show portrays two farmers who speak the southern dialect of the West Highlands. Often they are depicted as confused losers visiting the city with their pitchforks and rubber wellingtons. Another character on the same show portrays an aggressive young man with a low IQ speaking in the stylised dialect of Šiauliai city (at the time of the television show the city was famous for its high level of criminal activity). Though stylised dialectal speech needs not necessarily be understood as a parody of personal (in)competence but just can show community affiliation (cf. Coupland 2001; see also Atkinson and Kelly-Holmes 2011: 259), in this specific case an effect of inadequacy and thus humour is intended (dialect does not belong to the city, dialect speakers are funny, uneducated and provincial). Both qualitative and quantitative surveys, as well as discourse analyses, reveal that dialects are used ‘for fun’ and ‘when joking’, and are regarded as appropriate means in order to achieve a comic effect (Vaičekauskienė and Sausverde 2012; Širvytė 2008).

In general, the domain of broadcast media is reserved for the SL. Regional dialects are spoken in some programs on ethnography and in some provincial broadcasting. Many respondents stress in the qualitative interviews that SL is the only appropriate choice for the newsreaders, who traditionally represent the conservative language standard:

Jeigu man per televiziją pranešėjas pradėtų žemaitiškai žinias skaityti, man kažkaip ausį biškutį rėžtų (50 m. vyras, ūkio skyriaus vadovas, Klaipėda).

[‘If the TV announcer would read the news in the Lowland dialect, it would grate on my ears a bit (50 year old male, maintenance manager, Klaipėda)’].

Nevertheless, almost 10% of the urban respondents in the quantitative survey state that a dialect would be appropriate in TV and radio (Vaičekauskienė and Sausverde 2012). In the regions, the number of people who claim that dialect can be an appropriate choice in the broadcast media can increase up to 39% (cf. research in the North Lithuanian site – Joniškėlis in Ramonienė 2006). This favourable view is most often supported by arguments to do with entertainment or education (e.g. ‘it would be interesting, nice to hear dialect on TV’, ‘it would be beneficial to introduce dialects to the kids and urban population in general’) (Vaičekauskienė and Sausverde 2012).

The Lithuanian evidence supports evidence from other countries (e.g. Kristiansen 2009) to the effect that positive *overt* attitudes do not necessarily encourage use. Dialects do not expand into areas of prestige (public places and cities), but are code-switched to in the private sphere, in particular when urban residents visit the province where they grew up, where dialects are sustained by the *covert* prestige of ‘the language you are born with’ (Širvytė 2008; Kliukienė 2010). In the province, the dialect is still perceived as an attribute of the in-group. Violation of this in-group loyalty can be condemned, the speaker can be branded as alienated or ‘fancy’ (Ramonienė 2006; Vaicekauskienė and Sausverde 2012).

The lay SL construct, as it appears in surveys using direct questioning, results more from people’s experiences with commonly used language in the big cities and on TV than from any wish on their part to comply with the official norms of pronunciation (cf. Vaicekauskienė and Čičirkaitė 2011). Strictly normative *conservative speech*, promoted by the gate-keepers, does not seem to have much impact on the SL notion of lay people. The dichotomy of the two linguistic modes – written and spoken – is no doubt of greater importance to lay SL conceptualisations: SL is speech which resembles written style; it is fluent, coherent, and lacks the discourse markers of spontaneous spoken language. Furthermore, the popular SL notion accords importance to a consciously controlled lexis, reflecting the prescriptive ideology in this respect: the SL does not contain elements that characterise low or informal style. Experiments in which informants were asked to demonstrate SL portrayed the stereotypical SL speaker as a professional older person speaking in a formal register close to the written language (Vaicekauskienė 2010).

Overall, we think that overtly expressed positivity towards dialects should merely be taken to indicate that the language-ideological climate in Lithuania is becoming more ‘politically correct’ (all must have equal rights, social and geographical exclusion must be eradicated). This climate reflects and upholds the country’s official standardisation policy, which values the dialects as ‘ecologically valid’ while at the same time imposing limits on their domains of use.

Covert evaluations in an experimental study

A Speaker Evaluation Experiment using the Matched-Guise Technique was conducted in 2009 in one school in Radviliškis (in North Lithuania, situated 21 km South-East of Šiauliai city), and furthermore with a group of university students from Radviliškis in Vilnius, yielding a total of 53 informants between 17

and 21 years of age (see Širvytė 2009). The narratives for the text-stimuli were written in a free style and had the same topic about travelling across Iceland. The 5 recorded stimuli were from 1.15 to 1.43 minutes long. The recording was played one time, with a pause of 2 minutes between each of the readings, so that all respondents had time to carry out the evaluative tasks. The stimuli appeared in the following order: Filler – Guise A (MS) – Filler – Filler – Guise B (Radviliškis speech). The recorded speaker of the guise-stimuli was a 26 year old man from Radviliškis, who had been living in Vilnius for about 6 years. Guise A was the Vilnius variety with inclusion of some Slightly Conservative features. Guise B was the regional dialect of Radviliškis city, containing non-standard features such as stress attraction, phonetic shortening of unstressed endings, shortening of long unstressed vowels at the end of the word, short [a]/[e] instead of long tense [eː]/[oː], and diphthongisation.

The research was presented as a sociological investigation of relations between speaking and listening. Although the dialectal guise was identified by both groups of judges as speech belonging to their local community (this was seen from the comments during the test), no one grasped the purpose of the investigation and nobody figured out that one speaker spoke twice. In this sense, the elicited reactions can be said to reflect *subconscious* attitudes.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. In part 1, the judges had to mark response options about the social status, education, place of residence, and age of the speaker. In part 2, they were asked to assess the following personal traits of the speaker on 5-point semantic differential scales: ‘intelligent’, ‘talented’, ‘educated’, ‘ambitious’, ‘independent’, ‘energetic’, ‘interesting’, ‘trustworthy’, ‘sincere’, ‘generous’, ‘youthful’, ‘modern’, and ‘joyful’. The results showed that evaluations were not affected by the residence of the judges. In both groups, MS was significantly more associated with an educated urbanite, while dialectal speech was more linked to a provincial citizen with a high school diploma. On personality traits, the MS-guise was considered significantly more ‘intelligent’, ‘educated’, ‘independent’, and ‘trustworthy’ than the dialect-guise, while the two guises were considered equally ‘interesting’, ‘sincere’, ‘modern’, ‘youthful’ and ‘joyful’ (Širvytė 2009).

OVERT AND COVERT EVALUATIONS OF LANGUAGE VARIETIES IN THE LITHUANIAN LOWLANDS

The matched-guise investigation mentioned above indicates that *Modern (Vilnius) Speech* (MS) may be *subconsciously* evaluated to be better than *Local Speech* (LS) on traits related to status and competence. The first comprehensive experimental attitudinal research in Lithuania which might provide clues to the relationship between the *Slightly Conservative Speech* (SCS) and MS, and between these varieties and the dialectal varieties (LS), was conducted in upper-secondary schools of one of the Lowland regions in May 2011 and April 2012⁴. In what follows, reference will be made to Exp 2011 and Exp 2012.

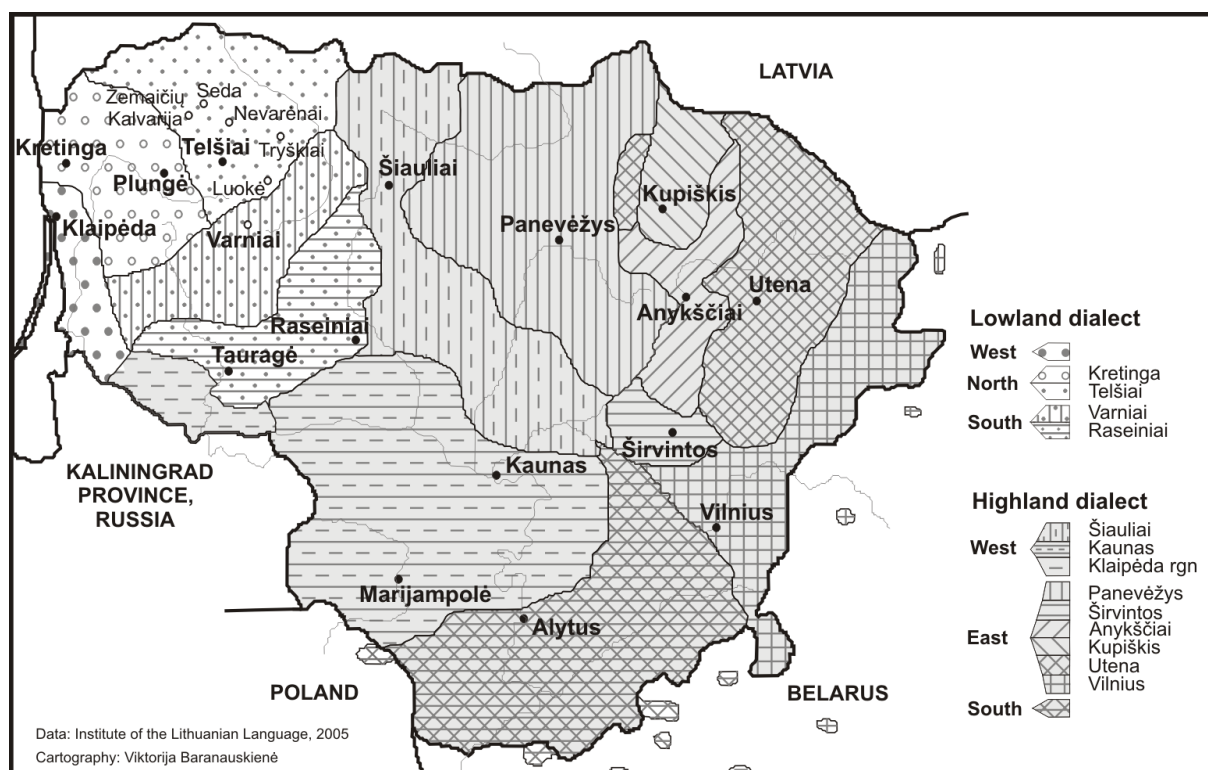
The Lowlands were chosen because of well-known overt manifestations of local identity. The principal research question was whether the deliberate propagation of dialect as a most important part of local identity could be traced in subconscious upgrading of LS in comparison with SCS and MS. And if so, would the findings be indicative of a real rebirth of dialectal speech, with the main city of the region becoming a linguistic norm centre?

Background: The identity of the Lithuanian Lowlanders

From a linguistic point of view, the Lowland dialect (one of the two main Lithuanian dialects, the other being Highland dialect) includes three sub-dialects – West, North, and South Lowland dialects – but in popular discourse the label ‘Lowland dialect’ (*žemaičių tarmė*) is used for the local speech of the whole Lowland region. The Highland dialect also covers three sub-dialects, which do have popular names, as the Highland dialect covers a much larger area: West Highland dialect (*suvalkiečių tarmė*), South Highland (*dzūkų tarmė*), and East Highland (*aukštaičių tarmė*. (The latter label means just ‘Highland dialect’ and is used metonymically for East Highland)⁵. The popular conceptualisation of Lithuanian dialects thus consists of the four mentioned labels; see Map 1.

⁴ The research was carried out as part of the project *Lietuvių kalba: idealai, ideologijos ir tapatybės lūžiai*, 2010–2013 (*Lithuanian language: ideals, ideologies and identity shifts*), funded by a grant from the Research Council of Lithuania, No. VAT-14/2010.

⁵ *Žemaičių / aukštaičių tarmė* correspond in English to ‘the dialect of people of the Lowlands / Highlands’; *suvalkiečių* originates from the name of the present Polish city Suwałki and *dzūkų* has been derived from a specific for that region use of affricative [dz] instead of [dʒ].



Map 1: Lithuanian dialects and sites of the research

Works of fiction appear in the Lowland dialect, and periodicals devoted to regional culture are published partly in the dialect⁶. Attempts are made to use the dialect in such modern media as Internet encyclopaedias and weblogs⁷. The idea of a Republic of Lowlands with a Lowland passport⁸ propagated by some politicians and cultural activists is also worth mentioning, as well as a proposal to speak dialect at the city council meetings in one of the Lowland municipalities.

Arguably, this development in the Lowlands is indicative of the democratisation of the local community and of Lithuanian society in general. And it might perhaps contribute to strengthening the use of dialect. However, it is clear that the efforts in question may have little to do with ordinary people's everyday language. Exposure to the periodicals just mentioned is scant at best: the majority of interviewees from the Lowlands claim that they 'just heard about the periodicals' or gave up reading them because of the difficulty of reading in dia-

⁶ The magazine *Žemaičių žemė* ('The land of Lowlands') has been published since 1993 (http://www.samogit.lt/kultura/zemaiciu_zemea.htm). The newspaper *Samogitia* ('Lowland') (http://samogitia.mch.mii.lt/kultura/samogitia_laikr.htm) aims to gather writers writing in Lowland dialect and to urge children to learn reading and writing in Lowland dialect.

⁷ Wikipedia in the Lowland dialect exists since 2006 and is today claimed to contain 13 000 content pages, see http://bat-smg.wikipedia.org/wiki/P%C4%97rms_poslapis.

⁸ The number of unofficial Lowland passports issued is claimed to stand at 10 000.

lect (Vaicekauskienė and Sausverde 2012). On the other hand, one cannot deny the symbolic value of such writings and other ideological initiatives to promote the use of dialect and raise dialect awareness in the community.

Experimental research of language attitudes in the Telšiai region

Respondents and methods

Exp 2011 was carried out with 222 students (116 girls and 86 boys) from the 9th and 10th grades (16 years old on average) in upper-secondary schools⁹ in the four sites of Nevarėnai, Tryškiai, Luokė, and Varniai, while Exp 2012 included 188 students (85 girls and 103 boys) in the upper-secondary schools of Alsėdžiai, Žemaičių Kalvarija, and Seda – all situated in the environs of Telšiai, a North Lowland city which functions as a regional centre and is named ‘the capital’ of the Lowlands. (See Map 1).

In the interest of comparison with the language-attitudinal situation described for Denmark, both experiments followed closely the research design used in the Danish LANCHART project (see Kristiansen 2009). The purpose of the design is to obtain *subconsciously* offered attitudes which can be compared with *consciously* offered attitudes. In order to avoid leakage of information about the language-ideological focus of the experiment, the contact persons in the schools were told that we investigated how students perceive personal traits of speakers.

In the first part of the data collection session, a Speaker Evaluation Experiment (SEE) was conducted in which the students assessed audio-recorded clips representing SCS, MS, and LS (more about the clips below). While listening to the clips, the students rated them on eight 7-point adjective scales representing the same personality traits as in the Danish experiments: *goal-directed–indecisive*, *trustworthy–untrustworthy*, *conscientious–happy-go-lucky*, *interesting–boring*, *self-assured–insecure*, *intelligent–stupid*, *nice–repulsive*, *cool–uncool*. The scales were listed in the opposite order in half of the questionnaires, which were distributed so that students sitting next to each other had different ordering of the scales, in order for copying to be meaningless; students were informed about this. Asking questions about the speakers’ personalities rather than

⁹ To ensure the social representation of the respondents, the grade levels chosen were the last two grades of compulsory schooling in Lithuania. Though one can leave school to attend some technical school after the 8th grade, the vast majority of students finish 10 grades and then proceeds to a technical school or study at the high school level.

their speech is one of the measures taken to keep listener-judges unaware of the experimental purpose: evaluation of linguistic variation.

In the second part of the data collection session, the respondents completed a Label Ranking Task (LRT). They ranked the ‘names’ (labels) of a number of listed speech varieties in terms of personal preference. Of course, in this task the respondents were aware that they evaluated speech varieties; the evaluation was *consciously* offered. The list of varieties to be ranked included labels which were supposed to correspond to the three varieties that were assessed in the SEE: (1) ‘standard language’, corresponding to SCS, (2) ‘Vilnius speech’, corresponding to MS, (3) ‘Lowland dialect’ and ‘Telšiai speech’, corresponding to LS. (In the Exp 2011, the label ‘Lowland dialect’ was not included).

Additionally, in this second part of the session, where the students knew about the purpose of the experiment, the SEE voices were played to them once more and they were asked to assess the geographical affiliation of the voices by ticking off whether the speaker was from Vilnius, Telšiai or another city). At the same time, they were asked to assess the standardness of each voice by rating them on a 7-point scale.

The voices

Twelve voices, four for each of the three varieties (SCS, MS, LS) were included in both Exp 2011 and Exp 2012, and in both studies there were 2 male and 2 female speakers per variety. The voices were selected from several dozens of spontaneous audio-recorded interviews about ‘what is a good teacher like’. For the LS voices, these interviews were conducted with 10th to 12th graders (16–18 years old) in the upper-secondary schools of Telšiai. For the SCS and MS voices, the interviews were conducted with 10th to 12th graders in upper-secondary schools in Vilnius, and with first to third year university students (18–20 years old) majoring in Lithuanian philology and journalism. Each of the 12 clips were made about 15 seconds long and edited so that their content (opinion about teacher) and form (fluency, voice quality) were as similar as possible. To our best judgement, the main remaining difference was the ‘dialectal’ speech features. The voices were presented in an order which alternated both varieties and speaker gender (see the speech stimuli designations in the first column in Tables 1a and 1b).

What we name SCS in our research is speech on the Conservative–Modern continuum which contains (some of) the *codified* phonetic and prosodic features

of SL: long (or semi-long) vowels in unstressed syllables; long (or semi-long) and tense unstressed [o:], [e:]; stress not attracted from the end of the word; retained diphthongs [uo] and [ie]; and not lengthened short stressed vowels. These conservative features are described in the textbooks on standard pronunciation and are supposed to be taught in school; however, they are very seldom heard in the speech of youngsters. Since very few of the volunteers in the schools of Vilnius manifested SCS features in the spontaneous speech, the SCS-stimuli were also extracted from university students majoring in journalism and Lithuanian philology, who in terms of their curriculum are supposed to be trained in this variety. In order to avoid dialectal influence, the origin of the volunteers was controlled; all the selected SCS speakers were born in Vilnius.

However, as a crucial difference between the two experiments, most of the voices in Exp 2012 were changed with the intention of making them represent a less broad gamut of variation. In particular, we felt that the SCS voices in Exp 2011 lacked ‘naturalness’ and wanted to check in Exp 2012 if more ‘natural-sounding’ voices would be differently evaluated. This issue arose because we had trained three of the four SCS-speakers in Exp 2011 – SCSb(4), SCSg(7), SCSb(10) – to make them sound more conservative, with the unwanted but inevitable consequence that two of them – SCSb(4), SCSg(7) – sounded less natural, more confident and closer to monitored (though not read-aloud) speech. In Exp 2012, the voice which sounded most monitored, namely SCSb(4), was replaced by a more natural-sounding conservative speaker, while new clips with SCSg(7) and SCSb(10) were taken from their more spontaneous, non-rehearsed speech. However, SCSg(7) still remained a little reading-like. SCSg(1) was retained as the only natural-sounding SCS voice in Exp 2011. The voices used in the two experiments are described in terms of frequency of crucial features in Table 1.

Also the MS- and the LS-voices from Exp 2011 were partly substituted with new ones for Exp 2012 in order to secure compatibility with the SCS-voices in terms of fluency and voice confidence. In terms of style (i.e. frequency of ‘high’ and ‘low’ variants), the SCS-voices were ‘set lower’, while the MS- and LS-voices were ‘set higher’.

The MS-voices represent Vilnius speech and contain features that are said to be spreading in the contemporary broadcast language: short long vowels in unstressed syllables; short and not tense [o:], [e:] in unstressed position; monophthongisation of [uo] and [ie] in unstressed syllables; stress attraction and lengthened short stressed vowels; a slight lowering of [o:], characteristic for young

Table 1: Phonetic and prosodic features of voices in Exp 2011 and Exp 2012. Figures give # of instances: actual/possible.

Exp 2011	Shortening of long unstressed to short		Leng- thening of short stressed [i], [u]	Monoph- thongisat- ion of un- stressed [ie] [uo]	Stress attract- ion		
	[i:] [u:] [æ:] [a:]	[o:] [e:]					
Sg(1)	0/7	0/10 *	0/7	1/3	0/0		
Sb(4)	1/6	1/6 *	0/8	0/0	0/3		
Sg(7)	6/14	2/4	0/1	0/0	0/1		
Sb(10)	3/8	2/6 *	0/1	1/1	0/0		
Mb(2)	6/6	4/7	2/8	0/0	2/2		
Mg(5)	9/11	4/4 o→ɔ	0/2	0/0	0/0		
Mb(8)	9/10	7/7	3/4	2/3	1/2		
Mg(11)	7/7	3/3 o→ɔ	1/4	3/3	1/2		
					Lowland stress attraction	Shorten- ing of endings	[o:] [e:] Diphthong- isation
Lg(3)	3/3	1/1	4/6	0/0	3/3 +	4/11	0/2
Lb(6)	0/2	1/4	0/6	1/1	0/6 +	4/11	5/7
Lg(9)	4/4	2/4	0/3	0/0	2/3 +	2/10	2/6
Lb(12)	3/5	2/3	0/6	0/0	1/1	4/8	1/5

Exp 2012	Shortening of long unstressed to short		Leng- thening of short stressed [i], [u]	Monoph- thongisat- ion of un- stressed [ie] [uo]	Stress attract- ion		
	[i:] [u:] [æ:] [a:]	[o:] [e:]					
Sg(1)	0/7	0/10 *	0/7	1/3	0/0		
Sb(4)	2/9	0/1*	0/6	1/1	0/1		
Sg(7)	3/8	1/4	0/5	0/0	0/0		
Sb(10)	3/9	1/6	0/6	1/1	0/2		
Mb(2)	5/6	4/7	2/8	0/0	2/2		
Mg(5)	6/8	4/4 o→ɔ	0/2	0/0	0/0		
Mb(8)	5/5	6/6	0/2	0/0	2/2		
Mg(11)	11/12	2/3	1/7	2/2	1/1		
					Lowland stress attraction	Shorten- ing of endings	[o:] [e:] Diphthong- isation
Lg(3)	5/10	4/5	0/5	1/2	5/7 +	1/1	5/8
Lb(6)	0/2	1/4	0/6	1/1	0/6 +	4/11	5/7
Lg(9)	2/4	2/2	0/3	0/1	6/6 +	5/11	5/5
Lb(12)	3/5	2/2	1/2	2/2	2/3 +	1/8	0/5

S=Slight Conservative Speech (SCS), M=Modern Speech (MS), L=Local Speech (LS);
g = girl, b = boy; (1)...(12) = order of voice in the audio-recording.

* indicates tenseness of [o:], [e:]; o→ɔ marks slight lowering of [o:]; + marks specific Lowland intonation.

speakers. The MS-voices were extracted from the audio-recorded speech of at least second generation Vilnius-born young Lithuanians whose mother tongue was Lithuanian¹⁰. Salient socio-phonetic features associated with low Vilnius vernacular and ‘young’ speech (such as raised intonation at the end of the utterance, diphthongisation of [eɪ], lengthening of short vowels in stressed endings, distinct lowering of [oɪ] and [eɪ] and merging and reduction of sounds) were not included in the stimuli in order to create samples resembling the variety that is spreading in the broadcasting (in which these socially marked features are not so prominent).

The LS-voices in the investigation represent the speech of the adolescents in the biggest regional city of the research area – Telšiai. The variation in the total material recorded in the interviews was quite broad – from non-dialectal to rather saliently dialectal speech samples. In order not to attract attention to dialectal differences as the object of study, we selected voices with few dialect features to represent LS in the SEE. Among the features that are specific for the Lowland dialect, the SEE voices from Telšiai exhibit stress attraction to the beginning of the word and inconsistent preservation of secondary stress, an intonational pattern resulting from Lowland glottal stop of the acute pitch and concentration of the circumflex on the first diphthong component, phonetic shortening of unstressed endings (long vowels are shortened and short vowels are dropped out) and diphthongisation of [eɪ] and [oɪ]. A single 2012 voice (LSg 09) contains one of the typical dialectal pronouns.

Overtly offered attitudes: Results of the Label Ranking Task

In the conscious data collection component, the three Lithuanian language labels relevant to the research were included: *Standard language (Bendrinė kalba)*, *Vilnius speech*, and *Telšiai speech*. They were randomly listed with labels representing the speech of other Lithuanian cities, including two more labels from Lowlands (Plungė and Kretinga). In Exp 2011, the list consisted of twelve labels; in Exp 2012, four more labels were added, viz. the four popular names *žemaičių*, *aukštaičių*, *suvalkiečių* and *dzūkų*, i.e. Lowland dialect, East Highland dialect, West Highland dialect, and South Highland dialect (see Table 2; and Map 1 for the location of cities and dialect boundaries).

¹⁰ Previously a Polish and Russian speaking city, Vilnius became more Lithuanian speaking only after the World War II. Third or fourth generation Lithuanian speaking inhabitants are rather an exception in Vilnius.

Table 2: Overt evaluations in LRT in the Telšiai region. Figures are means.

Exp 2011			Exp 2012		
	Speech labels			Speech labels	
1	Telšiai speech	3,07	1	Lowland dialect	3,13
2	Klaipėda speech	4,38	2	Telšiai speech	4,92
3	Standard language	4,41	3	Standard language	5,78
4	Vilnius speech	5,16	4	Klaipėda speech	5,85
5	Šiauliai speech	6,15	5	Plungė speech	6,40
6	Kaunas speech	6,16	6	Vilnius speech	7,08
7	Plungė speech	7,27	7	E. Highland dialect	7,39
8	Kretinga speech	7,27	8	Kaunas speech	8,78
9	Utena speech	8,00	9	Šiauliai speech	8,89
10	Panevėžys speech	8,04	10	Kretinga speech	9,19
11	Alytus speech	8,05	11	Panevėžys speech	9,36
12	Marijampolė speech	8,56	12	Utena speech	10,27
			13	Alytus speech	10,78
			14	Marijampolė speech	10,98
			15	S. Highland speech	11,26
			16	W. Highland speech	11,54

The results show that young Lowlanders prefer their own dialect to all others in the LRT. In Exp 2011, Telšiai speech came out in top. In Exp 2012, Lowland dialect and Telšiai speech occupied the two top positions.

Physical distance clearly plays a role in both rankings. The speech of the most remote local site, Kretinga, did worst among the included local labels – accompanied by Plungė in Exp 2011 where the distance from the researched sites to Plungė was bigger than in Exp 2012. The speech of Klaipėda, which is the centre of urban attraction in western Lithuania, and the third largest city in the country, was ranked just below the Local labels (Lowland and Telšiai) on a par with Standard language. The third label of particular interest in our study, Vilnius speech, was ranked lower than both Local labels and Standard language. This pattern is summarised in Table 3.

It may be mentioned that the effect of judge-gender on these assessments was minimal, with the notable exception that ‘Standard language’ – as it is often found – was ranked more favourable by girls than boys (in both experiments).

Table 3: Consciously offered ranking of the three studied speech varieties

Local > Standard > Vilnius

Subconsciously offered attitudes: Results of the Speaker Evaluation Experiment

In view of the evidence from the investigations in Denmark (cf. Kristiansen 2009), we were eager to see whether the consciously offered evaluative hierarchy – as it appears in Table 3 – would remain the same or be changed (possibly be turned upside down) in a situation where Lithuanian adolescents did not realise that they are evaluating speech varieties. Thus, the aim of the SEE was to obtain subconsciously offered evaluations from the students.

Our way of checking whether we had succeeded in eliciting subconscious evaluations, was to ask the students – before the final debriefing – to tell what they thought the SEE was about. The most frequent answer in all classes was that we were interested in opinions about teachers. Other suggestions included the manner of speaking: certainty, emotions, critical sense etc. of the speaker,

Table 4: Covert evaluations in SEE in the Telšiai region. Figures are mean ranks.

Exp 2011						Exp 2012					
Intelligent – Stupid	S	***	M	***	S	S	***	M	***	S	
		1,47		2,15		2,38	1,50		1,99		2,51
Conscientious – Happy-go-lucky	S	***	M	/	S	S	***	M	***	S	
		1,45		2,26		2,29	1,51		1,96		2,53
Goal-directed – Dull	S	***	M	/	S	S	***	M	***	S	
		1,56		2,20		2,24	1,46		2,09		2,46
Trustworthy – Untrustworthy	S	***	M	**	S	S	***	M	***	S	
		1,49		2,15		2,36	1,57		1,99		2,44
Self-assured – Insecure	S	***	M	**	S	S	***	M	***	S	
		1,36		2,27		2,37	1,51		2,10		2,40
Cool – Uncool	S	***	M	/	S	S	*	M	*	S	
		1,67		2,17		2,17	1,87		2,01		2,13
Interesting – Boring	S	***	M	***	S	S	/	M	***	S	
		1,59		2,01		2,40	1,80		1,89		2,31
Nice – Repulsive	S	*	M	***	S	S	***	M	***	S	
		1,68		1,86		2,38	1,56		1,91		2,53

S = Slightly Conservative Speech (SCS), M = Modern Speech (MS), L = Local Speech (LS)
Wilcoxon Signed Pair Test: * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$, / = n.s.

the timbre of the speaker's voice, speaking tempo, intonation, and others. In the scarce free comments offered in the completed questionnaires, we find evaluations of the speakers' arguments and general demeanour, e.g. 'He is a serious guy, he knows what he wants from life', 'He is handsome and has many interests', 'I think she lacks stronger opinion', 'He sounds reasonable', etc. Though the dialectal features made the local speech stimuli relatively salient to our ears, no one of the students guessed the goal of our experiment. We could thus conclude that we had succeeded in eliciting subconscious attitudes.

The results are shown in Table 4. Both experiments show the same pattern: SCS is associated with the more positive values on all scales (low mean ranks), LS with the more negative values at the other end of the scales, with MS in between. Local is downgraded from consciously offered top-ranking (Table 3) to a subconsciously offered bottom-ranking (Table 5).

Table 5: Subconsciously offered ranking of the three studied speech varieties

Standard (SCS) > Vilnius (MS) > Local (LS)
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In the Danish results, the very same personality traits were found to represent two underlying evaluative dimensions: superiority and dynamism (represented in the Table 4 by the first and last four scales, respectively). There is no trace of this distinction (or any other impacting distinction) in these Lithuanian results. However, before rejecting its relevance completely we need to conduct more studies in other Lithuanian regions. Preliminary results from a recent investigation in another region indicate that MS is evaluated equally high as SL on dynamism traits 'cool', 'interesting' and 'nice' (Vaicekauskienė 2012b).

Were evaluations influenced by manipulations of the stimuli voices?

As both experiments produce the same evaluative pattern, there does not seem to have been any impact from our various manipulations of the stimuli voices in order to strengthen naturalness and reduce the variational gamut from Exp 2011 to Exp 2012 (see the 'voices' section above). If there is such an effect, it consists in nullifying the difference between SCS and MS on the scale 'interesting–boring', and augmenting the evaluative distance between MS and LS (making non-significant differences significant) in terms of 'conscientiousness', 'goal-directedness', and 'coolness' (see Table 4).

However, this immediate conclusion derives from looking at results at the level of varieties, i.e. results for four voices pooled together. The results for each voice separately are presented for both experiments in Table 6 and allow for a more detailed look at whether there was any effect of the changes made to the stimuli voices.

Table 6: Covert evaluations of 12 voices on 8 personality traits. Assessments on 7-point scales. Figures are mean ranks. Friedman Test: all p's <.001

Intelligent – Stupid				2011: N=210, $\chi^2=231,137$				2012: N=174, $\chi^2=229,191$				
2011	Sb (4)	Sg (7)	Sg (1)	Sb (10)	Mg (5)	Mb (2)	Lb (12)	Mb (8)	Lg (9)	Lg (3)	Mg (11)	Lb (6)
	4,54	5,12	5,49	5,96	6,03	6,71	6,84	7,12	7,16	7,46	7,52	8,05
2012	Sg (7)	Sb (4)	Sb (10)	Sg (1)	Mg (11)	Mg (5)	Mb (8)	Mb (2)	Lb (12)	Lb (6)	Lg (3)	Lg (9)
	4,86	5,37	5,52	5,53	5,87	6,22	6,62	6,95	6,97	7,42	8,18	8,49

Conscientious – Happy-go-lucky				2011: N=211, $\chi^2=256,199$				2012: N=173, $\chi^2=216,840$				
2011	Sb (4)	Sg (7)	Sg (1)	Sb (10)	Lb (12)	Mg (5)	Mb (8)	Lg (9)	Mb (2)	Lg (3)	Lb (6)	Mg (11)
	4,53	4,9	5,67	5,75	6,51	6,67	6,69	6,8	6,84	7,45	7,76	8,43
2012	Sb (4)	Sg (7)	Sg (1)	Sb (10)	Mg (11)	Mb (8)	Mg (5)	Lb (12)	Mb (2)	Lb (6)	Lg (3)	Lg (9)
	4,75	5,34	5,46	5,76	5,81	6,50	6,55	6,56	7,18	7,48	8,10	8,51

Goal-directed – Dull				2011: N=212, $\chi^2=201,961$				2012: N=170, $\chi^2=177,654$				
2011	Sb (4)	Sg (7)	Sb (10)	Sg (1)	Lb (12)	Mb (2)	Mg (5)	Lg (9)	Mb (8)	Lg (3)	Mg (11)	Lb (6)
	4,64	5,09	5,88	6,05	6,34	6,48	6,51	6,82	7,24	7,24	7,77	7,95
2012	Sg (7)	Sb (10)	Sb (4)	Mg (11)	Sg (1)	Lb (12)	Mb (8)	Mb (2)	Mg (5)	Lb (6)	Lg (3)	Lg (9)
	4,96	5,26	5,39	5,97	6,05	6,31	6,67	6,80	6,98	7,58	7,92	8,11

Trustworthy – Untrustworthy				2011: N=211, $\chi^2=182,768$				2012: N=168, $\chi^2=154,296$				
2011	Sb (4)	Sg (7)	Sg (1)	Sb (10)	Mg (5)	Lb (12)	Mb (2)	Lg (3)	Mb (8)	Mg (11)	Lg (9)	Lb (6)
	4,95	5,2	5,35	5,92	6,3	6,53	6,94	7,12	7,14	7,3	7,45	7,82
2012	Sg (7)	Sb (10)	Sb (4)	Mg (11)	Sg (1)	Mg (5)	Mb (8)	Lb (12)	Mb (2)	Lb (6)	Lg (3)	Lg (9)
	4,74	5,58	5,81	5,82	6,15	6,33	6,57	6,59	7,04	7,42	7,81	8,13

Self-assured – Insecure		2011: N=202, $\chi^2=311,789$						2012: N=163, $\chi^2=205,507$					
2011	Sb (4)	Sg (7)	Sb (10)	Sg (1)	Mb (2)	Lg (9)	Mg (5)	Lb (12)	Mg (11)	Mb (8)	Lb (6)	Lg (3)	
	4,02	4,82	5,33	5,91	6,17	6,66	6,93	7,02	7,52	7,57	8,02	8,03	
2012	Sg (7)	Lb (12)	Sb (4)	Sb (10)	Mb (2)	Mg (11)	Sg (1)	Mb (8)	Mg (5)	Lb (6)	Lg (3)	Lg (9)	
	5,05	5,36	5,38	5,39	6,10	6,32	6,36	7,04	7,09	7,31	7,95	8,65	

Cool – Uncool		2011: N=210, $\chi^2=130,058$						2012: N=168, $\chi^2=188,759$					
2011	Sb (4)	Sg (7)	Sb (10)	Mb (2)	Sg (1)	Lb (12)	Lb (6)	Lg (9)	Mb (8)	Mg (5)	Mg (11)	Lg (3)	
	4,9	5,63	5,98	6,07	6,47	6,47	6,5	6,84	6,9	7,18	7,24	7,82	
2012	Lb (12)	Sg (7)	Sb (10)	Mb (2)	Sb (4)	Mg (11)	Lb (6)	Mg (5)	Sg (1)	Mb (8)	Lg (9)	Lg (3)	
	4,51	5,69	5,90	5,95	6,20	6,36	6,43	6,69	6,70	6,93	8,08	8,57	

Interesting – Boring		2011: N=209, $\chi^2=161,846$						2012: N=170, $\chi^2=194,5$					
2011	Sb (4)	Sg (7)	Sb (10)	Mb (2)	Mg (5)	Sg (1)	Lb (12)	Mg (11)	Mb (8)	Lg (9)	Lb (6)	Lg (3)	
	4,88	5,19	5,89	6,11	6,35	6,44	6,52	6,74	7,02	7,46	7,55	7,86	
2012	Sg (7)	Lb (12)	Sb (10)	Mg (11)	Mb (2)	Mg (5)	Mb (8)	Sb (4)	Sg (1)	Lb (6)	Lg (9)	Lg (3)	
	4,82	5,14	5,31	5,91	6,01	6,50	6,76	6,83	7,25	7,32	7,92	8,22	

Nice – Repulsive		2011: N=211, $\chi^2=195,925$						2012: N=172, $\chi^2=227,119$					
2011	Sg (1)	Mg (5)	Sb (4)	Sg (7)	Mg (11)	Mb (2)	Sb (10)	Mb (8)	Lg (3)	Lb (12)	Lg (9)	Lb (6)	
	4,96	5,1	5,65	5,87	6,17	6,53	6,72	6,95	7,02	7,1	7,78	8,14	
2012	Sg (7)	Sg (1)	Mg (5)	Mg (11)	Sb (10)	Sb (4)	Mb (2)	Mb (8)	Lb (12)	Lb (6)	Lg (3)	Lg (9)	
	4,21	5,38	5,53	5,98	6,25	6,44	6,68	6,80	6,91	7,73	7,79	8,31	

S = Slightly Conservative Speech (SCS), M = Modern Speech (MS), L = Local Speech (LS)
 g = girl, b = boy, (x) = the stimuli's order of appearance on the stimulus tape.
 Voices are ranked according to mean rank in decreasing order.

Recall that in order to produce more conservative features, three of four SCS-speakers in Exp 2011 had been trained. This influenced fluency and voice quality (made the voices sound louder and more confident), and resulted in general top ratings for SCSb(4) and SBCg(7) in particular. For Exp 2012, changes were made to three of the SCS-voices (4, 7, and 10) in order to make them sound more 'natural'. As can be seen in the table, this resulted in a relative downgrad-

ing on most traits for SCSb(4), who was the only completely new SCS-voice, but had little influence on the evaluation of the other SCS-voices.

As to the MS-voices, MSb(2) from Exp 2011 was retained. So was MSg(5), but she was shortened by three seconds as potentially problematic statement about teacher interest in art and literary fiction was removed. Voices MSb(8) and MSg(11) were replaced by more fluent samples taken from other speakers, and it is easily seen from Table 6 that the new MSg(11) by and large obtains better relative rankings.

Three of the four LS-voices were substituted with new ones between Exp 2011 and Exp 2012. The one retained was LSb(6). This had little impact on the evaluations, except for a noticeable upgrading of the new LSb(12) as ‘self-assured’, ‘cool’, and ‘interesting’ (which interestingly enough are the three prevailing ‘dynamism’ traits in the Danish studies). The 2012 LSb(12) was the LS-voice with the least Lowland dialect features (see Tables 1a and 1b)

The few cases of relative downgrading and upgrading do illustrate that other features than dialectal differences are involved, of course, when speakers and their speech are being assessed. However, in relation to the research interest in this study, the important finding is that the manipulations of the speech stimuli from Exp 2011 to Exp 2012 did not have the effect of changing the overall pattern. By and large, SCS-voices group to the left (positive) end of the scales in both experiments, LS-voices group to the right (negative) end of the scales, and MS-voices group in the middle. We can take this patterning as a testimony to the overriding impact of dialectal differences (cf. Garrett 2010: 88–90), and as a clear indication that we have succeeded fairly well in selecting voices to represent the three ‘ways with language’ which are cognitively and affectionally relevant to social psychological processes among young people in the Lithuanian Lowland region.

Evaluations of the voices in terms of geographical affiliation and standardness

In the second part of the data collection session, when the students had been made aware of the language-attitudes interest of the investigation, the SEE recording was played to them once more and they were asked to assess each of the voices in terms of geographical affiliation and standardness. In the questionnaire, three options were given as possible answers: ‘Vilnius’, ‘Telšiai’ and ‘Other’, while standardness was to be rated on a 7-point scale. Results for assessed geographical affiliation are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Assessed geographical affiliation of SEE voices. Figures are percentages

Exp 2011	Sg (1)	Mg (5)	Sb (10)	Sg (7)	Sb (4)	Mb (2)	Mg (11)	Mb (8)	Lb (6)	Lb (12)	Lg (3)	Lg (9)
Vilnius	88	74	70	68	66	65	59	54	15	9	8	6
Telšiai	5	9	9	9	12	13	16	19	65	72	63	83
Other	5	15	18	20	21	19	23	23	17	17	28	9
No answer	2	2	3	3	1	3	2	4	3	2	1	2

Exp 2012	Sg (7)	Sg (1)	Sb (4)	Mg (11)	Mg (5)	Sb (10)	Mb (2)	Mb (8)	Lb (6)	Lg (3)	Lb (12)	Lg (9)
Vilnius	88	84	81	77	75	73	70	61	15	10	10	5
Telšiai	5	6	4	9	9	12	18	19	59	64	63	85
Other	5	9	14	13	14	14	11	17	23	25	25	8
No answer	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	3	3	1	2	2

Table 8: Voice assessments in terms of ‘being from Vilnius’ (figures are percentages) and ‘speaking standard’ (figures are means; low value is ‘more standard’).**Exp 2011**

Allocat- ion to Vilnius	Sg (1)	Mg (5)	Sb (10)	Sg (7)	Sb (4)	Mb (2)	Mg (11)	Mb (8)	Lb (6)	Lb (12)	Lg (3)	Lg (9)
	88	74	70	68	66	65	59	54	15	9	8	6
Stand- ardness	Sg (1)	Mg (5)	Sg (7)	Mb (2)	Sb (10)	Sb (4)	Mb (8)	Mg (11)	Lb (6)	Lg (3)	Lb (12)	Lg (9)
	1,65	2,18	2,32	2,47	2,50	2,62	2,78	2,90	4,47	4,68	4,71	5,32

Exp 2012

Allocat- ion to Vilnius	Sg (7)	Sg (1)	Sb (4)	Mg (11)	Mg (5)	Sb (10)	Mb (2)	Mb (8)	Lb (6)	Lg (3)	Lb (12)	Lg (9)
	88	84	81	77	75	73	70	61	15	10	10	5
Stand- ardness	Sg (7)	Sg (1)	Sb (4)	Mg (11)	Mg (5)	Mb (2)	Sb (10)	Mb (8)	Lb (6)	Lg (3)	Lb (12)	Lg (9)
	1,59	1,75	1,75	1,95	2,01	2,35	2,38	2,60	4,26	4,86	4,96	5,79

S = Slightly Conservative Speech (SCS), M = Modern Speech (MS), L = Local Speech (LS)
 g = girl, b = boy, (x) = the stimuli's order of appearance on the stimulus tape.
 Voices are ranked according to mean rank in decreasing order.

Lowland adolescents allocate speakers of both MS and SCS to Vilnius. Interestingly, the latter variety, which theoretically is not linked to any Lithuanian location, was ascribed to Vilnius by a larger number of judges than Vilnius-stimuli

itself – an average across the four voices of 82 vs. 71% in 2012 and 73 vs. 63% in 2011. Thus, the MS (Vilnius) variety is actually regarded as having a stronger potential than SCS to be used in other cities than just capital city. On average, as many as 14% of our respondents in both experiments even allocated MS-speakers to the city of Telšiai.

The ratings for standardness showed that this notion is strongly associated with the city of Vilnius. The adolescents' judgements in terms 'being from Vilnius' and 'speaking standard' exhibit a perfect correlation in both experiments (see Table 8).

DISCUSSION

How can the findings of the presented research supplement the theoretical discussions about the relationship between social values and trends in language use? Do overt and covert ideologies in Lithuania play a different role? Can we support the argument that subconscious social values are the 'driving force' of language change (see Kristiansen 2011)?

Our research into the language attitudes of adolescents in the Telšiai region of North West Lithuania shows very clearly that attitudes elicited by different methods reveal different systems of language values. *Consciously* offered attitudes are most favourable to the regional speech. In LRT, the local speech, represented by the labels 'dialect of Telšiai' and 'Lowland dialect', was found to be rated higher than the standard varieties. This overt valorisation of the local speech is quite predictable against the backdrop of a particularly strong focus on (symbols of) local identity in the Lowlands, and the general positive (politically correct) language-ideological climate in the Lithuanian speech community.

The far more open question of our research was whether the local speech would also be subconsciously better evaluated than more standard 'ways with language' in the society at large, as represented by Slight Conservative Speech and Modern (Vilnius) Speech. Such a result could, arguably, be taken as an indication that the established conventional division between the private and public domains of society is being broken up, and that the social limitation of the dialect to private contexts is coming to an end. This turned out not to be the case in the Lithuanian Lowlands. The outcome of the *subconscious* assessments by adolescents in Telšiai region was the opposite of conscious assessments. Relatively

to each other, the local (Telšiai) speech was downgraded and the non-dialectal varieties were upgraded.

The impact of Lithuanian SLI at the level of covert evaluations is hard to assess, of course, but it should be stressed that this ideology, while promoting the dialect as an ethnic and regional value worth saving, does not at all tolerate the use of dialect beyond the boundaries of the private space – and especially not in the traditional SL domains like the schools and the media. It is not inconceivable that the ‘school-topic’ of the recordings that were assessed – ‘what is a good teacher’ – may have affected the SEE rankings of the dialect speakers in a negative way. The stimuli which received best scores of all local stimuli in both studies were those which contained *least* dialectal features.

In contrast to the evaluative hierarchisation of ‘local’ and ‘standard’, the evaluative relationship between the two potentially competing ‘standards’ did not change from conscious to subconscious evaluations. Both LRT and SEE results showed Lowland adolescents to be less favourable to the expanding Vilnius speech (MS) than to the SCS, the SL-variety with more conservative traits. MS was upgraded only in relation to dialectal speech. This may be taken to indicate that the undeniable ‘democratisation’ and ‘informalisation’ of broadcast media language in Lithuania has not yet lead to changes in lay notions of ‘language standards’. The role of standard language ideology should not be underestimated in this respect. The development of language use in the media actually shows the same tendencies as in other speech communities, but the prescriptive requirements and systematic supervision puts a brake on the development. This may explain the discrepancy between the limited usage of SCS and the dominating covert positivity towards this variety among Lowland adolescents

There is clearly no straightforward way of interpreting the relationship between our findings about language attitudes and what can be observed to happen with language usage. A *slightly* conservative variety (SCS) enjoys evaluative precedence in covert ideology, but is not spreading. What is spreading is the less favourably evaluated *modern Vilnius* (MS) variety. This may indicate a less important role for covert ideology in language use and change in present-day Lithuania than what has been reported from Denmark. However, instead of jumping to conclusions, we have to carry out further investigations of language attitudes, as well as language use, in other regions of Lithuania.¹¹

¹¹ Preliminary results from such investigations in progress indicate that Lithuania does resemble Denmark in that an upgrading of MS relative to SCS seems to be underway in the evaluative dimension of dynamism, on traits such as ‘cool’, ‘interesting’ and ‘nice’.

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