

The Founder Principle and Namibian English

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Abstract

It is not clear which population group most qualifies as the ‘founders’ of Namibian English. While Namibia’s historical Afrikaans-speaking settler population has a tradition of Afrikaans-English bilingualism, English as a lingua franca was first introduced after independence by returning Black Namibian exiles with mostly Oshiwambo as a first language. This study seeks to determine which ethnolinguistic group plays the largest part in shaping contemporary Namibian English. Based on phonetic and ethnographic data, the findings suggest a loosening continuum between a White variety aligned with South African models and more locally rooted varieties. This partly reflects local language ideologies, which among the Blacks involve the pursuit of a Namibian urban identity set against both Namibian Whiteness and traditional Namibian ethnicities.

1. Introduction

Schneider (2007) posits that Outer Circle Englishes derive from a mostly unilateral merger of indigenous (‘IDG’) varieties with settler (‘STL’) varieties as part of a process of ‘nativization’. His account of this process explicitly incorporates Mufwene’s (2001) Founder Principle, which holds that the first-established native or native-like varieties of the colonial language hold long-term prestige and that their features accordingly display a ‘selective advantage’ in the feature pool from which postcolonial varieties arise. Namibian English is an Outer Circle English variety whose founders are not clearly identifiable: although Namibia’s historical European settler population – mostly Afrikaans-speaking – has a long history of competence in English, English was introduced in Namibia as an inter-ethnic lingua franca only when the country’s Black (and ethnolinguistically mostly Ovambo) anti-apartheid establishment returned from exile upon the country’s independence from South Africa in 1990. Against this background, this study asks the following question: to what extent do Namibia’s English varieties bear the linguistic marks of the Ovambo demographic and political majority rather than of the White Afrikaans-speaking minority? In other words, to what extent do the English varieties spoken by the Ovambos or White Afrikaans-speakers exert gravitational pull on those of the other ethnolinguistic groups? To answer this question, this study first examines variation trends in English vowel realization across an ethnolinguistically representative sample of young urban Namibians. Indications of inter-group convergence or divergence are subsequently placed in the perspective of the informants’ perceptions of language variation and their language ideologies.

This article is organized as follows. Section 2 provides a literature review on the genesis of new varieties in (post)colonial contexts. Section 3 presents some facts on Namibia’s sociolinguistic ecology. The data and methodologies used to process them are introduced in section 4. The socio-phonetic analysis proceeds in two stages. First, the features of the two potential founding English varieties, namely English as spoken by the Ovambos and English as spoken by the Afrikaners, are compared

(section 5). Second, convergence and divergence dynamics between all sampled ethnolinguistic groups are examined (section 6). Section 7 relates the established variation patterns with the informants' perceptions of variation in Namibia's English varieties and of salient Namibian sociolinguistic distinctions. Variation patterns are placed in the light of the informants' language ideologies in section 8. Finally, the discussion section places the findings in the broad theoretical perspective of New Englishes.

2. Modelling the emergence of Outer Circle Englishes

'New varieties', that is, varieties that arise from change-by-contact rather than from change-in-progress, were initially situated within the context of colonial migrations. They were mostly linked to inter-dialectal contact and creolization, which in both cases produce new 'vernaculars', that is, natively transmitted varieties with a naturally 'focused' character (Kerswill, 2010; Labov, 2001). Settlement colonies provide the background to 'new-dialect formation'. Speakers of various related dialects – socially equal under initial 'frontier' conditions – come into contact and mutually adjust their respective varieties via 'koinization' or 'dialect-levelling' (Trudgill, 1986). 'Catastrophic' language genesis is an attribute of plantation colonies, whose social order was defined by color hierarchies. It involves language shift among a linguistically diverse displaced non-European population and 'imperfect' language acquisition, which combine to produce restructured varieties of the colonial language (Winford, 1997). Mufwene (2001) proposed the Founder Principle for modelling the long-term linguistic outcomes produced by these colonial settings. It posits that the features of the first native or native-like forms of the spreading varieties have a 'selective advantage' over other features present in the 'feature pool' as they form part of an established model that newcomers seek to adjust to. Shifting demographics induced by mass-immigration may, however, dilute these features by creating the conditions for 'imperfect replication', compounded by the increasing social invisibility of the original founding group. Overall, Mufwene elaborated the Founder Principle mostly to account for language variation in colonial contexts marked by restricted access to standard varieties, in which pressure to adjust to prescriptive norms is low.

Second language ('L2') varieties used as official languages in postcolonial contexts, such as Outer Circle Englishes, have usually been treated as distinct from new vernaculars due to their strong association with educational settings and the assumption that – as L2s – they form interlectal systems with little potential for stabilizing into 'focused' varieties. However, there has been an increasing tendency to describe them in terms similar to those applied to new dialects or creoles on the ground that – as vernaculars do – they form collective rather than individual phenomena and tend to be deployed in low functions, generally as part of code-mixing practices (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008). Schneider (2007) treats them on a par with native varieties in his model that posits that – following an 'Event X' generally associated with political independence and an emergent sense of national awareness in a given (ex-)British or US colony – English begins to develop indigenized varieties via 'nativization'. At the core of that process is mutual convergence between exogenous settler ('STL') varieties – implicitly understood as native English dialects – and indigenous ('IDG') varieties usually marked by transfers from indigenous languages. Following the Founder Principle, most of that convergence is assumed to occur with the STL varieties, which form the first-established L1 models besides often retaining high prestige through enduring indexical associations with socio-economic dominance. Schneider (2007, p. 66) acknowledges scenarios where STL-IDG mergers are not possible

due to the absence of an STL component, such as in former exploitation colonies where settler populations never had a significant demographic presence. Such cases are accommodated by the 'grassroot growth' scenario, in which conditions for 'nativization' are present from the start. In such cases, the question of who the founder is may amount to the question of which indigenous ethnolinguistic group is most dominant.

Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory ('EVT', Giles et al. 1977) models language dynamics according to group dominance in contexts where ethnolinguistic boundaries are salient, that is, a frequent hallmark of postcolonial societies. Its predictions are based on differentials in 'ethnolinguistic vitality' ('EV'), which it defines as a combination of three variables, namely '(social, socio-historical, language) status', 'demographics', and 'institutional support'. Groups displaying 'high EV', a notion akin to high sociolinguistic prestige, are likely to be perceived as linguistic targets. Importantly, EVT leaves open to question which of the three EV variables play the largest part in determining EV levels. As Founder Principle accounts do, EVT acknowledges that linguistic convergence may be hampered by inter-ethnic boundaries: while 'soft' ones favor linguistic assimilation, 'hard' ones foster linguistic maintenance (see further Giles, 1979). Based on Labov's (2001) gender paradox, one may assume that women will – subject to inter-ethnic boundary hardness – lead linguistic convergence with high-EV groups (see Mesthrie, 2017, 2014; Schmied, 1991). Not explicitly accommodated by EVT and the Founder Principle are situations with pressure for mutual convergence into ethnically neutral varieties, as mostly illustrated by ethnographic studies of urban youth languages, that is, low-status varieties often derived from the high-status variety, whose emergence must be read in the light of local urban identity constructs (Beyer, 2015). This study proposes to test the Founder Principle and its EVT alternative against the English varieties spoken in the specific Outer Circle context of Namibia¹. The origin of these varieties might be traceable to two distinct founding populations: one qualifies as 'settlers' and the other as 'indigenous' while neither is considered to have English as an L1.

3. Namibia's sociolinguistic ecology and English

Namibia, formerly known as 'South West Africa', is an ethnolinguistically diverse Southern African country of roughly 2.6 million inhabitants. After briefly being ruled by Germany (1884–1915), South West Africa was de facto incorporated into South Africa (1915–1990), which subjected it to a regime of apartheid aimed to buttress the socio-economically dominant position of the (mostly Afrikaans-speaking) White minority². A key aspect of that policy was the engineering of fragmentation among the Non-White population, which was subdivided into two 'racial' groups, namely the 'Coloureds'³ and the 'Blacks', with the latter assigned the lowest socio-economic position and the former occupying an intermediate position in between the White and Black groups. Additionally, the two NonWhite groups

¹ Buschfeld et al. (2017) place Namibia in the 'Expanding Circle' on the ground that Namibia, in their view, has not experienced British colonization. I disagree with this historical interpretation: from a legalistic perspective, South West Africa de facto became part of the British Empire in 1919 and remained so at least until the South African Union passed the Status of the Union Act in 1934. Additionally, the Walvis Bay coastal area stood under direct British control from 1884 until 1910. On this account, I argue that Namibia belongs in the Outer Circle on the same terms as the various German territories seized by Australia and New Zealand during WWI.

² South West Africa's 'racial' make up in 1981 was as follows: Blacks 87 per cent, Coloureds 6 per cent, Whites 7 per cent (van der Merwe 1983).

³ 'Coloured' in the South African context refers to Non-European population groups descended from the Khoe-Sans or of mixed origin.

were subdivided into distinct ethnic/ethnolinguistic categories. The Black ethnolinguistic categories included the 'Ovambos', 'Hereros', 'Kavangos' (each associated with a specific language, i.e. Oshiwambo, Otjiherero, and Rukavango), 'Namas' and 'Damaras' (who both historically share Khoekhoegowab). The 'Coloured' category included the 'Basters' and 'Cape Coloureds' (historically sharing Afrikaans). These ethnolinguistic categories were each given a spatial dimension in the form of designated land reserves ('Homelands') and residential areas in towns (Peyroux, 2004). Ethnolinguistic fragmentation among the Blacks was reinforced via 'Bantu Education', which imposed mother-tongue instruction at primary school (Cohen, 1994). The apartheid regime was abolished when the local anti-apartheid movement, the Ovambo-dominated South West Africa People Organization ('SWAPO'), assumed power upon Namibia's independence in 1990. Among the most visible social effects of Namibia's democratic transition are internal mass migration, mostly from the populous Oshiwambo-speaking northern rural districts to Windhoek, the capital, where Ovambos now form the majority (Frayne and Pendleton 2002; NSA 2013)⁴, and the emergence of a Black urban middle class (Melber, 2014).

Namibia's demographically dominant language is Oshiwambo (48.9 per cent of households), followed by Khoekhoegowab (11.3 per cent, historically spoken by the Damaras and Namas), Afrikaans (10.4 per cent), Rukavango (9 per cent), and Otjiherero (8.6 per cent; NSA 2013). Among these languages, Oshiwambo, Rukavango, and Otjiherero are Bantu, while Khoekhoegowab is Khoisan and Afrikaans Germanic. First brought to the country as 'Cape Dutch' by the Oorlams and Basters, Afrikaans was by the late South African period the L1 of most Whites and Coloureds and by far the most established lingua franca (Prinsloo et al., 1982; Stals & Ponelis, 2001). While German was the official language during the German period, it played less of a role as a lingua franca than Cape Dutch (Kleinz, 1984). After de facto incorporating it in 1919, South Africa implemented in South West Africa a de jure trilingual language policy involving English, Afrikaans, and German. English initially was a widespread medium of instruction ('MOI') in the White education system and gained presence at (especially northern) mission schools for Non-Europeans (Harlech-Jones, 1990; Kotzé, 1990). However, Afrikaans was given a more prominent role from 1948 and was generalized as a compulsory primary-level L2 subject and secondary-level MOI for Blacks (UNIN 1986). Meanwhile, English had become the language of SWAPO, which it implemented as a MOI in its Zambian and Angolan refugee camps, where as much as 10 per cent of Namibia's population came to reside (Williams 2017). Additionally, English began phasing out Afrikaans as a MOI from 1979 in the Oshiwambo-speaking northern districts (Harlech-Jones, 1990). Upon assuming power in 1990, SWAPO declared English Namibia's sole official language and universal MOI. The 2001 national census reported 69.4 per cent of the population declaring itself literate in English versus 37.5 per cent in Afrikaans, which today remains a widespread school subject in urban areas (NSA, 2003; Wolfaardt, 2001). English has become the most visible language in urban areas and is deeply entrenched in both high- and low-function repertoires while Afrikaans is still used as a low-function urban lingua franca (Buschfeld & Kautzsch, 2014; Stell, 2016).

As an L1, English was never spoken by more than 10 per cent of the White population, generally transient officials and skilled mining personnel from South Africa and Great Britain, while Afrikaner

⁴ Windhoek's original Black urban population consisted of mostly Damaras, Hereros. Ovambos were mostly male contract workers until urban influx controls were abolished in the 1980s (Peyroux 2004).

migrants – who soon became the demographically dominant White population group from the immediate post-WWI period – were often bilingual in Afrikaans and English from the early South African period, which reflects contemporaneous trends of partial shift to English among Afrikaners (Klein, 1984; Steyn, 1980). The Afrikaners replaced the Germans as the dominant urban population and largely took over South West Africa's administration from 1948 (Botha, 2007). While Prinsloo et al. (1982) suggest that Afrikaans was by far the most dominant lingua franca south of the 'Red Line' (Miescher, 2012) in the decade preceding independence, it also shows that most of the White population considered itself proficient in English, and also used it daily in combination with Afrikaans, at home and outside, as also did a significant portion of the Cape Coloured population that had been migrating from South Africa to South West Africa's towns (Bruwer, 1964). Against this background, one could argue that the English varieties of the Afrikaners and to a lesser extent of the Coloureds, both possibly marked by Afrikaans features, were the most established and visible native-like English varieties in urban South West Africa by the time of independence. This could qualify the Afrikaners (and to a lesser extent the Coloureds) as potential founders of Namibian English⁵. However, the spread of English as an urban lingua franca only began in earnest with mass migration from the Oshiwambo-speaking districts in the north, where exposure to Afrikaans is historically low, and with the return of SWAPO exiles, which coincided with the phasing in of English as MOI (Fourie, 1991; Harlech-Jones, 1990). Therefore, one could counter-argue that the English varieties brought from the north and from exile by Ovambo migrants, possibly marked by Oshiwambo features, are the founding varieties of Namibian English, at least in its inter-ethnic lingua franca varieties. Which of the two ethnolinguistic groups qualifies most as founder of Namibian English might be visible in the gravitational pull that their respective English varieties exert on those of other local ethnolinguistic groups. In this regard, one could formulate three scenarios:

Scenario 1: The English variety of the Afrikaners exerts the strongest gravitational pull on the varieties of the other ethnolinguistic groups. This scenario fits with the Founder Principle where the Founder Principle equates founding varieties with established native-like varieties. This scenario also fits with the view that high status, which the Afrikaners hold due to their long association with power, possibly forms the most important attribute of high EV.

Scenario 2: The English variety of the Ovambos exerts the strongest gravitational pull on the varieties of the other ethnolinguistic groups. This scenario fits with the Founder Principle where the Founder Principle implies the possibility, especially in diglossic postcolonial settings, that the founders of the local variety of the ex-colonial language may simply be 'regular' speakers and thus not necessarily native(-like) speakers (Mufwene, 2001, p. 106). This scenario also fits with the view that majority status and/or institutional support (the Ovambos form the majority and are associated with SWAPO, Namibia's current ruling party, cf. Düsing 2000) may form the most important attributes of high EV.

Scenario 3: Ethnolinguistic background is the strongest predictor of variation. This is due to the persistence of 'hard' inter-ethnic boundaries inherited from the apartheid regime, which hamper inter-ethnic convergence, fostering instead English ethnolects marked by L1-transfers.

⁵ See further Schneider (2007: 176–7) on the role of the part-anglicized 19th century Voortrekkers (i.e. Afrikaners who left the British Cape Colony) as initiators of the spread of English into South Africa's interior

The following section introduces the data and the methodology used to test the validity of these scenarios.

4. Dataset and methodology

This study is based on a sample of 60 informants aged 17 to 19 attending Grade 12 (i.e. the highest school grade in Namibia) at a range of schools in the Windhoek region. Windhoek is selected as the research site as it is the country's largest multi-ethnic city, as well as the highest recipient of migrants from the northern regions where exposure to Afrikaans is historically limited (NSA, 2012; section 3). This makes Windhoek the city where English has the largest scope for functioning as a lingua franca and thus for developing focused features. This sample is stratified in terms of self-reported dominant home language, ethnicity, and gender. It comprises 12 Afrikaners, 12 (Cape) Coloureds (hereafter 'Coloureds'⁶), and members of historically Black ethnolinguistic groups, namely, 12 Damaras, 12 Hereros, and 12 Ovambos (Ndongas and Kwanyamas). Each ethnolinguistic group comprises equal numbers of males and females. Stratifying the sample in terms of social class was problematic as local class categorization schemes are not available. To control for social class, the informants were mostly recruited from three government-run schools located in (lower) middle-class areas. The Afrikaner informants could only be located at private schools located in an upper-middle class area. One criterion for recruiting the informants was that they should have attended school in Windhoek from Grade 1. This criterion ensures that rural migrants with potentially more substratal accents do not skew the findings. The option of recruiting an older control sample was ruled out on the grounds that only few Non-Whites had access to secondary education under the apartheid regime (Cohen, 1994; UNIN, 1986).

Each informant was administered an English reading task comprising both text fragments and loose utterances selected such as to elicit realizations of the English vowel system. Additionally, each informant was administered a sociolinguistic interview on perceived language variation and language ideologies. The elicited English vowels comprise Wells' (1982) 'full monophthongs' (KIT, DRESS, TRAP, BATH, PALM, LOT, CLOTH, THOUGHT, FOOT, STRUT), 'full diphthongs' (PRICE, CHOICE, MOUTH), and 'potential diphthongs' (FLEECE, FACE, GOAT, GOOSE). Only vowels in stressed syllables were examined. Environments potentially producing co-articulatory effects were excluded, namely nasals and approximants in preceding/following position, which in the case of English disqualifies NURSE, SQUARE, NEAR, CURE, as each is likely to feature [ɹ] depending on levels of orientation to RP norms. One additional excluded environment is that which favors [i] allophones of KIT following the rules of the KIT-split, a feature of primarily White South African English (WSAfE) that could be suspected to occur at least among White Namibians, namely velar consonants in preceding/following position, palato-alveolar consonants in preceding position, [h] in following position, and word-initially (Bekker, 2014). Finally, function words were excluded. At least five of each English token were elicited per informant. The number of elicited tokens is 9,930.

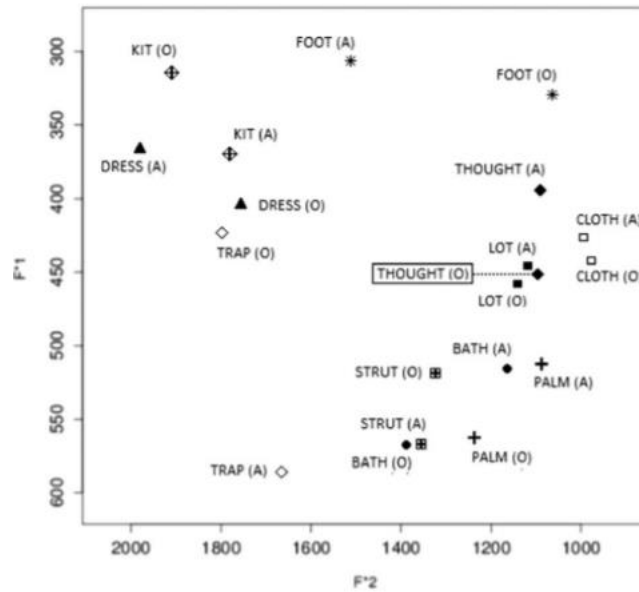
⁶ Cape Coloureds in Namibia's context generally refer to themselves as 'Coloureds', by which they distinguish themselves from the 'Basters' (Stell 2016). I am adopting here the popular nomenclature.

The data was transcribed and annotated via the PRAAT software (Boersma & Weenink, 2019). Formant settings were the same for all speakers. The window length was set at 40 milliseconds. F1 and F2 were measured at 20 per cent, 50 per cent, and 80 per cent of vowel duration. The socio-phonetic analysis proceeds in two stages. First, an acoustic analysis is performed of the vowel systems of the two potential founding varieties, namely the English variety of the Afrikaner informants and that of the Ovambo informants (section 5). This analysis is based on average F1 and F2 values using the Lobanov normalization procedure (Adank, Smits, & Van Hout, 2004), implemented through the NORM package (Thomas & Kendall, 2007). The second stage (section 6) involves a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) aiming to visualize relations of similarity/distance between individual speakers based on their patterns of vowel realization using F1 and F2 values as input. Simultaneously, sections 5 and 6 feature an auditory analysis performed by four non-linguist raters tasked with assigning IPA symbols to individual vowels. Assumptions of inter-group convergence/divergence are made based mostly on the behaviour of female informants following Labov (2001)'s gender paradox (section 2) and on the presence/absence of substratal features. These are identified based on phonetic accounts of Afrikaans (Wissing, 2014a), Khoekhoegowab (Fredericks, 2014), Otjiherero (Möllig & Kavari, 2008), and Oshiwambo (Fivaz & Shikomba, 1986; Halme, 2004). The observed variation trends are subsequently related to the informants' perceptions of ethnolinguistic distinctions in the Namibian context (section 7) and their views of sociolinguistic prestige (section 8).

5. Phonetic features of the potential founding varieties

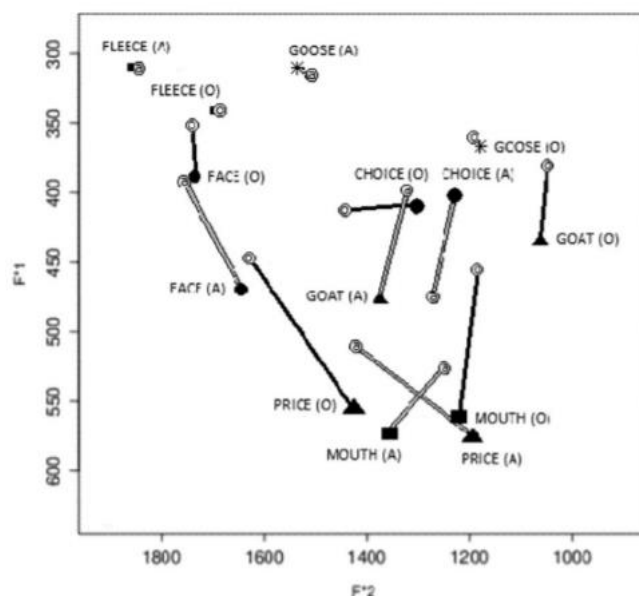
The Lobanov-normalized speaker-based average values for the English monophthongs of the Afrikaners and Ovambos are plotted in Figure 1. The Afrikaner and Ovambo monophthong systems can be distinguished based on levels of distinction within vowel pairs. The Afrikaners tend to distinguish more between KIT and FLEECE, realizing KIT as -tense [ɪ] and FLEECE (Figure 2) as +tense [i], while the Ovambos merge them into [i]. DRESS and TRAP are distinct among the Afrikaners with DRESS [e]-like and close-mid and TRAP [æ]-like and near-open/open. In contrast, DRESS and TRAP merge into open-mid [ɛ] among the Ovambos. Finally, the Afrikaners distinguish between LOT and THOUGHT, with the former +open and [ɔ]-like and the latter +close and [o]-like. In contrast, the Ovambos merge LOT and THOUGHT into [ɔ]. Occasionally, it is the Ovambos who make stronger distinctions within vowel pairs. This goes for DRESS-KIT: +Open-mid [ɛ]-like Ovambo DRESS contrasts with +close [i]-like Ovambo KIT. In contrast, Afrikaner DRESS and KIT are mostly distinguishable along a [+/-centralized, +/-tense] dimension. The contrasts between the Afrikaners and Ovambos can simultaneously be expressed in terms of centralization/tensing levels. +Centralized/-tense Afrikaner monophthongs are KIT, FOOT, and GOOSE while the Ovambo variants are more peripheral (+tense). Other contrasts concern BATH, PALM, and STRUT. [ɒ-ɔ]-like, Afrikaner BATH/PALM are more back and more close than their Ovambo counterparts, which occupy +open/+centralized [ä]-like positions. Afrikaner STRUT conversely occupies an [ä]-like +open/+centralized position while the Ovambo variant is +close and [ʌ]-like.

FIGURE 1 English monophthong plot for Afrikaners ('A') and Ovambos ('O'), combined Lobanov-normalized speaker averages (n = 2,240)



Some of the contrasts between the Afrikaner and Ovambo diphthongs (Figure 2) can be categorized in terms of centralization/tensing levels. The Afrikaners realize onsets or offglides in +centralized/-tense positions. This concerns Afrikaner GOOSE and GOAT whose onsets and offglides occupy +centralized/-tense positions. In contrast, Ovambo GOOSE tends towards peripheral [u] and Ovambo GOAT towards [ɔu]. The offglides of Afrikaner PRICE, MOUTH, and CHOICE occupy characteristically +mid-central positions while their Ovambo variants assume -centralized/+tense forms akin to [e-ɛ], [u], and [e-ɛ], respectively. The Afrikaners conversely tense CHOICE onsets into [o] and FLEECE into [i] while the Ovambo variants are +centralized/-tense. Another contrast concerns diphthongization levels: Afrikaner FACE and GOAT are more diphthongal than the Ovambo variants, which monophthongize into [e] and [-o], respectively. Conversely, Ovambo MOUTH is more diphthongal than the Afrikaner variant. FLEECE and GOOSE are monophthongal among both groups. Various other contrasts can be found. Contrasting with close mid-front [e]-like Ovambo FACE onsets, Afrikaner FACE onsets approximate open-mid front [ɛ]. PRICE onsets are open-back and [ɑ]-like among the Afrikaners and open-front and [a]-like among the Ovambos. Afrikaner FACE/PRICE offglides are more open. Afrikaner FACE offglides are akin to [e] and their Ovambo counterpart to +close [i]. Afrikaner PRICE offglides tend towards [æ] while their Ovambo counterparts tend towards +close [ɛ]. Finally, Afrikaner and Ovambo MOUTH onsets contrast along the [+/-front, +/-back] dimension: the Afrikaner variant is [æ]-like (and +front) while its Ovambo counterpart is [ɑ]-like (and +back).

FIGURE 2 English diphthong plot ('full/potential diphthongs') for Afrikaners ('A') and Ovambos ('O'), combined Lobanov-normalized speaker averages (n = 1,272)⁷



The distribution of IPA values (Tables 1, 2) suggests high polarization between the Afrikaners and Ovambos. Monophthong values exclusive to the Afrikaners are [æ] for TRAP, [ɑ-ɒ-ɔ] for BATH-PALM, [o] for THOUGHT, [ʊ-i] for GOOSE, [ʊ-ʌ-ʊ] for FOOT. Diphthong onsets exclusive to the Afrikaners comprise [ɑ] for PRICE, [æ] for MOUTH, [œ-ə] for GOAT. Monophthong values exclusive to the Ovambos are [ɪ] for FLEECE, [i] for KIT, [ɛ] for TRAP, [a-ä] for BATH-PALM, [u] for FOOT-GOOSE. Monophthongal FACE, GOAT, CHOICE are found only among the Ovambos. Diphthong onsets exclusive to the Ovambos are [a-æ] for PRICE, [ɒ] for MOUTH, [ɔ] for GOAT. Some of the variation between the Afrikaners and Ovambos is gradual. Ovambo FLEECE, KIT, DRESS, STRUT marginally display the values dominantly displayed by their Afrikaner counterparts, while Afrikaner DRESS, THOUGHT, STRUT marginally display the values dominantly displayed by their Ovambo counterparts. The Ovambos display specific alternating variants for FACE and GOAT: monophthongal [e] versus [ei] for FACE and monophthongal [ɔ] versus [ɔu] for GOAT. Finally, they exhibit a marginal [æɪ-æe] variant for PRICE. Values more associated with Afrikaner females are [ɒ] for BATH, [ʊ-i] for GOOSE, [ʊ-ö] for FOOT, [æ]-like MOUTH onsets, and [oɪ] for CHOICE, while [ɑ] for BATH, [ʊ] for GOOSE, [ʊ] for FOOT, [ɑ]-like MOUTH onsets, and [ʊɪ] for CHOICE are more associated with Afrikaner males. Among the Ovambos, [ɪ] for FLEECE, [ä] for STRUT, [u] for GOOSE, and [oɪ] for CHOICE are more associated with females, while males more often display [i] for FLEECE, [ä] for STRUT, [u] for GOOSE, and [ʊɪ] for CHOICE.

⁷ The filled figures stand for onsets while the circles containing lower-case group abbreviations ('a': Afrikaner, 'o': Ovambo) stand for offglides.

TABLE 1 Distribution of IPA values for monophthongs across ethnolinguistic groups

	Afrikaners	Coloureds	Damaras	Hereros	Ovambos
FLEECE	i: 89%	i: 74%	i: 62%	ɪ: 75%	ɪ: 69%
	ɪ: 11%	ɪ: 26%	ɪ: 38%	i: 25%	i: 31%
KIT	ɪ-ɪ-ə: 100%	ɪ-ɪ-ə: 95%	ɪ-ɪ-ə: 59%	i: 74%	i: 53%
		i: 5%	i: 41%	ɪ-ɪ-ə: 26%	ɪ-ɪ-ə: 47%
DRESS	e: 55%	ɛ: 67%	ɛ: 88%	ɛ: 86%	ɛ: 90%
	ɛ: 45%	e: 33%	e: 12%	e: 14%	e: 10%
TRAP	æ: 96%	ɛ: 84%	ɛ: 100%	ɛ: 100%	ɛ: 100%
	ɛ: 4%	æ: 16%			
BATH	ɒ: 75%	a-ä: 84%	a-ä: 93%	a-ä: 97%	a-ä: 100%
	ɑ: 25%	ɑ: 26%	ɑ: 7%	ɑ: 3%	
PALM	ɒ: 86%	a-ä: 58%	a-ä: 91%	a-ä: 97%	a-ä: 100%
	ɑ: 14%	ɑ: 32%	ɑ: 9%	ɑ: 3%	
		ɒ: 10%			
LOT	ɔ: 81%	ɔ: 70%	ɔ: 67%	ɔ: 79%	ɔ: 76%
	ɑ-ɒ: 19%	ɑ-ɒ: 30%	ɑ-ɒ: 33%	ɑ-ɒ: 21%	ɑ-ɒ: 24%
THOUGHT	o: 62%	ɔ: 57%	ɔ: 81%	ɔ: 79%	ɔ: 87%
	ɔ: 48%	o: 43%	o: 19%	o: 21%	o: 13%
CLOTH	ɔ: 91%	ɔ: 87%	ɔ: 86%	ɔ: 56%	ɔ: 53%
	ɑ-ɒ: 9%	ɑ-ɒ: 23%	ɑ-ɒ: 14%	ɑ-ɒ: 44%	ɑ-ɒ: 47%
FOOT	ʊ: 78%	u: 92%	u: 100%	u: 100%	u: 100%
	ʊ-u: 22%	u-w: 8%			
GOOSE	ʊ-i: 82%	u: 78%	u: 87%	u: 96%	u: 91%
	ʊ: 18%	ʊ: 22%	ʊ: 13%	ʊ: 4%	ʊ: 9%
STRUT	ä: 92%	ä: 87%	ä: 63%	ä: 52%	ä: 54%
	ʌ: 8%	ʌ: 13%	ʌ: 37%	ʌ: 48%	ʌ: 46%

TABLE 2 Distribution of IPA values for diphthongs across ethnolinguistic groups⁸

	FACE	PRICE	MOUTH	GOAT	CHOICE
Afrikaners	eɪ: 57%	aɪ-aə: 100%	æʌ: 86%	əʊ-əʊ: 100%	oə: 58%
	ɛɪ: 43%		äʌ-aʌ: 14%		ʊə: 42%
Coloureds	ei: 100%	äɛ-äe: 100%	äʌ-aʌ: 58%	ɔʊ: 79%	oe-oə: 53%
			a-ʌ-ɔ: 42%	ɔ: 21%	ue-uə: 47%
Damaras	ei: 52%	aɪ-ae: 96%	aʌ: 56%	ɔ: 85%	ue-uə: 55%
	e: 48%	æɪ-æe: 4%	a-ʌ-ɔ: 44%	ɔʊ: 15%	oe-oə: 45%
Hereros	ei: 56%	aɪ-ae: 91%	aʌ: 55%	ɔ: 89%	ue-uə: 41%
	e: 44%	æɪ-æe: 9%	a-ʌ-ɔ: 45%	ɔʊ: 11%	oe-oə: 19%
Ovambos	ei: 58%	aɪ-ae: 95%	aʌ: 79%	ɔ: 83%	ue-uə: 54%
	e: 42%	æɪ-æe: 5%	a-ʌ-ɔ: 21%	ɔʊ: 17%	oe-oə: 15%
					u: 31%

Much of the contrast between the Afrikaner and Ovambo systems can be tentatively ascribed to L1 interferences. As typical of most Bantu languages, Oshiwambo's standard dialects feature only five

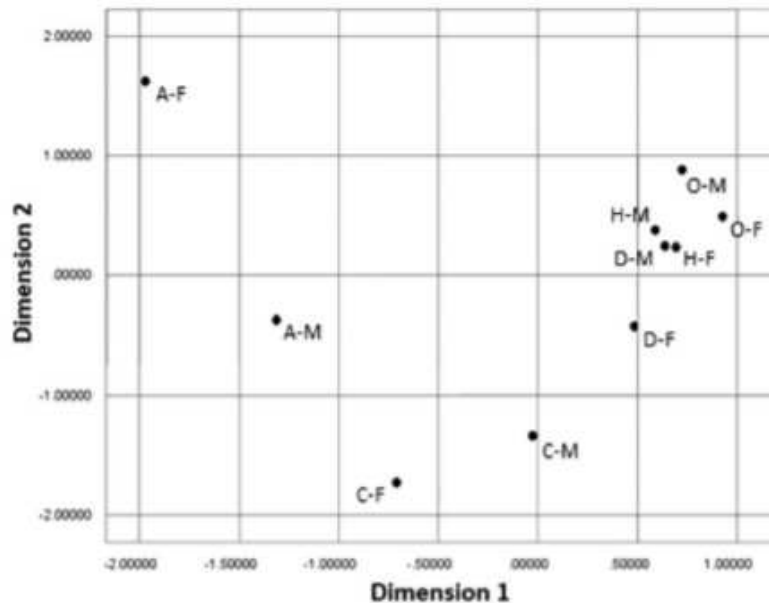
⁸ The range of central values for the IPA raters to choose from for transcribing offglides was restricted to [i], [ɪ], [e], [ʌ], [u], and [ə].

vowels: [i], [e], [a], [o], [u]. This could explain why the Ovambos tend to merge the FLEECE-KIT and DRESS-TRAP pairs. The cardinal [u] in Bantu languages is a likely explanation for the peripheral position of Ovambo FOOT/GOOSE. The lack of diphthongs in Bantu languages could also explain why Ovambo FACE and GOAT appear monophthongal. These features are reminiscent of ‘mesolectal’ Black South African English, whose Bantu phonetic substrate is akin to Oshiwambo (cf. van Rooy, 2004). The fact that FLEECE-KIT and DRESS-TRAP are not merged among the Afrikaners may have to do with the Afrikaans vowel inventory. Afrikaans distinguishes between tense and lax /i/, as reflected in the distinction within the Afrikaner FLEECE-KIT pair. Also, Afrikaans has a mid-front vowel [e-ɛ] and a near-open front [æ] roughly equivalent to RP DRESS and TRAP, respectively. Some features cannot be accounted for as substratal. Distinct from any Afrikaans diphthong, [æʊ]-like MOUTH reflects Lanham and McDonald’s (1979, pp. 40–41) description of one WSAfE MOUTH variant. While the Afrikaans diphthong most equivalent to RP PRICE displays a -centralized/+tense offglide, the mid-central offglide of Afrikaner PRICE fits with accounts of monophthongizing WSAfE PRICE variants (Bowerman, 2004; Wissing 2014a). The strongly fronted GOOSE of the Afrikaner females reflects trends in South African English observed by Mesthrie (2009). In contrast, +centralized/-tense FLEECE among the Ovambo females may manifest hypercorrect divergence from Oshiwambo cardinal [i]. Hypercorrect divergence from the Oshiwambo five-vowel system may also plausibly account for their +centralized/-tense STRUT and GOOSE.

6. The Namibian continuum of English varieties

Based on a PCA of F1/F2 values extracted at 20 per cent and 80 per cent of vowel durations, Figure 3 provides an aggregate representation of English phonetic behaviours across ethnicity and gender. Dimensions 1 and 2 account for 54.82 per cent and 14.68 per cent of all variation, respectively. Dimension 1 displays a strong association with ethnicity. There is a strong polarization between the Afrikaners and the Ovambos. The distribution of datapoints reflects apartheid-era ethnoracial stratification with one dense Black group including all three historically Black ethnicities, while the Coloureds occupy an intermediate position between the Afrikaners and the Blacks. The Damaras occupy an intermediate position in between the other historically Black ethnicities and the Coloureds. Dimension 2 captures gender effects. However, inter-gender contrasts differ across the White/Non-White distinction: all Non-White females are located below their male peers, while the opposite is found among the Afrikaners. Additionally, inter-gender contrasts differ across the Black/Non-Black distinction: The Ovambo and Herero females are located right from their male peers, while the opposite applies to the Afrikaners and Coloureds. The Damaras occupy an intermediate position in between the two patterns, as the Damara females only slightly deviate from their male peers. Based on the gender paradox alone, the plot can be interpreted as follows. The Afrikaner variety exerts some gravitational pull on the Coloured variety, which itself exerts gravitational pull on the Black varieties, most visibly so on the Damara variety. In contrast, the Ovambos are diverging from the Afrikaners, in which they are followed by the Hereros. The fact that – unlike the White and Coloured females – the Damara females exhibit only a slight leftward deviation from their male peers may be a consequence of gravitational pull exerted by the Ovambos and Hereros. Despite the diverging trends, the plot suggests a loose continuum between the three ethnoracial poles, with a relatively strong link between the Black and Coloured poles.

FIGURE 3 Principal components for variation in realization of English mono-/diphthongs
'F' = female, 'M' = male



The IPA values for monophthongs (Table 1) reveal mostly gradual variation between an Afrikaner pole and Ovambo pole, although some features remain specific to the Afrikaners, namely, [ɒ] for BATH, [æ] for TRAP, and [ʊ-i] for GOOSE-FOOT. The Coloureds display the highest similarity with the Afrikaners. Although in each case less than the Afrikaners, the Coloureds display the highest distinction within the DRESS-TRAP and LOT-THOUGHT pairs, the most backed BATH-PALM, the most fronted GOOSE-FOOT, and the most open and [ä]-like STRUT. However, Coloured FLEECE is less tense than the Afrikaner variant. Among all Black groups, the Damaras come closest to the Coloureds. However, their realization of STRUT follows the Ovambo and Herero patterns where [ʌ] is almost as prominent as [ä]. Overall, the Herero monophthongs are hardly distinguishable from their Ovambo counterparts except via a slightly stronger distinction within the LOT-THOUGHT pair. Except for the Afrikaners (section 5), the most systematic intergender differentials are found among the Coloureds and Damaras. Values more associated with Coloured females are [e] for DRESS, [ɑ] for BATH, [ɑ-ɒ] for PALM, [ʊ] for GOOSE, and [ʊ] for FOOT, while [ɛ] for DRESS, [a-ä] for BATH/PALM, and [u] for FOOT-GOOSE occur more among their male peers. Some of the values associated with Coloured females are also associated with Damara females, namely, those for BATH, PALM, GOOSE. As their Ovambo peers, Damara females tend to exhibit [ɪ] for FLEECE and [ʌ] for STRUT while the corresponding values among Damara males tend more towards [i] and [ä]. Inter-gender differentials among the Hereros are comparable to those among the Damaras but resemble more those seen among the Ovambos in that +back BATH-PALM and +fronted GOOSE are less frequent among females. The stronger tendency among the Herero and Ovambo males to exhibit [i] for FLEECE and [ä] for STRUT could explain while they seem slightly closer to the Afrikaners than their female peers.

The IPA values for diphthongs (Table 2) reveal sharp distinctions between the Afrikaners, Coloureds, and Blacks. Afrikaner values absent in the other varieties are [aɪ-aə] for PRICE, [æ] for MOUTH, [əu-əʊ] for GOAT. The Coloureds still display the highest similarity with the Afrikaners by realizing CHOICE onsets mostly as [o]. They also mostly realize MOUTH as [äʌ-aʌ], a feature marginally

represented among the Afrikaners. Additionally, their FACE, MOUTH, GOAT and CHOICE variants are mostly diphthongal. The Coloureds display one specific feature absent in the other varieties, namely, [äɛ-äe]-like PRICE. In line with their Ovambo peers, the Damaras and Hereros commonly display [ei], [a-ae], [ɑʌ], [ʊe-ʊə] as the dominant variants for FACE, PRICE, MOUTH, CHOICE, respectively. Among these features, [a-ae] for PRICE are not found among Coloureds and Afrikaners. Additionally, they display strong monophthongizing tendencies for FACE, MOUTH, and GOAT, with monophthongal MOUTH and GOAT also found among the Coloureds, albeit not as dominant variants. CHOICE is found only as a diphthong among the Damaras as it is in the Coloured and Afrikaner varieties. One feature that the Damaras and Hereros exclusively share with the Ovambos is the marginal [æ-æe]-like PRICE variant. As with the Afrikaners, strong inter-gender differentials are found among the Coloureds. More associated with the Coloured females are diphthongized MOUTH and GOAT and [o]-like CHOICE onsets. To some extent, levels of diphthongization co-vary with gender among the Blacks: diphthongized variants of especially GOAT and CHOICE tend to occur more with females. Finally, there is an association between Black males [æ]-like PRICE onsets and -centralized/+tense PRICE offglides.

Some of the features of the Coloured variety could be attributed to transfers from Coloured Afrikaans varieties: +fronted BATH-PALM and PRICE onsets reflect the Afrikaans long 'a' typical of South African Coloureds, by which they differ from their +backed White counterparts. Additionally, backed MOUTH and GOAT onsets among the Coloureds reflect the onset of the Afrikaans diphthong 'ou' as typically realized by South African Coloureds (Wissing, 2013). Trends among the Hereros and their high similarity with the Ovambos can be read as a reflection of the Otjiherero five-vowel system in which diphthongs are absent. The fact that the Damaras tend to realize CHOICE with +tense onsets may reflect the Khoekhoegowab [oe] diphthong. Some features cannot be interpreted as L1-transfers. This goes most visibly for Damara variants: The Damaras frequently realize KIT as [i] where Khoekhoegowab schwa-like allophones could be transferred, and +back BATH-PALM and +front FOOT-GOOSE among Damara females do not reflect cardinal Khoekhoegowab [a] and [u]. There is no substratist explanation either for the relatively high monophthongizing tendencies exhibited by Damara GOAT, where the Khoekhoegowab diphthong 'au' ([ou]) could be transferred. Finally, hypercorrection could explain the centralizing tendencies among the Herero females, in which they reflect their Ovambo peers.

7. Phonetic trends and perceived sociolinguistic distinctions

The patterns of ethnoracial stratification identified above are broadly reflected in the informants' perceptions of variation in English. Stereotypical ethnic features are named. Most specifically named are [l] x [r] metathesis, ascribed to the Ovambos, [m]- and [n]- prothesis, ascribed to the Hereros, and [j] x [d] metathesis, ascribed to Khoekhoegowab-speakers. The Black informants perceive an 'Afrikaans accent' in English which can be either 'White' or 'Coloured/Baster', and a 'German accent', attributed to Namibian Germans. In contrast, the Afrikaner informants cannot identify ethnic accents among the Blacks although three mention the Damara variety as recognizable and similar to the 'Coloured' or 'Baster' variety, to which they all point as phonetically distinctive. Strikingly, the distinction made between 'White' and 'Coloured' English accents reflects the informants' subdivision of Afrikaans in Namibia into a 'White Afrikaans' variety and (hardly mutually distinguishable) 'Coloured' and 'Baster Afrikaans' varieties. However, while most Non-White informants refer to a specifically Black Afrikaans variety (see section 8), there is no question of one Black English accent. The inter-gender differentials

observed in the previous sections surface in perceptions, especially among the Hereros and Ovambos. For example, HE-F-5 observes that 'we [Herero girls] like to make things sound more English' while the '[Herero] guys sound more Herero'. Perceived gender-based linguistic differentiation among the other groups more often emerge in relation to Afrikaans usage. For example, DA-M-3 comments that '[Damara girls] are actually good at it [Afrikaans]' while '[Damara] guys mostly speak slang'. 'Overrounding girls' speech' (A-M-2) is one salient Afrikaans stereotype among the Afrikaner informants. It is attested among White South African Afrikaans-speaking women in the form of a +backed/+raised long 'a' vowel (Wissing, 2014b), which is reflected in the +back BATH of the Afrikaner females (section 5).

Ethnic linguistic stereotypes reflect perceived social distinctions. Historical ethnoracial categories are salient to the informants. The Ovambo, Herero, and Damara informants self-identify as Black while defining their own ethnicities based on descent, language, and family ties to ethnic homelands and neighbourhoods in Katutura, Windhoek's former designated Black area. In the same way as Baster ethnicity, Coloured ethnicity is primarily defined in terms of light-skinned phenotypes considered neither Black nor White. Unlike Black (and Baster) ethnicities, it is rooted in urbanity, more specifically in Khomasdal, Windhoek's formerly designated Coloured area. The Afrikaners conceive of their ethnicity in terms of phenotypical 'whiteness' and of lifestyles that distinguish them from both Non-Whites and Namibian Germans. Class forms another salient distinction. The Non-White informants point towards an economic divide opposing Windhoek's wealthy east side – associated with Whites – and its poorer west side, home to the former designated Black and Coloured areas, where all of them reside. The informants' individual social networks reflect this divide. None of the Non-White informants reported having Whites in their close circles, nor the other way round. Still, Non-White social circles tend to be multi-ethnic, especially those of the Damaras and Ovambo males. In contrast, the Hereros, and to a lesser extent the Basters, Coloureds, and Ovambo females, tend to report mono-ethnic close social circles. The Ovambo informants perceive a divide between (northern) rural immigrants, labelled Gwerries (a term of unclear origin meaning 'backward'), and long-term urban residents, labeled Ombwiti (Oshiwambo for 'rootless person'). Only one social label, named by the Black informants, can be matched with linguistic gender distinctions, namely, 'coconut', most frequently applied to Black women who 'try to act white' (D-F-3) or 'forget their roots' (H-M-2).

The informants occasionally link non-ethnic social categories to specific English varieties. For the Ovambo informants, to be Ombwiti or Gwerrie means using recognizable hypercorrect English accents. The former are noted for 'overdoing their R's' (O-M-3), in an ostentatious bid to distance themselves from Oshiwambo stereotypes (the standard dialects of Oshiwambo feature no [r], which explains the [r]x[l] metathesis stereotype) by 'put[ting] on Afrikaans accents' (O-M-6), of which trilled [r] is a perceived hallmark. Gwerrie Ovambo women distinguish themselves from Ombwiti not only by their lack of familiarity with Afrikaans (section 3), but also by what O-F-3 derides as 'Youtube American accents'. The notion of a local Namibian English variety transcending historical ethnolinguistic distinctions is most clearly articulated through the often-named label 'Namlish'. A 'mixture' of English and Afrikaans, it is primarily viewed as an urban English variety or bilingual style opposed to rural interference varieties or hypercorrect Gwerrie varieties. Secondly, it is associated with Coloureds and Ombwiti in general and (especially urban Black) women. Importantly, it is not associated with Whites, although Afrikaner males are noted by their female peers for their frequent use of Afrikaans-English code-mixing, which they view as a 'slang' Afrikaans variety rather than as an English variety.

Namlish is characterized in mostly lexical terms, exemplified by Afrikaans discourse markers, such as *mos* (a marker of shared knowledge), interrogative tag *nè*, and quotative/pretensive *kamma*. The Black informants also acknowledge the existence of English varieties featuring emblematic indigenous features, yet without labelling them and not distinguishing them from intra-ethnic language-mixing practices.

8. Namibian sociolinguistic prestige constructs

The informants unanimously agree that English is the highest-ranking language in Namibian society. They associate it with high-earning work opportunities in Namibia's private and public sector. All imply that English is the only imaginable linguistic attribute of Namibian nationhood and – except for three Afrikaner informants – the most desirable main MOI. The higher status of English is visible in the fact that – unlike (Non-White) Afrikaans and indigenous languages – it has perceived hypercorrect forms in the Namibian context (section 7). It is also reflected in the differential functions that the Non-White informants assign to it and to Afrikaans: 'English is for keeping things nice and clear', while 'Afrikaans is just for making a story sound interesting' (D-F-4). English holds indexicalities of deference. Partly due to perceived unbridgeable linguistic differences between their respective Afrikaans varieties, it is named by most Black and White informants as the default medium of Black-White interactions. Additionally, there is a strong association between the frequent use of English and young Black women, with whom most male Black informants agree English is the preferable medium of interaction. In this regard, O-F-4 observes that most Ovambo girls don't talk Afrikaans even if they can' [and speak English instead]. Except for the Hereros, noted for 'stick[ing] to their language' (O-M-4), indigenous languages are 'for the home' (O-M-1), for interactions with older or rural relatives, or with trusted ethnic peers. However, the Ovambo informants note a trend of language shift among the Ombwiti, among whom Oshiwambo tends to give way to bilingual English-Afrikaans repertoires. Only the Afrikaner informants assign high status to Afrikaans, which they see as a link with South Africa, where all have relatives, and in some cases also prospects of Afrikaans-medium tertiary education.

Perceived norms of correctness sharply differ from one language to the next. 'Correct' varieties of the indigenous languages are 'unmixed' and rural. While the Afrikaners associate 'correct' Afrikaans with South Africa's Afrikaans-medium tertiary institutions, the Coloureds associate it with 'Whites', and the Black informants with the 'Coloureds', 'Basters', and to a lesser extent the Damaras, to whom they are socially closer. In contrast, the informants do not associate 'correct' English with any specific Namibian ethnolinguistic group, let alone with the country's historical English-speaking White community, of which no informant shows awareness. Rather, they tend to link it to Windhoek's higher social classes via 'the Windhoek private schools' (see further Stell, 2019). Although aspects of the 'Afrikaans accent' seem to hold some covert prestige as symbols of urbanity (section 7), the English variety of the Afrikaners is mostly viewed in derogatory terms, as in the words of C-M-2, 'they [Afrikaners] struggle with English'. While the Afrikaner informants implicitly judge their Afrikaans variety as dominant by referring to Black Afrikaans varieties as 'broken' or 'slang', they do not manifest a sense of being the 'best' English-speakers. In fact, A-F-3 believes that 'good English' in Namibia is found among 'some Ovambos', namely, those 'who talk much about politics'. Although they do display WSAfE features (section 5), they do not explicitly consider South African English models as targets (e.g. 'many of them [South Africans] speak bad English', A-M-5). Strikingly, no informant can name any South African English or WSAfE linguistic stereotype. There is more awareness of US models, to which

the informants are exposed via social media, and there is wide-held agreement that the use of US English features is inappropriate in the Namibian context, as they manifest linguistic insecurity and lack of exposure to Namibia's urban language norms (section 7).

At first sight, English is not associated with ingroup solidarity. Both Afrikaner and Coloured informants name their Afrikaans varieties as linguistic markers of ethnic in-groupness. Among the Black informants, indigenous languages perform that function largely within the context of visits to rural relatives, during which pressure is felt to align with monolingual models or else face rejection (e.g. 'It's not respectful when you use English words with the [rural] elders', HF-1; 'They [rural relatives] call me Ombwiti when I don't know the [Oshiwambo] words', O-M-3). What the Black informants view as the linguistic medium most apt to convey solidarity within their urban surroundings starkly differs across genders. Although they are sensitive to 'coconut' ascriptions, there is a consensus among the Black females that intra-ethnic interactions among them may occur in monolingual English (e.g. 'We [girls] like to speak English (...) because that's the only way we can practice', O-F-6). In contrast, young Black men are noted for shunning English, as 'they are afraid of making mistakes' (O-F-6). Lack of practice could explain the higher incidence of L1-interferences in their varieties (section 7). The Black informants agree that the preferred linguistic medium of solidarity among young Black men (and to a lesser extent Coloured men) in western Windhoek is a Black variety of Afrikaans with anti-register attributes, to which they refer as 'Kasietaal', a term derived from Afrikaans *kasie* ('location', an apartheid term for Non-White residential area) and *taal* ('language'). Pressure to acquire it is high, as fluency in it projects urban insiderness, while 'just speaking English [in Katutura] sounds weak' and marks one out as an 'easy to rob from' (O-M-2) fresh rural migrant.

9. Discussion

The phonetic data presented in this study provides considerable support for Scenario 3. Many of the encountered features can be accounted for as substratal. Some contrasting features of White and Coloured Afrikaans are reflected in the English varieties of the Afrikaners and Coloureds. The peripheral nature of Bantu and Khoekhoegowab vowels is reflected in the tensing tendencies in the Black English varieties. Against this background, some support can still be found for Scenario 1. There is a tendency among the Coloureds to converge with (specific features of) the Afrikaner English variety, such as [ä] for STRUT. Some convergence from the Damaras with the Coloured and Afrikaner varieties can be seen in the fact that they exhibit lower tensing levels than the other Black groups. The converging tendencies among the Coloureds and Damaras could have historical explanations: the Coloureds are the longest-urbanized Non-White group and have as such consistently been exposed to Afrikaner populations, while the Damaras integrated faster than the other Black groups into the colonial urban economy (Peyroux, 2004). There is also some support for Scenario 2. The Ovambos are diverging from Afrikaner models, in which they are visibly followed by the Hereros. Apart from not replicating the WSAfE features of the Afrikaner variety, they exhibit specific hypercorrect behaviours combined with substratal features. There are signs that the Ovambo variety could be exerting gravitational pull on the Damaras in the fact that Khoekhoegowab features such as schwa-like allophones and specific Khoekhoegowab diphthongs are not systematically transferred where they could be used as equivalents of RP features. +front KIT and +monophthongal GOAT form features of the Damara variety that could be ascribed to 'Bantuization'. However, based on the comparable diphthongization levels of FACE, MOUTH, GOAT across the three Black groups, one could suspect

partial mutual convergence between them rather than only unilateral convergence from the Damaras with the others.

The ethnographic data seems to undermine the notion that the Afrikaner variety – or indeed any English variety originating in South Africa – may be regarded as a founding variety outside of Namibia's Non-Black population. English models to which Black Namibians orient are set against local White varieties, as well as against Whiteness constructs in general, whose rejection is encapsulated in the derogatory 'coconut' ascription. Authentic Namibian English does not align with Inner Circle models, of which US English is the one most known to the informants. It is instead rooted in a Namibian sense of urbanity of which one essential linguistic attribute is a repertoire featuring Afrikaans, more specifically its Baster and Coloured varieties and Kasietaal, a development specific to Katutura Blacks. The status of Afrikaans as a medium of solidarity among Non-Whites explains the reported emblematic use of Afrikaans discourse markers in Namlish. The social prestige of Coloureds as an early urbanized Non-White population may indirectly explain why the Coloured variety seems to exert more gravitational pull than the Afrikaner variety on the Black English varieties. Yet no merger is occurring between the Blacks and Coloureds. The Black varieties are undergoing a specific focusing process spearheaded by (especially Ovambo) women. The outcome of that process is visible in Bantu-like features, diphthongization levels, and hypercorrect patterns shared by (especially females among) the three Black groups, including the Damaras, whose non-Bantu linguistic background may have predicted a more distinctive English variety.

The findings suggest that Outer Circle indigenous populations can in some contexts be regarded as founders. The leading role of Ovambo women in spreading a characteristically Black Namibian English provides an apt illustration of what Schneider (2007) calls 'grassroot growth' nativization scenarios, where settler populations contribute little or nothing to the feature pool as a result of being absent or – as in the Namibian case – socially distant and/or sociolinguistically disqualified. As such, the Namibian scenario starkly differs from South Africa's, as Mesthrie (2017) observes that young urban Black women tend to align with features of WSAfE, South Africa's founding native English variety. From an EVT perspective, the findings suggest that ethnolinguistic groups scoring highly on demographics and institutional support alone are likely to hold linguistic target status. They simultaneously suggest that linguistic target status cannot always be derived from high socio-historical status alone, especially where a given ethnolinguistic group scoring highly on this dimension – as Namibia's Afrikaners – is not perceived nor perceives itself as 'owning' the dominant language. From a language contact perspective, the findings suggest that the features of Outer Circle Englishes need not systematically be ascribed to L1-transfers, as Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) highlighted. Instead, they suggest that some of their features may arise from hypercorrection, a strategy that is associated with women in the Namibian data. The ethnographic data raises questions about men's tendency to display more L1-transfers. Instead of evoking in-group solidarity, as suggested by Schmied (1991), L1-transfers in Outer Circle Englishes may be due to infrequent use of English, especially where functionally intermediate lingua francas are available.

10. Conclusion

From a socio-phonetic perspective, Namibian English does not fit in Schneider's base nativization scenario in that it does not form the outcome of a merger between STL and IDG English varieties:

Namibia's historical settler population orients towards White South African models, while its Non-White (and especially Black) population is diverging away from such models. The deep gap between the STL and IDG varieties reflects the specific post-apartheid context in which they co-exist, as well as the fact that the Afrikaner population is disqualified as a linguistic target by its close association with Afrikaans. Against this background, the Black population, more specifically its Ovambo component, appear as plausible founders of a local urban English variety. An essential ideological factor at play in its emergence is the pursuit of a Black urban identity simultaneously set against the linguistic attributes of (Namibian) Whiteness and traditional (and implicitly rural) ethnolinguistic identities. The ethnographic data foregrounds the leading role played by 'indigenous' urban women in the diffusion of local forms. It also illustrates Schneider's 'grassroot growth' nativization scenario, which is likely to apply to much of the Outer Circle and to account for a large range of distinctly local English features. This study has limitations. Apart from being based on a relatively small sample, it relies on experimentally elicited data that are likely to produce hypercorrect performances. It also lacks an apparent-time perspective, which is needed to verify the long-term validity of the observed trends. Finally, socio-phonetic trends in Namibian Englishes should be cross-compared with grammatical trends, whose systematic observation has been pioneered by Steigertahl (2019).

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