Terttu Nevalainen*

What are historical sociolinguistics?

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Abstract: This paper takes a look at recent shifts in sociolinguistic paradigms and considers their applications to historical sociolinguistic research. Besides growth areas such as multilingualism, a current trend is convergence of established approaches. My discussion focuses on those that go even further, bridging the gap between macro- and micro-levels of analysis in the historical context of study. Presented as interdependent levels, layers or domains of analysis, these models usually imply that the analyst needs to cross boundaries between established sociolinguistic paradigms when moving from one level of analysis to another. From the analyst's perspective the issues include the layered simultaneity of the multiple contexts present at any given point in time and the ways in which their chronologies stretch over time and space. I discuss the reconstruction of macro- and micro-contexts and their interdependence by presenting a case study of Samuel Pepys, a seventeenth-century English naval administrator. I conclude by advocating both informational maximalism and an empirical baseline for such studies. Digital humanities will no doubt facilitate this research in the future.

Keywords: baseline information, community, context, ego-documents, layered simultaneity, Restoration England, sociolinguistic paradigms

1 Introduction

"What are sociolinguistics?" asks Allan Bell (2013) in his recent *Guidebook to Sociolinguistics*. He gives a rich, multifaceted characterization of sociolinguistics, which also comprises neighbouring and overlapping fields such as contact linguistics, dialectology and pragmatics. These neighbouring fields include historical linguistics, defined as follows: **"Historical linguistics** studies how languages have changed in the past, often with little regard for the society in which the changes took place. Labov devised methods to investigate and explain language change in the present and in its social context" (Bell 2013: 13). After thirty years of research since the early 1980s, the omission of *historical*

***Corresponding author: Terttu Nevalainen,** University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland,
E-mail: terttu.nevalainen@helsinki.fi

sociolinguistics is of course regrettable. One reason for it might be that historical sociolinguistic work has been so well integrated into the mainstream approaches of sociolinguistics delineated by Bell that there is no need to discuss historical work separately. A more likely explanation is that anything "historical" is classified under the well-established discipline of historical linguistics, which – as the above quote suggests – does not have much regard for the society in which linguistic changes took place. Bell does introduce real-time language change under variationist sociolinguistics, beginning with the classic paper by Weinreich et al. (1968), and illustrating it by studies on phonological change such as the Northern Cities Shift in the United States. However, in an introductory textbook, the perspective on language change largely remains one of the present.

The readers of this journal would presumably not wish to be subsumed under the broad umbrella of asocial historical linguistics but prefer a more analytic view of their specialization and, following Bell's lead, maybe go so far as to ask "What are historical sociolinguistics?" In the *Handbook of Historical Sociolinguistics,* we basically took an integrationist view of sociolinguistic studies of language, forging a strong link between present-day and historical sociolinguistics in terms of their approaches to language and society, but also drawing attention to the specific circumstances in which historical work is typically carried out (Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2012).

History-specific circumstances are also outlined in this paper but without severing links to the theoretical foundations of sociolinguistics. I will begin by considering historical sociolinguistic research from the perspective of theoretical plurality (Section 2). A different angle will be adopted in Section 3, where I consider attempts at bringing certain sociolinguistic approaches into a closer dialogue with one another in ways that I hope will interest the historical sociolinguist. One of the overarching concerns here is the multiple contexts present in the past (*layered simultaneity*) and their relation to time. This coexistence of macro- and micro-issues will be discussed and illustrated in a case study, which also presents some benefits of hindsight that historical sociolinguists may have on their object of investigation (Section 4).[1]

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2 What are historical sociolinguistics? Approaches and applications

In his textbook, Bell (2013) singles out three principal domains of sociolinguistic inquiry, namely, the *sociolinguistics of multilingualism*, *ethnographic-interactional sociolinguistics* and *variationist sociolinguistics*. He further subdivides the sociolinguistics of multilingualism into the sociology of language and critical constructivism, pointing out that it is the critical constructivist strand that is gaining ground in multilingualism research in the twenty-first century (Bell 2013: 8). This classification offers a basic conceptualization that differs in weighting from the traditional division of paradigms found in earlier work, that is, the *sociology of language*, *variationist sociolinguistics*, *interactional sociolinguistics* and the *ethnography of communication* (e.g. Wodak et al. 2011: 9–84). When discussing the applications of these paradigms to historical sociolinguistics, I have paid attention to the limitations of the historical endeavour, particularly to material constraints on the reconstruction of past usage (Nevalainen 2012a; Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2012). The level and time-depth at which vernaculars have been documented varies radically even within the context of European languages, let alone world-wide. Where early documentation exists, it is in writing, speech recordings going back only a hundred years or so.

In view of these constraints on linguistic evidence, the diverse approaches listed above vary in their application to the past. In the four-fold division sketched above, the sociology of language can be extended the furthest back in time, concentrating, as it does, on the status and function of languages and language varieties in language communities. These issues do not always require extensive access to primary usage-based data but can be identified and explored on the basis of meta-textual and secondary sources (although their study will naturally benefit from primary textual materials). Bell's focus on the sociolinguistics of multilingualism is of particular relevance in the historical context and a growth area in historical sociolinguistics (e.g. Schendl and Wright 2011; Hüning et al. 2012; Stenroos et al. 2012). The historical context typically involves real-time processes, accounting for differences of and changes in the status and function of languages and language varieties in the past. As the studies referred to above suggest, this topic readily lends itself to *comparative historical sociolinguistics* (see also Nevalainen and Rutten 2012).

Bell (2013: 9) associates the critical-constructivist strand of sociolinguistics with the operations of language as social practice and speakers drawing on a variety of linguistic resources for their own purposes in the globalizing world.

The focus is on the duality of languages constructing society and being constructed in society. At the macro-level of society and politics, this approach also informs a good deal of work in historical sociolinguistics. Partly because of their direct connections with the present, discussions of language ideology Zand standardization make up a particularly strong strand in historical Zresearch, including studies on purism, language myths and hegemony (e.g. Watts and Trudgill 2002; Rindler Schjerve 2003; Langer and Nesse 2012; Milroy and Milroy 2012).

In order to be able to study language change and the social dynamics of language varieties in their communities empirically in relation to external factors, the historical sociolinguist needs access to language documentation of a variety of sources. Hence the extension of the variationist paradigm (social dialectology) into the past is only possible for documented periods of a language or language variety. Data produced by identifiable individuals and groups of people over longer periods of time is the key for studying real-time sociolinguistic variation and change. Personal correspondence offers a rich source of material for diachronic sociolinguistic investigations and it has been extensively used, for example, in historical variationist studies of English and Dutch (Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2003; Rutten and van der Wal 2014).

Bell (2013) sees sufficient convergence between ethnographic and interactional sociolinguistics to combine them under one heading, connecting interactive construction and organization of discourse and patterned ways of speaking, sociolinguistic styles and registers. Focusing on how individuals and small groups behave and interact, this orientation requires access to primary data, which to a language historian is available in ego-documents, such as letters and diaries, and dialogic texts such court records and drama (Rosenthal 2009; Culpeper and Kytö 2010; Dossena and Del Lungo Camiciotti 2012; van der Wal and Rutten 2013). These are usually only available from the more recent periods, and the method of participant observation is not available to the historical sociolinguist.

Though a useful way of conceptualizing a field, pigeonholing sociolinguistic research into three or four paradigms hardly does justice to their commonalities. Moreover, established paradigms evolve, converge and diverge over time. This is well in evidence in the macro-level paradigms that Bell (2013) proposes. He finds further convergence, in particular, between the ethnographic-interactional orientation and critical constructivism. The plurality of paradigms that inform historical work can similarly mix and blend. The perspective from which historical particulars are viewed may, and often does, bring together a variety of approaches. For example, the roles of scribes as a source of evidence for

language change in various cultures of different time depths can only be considered using a range of research orientations and analytic tools (Wagner et al. 2013). It is the topic of parallel processes that require diverse analytic approaches that I will turn to next.

3 Layered simultaneity in diachrony

3.1 Theoretical underpinnings

The kind of model building discussed above highlights approaches that have different objects of study, and describe and aim to explain different phenomena. Hence they do not necessarily enter into dialogue with one another. But for historical sociolinguists in particular, it would be desirable to be able to place their sociolinguistic objects of study in a more holistic perspective so as to be better prepared to meet the "historical paradox", i.e. knowing that the past was different from the present, but not knowing how different (Labov 1994: 11). This is the aim of the many sociolinguists who advocate more dialogue between the *micro* and the *macro* in the various sociological dualisms, notably the individual and society, and agency and structure.

Such ideas have also been developed by (critical) discourse analysts, notably Fairclough (1992), Scollon and Scollon (2004), and Blommaert (2005). Blommaert in fact starts from the notion that simultaneity is a rule in discourse, not an exception. He observes that linguistic/communicative form and social stratification can collapse into one "meaning": some historically older linguistic forms can be seen both as "archaic" and "upper class", for example, in forms of address in institutional settings. In texts, this *layered simultaneity* consists of meanings that are "simultaneously produced but not all consciously nor similarly accessible to agency" (Blommaert 2005: 126). A closely related idea is found in the *nexus analysis* put forward by Scollon and Scollon (2004), who identify cycles of relative autonomy which come together in acts of communication. These cycles of varying time scales consist of elements such as historical/social genres, interaction order and embodied habits, grounded, as Blommaert (2005: 18, 58) notes, in the interactants' linguistic means and communicative skills, the resources available to them.

In the following sections, I will look more closely at integrationist thinking with reference to the study of the past. These discussions are intended to bridge the gap between the micro- and macro-levels of analysis and, in doing so, cross

various paradigm boundaries, aiming to come to grips with some of their layered simultaneities.

3.2 Communities within communities

Apart from traditional speaker variables such as age, social status, gender and ethnicity, which are usually identified and cross-tabulated in variationist sociolinguistic studies, communities have an important role to play in studies of language variation and change. These analytic categories range from frames of reference as broad as the speech community and more or less specified geographical localities to social networks and communities of practice. Sociolinguists basically agree that micro-level analyses do not compete with macro-level analyses; as Milroy (2004: 550) points out, one's personal social networks, for example, are not independent of broader social, economic or political frameworks constraining individual behaviour (see also Labov 2001: 59). The same is true of communities of practice (Eckert 2006: 685). It would therefore be helpful, Milroy (2004: 567) suggests, to have a two-level sociolinguistic analysis linking individual small-scale networks with larger-scale social structures which determine relationships of power.

Communities of practice are defined as the sites of interaction where social meaning and linguistic change are negotiated and co-constructed (e.g. Eckert 2006: 683). This view stresses the agency of individuals in interaction. But for an innovation to become language change, it needs to be picked up by others beyond a given community of practice. Viewed from this perspective, language change becomes a process of intergenerational transmission within a larger community or of diffusion between communities (Labov 2007). The latter has been variously described in terms of accommodation and assimilation. Accommodation can take place in response to changes in the requirements of the linguistic market place, for example, at different life stages or in migration.

The mediating concept of social network may offer a middle ground in accounting for the diffusion of linguistic change. It refers to the structural and content properties of the ties that individuals contract with others; the density of these ties varies from high to low, and their strength from strong (between friends and kin) to weak (between acquaintances) (e.g. Milroy 2004: 552). Network ties can describe a person's potential exposure to linguistic and other social influences emanating from outside their own environment. Differences in social network structures have been used to explain why some communities maintain their linguistic norms when others show a greater readiness to adopt external influences. Strong ties can serve as a norm-enforcement mechanism,

while mobility typically loosens network ties and loose-knit groups are more apt to adopt innovations.

Auer and Hinskens (2005) present a simple model connecting individual accommodation in social networks to language change in the community. Relevant to the diffusion of language change is the time factor they build into the model by making a distinction between short-term and long-term accommodation. The assumption is that continued accommodation processes are required to provide the context for language change, but that the interaction of individuals in their social networks furnishes the immediate social context in which language change can actuate (Table 1).

Table 1: From individual accommodation to language change (modified from Auer and Hinskens 2005: 336).

Micro-level:	Individual (interactional episode): short-term accommodation
	↓
	Individual (the individual): long-term accommodation
	↓
Meso-level:	Networks: incipient language change
	↓
Macro-level:	Speech community: language change

As I illustrated in Nevalainen (2012b) with twentieth-century English and Finnish examples, internal migration and population movements provide a frame of reference for testing the effects of long-term accommodation and establishing some of the conditions in which language change is likely to take place. Historical data, combined with social and population history, provide rich evidence for detecting these effects in the more distant past. By way of this brief discussion, I hope to have shown that communities cut across several paradigms of sociolinguistics, connecting, for example, variationist sociolinguistics with work done in the fields of interactional sociolinguistics and ethnography.

3.3 Layered socio-cultural processes

A number of megatrends transcend the boundaries of linguistic communities. In Nevalainen and Rutten (2012: 269), we listed the following, which affected European languages in the Late Modern era (1600–1900): urbanization and industrialization, successive waves of immigration, conquests and colonization.

These resulted in language and dialect contacts, while education and the print media mediated the spread of a uniform written code and language standardization. These issues are typically addressed from different sociolinguistic perspectives and within different paradigms.

By contrast, there are other large-scale issues that often fall outside of sociolinguistic theorizing. These include the kinds of interaction represented by the various *genres* or *Textsorten* used in historical research. Nevalainen and Rutten (2012: 261–262) emphasize this material side in doing historical sociolinguistics: partly by necessity – data elicitation not being an option – historical sociolinguists will need to embrace a broader view of evidence than is customary in present-day studies based on spoken interaction.[2] Consequently, variation in and between genres emerges as a relevant topic in historical research, influencing the compilation of diachronic corpora. Although corpus compilers and users rely on a particular genre remaining relatively stable over time, research shows that genres, too, are subject to change and reflect societal megatrends such as democratization, colloquialization and informalization (e.g. Leech et al. 2009; Farrelly and Seoane 2012).

Culpeper and Nevala (2012) present genres as types of socio-cultural activity associated with local communities on a par with other social practices, activity types, discourses, frames and social roles. They place these layered socio-cultural influences in the three-tiered model shown in Table 2 but are careful to point out that the levels are not discrete, nor do they work in isolation. Although

Table 2: Modelling socio-cultural processes (modified from Culpeper and Nevala 2012: 383).

Levels of socio-cultural processes	Descriptive focus	Associated descriptive concepts	Examples from the history of English
Macro	Socio-cultural structures & processes associated with broad communities	e.g. ideologies, cultures, nations, laws	The eighteenth-century ideology of correctness
Mezzo	Socio-cultural activities associated with local communities	e.g. social practices, activity types, frames, genres, discourses, roles	Lectures, dictionaries, grammars, essays, debates and discussions
Micro	Socio-cultural actions and re-actions amongst particular individuals	e.g. discursive practices, speech acts, exchanges, co-text	Evaluative language, directives

2 This does not mean that there has not been any discussion on the topic. See, for example, the articles in Eckert and Rickford (2001). As I advocate in Sections 4 and 5, many diverse data sources should be used in historical sociolinguistic research.

ideologies, for example, are usually discussed in terms of broader communities, they can be shared by only a few people at the micro-level. Blommaert (2005: 234) notes that a textual analysis of ideologies, which are highly context-bound and multifaceted, also requires a historical analysis. *Cultures*, shown as a macro-level concept in Table 2 and similarly permeating all three levels, can organize situational activities and influence linguistic behaviours (Culpeper and Nevala 2012: 384). The table summarizes a range of simultaneous processes, which typically are, but need not be, reflected in linguistic interactions. When they are, they can have a variety of manifestations at the micro-level.

Modelling identity construction, Coupland (2007: 112–113) places constructs such as social class, gender, ethnicity, and age as well as the socio-cultural values they may index in a particular culture at the macro-level. Using Goffman's notion of *framing*, he notes that in social interaction, many or most potential social identities often remain latent and the linguistic features that might index them need to be activated in context. Genre framing comes at the meso-level and interacts with the wider socio-cultural frame, prefiguring, consolidating, reducing or even contradicting the relevance of the social roles and participant identities foregrounded in that frame. Coupland (2007: 113) stresses that "in any one community, specific normative expectations about social identities will be held for specific communicative genres". In his model, too, personal and relational identities are expressed and forged at the micro-level, where individuals interact in linguistically subtle ways within a consolidated genre and community of practice.

Like genres, the various social constructs in Table 2 represent moving targets in that they change over time. The *ideology of linguistic correctness*, for example, is a megatrend that crosses linguistic and geographical boundaries. Although its influence varies over time, one of its manifestations is language standardization, which today is associated with prescription. In the context of English, prescriptive grammars go back to the eighteenth-century ideology of correctness. Whatever norms were laid down in the previous centuries, they were not intended for the masses but assumed various target groups. The earliest prescriptive comments on English grammar appeared in the late seventeenth century and were included in critical essays discussing literary language with the aim of guiding their readers in the appropriate style of writing. The first recommendations for "best speech" a century earlier targeted an even more select group, namely aspiring poets in search for patronage (Nevalainen 2014). In view of this diversity, there was no uniform ideology of correctness before the eighteenth century to form part of the speech community's shared linguistic awareness.

Despite the current pervasiveness of *standard languages*, a recent study shows how differently the concept can be understood today. Smakman (2012) carried out a survey asking non-linguists from seven countries (England, Flanders, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, and the United States) to define the standard language in their country. The only feature that the definitions shared was the lingua franca quality of the standard. Smakman found that the association of standard languages with non-regionality may only be true for old standard languages. He suggests that there are two basic conceptualizations of standard languages: socially distinctive (the "exclusive" standard language) and socially cohesive (the "inclusive" standard language). Standard British English, for example, comes at the exclusive end of the scale, characterized by correctness, formality, and lacking regional associations, while Standard Japanese is inclusive, associated with the notions of lingua franca, media language and informality. Such findings serve as a useful reminder that what may look like similar socio-cultural concepts may have varying realizations and interpretations.

3.4 Description and interpretation of text in context

In her discussion of letters written to and by Margaret Paston, a fifteenth-century English gentlewoman, Wood (2004) presents an application of layered simultaneity from the perspective of discourse realization. She adopts Fairclough's three-dimensional model (1992) to analyse and interpret the text of these letters in the context of contemporary social and discursive practises. The model situates the linguistic analysis of texts within "the macrosociological tradition of analysing social practice in relation to social structures, and the interpretivist or microsociological tradition of seeing social practice as something which people actively produce and make sense of on the basis of shared commonsense procedures" (Fairclough 1992: 72).

The discursive practices of letter writing basically always involve the components of production, distribution and consumption of text, but the particulars vary over time. In the fifteenth century, for example, few women were literate, and even high-ranking women did not pen their own letters. Margaret Paston probably dictated hers. Considerations of authorship are of course crucial for all historical sociolinguists who are interested in her language.

The category of social practices comprises a wide range of both long-term and short-term sources of influence. Wood singles out three components that were particularly relevant in the fifteenth century: social status, religion and gender. Although all three have enduring relevance, the ways in which they are

communicated in interaction change over time. For example, the use of address forms in Margaret Paston's correspondence reflects her husband's position in society and her own roles in the family vis-à-vis her husband, children and family servants. On the basis of her close contextual analysis, Wood concludes that Margaret Paston occupied a powerful position both within her family and the community.

4 Contextualizing Samuel Pepys (1633–1703)

4.1 Background

Taking layered simultaneity seriously in the historical context of study means maximizing the data sources that have come down to us (cf. Janda and Joseph 2003). These efforts are constrained by the amount and nature of the information available. In this section, I illustrate the extent to which the circumstances and language use of somebody who lived in the seventeenth century can be reconstructed four hundred years on. Compared to Margaret Paston, the life and times of Samuel Pepys (1633–1703) are amply documented. Pepys's texts and linguistic practices can be described and interpreted from various macro- and micro-level perspectives depending on the historical sociolinguist's research interests.

Samuel Pepys was the son of a tailor, whose family came from Cambridgeshire, and a London butcher's daughter. He was educated at St Paul's School in London and at Magdalene College, Cambridge, and lived all his adult life in London. In 1655, he married the fifteen-year-old Elizabeth St Michel and entered the service of his distant cousin, Admiral Edward Mountagu, later first earl of Sandwich, who was instrumental in Pepys's advancement into public service. In subsequent decades, Pepys established himself both professionally and financially, becoming a leading English naval administrator of his day, but he was never knighted for his services to the crown and the country.[3]

In his professional capacity, Pepys produced and received a wealth of official documents throughout his life. He was also in the public eye due to his professional activities. Of particular interest to the historical sociolinguist are his private documents, personal letters and a diary written in shorthand, which he kept from 1660 to 1669. The diary provides a unique record of Pepys's daily

3 The biographical details of Pepys's life come from the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Carter 2004, Knighton 2004) and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* as well as the Pepys diary weblog at http://www.pepysdiary.com/. His life and times have also been chronicled in several biographies.

life during this period, the background details of which have been provided in the edited versions and, more recently, in a weblog. This site contains the diary text from Henry B. Wheatley's edition, the most complete copyright-free version, plus "thousands of pages of further information about the people, places and things in his world" (http://www.pepysdiary.com/about/).[4]

4.2 Society at large

In Nevalainen and Raumolin-Bruberg (2003: 34–35), we outlined some of the major changes that took place in the social and economic conditions of Tudor and Stuart England.[5] I will briefly touch upon issues that characterize the seventeenth century and assess their particular relevance for Pepys.

The seventeenth century was marked by demographic growth, the population of England and Wales increasing from about 4 million to 5 million in the course of the century. Urbanization continued and the growth of London was particularly remarkable, the population of 200,000 inhabitants in 1600 doubling by 1650 and reaching about 500,000 by 1700. This growth depended on a steady flow of migrants, because, due to epidemic and endemic diseases, London's mortality rate exceeded its birth rate. A native Londoner, Pepys was a witness to these mortality crises, including smallpox and the great plague in 1665–1666, which killed about one fifth of London's population. Pepys was also there to describe the great fire of London in 1666, which destroyed up to one third of the city.

The major political disruption in the seventeenth century was the Civil War, which led to the execution of King Charles I in 1649, followed by the Interregnum in 1646–1660, and the Restoration of the Stuarts in 1660. As Sir Edward Mountagu's personal secretary, Pepys was one of the party to accompany the exiled Charles II back to England. In the course of his professional career as naval administrator, he got to know personally both the King and his brother the Duke of York, later King James II.

In the seventeenth century, England was an agricultural society but the emergence of commercial farming improved productivity. An integrated national economy was emerging and continued diversification took place within established

4 Pepys wrote his diary in shorthand which scholarly editions reproduce in modernized spelling because it is not possible to recover the seventeenth-century orthographic variation that would have been in evidence had Pepys written it in longhand (for a detailed discussion, see Latham and Matthews 1983: xlviii–lxvi).

5 For references, see those given in Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg (2003: 30–43) and the past work by the authors cited there.

industries. There was also an increase in consumer goods production. International trade was important and London had a central role to play in it. The Royal African Company, for example, was set up by the Stuarts, and London merchants began to trade along the west coast of Africa; besides precious metals and other commodities, the Company was engaged in slave trade. Pepys gives accounts of cargos, victualling and stores for vessels going to and from West Africa.

Stuart England was socially stratified. The position of the gentry was founded on land ownership but upward social mobility could be achieved via the professions, marriage or acquisition of land. Different social groups had different marriage patterns: the upper ranks married younger and their marriages were often arranged, whereas the lower ranks married later and had a freer choice. Pepys represented the middling ranks but his marriage was a love match as "neither party stood to gain financially from the union" (Carter 2004). Knighton (2004) puts it less romantically: "Elizabeth brought the awkward legacy of a convent education, and a negative dowry of mendicant relatives, most notably her brother Balthasar (Balty)". It was true more generally that kinship was often used as a basis for economic and other assistance and that kinship ties could break social boundaries.

The post-Reformation period was marked by strong anti-Catholic feeling and Puritan opposition in England. Partly because of his wife's Catholic upbringing and because he worked under the patronage of the Duke of York, Pepys was suspected of Catholic sympathies and denied some of the public offices he sought.

Stuart England was only a semi-literate society. Educational opportunities increased with time and were enjoyed by higher ranks and the upper levels of the middling sort but the poor were illiterate. Benefiting from some of his family connections, Pepys went to Cambridge. He had a wide range of intellectual interests, including the natural world. In 1684–1686, he even served as the president of the Royal Society. Pepys was an active consumer of the rich popular culture of his day. He was an avid book collector, theatre-goer and music-lover, and he played several instruments. English was already accepted as the national language suitable for most purposes at the time. Apart from Latin, Pepys had at least a reading knowledge of French, Spanish and Italian. At the same time as national identity assumed a heightened role in the country, the English worldview widened in the wake of globalization, international commerce and ongoing colonization. Samuel Pepys was there when things were happening.

4.3 Physical space

As a naval administrator with wide-ranging responsibilities, Pepys was well connected with a great variety of people who worked for the navy at home and

abroad. He lived most of his life in the City of London, the commercial heart of the capital, but divided his time evenly between the City and Westminster, where the country's central administration and the Royal Court were situated (e.g. Archer 2000). The topography of his daily movements and concerns can be visualized by mapping the localities he refers to in his diary. Because of the large number of mentions, only three months (January, June, and October) for the years 1660 and 1666 have been sampled for the visualizations shown here. The size of the icons is proportional to the number of mentions.[6] Figure 1 presents this information for

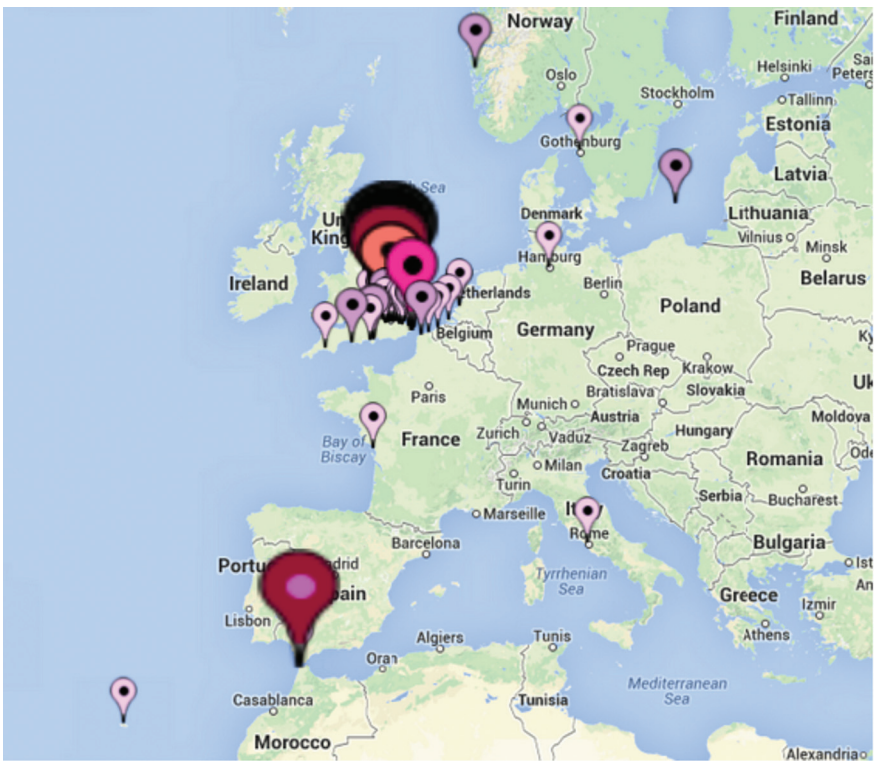

Figure 1: Pepys diary locations in Europe and North Africa (Jan/Jun/Oct. 1660 and 1666).

6 The locations that Pepys refers to in his diary and correspondence are not difficult to find on present-day maps. Figures 1 and 2 were drawn using the freeware ZeeMaps program available at http://www.zeemaps.com/map?group = 995168. Many thanks to Sara Norja for assisting me in retrieving the place names in Pepys's diary for the months specified and doing the mapping.

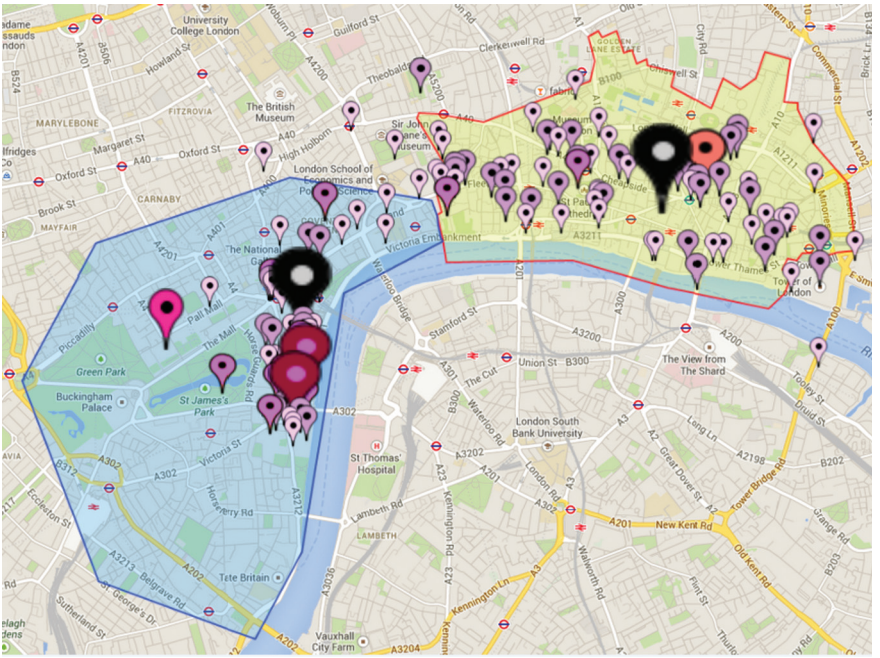

Figure 2: Pepys diary locations in the City (right) and at Westminster (left) (Jan/Jun/Oct. 1660 and 1666).

Europe and North Africa and Figure 2 zooms in on the information retrieved for the City (right) and Westminster (left). The largest icons in Britain stand for the City of London, Westminster and Deptford, home to the Royal Dockyard, with various others along the coastline. The navy was, after all, the biggest employer in the country after the mid-seventeenth century (Roy 1987: 200). The largest icon outside Britain is found in North Africa and marks Tangier, an English colony at the time, which had several hundred mentions throughout the diary period and which Pepys also visited.

Figure 2 includes more mentions of places in the City than in Westminster, where most of Pepys's references are to Whitehall Palace and Westminster Hall, or generally to Westminster. In the City, the largest number of place identifiers refers to the City and its synonyms, "London" and "town". The largest icon for a single locality within the City marks the area of the Royal Exchange. Pepys's numerous references to "home" and "office" are not included in the map, "home" referring to the Pepyses' home in Seething Lane, which was part of the Navy Office building complex, Samuel's "office" in the City. Both "home" and "office" have a couple of

thousand mentions in the diary. I discuss the contrast between the City and Westminster in Pepys's social spheres in 4.4, and in more detail in Nevalainen (2015).

4.4 Samuel Pepys's ego-documents as sociolinguistic evidence

Pepys's diary and his personal correspondence provide unique longitudinal material for the study of his communities of practice, social networks, social mobility and language change over the lifespan, all embedded in his contemporary language community. To give an idea of the contents and style of his diary, two short entries – for Thursday 7 November 1661 and Thursday 7 December 1665 – are presented in (1) and (2), respectively. The words in bold are glossed in the weblog text of the diary.

(1) This morning came one **Mr. Hill** (sent by **Mr. Hunt**, the Instrument maker), to teach me to play on the **Theorbo**, but I do not like his play nor singing, and so I found a way to put him off. So to **the office**. And then to dinner, and got **Mr. Pett** the Commissioner to dinner with me, he and I alone, **my wife** not being well, and so after dinner parted. And I to **Tom Trice**, who in short shewed me a writt he had ready for **my father**, and I promised to answer it. So I went to **Dr. Williams** (who is now pretty well got up after his sickness), and after that to **Mr. Moore** to advise, and so returned **home** late on foot, with my mind cleared, though not satisfied. I met with letters at home from **my Lord** from **Lisbone**, which speak of his being well; and he tells me he had seen at the court there the day before he wrote this letter, the **Juego de Toro**. So fitted myself for bed.

Coming home I called at my **uncle Fenner's**, who tells that **Peg Kite** now hath declared she will have the beggarly rogue the weaver, and so we are resolved neither to meddle nor make with her. (http://www.pepysdiary.com/diary/1661/11/)

(2) Up and to **the office**, where very busy all day. **Sir G. Carteret's** letter tells me my **Lord Sandwich** is, as I was told, declared Embassador Extraordinary to Spayne, and to go with all speed away, and that his enemies have done him as much good as he could wish. At noon late to dinner, and after dinner spent till night with **Mr. Gibson** and **Hater** discoursing and making myself more fully [know] the trade of pursers, and what fittest to be done in their business, and so to the office till

> midnight writing letters, and so **home**, and after supper with **my wife** about one o'clock to bed. (http://www.pepysdiary.com/diary/1665/12/)

The two entries are enough to show Pepys in his various *social roles*: as an administrator charged with affairs of the Navy Office, as son running errands for his father and an individual with cultural pursuits of his own. Many more, both in the public and the private sphere, transpire from the text.

A seventeenth-century government servant's job description was less narrowly circumscribed than it is today and a society based on patronage required active and efficient networking. Studying the diary, Archer (2000: 79) suggests that Pepys was a community broker with frequent contacts in the City and at Westminster alike. It is also noteworthy that his circumstances altered dramatically over the diary period. Archer (2000: 82–83) reports that at the beginning, as secretary to Edward Mountagu, Pepys earned about £50 a year. When he became the Clerk of the Acts to the Navy Board, his salary increased to £350 a year, not including the various fees and perquisites of the job. At the beginning of 1660, Pepys estimated his wealth at £25, but it soon rose to £300 and further to £1,205 by the middle of the decade and to £6,900 after the second Dutch War in 1667. These vastly improved financial circumstances showed in his spending and lifestyle, as well as in the company he kept.

According to Archer (2000: 83), in 1660, Pepys's modest income made him economically only a marginal member of the middle classes and he socialized with other clerks and men of business in positions similar to his own. By 1666, he continued to have merchants and tradesmen in his social circle, but the public servants he mostly had dealings with were "men of considerable political clout in their own right". In his diary, Pepys commented that he found it "a great pleasure… to talk with persons of quality" (Thomas 2009: 100). Archer emphasizes the degree to which men like Pepys mediated between the worlds of the City and the Court.

A sociolinguist would be interested in the extent to which Pepys was also a linguistic broker. In Nevalainen (2015), I examined this possibility, for example, by analysing the shift in Pepys's entourage by using WordSmith Tools to compare the keywords in his diary for 1660 with those for 1669, the whole diary serving as a reference corpus.[7] In 1660, the first keyword was *Mr*, referring to the title of many of Pepys's contacts at the time. At the time, the title was no longer reserved for the landed gentry, but was used widely when talking about

7 For the WordSmith Tools software package, see http://www.lexically.net/wordsmith/.

men of the middling ranks. In 1669, the keyword list was headed by *York*, with reference to James Stuart, Duke of York and future king James II, who was the Lord High Admiral and Pepys's superior.

Pepys's *social status* in his metropolitan communities can be analysed in more detail by consulting his correspondence, both professional and private. He wrote the letters he refers to in (2) during the outbreak of the great plague when the Navy Office operated from Greenwich. One of them, shown in (3), was addressed to Sir John Evelyn (1620–1706), who was to become Pepys's life-long friend. Evelyn, a writer and fellow diarist, had been appointed commissioner for sick and wounded seamen and prisoners-of-war and in that capacity he communicated with Pepys, who was Clerk of the Acts (secretary of the Navy Office). Pepys addressed his letter to "Mr. Evelyn".

(3) Sir
His Royal Highness hath commanded, that the *Golden hand* and *Prince William* be imediatly sent to New Castle to fetch Coales for the poore of the Citty of London: I doe therefore entreat you that if they have any Dutch prisoners now onboard them as I am told they have you will please to thinke of some fitt place for the removal of them unto, and to cleare the shipps of them that we may in obedience to his Royal Highness's comands see the said shipps imediatly proceed on the forenamed service: I am
Your affectionat Servant
SPepys (CEEC, Samuel Pepys to John Evelyn, 1665; Pepys3, 50)

We also have Evelyn's reply to Pepys, written on 9 December and addressed "For Samuell Pepys Esqr, One of the principall Officers of his Majesties Navy at the Navy Office, Greenewich", which is reproduced in (4).

(4) Sir,
Your Letter of the 7th concerning our Prisoners in the *Golden-hand* and *Prince William* came not an houre since to me; by what neglect I know not: I have sent to my Martiall at Leeds, to be here on Moneday (if possible) and to march away with them; so that those Vessells shall speedily be cleared: Sir William Coventry gives me hopes our Lazers shall be cloathed, but you must coöperate or we shall be forgotten: I am Sir, *Stylo Laeconico*
Your most faithfull Servant
JEvelyn: (CEEC, John Evelyn to Samuel Pepys, 1665; Evelyn, 49)

The letters in (3) and (4) provide information on the two men writing to each other in their official capacity and observing certain formalities that go with the

letter-writing genre but vary according to the circumstances of writing. Addressing each other as *Sir* and using the subscription formula with *Servant*, the correspondents position each other professionally at the same level. The only difference comes in the superscriptions where Pepys refers to Evelyn with the default title of *Mr*. Evelyn gives Pepys the courtesy title *Esquire*, which was formerly associated with the eldest son of a knight but which Pepys had earned by virtue of his office. As their friendship developed in the following decades, Evelyn could address Pepys as *My Worthy Friend* and Pepys reciprocate by *Deare Sir* or *Dearest Sir*, ending in the subscription formula *Yours indefinitely, Spepys*. They never corresponded on first-name terms.

Kinship ties played an important role in Samuel Pepys's life but his extended family could hardly be grouped together as one particular kind of social network. Pepys's father was a well-to-do tailor but especially his paternal kin covered a broad social spectrum ranging from the Earl of Sandwich, his patron and second cousin once removed (*my Lord* in (1)), university men, lawyers, MPs and businessmen to fishmongers, blacksmiths, pewterers and tallow chandlers (Archer 2000: 87–88). In his diary, Pepys typically referred to his kin by simply specifying their relation (*my wife*, *my father*, *my uncle Fenner* in (1) and (2)), but he often also revealed his attitudes to them, as to his cousin Peg Kite in (1). The extract in (5) illustrates how Pepys would use his influence to assist a less fortunate relative, his brother-in-law Bathasar St Michel (*her brother*), and derive pleasure from being in a position to do so but at the same time worry about the potential risks involved.

(5) Here was her brother come to see her, and speake with me about business. It seems my recommending of him hath not only obtained his presently being admitted into the Duke of Albemarle's guards, and present pay, but also by Duke's and Sir Philip Howard's direction, to be put as a right-hand man, and other marks of special respect, at which I am very glad, partly for him, and partly to see that I am reckoned something in my recommendations, but wish he may carry himself that I may receive no disgrace by him. (http://www.pepysdiary.com/diary/1665/12/)

In his correspondence, Pepys expressed the relations of power and distance that obtained between himself and the letter recipient. Many private letters that he wrote to his family members, including his father, younger brother John, sister Paulina as well as his brother-in-law Balthasar St Michel and his wife Ester, have come down to us and show how he formulated his position vis-à-vis them. Some of their letters to Samuel have also survived, showing their positioning towards him. Noting the social hierarchy in the nuclear family and courtesy conventions

of the era, Pepys addresses his father as *Honoured Sir* and signs off as *Your ever obedient Sonn Samuel Pepys*. His father opens his letters to Samuel with the more intimate *dear Soon,* 'son' and closes with *Your very loving father John Pepys*. Samuel begins his letters to his siblings with plain *Brother/Sister* or *Sister Jackson* and ends in *Your loving Brother* or *Your truly Loving Brother S Pepys*. His younger brother John in turn indicates their age and status difference by employing the *Sir – Your most humble Servant* formula.

As we saw in (5), Pepys's relationship with his in-laws was unequal. As a social superior who could afford more intimacy, he addressed Balthasar St Michel as *Brother* or *Brother Balty* and subscribed *Your truely affectionate Brother to serve you*. In contrast, St Michel always addressed Pepys as *Honoured Sir* or *Most Ever honoured Sir* and signed off as *Your Most faithfull and Obedient Servant* or *Your Honour's Most Dutifull and Ever Obedient Servant* throughout the twenty years that the brothers-in-law corresponded. The letter in (6) by his wife Ester St Michel addressed to Pepys contains these same superscription and subscription elements and a variety of humility formulae in the body of the letter (e.g. *I humbly make bould*, *the humble duty*, *dutiffull servis*, *humbly praying*).

(6) Honoured Sir,
I humbly make bould (with presentasion of the humble duty of Littel Samuell whoe prays your Blessing, and the ever dutiffull servis of all the rest of my famely) to acquaint that I should have given my selfe the honour to have inquired after your health (which god Longe preserve) before n*ow* had not my owne indisposition (haveing bine very ill theese 3 weekes past) hindred me, this now comes to give cover to the inclosed not [= note] which was lefte for your honour *not* at your house, but at the Post house, and further to advise you that I And famely are now redused to the Last and wate your further directions. and orders assuring you that to the uttermost of my power I have managed Every mite with the best huswiferye as posible I could humbly praying to hear Speedely from you I remaine
your Ever Obedient and Moste Humble Sarvant
Ester St Michel (CEEC, Ester St Michel to Samuel Pepys, 1681; Pepys2, 194)

It was argued in Section 3.2 that personal social networks are not independent of broader social, economic or political frameworks which affect individual behaviour. The degree to which begging letters such as (6) formulaically encode some of these power differences illustrates the point.

5 Discussion

The notion of layered simultaneity offers many avenues for exploration in historical sociolinguistic research, both of the distant and more recent past. An example of the latter would be its application to the post-war history of the German language by Stevenson and Carl (2010). Most of the work based on layered simultaneity and, increasingly, nexus analysis has been carried out on the present, using the past to explain the present. What is needed for that purpose, Blommaert (2010: 4) argues, is "a toolkit of concepts that are *intrinsically* historical... concepts whose very nature and direction point towards connections between the past and the present in terms of *social* activities" [emphasis in the original]. A parallel in variationist sociolinguistics would be the study of language change in apparent time, which views the present in terms of various generational layers and by doing so uses the present to explain the past.

A large variety of contexts and activities are not readily available for the historical sociolinguist, and those that are often need to be reconstructed at the intersection of other disciplines. These may range from paleography in the case of manuscript resources to social, economic and population history, needed to place individuals and groups of people in their socio-economic and demographic contexts. Discourse and genre studies are particularly relevant to historical sociolinguists, who usually work with written sources. Together with their associated disciplines, these specializations can inform researchers on continuity and change in the practices of text production and consumption over time (Wood 2004; Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2012: 26–28).

The prerequisite for reconstructing multiple contexts is access to what is perceived to be relevant data. In their discussion of the concept of uniformitarianism in diachronic studies, Janda and Joseph (2003: 37) suggest that we should strive for *informational maximalism*, that is: "the utilization of all reasonable means to extend our knowledge of what might have been going on in the past, even though it is not directly observable." The real-time axis is indispensable for diachronic research both as an object of study in its own right and as an element built in the social and discursive practices of the past. Informational maximalism would hence include the multifarious external circumstances of varying time scales that might influence the ways is which speakers make use of their linguistic and other communicative resources, and – importantly from the analyst's perspective – the forms in which they have come down to us.

An example of the different sources of influence at the graphemic level of text is provided by the ego-documents discussed in 4.4. As spelling variation is not recoverable for the shorthand diary apart from some words Pepys wrote in

longhand, modern editors have rendered the text in standard orthography. However, since Pepys wrote his personal letters in longhand, the modern editors have had the option of reproducing his spelling variation, which many of them did (e.g. Heath 1955). Hence the modernized spelling in the diary editions hides the variation usually found in ego-documents in the latter half of the seventeenth century. As illustrated by the exchange of letters by Pepys and Evelyn in examples (3) and (4), even educated professionals did not have fully standardized word forms at the time, let alone women like Ester St Michel in (6) with little formal education.

Most historical sociolinguists are interested in real-time language change. The schematic model put forward by Auer and Hinskens (2005) shown in Table 1 provides one perspective on the process of linguistic change from inception to diffusion. Clearly, some of the stages are more accessible than others, even for present-day research, where communities of practice have come to be specified as the sites of interaction where social meaning and linguistic change are negotiated (Eckert 2006: 683). However, coming across the relevant communities in which speaker innovation is picked up by others is far from self-evident. Eckert (2006: 684) comments: "While every community of practice offers a window on the world, the value of this approach relies on the analyst's ability to seek out communities of practice that are particularly salient to the sociolinguistic question being addressed". This is where the historical sociolinguist may occasionally have the benefit of hindsight. There are social networks and communities of practice on which sufficient documentation survives, making it possible to explore their potential linguistic influence on the wider community. A case in point is Fitzmaurice's work (2000, 2010) on the *Spectator* coalition as a trendsetter for language usage and literary style in early eighteenth-century England. The impact of influential literary communities need not, of course, be direct. Ayres-Bennett (2014), for example, shows how the French seventeenth-century advocates of good usage (*remarqueurs*) not only prescribed *le bon usage* but also reflected changing language practices of their time.

Thinking of processes of linguistic change that stretch over centuries, finding the communities of practice that initiated these changes is hardly a possible task. The *actuation problem* – the transition of a change from the individual to the community – usually remains unsolved for the present as well (Weinreich et al. 1968). A more relevant task may therefore be to develop models of social interaction that will help researchers better understand the conditions in which an innovation may be adopted by a community and ultimately become a language change, the only way of saying something in the speech community (Nurmi et al. 2009; Nevalainen 2012b).

In order to be able to ascertain language change, we need cumulative *baseline evidence* mapping actual processes of change in their different stages at the aggregate level of the community. This is an enterprise in which comparable diachronic materials are at a premium. Multigenre databases make it possible to focus on register variation within and across genres and analyse, for example, the ways in which general societal processes such as colloquialization and democratization may impact them linguistically. Corpora consisting of dialogic texts and ego-documents, notably personal correspondence, in turn, provide data sources on which baseline evidence on language change can be built on multilayered sociolinguistic principles (Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2003; Culpeper and Kytö 2010; Rutten and van der Wal 2014). With both kinds of data source, *metadata* accompanying the texts play a central part in research, providing some of the layered simultaneities inherent in all texts.

6 Conclusion

The question "what are historical sociolinguistics?" obviously has many answers. Some of them are interesting in that they bring together fields of study that at first glance do not seem to have much in common in terms of methodology. These include the notion of *layered simultaneity* – co-occurrence in text and discourse of multiple interlocking meaning elements of varying time scales – introduced in the field of discourse analysis and elaborated on in ethnographic nexus analysis. As historical sociolinguistics has a vested interest in time, perspectives like this can help approach the complex interaction of synchrony and diachrony in the past as well as the present.

The extent to which simultaneous layers can be reconstructed in historical sociolinguistics naturally varies. My study of the seventeenth-century naval administrator Samuel Pepys provided some pointers to contexts in which this could be done, including his private record of the events in his life and the people he socialized with over a period of nearly ten years. The digital data sources available make the task of reconstructing Pepys's movements and the company he kept in the City of London and at Westminster much easier than before. However, for somebody interested in mapping the role Pepys might have had as a linguistic broker between these two worlds, data are needed representing his language use in various contexts and, importantly, the language use of his contemporaries. Existing corpora go part of the way to meeting this need but so far cannot provide more than a partial answer to the question (Nevalainen, 2015).

Viewed from the perspective of matching parallel data sources, our work has just begun. But the big picture looks promising and further rapprochement between the history disciplines can be expected. As a historical sociolinguist it is not difficult to agree, *mutatis mutandis*, with what David Armitage (2012) writes about the promise of digital humanities in his field, intellectual history:

> The increasing availability of vastly larger corpora of texts and the tools to analyse them allows historians to establish the conventions which framed intellectual innovation, and hence to show where individual agency took place within collective structures. And with ever greater flexibility for searching and recovering contextual information, we might now discover more precisely and persuasively moments of rupture as well as stretches of continuity.

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