Inland Norway
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Faculty of Education

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A critical sociolinguistic analysis of English among Congolese refugees in Norway

PhD in Teaching and teacher education
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Abstract

Recent years have seen an increase in forced migration from the Global South to the Global North. Norway is one such country in the Global North that hosts UN refugees from the Global South. Such refugees often have complex linguistic repertoires. Most refugees in Norway from the Global South have grown up in Syria, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Afghanistan, and Eritrea. In Norway, as it often the case in other host countries as well, newly-arrived refugees are mandated to learn the national language, in this case Norwegian. Refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, and Eritrea, who do not necessarily have linguistic resources from American or European prestige languages in their repertoires, are dependent on translators, for example when communicating with case workers in the municipalities where they have been settled. Refugees from DRC, on the other hand, often have French and/or English resources in their repertories, depending on their age when they fled DRC and how long they stayed in transit in Uganda, respectively. There has been some research on French practices among newly-arrived Congolese refugees in Norway, but hardly any studies on English practices. In this article-based dissertation, I address this gap in previous research by exploring English practices among a group of newly-arrived forced migrants from DRC via Uganda to Norway.

Theoretically, this is a critical sociolinguistic study informed by sociolinguistics of globalisation and recent calls for questioning academic doxa primarily informed by Northern perspectives and engaging more with Southern perspectives. Methodologically, English practices have been approached through 1) a phonetic study on syllable structure in English speech among seven newly-arrived Congolese refugees in Norway and 2) a qualitative study of two newly-arrived Congolese refugees' emic perspectives on English practices in their life histories. I present the findings from the phonetic study in the first dissertation article and the findings from the qualitative study in the second and third dissertation articles.

I use different conceptual frameworks in each dissertation article in order to approach the empirical data from different angles: in the first dissertation article, I draw on the notion of *linguistic ecologies* to understand the participants' English pronunciation patterns in situated English practices; in the second dissertation article, I use the concept *linguistic capital* as an analytical lens to explore the participants' emic perspectives on the value of English in their own lives; and in the third dissertation article I use the concepts *sociolinguistic scales* and *orders of indexicality* as analytical lenses to account for the participants' experiences of their English resources being devalued in some situated encounters.

The main conclusion from the entire dissertation is that English is valuable as linguistic capital to the forced migrants that have contributed as participants in this study. This dissertation contributes to the research fields language and migration and English as a global language. Empirically, it contributes documentation of English practices among an under-researched group of speakers. The main theoretical contribution is suggesting developments to theories developed in the Global North based on my empirical research on English practices among forced migrants from the Global South, and the main ideological contribution is revalorising English practices among newly-arrived refugees from DRC via Uganda to Norway.

Keywords: language and forced migration; Global English; critical sociolinguistics; emic perspectives; English practices

Sammendrag

De siste årene har det vært en økning i tvungen migrasjon fra Det globale sør til Det globale nord. Norge er et av landene i Det globale nord som har tatt imot FN-flyktninger fra Det globale sør. Slike flyktninger har ofte komplekse språklige repertoarer. De fleste flyktningene i Norge fra Det globale sør har vokst opp i Syria, Den demokratiske republikken Kongo (DRK), Afghanistan, og Eritrea. I Norge, som i andre mottaksland, må nyankomne flyktninger lære nasjonalspråket, i dette tilfellet norsk. Flyktninger fra Syria, Afghanistan og Eritrea, som ikke nødvendigvis har språklige ressurser fra amerikanske og europeiske prestisjespråk i sine repertoarer, er avhengige av tolker, for eksempel når de kommuniserer med kommunalt ansatte der de er blitt bosatt. Flyktninger fra DRK derimot, har ofte franske og/eller engelske ressurser i sine repertoarer, avhengig av henholdsvis hvor gamle de var da de flyktet fra DRK og hvor lenge de har vært i transitt i Uganda. Det er blitt gjort noe forskning på franskpraksiser blant nyankomne kongolesiske flyktninger i Norge, men nesten ingen studier på engelskpraksiser. I denne artikkel-baserte avhandlingen adresserer jeg denne mangelen i tidligere forskning ved å utforske engelskpraksiser blant en gruppe nyankomne tvungne migranter fra DRK via Uganda til Norge.

Teoretisk er dette en kritisk sosiolingvistisk studie informert av globaliserings-sosiolingvistikk og nyere oppfordringer til å stille spørsmålstegn ved akademiske doxa som hovedsakelig er informert av nordlige perspektiver, og å forholde seg mer til sørlige perspektiver. Metodisk har engelskpraksiser blitt tilnærmet gjennom 1) en fonetisk studie av stavelsesstrukturer i engelsktale blant syv nyankomne kongolesiske flyktninger i Norge og 2) en kvalitativ studie av to nyankomne kongolesiske flyktningers emiske perspektiver på engelskpraksiser i deres egne livshistorier. Jeg presenterer funnene fra den fonetiske studien i den første avhandlingsartikkelen og funnene fra den kvalitative studien i den andre og tredje avhandlingsartikkelen.

Jeg bruker forskjellige konseptuelle rammeverk i hvert avhandlingsartikkel for å tilnærme meg empirien fra forskjellige vinkler: i den første avhandlingsartikkelen tar jeg utgangspunkt i konseptet *språklige økologier* for å forstå deltakernes engelske uttalemønstre i situerte engelskpraksiser; i den andre avhandlingsartikkelen bruker jeg konseptet *språklig kapital* som analytisk linse for å utforske deltakernes emiske perspektiver på verdien av engelsk i deres eget liv; og i den tredje avhandlingsartikkelen bruker jeg konseptene *sosiolingvistiske scales* og *indeksikalitetsordener* som analytiske linser for å gjøre rede for deltakernes erfaringer med at deres engelske ressurser blir devaluerte i noe situerte interaksjoner.

Hovedkonklusjonen fra hele avhandlingen er at engelsk er verdifullt som språklig kapital for de tvungne migrantene som har bidratt som deltakere i denne studien. Denne avhandlingen bidrar til forskningsfeltene språk og migrasjon og engelsk som verdensspråk. Empirisk bidrar den med dokumentasjon av engelskpraksiser blant en under-forsket taler-gruppe. Det teoretiske hoved-bidraget er å komme med forslag til utvikling av teorier som har blitt utviklet i Det globale nord basert på den empiriske forskningen jeg har gjort på engelskpraksiser blant tvungne migranter fra Det globale sør. Det ideologiske hoved-bidraget er å valorisere engelskpraksiser blant nyankomne flyktninger fra DRK, via Uganda til Norge.

Nøkkelord: språk og tvungen migrasjon; global engelsk; kritisk sosiolingvistikk; emiske perspektiver; engelskpraksiser

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Ida Syvertsen
Oslo, October 2023

Overview of dissertation

Part 1: Extended introduction

Part 1: Extended introduction

Figures

1 Introduction

Academic discussions of English spoken by speakers from the *Global South* – i.e. research contexts, theories, epistemologies, etc. that have been overlooked in global academic discussions (see e.g., Pennycook & Makoni, 2020; Santos & Meneses, 2020; see also ch. 3 for a longer discussion) – are often concerned with assessing their English competence level and learning development, most often in comparison with a British or American English variety (e.g., Bao, 2017; Hamid & Baldauf Jr., 2013; Rørvik, 2022; Simo Bobda, 2010) and/or categorising them as certain types of English speakers, based on nationality or how and when they have learnt English (e.g., Flowerdew, 2008; Kachru, 1985; Kasanga, 2012; Li, 2020). International scholarship on English among speakers from the Global South from a Global English perspective has often been concerned with creating models of World English(es) for distinguishing speakers and their English varieties in different stable geographical locations (e.g., Gupta, 1997; Kachru, 1985; McArthur, 1992; Schneider, 2007). The most influential model in Global English scholarship is arguably Kachru's (1985) three concentric circles. This model places countries where English is the native language (ENL), e.g., the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia, in the centre; postcolonial countries where English is an official second language (ESL), e.g., India, Nigeria and Uganda, in an outer circle around the inner circle; and, finally, countries where English is a foreign language (EFL), e.g., Japan, Norway and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), in what he calls the expanding circle (Kachru, 1985). Thus, based on Kachru's (1985) concentric circles, English speakers are sometimes categorised according to whether they are ENL, ESL or EFL speakers (e.g., Edwards, 2014; Jarvella et al., 2001; Kasanga, 2012), native English speakers (=ENL) or non-native English speakers (=ESL and EFL) (e.g., Chan, 2018; Evans & Imai, 2011; Nakayiza, 2016; Xu et al., 2010), or English speakers (=ENL and ESL) and English learners (=EFL) (e.g., Aijmer, 2002; Gilquin, 2015).

Parallel to Global English scholarship, there have also been several studies on English among speakers from the Global South from other perspectives, like critical sociolinguistics (e.g., Blommaert, 2005b; Bolander & Sultana, 2019; Garrido & Codó, 2017; Highet, 2022; Hillman & Ocampo Eibenschutz, 2018; Holm et al., 2019, 2019; Sabaté-Dalmau, 2018). Studies within this tradition have highlighted how English speakers from the Global South are often positioned as learners with 'insufficient' English competence and/or treated as 'illegitimate speakers' of English due to their background from the geographical South (e.g., Codó & Riera-Gil, 2022; Garrido & Codó, 2017; Piller & Bodis, 2022; Sabaté-Dalmau, 2018).

However, Pennycook and Makoni (2020, p. 17; see also Pennycook, 2022) stress that "[t]here [still] remains in applied linguistics a deplorable blindness towards contexts outside the Global North". We thus still know relatively little about the experiences of speakers from the Global South compared to speakers from the Global North. The present study contributes further to remedying this "blindness" by exploring English practices among refugees of war who grew up in the Global South.

Recent Norwegian scholarship on English among speakers from the Global South who are currently residing in Norway tend to be concerned with English additional language learning among adolescents and children who have repertoires consisting of one or more languages in addition to Norwegian (see e.g., Beiler, 2021, 2023; Myklevold, 2022; Sevinç et al., 2022). Thus, Norway-based speakers from the Global South for whom English is a dominant language have received less attention. Such English speakers are in fact part of Norway's *linguistic ecologies* (c.f. Haugen, 1972; Mufwene, 2001; see also ch. 4.1). I therefore seek to bring greater attention to English practices among migrants from the Global South who are now residing in Norway. Conducting empirical research among English-dominant multilingual refugees from the Global South and discussing findings in light of critical sociolinguistics, I further hope to contribute to international discussion on English practices among speakers from the Global South with histories of forced mobility both in terms of adding more empirical research from an under-researched context and by suggesting potential changes to dominant theories seeking to understand language and migration. Finally, I aim to contribute to a revalorising of English practices among a group of speakers that are often positioned negatively due to their background.

1.1 The present research project

My research project is a study of English practices among a group of newly-arrived Congolese refugees in Norway (see ch. 3.1.3 for an explanation of my use of named languages). Specifically, I have been interested in understanding pronunciation patterns in situated English practices and *emic perspectives*, i.e. the participants' life worlds, their thoughts and ways of thinking etc. as individual insiders (Pike, 1967; see also Hornberger, 2013), on English practices. The title of this dissertation, "Forced migration and English capital", implies that I view English as highly valuable *linguistic capital* for these speakers (Bourdieu, 1991, 1997), meaning that English has the potential to be exchanged for other forms of capital, like employment and social relationships. This conclusion was reached

especially through analysing interview data from autobiographic interviews, and fieldnotes from field visits and ongoing contact with the participants.

The pronunciation data provided insights into phonotactic patterns of the participants' situated English practices during reading tasks and sociolinguistic interviews that took place within their first year of residence in Norway, i.e. a snapshot of multilingual repertoires in transition. The autobiographic interviews and ethnographic fieldwork added more emic perspectives on their English practices. These emic perspectives are specifically concerned with whether the participants view themselves as capable of "accomplish[ing] desired *functions* through language", i.e. emic perspectives on whether they have a *voice* in communicative practices (cf. Blommaert, 2005a, p. 68, original emphasis, building on Hymes, 1996). Furthermore, their emic perspectives express why the participants attribute value to English as linguistic capital in their own lives, as well as their experiences of their English capital having been renegotiated in some local encounters. Together, these different types of data have provided complementary empirical insights into English practices among this group of speakers.

My research project is part of a collaborative longitudinal research project called Language across time and space: Following UN-refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo to Norway, abbreviated to KongNor from its Norwegian translation (see e.g., Monsen & Steien, 2022a). KongNor conducts linguistic ethnography research. It aims at understanding language practices and the addition of new linguistic resources among Congolese refugees from the time it was decided that they would be placed in Norway, while still in refugee camps in Uganda, and as they make a life for themselves in Norway. Parallel to more linguistic research on their repertoires and their learning Norwegian, the project also seeks to understand these refugees' life experiences through space and time by using more ethnographic research methods.

These Congolese refugees are in Norway due to Norway's decision to receive 3000 UN quota refugees in 2019, a third of whom were Congolese refugees in transit in Uganda (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2019; Steien & Monsen, 2022, p. 8). KongNor follows 14 of these refugees, of whom all volunteered to join the project (Steien & Monsen, 2022, p. 9). My research utilises data from eight of these research participants: pronunciation data from seven participants, and ethnographic data from two participants, with one participant providing both pronunciation and ethnographic data.

1.2 Researcher positionality and development

The experience of conducting a doctoral research project during a global pandemic has certainly involved unexpected twists and turns along the way. When I started this journey in the autumn of 2019, my original plan was to conduct research on perceptions of non-native English accents among adolescent additional language (AL) learners of English in Norway. I wished to include some non-native English accents that these learners might come into contact with within Norwegian society, such as English spoken by international workers based in Norway and English-speaking migrants. Coincidentally, one of my supervisors had just initiated the above-mentioned research project among newly-arrived Congolese refugees in Norway. Since many of these refugees were English speakers, we decided that their English practices might be one of the non-native English accents I could include in verbal-guise tests (see e.g., Drager, 2018). As there had not been any research on the English spoken by these speakers before, I decided to explore this accent before collecting data from Norwegian AL English classrooms.

A few months into my second semester in 2020, however, the global pandemic hit, and all schools closed. Consequently, my plans to conduct experimental research in classrooms had to change. At that point, the pronunciation data for exploring English spoken by the newly-arrived Congolese refugees had already been collected. I therefore decided to employ this data set for a larger exploration into the English spoken by these Congolese refugees in Norway. This could further provide a perspective on the status of English in Norway from a group of marginalised speakers, to complement earlier research on English in Norway that utilised data from Norwegian-dominant adolescent AL English learners in Norwegian secondary schools (Rindal, 2013). Having been trained as a variationist and Kachruvian sociolinguist, I decided to explore the following initial research questions (RQs), which, as will be clear below, were later abandoned:

RQ 1: What is the level of English competence of Congolese refugees in Norway?

RQ 2: What kind of English do Congolese refugees in Norway speak?

RQ 3: What type of English speakers are Congolese refugees in Norway?

I promptly set out to conduct an introductory study of English pronunciation employing reading tasks and sociolinguistic interviews, in line with common methodological practices in variationist and Kachruvian sociolinguistics (e.g., Labov, 2006; Kachru, 1985). However, I was highly aware of the various linguistic, cultural, social and economic differences between

myself and the participants; I was and am an outsider attempting to represent and "speak for" an Other (Spivak, 1988, p. 70). Additionally, I am part of a tradition of intellectual imperialism of "benevolent *Western* intellectual[s]" (Spivak, 1988, p. 78 original emphasis). This intellectual imperialism has led to lack of engagement with certain theories, epistemologies, and realities in the global academic discussion. These peripherised theories, epistemologies and realities are collectively referred to as *Southern* perspectives by several scholars (e.g., Pennycook & Makoni, 2020; Santos & Meneses, 2020). Consequently, I sought to approach the participants' English pronunciation somewhat like an anthropologist, by approaching them, their practices and contexts with curiosity, and not assuming an automatic fit with conceptual frameworks and explanations developed on the basis of empirical work conducted in more Northern research contexts, i.e. with a more inductive approach (Pennycook & Makoni, 2020, p. 14). This also meant, like many other sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists have done before me (e.g., Blommaert, 2010; Blommaert & Backus, 2013; Fabian, 1986; Pennycook, 2010), that I had to move away from a research focus on the participants' English variety as a linguistic system, i.e. an abstraction based on average, stabilised linguistic practices across individuals and over time (cf. e.g., Kachru, 1985; Kruger & van Rooy, 2017; Labov, 2006; Schneider, 2007; Simo Bobda, 2001). Instead, my research focus was shifted to individuals' situated (English) communicative practices, both because 1) I did not have access to a larger data set collected at various times necessary for making claims about a stabilised, shared variety, and 2) I realised that there is value in understanding their English pronunciation in specific situated encounters as individuals with similar backgrounds as well. This analytical focus of the individual's point of view remained throughout the entire research process.

Trying to find a way to describe the empirical data from the reading tasks and sociolinguistic interviews from an inductive perspective further led me to abandon the frequent practice of comparing English pronunciation to Received Pronunciation (RP) as a reference accent. With an analytical focus on individual speakers, their life world and life histories, it was clear that RP or any other British or American English varieties had not affected these speakers in their lifetime. Despite the historical influence of British English varieties through British colonisation of Uganda, the participants themselves had not been to the United Kingdom or come into extensive contact with British English speakers in DRC or Uganda. Similar observations have been made regarding the influence of European native speakers on linguistic varieties in Uganda and other neighbouring countries to DRC. For example,

Schmied (2004) explains that for English speakers in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania "non-African mother-tongue [English] speakers as role models are rare nowadays" (p. 924). Similar observations have been made with regards to African speakers of French in the Central African Republic (Bordal, 2012). Keeping in mind this lack of synchronic influences from non-African English varieties, it therefore made more sense, to compare their English pronunciation to descriptions of Ugandan English and other languages and varieties present in Eastern DRC and Uganda. Consequently, the initial RQ 1, determining English competence, became less straightforward to answer in the ecology in Uganda, at least when understood as degree of "native"-like pronunciation.

I further attempted to approach the initial RQs 2 and 3 to find out whether the participants' English could be characterised as Ugandan English, i.e. making them ESL speakers, or Congolese English, i.e. making them EFL speakers. What I found was that these speakers are, in fact, neither. Their English practices are different from Ugandan speakers, particularly due to exposure to French and other Bantu languages that are present in Eastern DRC, but much less so in Uganda. Further, the participants are a marginalised group of refugees from rural Eastern DRC and are thus very different from how English speakers have been described in DRC as a whole, i.e. as EFL learners (Kasanga, 2012). The next chapter presents these Congolese refugees in Norway in more detail, as well as the ecologies that are relevant to their trajectories. The initial RQs 2 and 3 thus also became less straightforward to answer, like the initial RQ 1. I settled instead on a new overarching, more inductive objective of my research of exploring English practices among Congolese refugees in Norway.

Following these discoveries that I have mentioned, that more classical Global English and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) epistemologies and methodologies did not fully work for empirical analyses of English practices among this multilingual group of forced migrants, I realised I had to move in a different direction, so I turned to critical sociolinguistics instead. The third chapter justifies my choice of critical sociolinguistics as the overarching framework for this research project and positions my research within the relevant ontologies and epistemologies of critical sociolinguistics. The fourth chapter explains and justifies my use of *linguistic ecologies*, *capital*, and *orders of indexicality* and *scales* as analytical concepts in my analysis of the data from the participants. The fifth chapter presents and reflects upon the methodology of this study, the methods for data collection and analysis, as well as methodological considerations and ethical concerns. Following the chapter on methodology, the sixth chapter presents and synthesises the empirical findings presented in the three

articles, while the seventh chapter discusses the empirical, theoretical and methodological contributions of my overall research project. Finally, the eight chapter ends this extended introduction with some concluding thoughts.

2 Research context

As mentioned in the introduction, the participants in this study have had forced South-South-North trajectories. The present chapter starts by presenting the linguistic ecologies that the participants have inhabited. I have not researched these ecologies myself. Thus, I here provide a brief summary of research that has been conducted by others on different aspects of these ecologies. Research on these ecologies is relevant as background information for my own research and to familiarise readers with potentially lesser-known ecologies. Next, I summarise what we know about Congolese refugees in Norway with long transits in Uganda from previous research. Finally, I give a brief presentation of the repertoires and trajectories of the specific participants who have taken part in my research.

2.1 Ecologies relevant to the participants' trajectories

2.1.1 Ecologies in DRC

DRC was under Belgian colonial rule from 1885 to 1960, a time that has been described as characterised by both continuous brutality and exploitation (see e.g., Bokamba, 1995; Fabian, 1986). Unfortunately, independence did not bring lasting peace. The Kivu region in Eastern DRC, for instance, where many of the Congolese refugees in Norway grew up, "has been war-torn for several decades" (Steien & Monsen, 2022, p. 7; UNHCR, n.d.). The war in Kivu broke out following the Rwandan genocide in 1994 (see e.g., Mathys, 2017; Nassenstein, 2018; Steien & Monsen, 2022). It has been characterised as "one of the most ferocious conflicts of the last twenty years" and has forced many Congolese refugees to flee DRC for Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda (Nassenstein, 2018, p. 295; Mathys, 2017; Meger, 2010; UNHCR, n.d.).

Despite DRC becoming independent from Belgium in 1960, colonial language policies and ideologies have continued in many ways (see e.g., Bokamba, 1995). During the colonial period, "French and Flemish were the languages of the colonial authorities" (Hollington & Nassenstein, 2019, p. 539). Today, French is the official language and the medium of instruction in the education system (see e.g., Bokamba, 1995, 2018, 2019), and the Bantu languages Swahili and Lingala have somewhat ambiguous statuses in parts of DRC due to colonial language policies (Bokamba, 2019; Fabian, 1986). Fabian (1986) explains how "Lingala served the military and much of the administration in the capital of the lower Congo; Swahili became the language of the workers in the mines of Katanga" (p. 42), a colonial decision in "the pursuit of control over a labor force" (p. 111) in the previously called Katanga region of DRC in the south-east part of the country. According to Congolese linguist

Bokamba (1995), "[t]he main reason for the retention of the status quo is that African states, Anglophone, Francophone, Lusophone or any other non-African phone, view Western Europe as the model for development of all sorts" (p. 22). His view is that "[w]e [i.e. DRC and other African countries] continue to define ourselves as others without computing into this definition the local conditions that make us Africans" (Bokamba, 1995, p. 22). Bokamba (1995) even goes on to conclude that "[y]es, indeed physical occupation and colonization have ended, but the mental colonization lives on and flourishes" (p. 22).

In addition to the colonial language French and the aforementioned Bantu languages, Swahili and Lingala, DRC has a vast number of other languages. In fact, DRC has the third highest number of languages in Africa (Bokamba, 2019). Estimates range between 210 (Eberhard et al., 2023) and 214 (Bokamba, 2018) living languages in DRC today, "of which four serve as national languages (… Kikongo, Kiswahili, Lingála & Tshiluba)" (Bokamba, 2018, p. 436). In DRC, multiple language learning "is not an option, but a daily requirement" (Bokamba, 2018, p. 433). In fact, repertoires with resources from two or three languages before starting school "is a very common occurrence" (Bokamba, 2018, p. 439). Bokamba (2018) explains that "African children and adults learn and acquire multiple languages, at least three and up to eight" (p. 443). Furthermore, speakers "[u]ndoubtedly, … will also be multi-dialectal in all these languages that he/she speaks fluently; thus adding to the complexity of his/her linguistic repertoire" (Bokamba, 2018, p. 438). Swahili, for instance, has been described as having four main regional varieties in DRC (Bose & Nassenstein, 2016). These are Kivu Swahili (see e.g., Bose & Nassenstein, 2016) spoken in the Kivu region of Eastern DRC, Kisangani Swahili (see Nassenstein, 2015) spoken in the city of Kisangani and its surrounding area, Bunia Swahili (see Nassenstein & Dimmendaal, 2019) spoken in north-east DRC, and Lubumbashi Swahili (see e.g., Fabian, 1986; Ferrari et al., 2014) spoken in and around the city of Lubumbashi. Other intra-language varieties that have been described include youth registers, like Lingala youth registers in Kinshasa (Nassenstein, 2022).

Ecologies with extreme linguistic variation, like DRC, are sometimes referred to as "superdiverse" societies (see e.g., Blommaert, 2013; Jørgensen et al., 2011). In Europe, this term is often used for societies with increasing linguacultural complexity following an influx of more people from the Global South, especially in cities (Arnaut et al., 2015; Blommaert, 2013; Jørgensen et al., 2011; see also Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010; Pennycook & Otsuji, 2016). However, as Hollington and Nassenstein (2019) have pointed out, "[t]he emphasis on urban

environments as superdiverse settings … cannot be ascertained for the African continent in all cases" (p. 544), including the Kivu region of DRC. They explain that,

> Villages in the North Kivu province …, for instance, can be called linguistically superdiverse due to the high number of [internally displaced people] in the entire border area between Congo, Rwanda, and Uganda, and to the ongoing conflict since 1994, with more than 60 armed groups operating in the area … In certain villages more than 30 languages are estimated to be spoken on a daily basis.
> (Hollington & Nassenstein, 2019, p. 544)

The ecologies in DRC mainly consist of Bantu languages, like Kinyabwisha, Kikongo, Swahili, Kitetela, Lingala, Lomongo, Tshiluba and Zande, and French (Bokamba, 2019; Eberhard et al., 2023). Descriptions of Bantu languages categorise them as belonging to the theorised Niger-Congo language family and having prosodic characteristics of being tonal languages and having (N)CV(V) syllable structures (Odden, 2015; Wald, 2009; see also Diprose, 2007; Hyman & Katamba, 1999). In terms of phonemic system, Bantu speakers in the western Bantu area, e.g., in DRC, generally do not differentiate between short and long vowels, nor between lax and tense vowels, and operate with a five vowel system, i.e. /a e i o u/ (Odden, 2015, p. 2; Wald, 2009, p. 889). Morphologically, Bantu languages are described as agglutinative languages and vowel harmony in affixation is common (Odden, 2015; Wald, 2009). Syntactically, "Bantu languages have a basic verb-medial word order with a strong tendency towards subject first" (Wald, 2009, p. 898).

French in DRC, and in Africa in general, may arguably be categorised, in African ecologies, as an African language (c.f. Steien & Yakpo, 2020) even if it was initially introduced in Africa as a European, colonial language. This argument is based on empirical observations of African Frenches taking on prosodic characteristics of other languages in the ecologies, characteristics that have been viewed as impossible for Romance languages in Europe, i.e. becoming a tonal language and mainly using CV and CVC syllable structures (see e.g., Bordal, 2012; Nimbona & Steien, 2019; Steien et al., 2023; Steien & Yakpo, 2020). These prosodic features have been observed in African Frenches spoken in Senegal, Mali, the Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Togo, and the Central African Republic, i.e. in multiple ecologies across vast geographical distances (Nimbona & Steien, 2019, p. 53).

As mentioned, French, Swahili and Lingala are somewhat marked languages in ecologies in DRC. Another highly marked language in Eastern Congolese ecologies is Kinyabwisha, "spoken in the North Kivu province of the DR Congo" (Nassenstein, 2018, p. 297). Nassenstein (2018) explains that Kinyabwisha "is highly stigmatized due to its association

with war and armed conflict by nonspeakers" (p. 297). Kinyabwisha is related to Kinyarwanda, which is traditionally spoken in Rwanda, and Rufumbira, which is traditionally spoken in south-western Uganda (Nassenstein, 2018). As mentioned above, the war in Kivu broke out following the Rwandan Genocide. Thus, even if Kinyabwisha, Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira have structural similarities as related languages, speakers of the three linguistic varieties "strive for distinctiveness and divergence" either "in response to the violent conflict in the entire area since 1994 and the fear of armed groups, or, alternatively, in order to orient themselves away from the sociopolitical instability on the other side of the border" (Nassenstein, 2018, pp. 296–297). The markedness of Kinyabwisha has led the Congolese militia in Eastern DRC to develop a "secret register" using metaphors and euphemisms "in order to conceal strategic warfare plans, encode meaning, and ensure the protection of their own groups" (Nassenstein, 2018, p. 303). Such secret registers have also been documented among civilians, exhibiting pragmatic changes in Kinyabwisha in Eastern DRC. As Nassenstein (2018) explains, "new cryptic means of using euphemistic speech as a strategy of linguistic (pre)caution in a conflict-dominated area, as well as to pragmatic strategies of face-saving among civilians" have appeared. At times, this euphemistic speech has even been "calqued into the regional variety of Kiswahili" as well (Nassenstein, 2018, p. 305). Thus, such pragmatic strategies might spread across languages in Eastern Congolese ecologies.

English does not appear to play a significant role in ecologies in DRC. Kasanga (2012) refers to English as a "foreign language" in DRC. English is one of several school subjects and is "scarcely used in public given the infinitesimal number of fluent speakers" (Kasanga, 2012, p. 50). In Kinshasa and Lubumbashi, the two largest cities in DRC, use of English is increasing in advertisements and thus becomes slightly more visible in the semiotic landscape (Kasanga, 2012, 2019).

2.1.2 Ecologies in Uganda

Uganda was under British colonial rule from 1894 to 1962. Similar to in DRC, present-day language policies and ideologies continue to be influenced by colonial language policies. English has long been the only official language and is used, especially in urban areas, as the medium of instruction in education (see e.g., Meierkord, 2016; Mohr et al., 2020; Nakayiza, 2016; Nassenstein, 2016). Nassenstein (2020) further explains that language policies in Uganda have "a clear preference for British English in education and American English in media, movies, news broadcasts, etc." (p. 358). As the language of the former colonists, English does have a "slight colonial stigma" as "a 'white' language" in Uganda, "marking it

as a non-African language of the elites that is associated with a repressive colonial system and excludes the masses from national discourse, especially to older generations" (Nassenstein, 2016, pp. 398–399). Conversely, "[a]mong the young generation of urban speakers, these negative attitudes have disappeared and English is seen as a neutral medium of inter-ethnic and inter-linguistic communication" (Nassenstein, 2016, p. 399; see also Mohr et al., 2020).

In 2005, Swahili was declared a second official language (see e.g., Meierkord, 2016; Mohr et al., 2020; Nakayiza, 2016; Nassenstein, 2016). However, this declaration may have been viewed as primarily symbolic, as there have not been many practical changes following the expansion of a second official language in Uganda, potentially due to the indexicalities of Swahili in Uganda (see e.g., Meierkord, 2016; Nakayiza, 2016; Nassenstein, 2016). Schmied (2008) explains that Swahili, "is unfortunately still associated with the military and the "troubled" times in the 1970s and 1980s" (p. 154), under the dictatorship of Idi Amin Dada in the 1970s and war, conflict and military rule in the 1980s. Nassenstein (2016) explains that "[t]he mostly negative (covert) prestige of Kiswahili in Uganda promoted the rise and diffusion of English as a lingua franca" in Uganda (p. 398).

There are 41 living languages in Uganda, including English, Swahili, Acholi and Luganda (Eberhard et al., 2023). The number of languages in Ugandan ecologies might be higher if we were to also count languages spoken by refugees from neighbouring countries, since, as mentioned, Uganda has been one of the main countries hosting refugees from Eastern DRC since the 1990s (UNHCR, n.d.; see also ch. 2.1.1). Like in DRC, many of these languages are Bantu languages, as well as an originally European colonial language, in Uganda's case English.

According to Nassenstein (2016), "we can potentially assume ca. 11 million more or less fluent speakers [of English] … while major differences in language proficiency between rural and urban areas are evident" (p. 397). Ssempuuma (2012) explains that "[g]enerally speaking, English is used as a second language in Uganda, mainly in urban areas among Ugandans of different linguistic backgrounds in homes, residential areas, workplaces, and by elites at conferences and workshops" (p. 477). Interestingly, English is not necessarily an AL among the younger generation. As Ssempuuma (2012) points out, "[i]t is worth noting that there is a new generation of Ugandans who use English as a first language" (p. 477).

Structurally, descriptions of Ugandan English have pointed to many similarities with Bantu languages in the ecologies (Nassenstein, 2016; see ch. 2.1.1 for a description of structural

features of Bantu). Phonemically, according to descriptions of East African Englishes, i.e. Kenyan, Ugandan and Tanzanian English, "[l]ength differences in vowels are levelled and not used phonemically" and lax and tense vowels are merged, and diphthongs are generally not used (Schmied, 2008, p. 160; Nassenstein, 2016; Simo Bobda, 2001). Syllable structure in Ugandan English also seems to be influenced by Bantu phonotactics. For instance, /ɪ/ is often elided "in non-initial position … in order to avoid complex coda of syllables. This applies to all-vocalic environments, as demonstrated by the examples *pork* [pok], *fart* [fat], *dirty* [dati], *nerd* [nat] and *scarf* [skaf]" (Nassenstein, 2016, p. 401). With regards to potential influence of Bantu NC onset clusters, "the prefixation of homorganic nasals (which means for instance that a word like *balloon* could be realized as *mballoon*) has been mentioned … as a typical feature of East African English" (Nassenstein, 2016, p. 400). To mark assertive focus, "vowels can be lengthened" together "with an intonational pitch-rise" (Nassenstein, 2016, p. 400) or English wh-words can be inserted in declarative sentences, e.g., "[a]nd he saw – what? – a new car" (Nassenstein, 2016, p. 411), similar to how assertive focus can be marked in Bantu. Some other structural features of Ugandan English, also showing influence of Bantu languages, include syntactic topicalization, e.g., "[t]he greens, they never ate them", "[s]ubsecutive or sequential actions … often [being] expressed in two verb phrases …, connected through *and*" (Nassenstein, 2016, p. 413), and use of Bantu loanwords to express politeness (Nassenstein, 2016, p. 414).

2.1.3 Ecologies in Norway

Norway has not been colonised but was part of unions with the neighbouring countries Denmark and Sweden, respectively, for about 500 years until 1905. During its time in unions, Norway was considered quite provincial and remote in comparison to Denmark and Sweden, and thus many parts of the country were left alone to develop its culture separately from other impulses, developing a perception among Norwegians, on the macro-level, of monoculturalism and monolingualism, even if minoritised parts of the population were multilingual with resources from Norwegian as well as from minoritised languages like Sámi, Kven or Romanì (Røyneland et al., 2018). Most Norwegians today can be considered multilingual. However, the composition of people's repertoires differs depending on whether they are part of the majoritised population or the minoritised population: The majoritised population generally have resources from Norwegian and English, and often German, French or Spanish resources, while minoritised populations have resources from Norwegian, either indigenous languages, like Sámi or Kven, or non-European languages, like Somali or Swahili,

and usually English (Røyneland et al., 2018). The AL English competence of the nation as a whole has been ranked among the world's top five countries for the last few years (see Education First, 2022a, 2022b).

In terms of language policies, the Germanic language Norwegian is the main national language and has two official written forms: *Bokmål*, which is based on an urban Norwegian-ised version of Danish, and *Nynorsk*, which is based on rural Norwegian dialects (Røyneland et al., 2018; The Language Act, 2022, § 4). In addition, the Sámi languages, theorised as having been developed from Uralic languages, are recognised as national indigenous languages, and Kven (Uralic language), Romanì and Romanes (Indo-Iranian languages), and Norwegian Sign Language are recognised as national minority languages (Røyneland et al., 2018; The Language Act, 2022, § 6-7). Non-European immigrant languages, like Somali, Swahili and Arabic, do not have any official status in Norway (Røyneland et al., 2018; The Language Act, 2022).

Since Norway only has standardised written Norwegian languages, there is often great variation, as well as a general tolerance to variation, in spoken Norwegian, across scales (Røyneland et al., 2018). With regards to English in Norway, English is often viewed as valuable for accessing material and symbolic capital (c.f. Bourdieu, 1997; see e.g., Rindal, 2013; Røyneland et al., 2018). At the same time, uneasiness has been voiced several times related to the future status of Norwegian when English becomes a larger part of people's lives (e.g., Røyneland et al., 2018; see also Brevik, 2019; Hellekjær, 2017; Ljosland, 2007). It may be that the aforementioned perceived monolingualism and monoculturalism, combined with a fear of English peripherising Norwegian in Norway, have caused Norwegian ecologies to develop "normative monolingualism" (Grey & Piller, 2020, p. 56). This can be seen in that multilingualism is on the one hand celebrated, while, on the hand, combining resources from other languages than Norwegian in communicative practices is generally discouraged on most scales (Røyneland et al., 2018).

"Normative monolingualism" can also be viewed in terms of language ideologies related to English practices in Norway. While the national English subject curriculum does not explicitly require English production among Norwegian learners of English to be similar to e.g. British or American accents (The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2020), deviations from perceived Standard British or American English are regularly viewed as negative (see e.g., Bøhn, 2016; Reinemo, 2023). Adding more complexity to this, it has also been documented that when people combine English resources with other linguistic resources

in communicative practices, it is more marked to combine English resources with resources from non-European language than with resources from Norwegian or other European languages (Beiler, 2021, see also 2023).

2.2 Research on Congolese refugees in Norway

Within linguistics in Norway, two waves of Congolese refugees coming to Norway have been studied before: those who came to Norway in the early 2000s, from Kinshasa and Eastern DRC, and those who came to Norway in 2019, from Eastern DRC (e.g., Golden & Steien, 2021; Monsen & Steien, 2022a; Steien, 2021; Steien et al., 2023; Steien & Hansen, 2015). Some Congolese refugees from the second wave contribute as participants in KongNor. All those Congolese refugees who have been studied, from both waves, have had multilingual repertoires reflecting the ecologies they have inhabited. In general, they have resources from one or more Bantu language in their repertoires, often resources from French if they have attended school in DRC, often resources from English if they have had long transits in Uganda, and resources from Norwegian (Steien & Hansen, 2015; Steien & Monsen, 2022).

Structural research on language practices among Congolese refugees in Norway has mainly focused on prosody, especially intonation, in French and Norwegian practices (e.g., Jensen & Steien, 2017; Steien et al., 2023; Steien & Hansen, 2015; Steien & van Dommelen, 2018), with emerging research on pragmatics in Norwegian practices (Horbowicz, 2022) and morphosyntax in Norwegian and English practices (Jensen, 2022; Nordanger, 2022; Rørvik, 2022). Common to all the structural research that touches on cross-linguistic influences among these multilingual speakers is that "it is not straightforward to identify the role of some particular language in the acquisition of [additional languages]; there is not one only *first language* that could have had an effect on the acquisition" (Steien & Hansen, 2015, p. 2, original emphasis; see also Steien, 2021; Steien & van Dommelen, 2018). What has been fruitful instead has been to focus on "their *dominant language* (*i.e.* the language they speak better, the most often etc.)" (Steien & Hansen, 2015, p. 2, original emphasis). Another interesting finding from structural research is that prosody does not seem to be language-specific in the linguistic practices of Congolese refugees; intonation patterns seem to be consistent in function regardless whether they are speaking French or Norwegian (e.g., Jensen & Steien, 2017; Steien et al., 2023).

More ethnographic research on Congolese refugees in Norway has further focused on metalinguistic awareness (Randen, 2022), family language policy (Purkarthofer & Steien,

2019), linguistic backgrounds (e.g., Steien, 2021), emic perspectives on AL learning and learning contexts (e.g., Golden & Steien, 2018, 2021; Monsen, 2022; Monsen & Eek, 2022; Monsen & Steien, 2022b; Pájaro, 2022; Steien, 2022), and emic perspectives on experiences of devaluation of their French resources in Norway (e.g., Steien, 2019). Ethnographic fieldwork focusing more on the life histories of Congolese refugees has found that they were forced to flee their homes in Eastern DRC "due to an immediate threat of sexual violence, plundering, killings and forced recruitment to militias" (Steien & Monsen, 2022, p. 7; see also ch. 2.1). In Uganda, most of them have been placed in UN refugee camps characterised by decades of discontinuity, limited agency, and continued "threat of sexual violence, plundering [and] killings" (Steien & Monsen, 2022; Steien, personal communication; see also Thomson, 2014 for a description of a comparable refugee camp for Congolese refugees in Tanzania). Some of them have also lived in Kampala, like Prudent (see 2.3), where they have experienced other forms of precarious living conditions, like being left alone to figure out housing, food, etc. with less support from NGOs, which may have caused them to seek community with other Congolese refugees by, for instance, gathering in Congolese churches in Kampala (Steien, personal communication). Finally, in Norway, Congolese refugees continue to experience limited agency, for example in where and how they should be housed (e.g., Monsen, 2022; Steien & Monsen, 2022). Moreover, despite being able to use English as a lingua franca with other people in Norway, they experience difficulties getting a job and, like all immigrants in Norway, are excluded from obtaining citizenship until they have gained necessary formal qualifications in Norwegian (e.g., Steien & Monsen, 2022). As forced migrants from Africa for whom Norwegian is not a dominant language and who speak English with an unfamiliar accent (see e.g., Hellekjær, 2017), they are also at high risk for implicit racism and exclusion from society at large (see e.g., Kjelaas & Ommeren, 2019; Massao & Fasting, 2014; Steien & Monsen, 2022; Thyness & Lexander, 2023), as has also been documented in other contexts (e.g., Garrido & Codó, 2017; Otsuji & Pennycook, 2011; Rosa & Flores, 2017).

2.3 Participants in the present study

As mentioned, my research is part of the collaborative research project KongNor. KongNor conducts linguistic and ethnographic research among 14 newly-arrived Congolese refugees in Norway, originally from Eastern DRC. 10 of these refugees have English resources in their repertoire. My initial plan was therefore to collect pronunciation data from all these 10. These English-speaking Congolese refugees were settled in various locations in Norway by the

Norwegian government as they arrived in 2019-2020 (Steien & Monsen, 2022). Some of these locations require large amounts of time and money to visit. Thus, due to practical constraints and national travel restrictions during the global pandemic from March 2020, 7 out of these 10 ended up being included as participants in the production experiment. Furthermore, since, as mentioned in the introduction, these participants volunteered to be part of the collaborative research project, balancing biographical factors among the participants has not been an intention. Thus, their reported linguistic repertoires have different compositions and there is an unequal gender and age ratio; they come from different parts of DRC; not all have stayed in the same place in Uganda; as well as varying amounts of time spent in transit in Uganda (see also Steien & Monsen, 2022). The background information from the participants was obtained through ethnographic fieldwork by Steien and Monsen (2022). The following participants, all of whom are referred to by pseudonyms, contributed data for the first methodological phase (see ch. 5.1), which resulted in the first article (see part 2):

Christophe

Christophe is a man born in 1987 in Bukavu city. He spent 7 years in transit in Uganda, mainly in Kampala. His reported repertoire consists of resources from Mashi, Swahili, French, English, Luganda and Norwegian.

Fidèle

Fidèle is a man born in 1990 in the Rutshuru territory. He spent 23 years in transit in Uganda, mainly in Kyangwali refugee resettlement. His reported repertoire consists of resources from Swahili, Kinyabwisha, English, Runyoro, Luganda and Norwegian.

Joseph

Joseph is a man born in 1985 in the Rutshuru territory. He spent 12 years in transit in Uganda, mainly in Kyangwali refugee resettlement. His reported repertoire consists of resources from Kinyabwisha, Swahili, French, English, Luganda, Runyoro and Norwegian.

Koïs

Koïs is a woman born in 2002 in the Rutshuru territory. She spent 11 years in transit in Uganda, mainly in Kyangwali refugee resettlement. Her reported repertoire consists of resources from Swahili, English and Norwegian.

Lucas

Lucas is a man born in 1994 in the Rutshuru territory. He spent 11 to 12 years in transit in Uganda, mainly in Kyangwali refugee resettlement. His reported repertoire consists of resources from Kinyabwisha, Swahili, French, English, Runyoro, Luganda and Norwegian.

Pierre

Pierre is a man born in 1995 in the Rutshuru territory. He spent 7 years in transit in Uganda, mainly in Kyangwali refugee resettlement. His reported repertoire consists of resources from Kinyabwisha, Swahili, French, English, Luganda, Runyoro and Norwegian.

Zépherin

Zépherin is a man born in 1979 in the Rutshuru territory. He spent 11 years in transit in Uganda, mainly in Kyangwali refugee resettlement. His reported repertoire consists of resources from Kinyabwisha, Swahili, French, English, Luganda, Runyoro and Norwegian.

For the second methodological phase (see ch. 5.2), which resulted in articles 2 and 3 (see part 2), Fidèle continued as one of the participants. His emic perspectives were complemented with emic perspectives from another participant in the KongNor project, Prudent. Again, practical constraints were part of the reason why I only collected data from these two. I refer to articles two and three (part 2) for longer presentations of the participants' life histories. Thus, the following participants contributed data in the second methodological phase:

Fidèle (see above)

Prudent

Prudent is a man born in 1983 in the Kalehe territory. He spent 13 years in transit in Uganda, mainly in Kampala. His reported repertoire consists of resources from Kitembo, Swahili, French, English, Lingala, Luganda and Norwegian.

Similar to other Congolese refugees in Norway who have participated in earlier research (see ch. 2.2), the repertoires of all these eight Congolese refugees reflect the ecologies they have inhabited. These eight Congolese refugees were born in Eastern DRC, where they acquired resources from Bantu languages like Swahili and Kinyabwisha and French, if they went to school in DRC before fleeing to Uganda (Steien & Monsen, 2022). While in Uganda, they "collected", as one of the participants put it (Steien, 2022), the majority of their English and

Luganda resources, which expanded their already quite complex repertoires. Shortly after their arrival in Norway, their repertoire started expanding with several Norwegian resources (see e.g., Horbowicz, 2022; Monsen & Steien, 2022b; Nordanger, 2022). As is clear from the description of the participants' languages, they have very complex multilingual competencies. In the next chapter, I explain more about why *inter alia* the concepts *repertoire* and *resources*, often used in critical sociolinguistics, reflect their multilingual competencies in a very adequate way.

3 A critical sociolinguistic framework

In this chapter, I explain why I claim that a critical sociolinguistic framework is particularly suitable for the research I have conducted on English among forced migrants from the Global South. My research continues a relatively recent critical research strand within sociolinguistics. For a summary of previous developments in sociolinguistics, see Eckert (2012). I will here go through ontological, epistemological, and ideological arguments for positioning my research within critical sociolinguistics.

3.1 An ontological argument

A critical sociolinguistics framework works well for my research due to its ontological understandings of *language*. Specifically, using the terms *repertoires* consisting of communicative *resources* works well for describing the languages of individuals and in society, while the term communicative *practices* works well for referring to individuals' language usage during interactions. The specific utility of each of these terms for my empirical research will here be presented in turn, before a brief description of my use of *named languages*.

3.1.1 Resources and repertoires

Viewing individuals' languages as a *repertoire* of communicative *resources* (cf. e.g., Blommaert, 2010; Blommaert & Backus, 2013; Canagarajah, 2017) is helpful for several reasons in research with the present multilingual participants who have histories of mobility. Firstly, as mentioned in chapter 2, these speakers have had highly complex repertoires since birth. Similar to how other multilingual speakers have been described (see e.g., Blommaert & Backus, 2013), at no point in the participants' lives could they have been described as having "monolingual competence" in only one language. Instead, their communicative repertoires consisting of resources from different pedigrees reflect lives lived in multiple ecologies and used in multiple social encounters. Thus, viewing the participants' languages as complex repertoires consisting of linguistic resources from multiple pedigrees reflects their languages well.

Secondly, a critical sociolinguistic understanding of their languages as repertoires works well for describing these speakers' histories of mobility. The term *repertoires*, as understood in critical sociolinguistics, has dynamicity as an inherent characteristic. As Blommaert (2009, p. 424) puts it, "[t]he fact is … that someone's linguistic repertoire reflects a *life*, and not just birth, and it is a life that is lived in a real sociocultural, historical and political space" (original

emphasis). This is especially true for the participants in my research project. The snapshot of their reported repertoires (see ch. 2.3), as consisting of Bantu resources, English resources and often French resources, reflects their lives as minoritised groups in Eastern DRC, as refugees of war over several decades in Uganda, and as immigrants in Norway. Consequently, the ontological understanding of individuals' languages as repertoires in constant change reflects well the dynamic nature of the participants' languages resulting from a life of forced migration.

3.1.2 Communicative practices

Due to the dynamic nature of communication, it is helpful to follow the critical sociolinguistic tradition of referring to what speakers do in communicative interactions as communicative *practices* (cf. e.g., Ag & Jørgensen, 2013; Blommaert, 2010; Bourdieu, 1991; Li, 2018; Nassenstein, 2020; Pennycook, 2010; Steien et al., 2023). Other ontological understandings of English communication might focus on how certain English *accents* or *varieties* are 'used' in communicative interactions. However, these terms are mainly used for generalisations based on stabilised, average usage over time among a group of speakers (e.g., Kachru, 1985; Labov, 2006; Simo Bobda, 2001; Wells, 1982) and, therefore, might not capture adequately the complexities of individuals' situated communication. Thus, using the term English practices allows me to explore their English pronunciations without aiming for representability across all Congolese refugees in Norway at all times. Focusing on my participants' situated English practices does not entail that their English pronunciations are random; the pronunciation study (see article 1 in part 2) revealed that their pronunciations do show systematised patterns. However, the pronunciation data was collected from the participants at a moment of transition, i.e. their first year in Norway, and thus describes a fleeting snapshot of their accent (cf. Blommaert, 2010). Referring to their pronunciations as English practices thus affords me a way of observing linguistic patterns in transition.

3.1.3 Named languages

Using the terms *repertoires*, *resources*, and *practices* reflects a legacy of what we might call a project of poststructuralist sociolinguistics. This project has been marked by deconstruction of named languages (see e.g., Blommaert, 2010; Canagarajah, 2013; Makoni & Pennycook, 2006, 2012; Pennycook & Otsuji, 2016), focusing on named languages as social constructs (see e.g., Canagarajah, 2013, 2017; Otheguy et al., 2019), and various attempts at reimagining and renaming practices previously referred to as codeswitching and hybridity (see e.g., Blommaert, 2010; Canagarajah, 2013; Jaspers & Madsen, 2019; Jenkins, 2015; Jørgensen et

al., 2011; Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010). Sociolinguistic scholarship following this tradition now seems to be less concerned with deconstruction and renaming. Instead, sociolinguists following this tradition take these discussions on board by focusing more on their implications for applied linguistics (e.g., Canagarajah, 2022; García & Li, 2014; Pennycook, 2022), or critically reviewing the value of new terminology, like translanguaging for researchers, practitioners and grassroots speakers (e.g., Makoni, 2012; Phyak, 2022), particularly in minority language contexts (see e.g., Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; O'Rourke, 2019). It is, *inter alia,* because of this more critical distance to deconstruction and renaming practices that I refer to recent scholarship within this strand of sociolinguistics as critical sociolinguistics.

I believe, in line with several others (e.g., O'Rourke, 2019; Otheguy et al., 2015; Turner & Lin, 2020), that we can recognise named languages as social constructs, while still continuing to use such language labels. While the label 'English' might be less precise ontologically than 'the socially delineated set of linguistic resources commonly referred to as English', simply referring to a subset of speakers' resources as 'English' allows for much more straightforward communication of my research. Thus, when I refer to the participants' 'English pronunciation', what I mean is their pronunciation of lexical and morphosyntactic resources societally associated with the label 'English'. The phonetic and phonotactic resources they employ in 'English pronunciation' are, in fact, actually more similar to resources societally associated with the label 'Bantu', which highlights how named languages are socially constructed. Despite being social constructs, however, named languages still exist ontologically. They are often of great importance for policymakers as well as grassroots speakers for issues related to identity and linguistic justice (see e.g., Blommaert, 2010; Monsen & Steien, 2022b; Rosa & Flores, 2017). It is in this way I focus on 'English' as linguistic capital for my participants, as a part of their identities and of great emic importance to them.

3.2 An epistemological argument

In addition to the ontological argument for employing a critical sociolinguistic approach, I will now go on to present an epistemological argument for the value of a critical sociolinguistic approach for my research, related to critical sociolinguistic views on scientific knowledge production. Here I especially draw on Pennycook and Makoni's (2020; see also Pennycook, 2022) challenge of reimagining critical applied linguistics with perspectives from the Global South. Critical applied linguistics arguably belongs to the same research paradigm as critical sociolinguistics in many ways, regardless of which term is used as the overarching

term. Critical sociolinguistics and critical applied linguistics mainly differ in their research foci, one focusing on language practices and ideologies and the other focusing on applied, e.g., educational, implicational and operationalisational aspects of critical sociolinguistic understandings of language practices and ideologies, respectively. Here, I will refer to both as critical sociolinguistics for the sake of convenience.

3.2.1 Questioning Northern-informed doxa

Critical sociolinguists (e.g., Canagarajah, 2022; Pennycook, 2022; Pennycook & Makoni, 2020; Phyak, 2022; see also Ratele, 2019; and Santos & Meneses, 2020) have challenged fellow linguists to question Northern-informed doxa. They remind us that hegemonic theory-building – including theories, epistemologies, methodologies, researchers, locus of enunciation, etc. – and dominant ideologies – e.g., native/non-native dichotomy, monolingual ideology, standard language ideology – are based on empirical data from the Global North and have been developed by researchers academically socialised in the Global North. Here the Global North may overlap with the geographical North, i.e. much of the empirical data informing hegemonic theories are from American and European prestige languages and influential researchers are often academically socialised in North America and Europe. They further remind us that this centre-ing of Northern data, theories, ideologies and researchers limits other researchers, theories, research contexts, etc. from participating in and being listened to in the global academic discussion (e.g., Pennycook & Makoni, 2020; Santos & Meneses, 2020; see also Spivak, 1988).

I believe we can view the relationship between Northern and Southern perspectives as a spectrum from the more Southern to the more Northern, see figure 1. On the most Southern end of the spectrum, we have perspectives developed from peripherised data (e.g., research contexts, participants, ways of thinking, ways of expressing one's beliefs), researchers, theories, ideologies, etc. These Southern perspectives are often peripherised in multiple capacities. On the most Northern end of the spectrum, we have perspectives developed from centre-ised data (e.g., research contexts, participants, ways of thinking, ways of expressing one's beliefs), researchers, theories, ideologies, etc. Again, Northern perspectives are often centre-ised in multiple capacities. The status quo of the Northern-Southern spectrum is currently an imbalance, tilted strongly towards the Northern end of the spectrum. Admittedly, there are many examples of academic literature informed by more Southern perspectives, both based on data from the geographical South (e.g., Blommaert, 2005b; Fabian, 1986; Netto et al., 2022; Ratele, 2019; Steien & Yakpo, 2020) and data from the geographical North (e.g.,

Costa, 2018; Lane, 2018; O'Rourke, 2019; Patrick et al., 2018; Urla et al., 2018). However, most of the body of academic literature up until today focuses mostly on Northern perspectives, developed from data, theories, researchers, and ideologies from the Global North. A potential remedy to redress this imbalance is to add more academic literature into the global academic discussion that is based on Southern perspectives.

Figure 1. A spectrum of Northern more and more Southern perspectives

Redressing the imbalance of Northern and Southern perspectives in the global academic discussion is important because such perspectives inform and affect doxa in the global academic discussion. By doxa, I am referring to hegemonic theory-building (e.g., Bourdieu, 1991; Kachru, 1985) and dominant ideologies. Building on figure 1, figure 2 shows how data generation and analysis *shape* doxa, and data generation and analysis *are themselves shaped by* doxa, in an ongoing cyclical process. By data generation and analysis, I am referring to what counts as data, what is prioritised (academically, economically, practically), data collection processes, etc., as well as inductive, deductive or abductive analytical modes. The relationship between data generation and analysis is also cyclical: generation of data *affects* analysis of data, and analysis of data *affects* generation of (new) data. Again, the relationship between dominant ideologies and hegemonic theory-building is cyclical: dominant ideologies *affect* hegemonic theory-building and hegemonic theory-building *affects* dominant ideologies. Thus, in order to change doxa in the global academic discussion, we need more Southern perspectives to inform ideologies and theory-building on the one side, and/or data generation and analysis on the other.

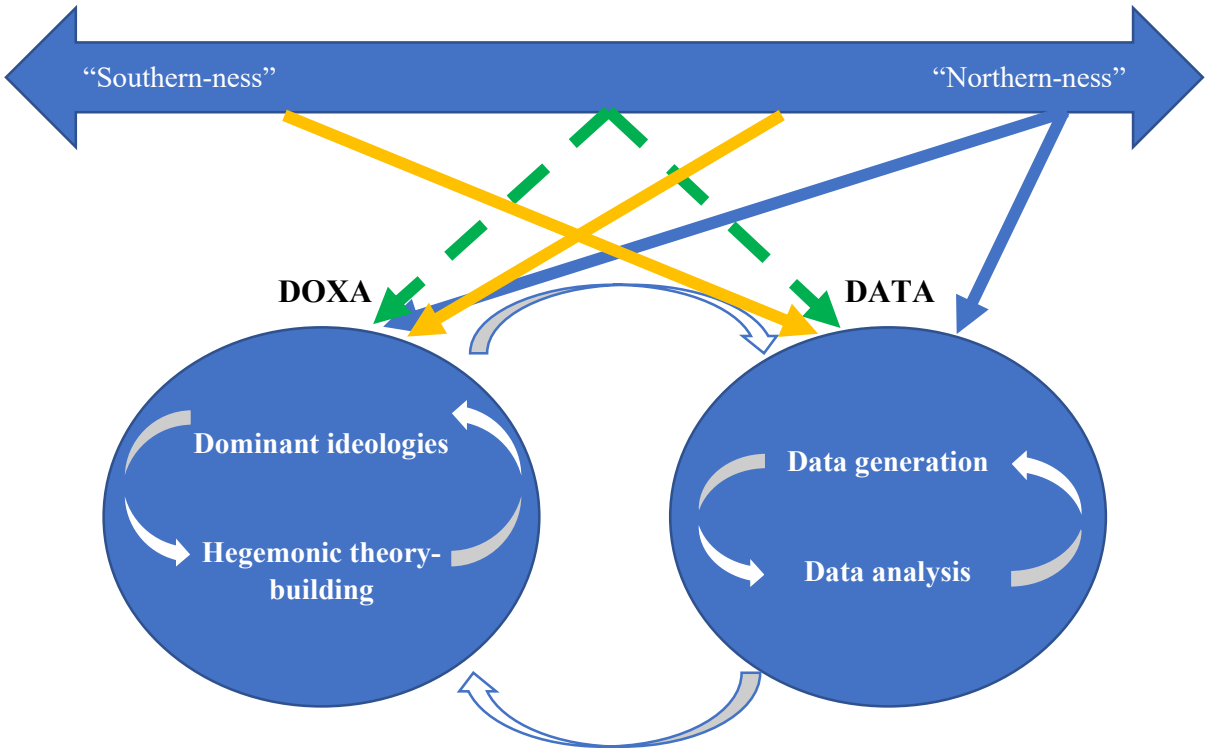

Figure 2. Overview of how Northern and Southern perspectives feed into doxa and data

Figure 2 also includes several coloured arrows. The blue arrows show my interpretation of current status quo in the global academic discussion, i.e. that the Northern-Southern spectrum is generally weighted more towards the Northern end and there is thus a Northern centre of gravity in perspectives that inform doxa. The yellow arrows show where I would place my research project. Data are from the more Southern end of the spectrum, and theories, epistemologies and methodologies are from a slightly more Northern end of the spectrum. I also position my research within ideologies that question ways of thinking that dominate the global academic discussion. It is certainly possible to have both data and theory-building from the Southern end; thus, my research is just a small contribution. However, utilising data from the more Southern end of the spectrum, together with ideological positioning, means that I can challenge doxa in the global academic discussion, albeit to a limited degree, since theory-building has to be adjusted in order to be used for more Southern data. Finally, the green dotted arrows show the potential ideal balance within the global academic discussion that can be achieved if the average amount of academic literature is informed by the middle of the spectrum. Since most of the academic literature is informed by the more Northern end of the

spectrum, we need a great deal more literature informed by the more Southern end to redress this imbalance.

While recognising that I am myself a researcher trained in the Global North, the challenge to question Northern-informed doxa from the start of my research has afforded me a more inductive approach to empirical data from participants from the Global South. As my participants have a completely different background than myself, it has been important to approach data descriptions with as few analytical classifications as possible to allow the data to guide the process, as well as be willing to discard or suggest changes to any Northern theories and analytical frameworks that do not work when analysing and interpreting data from Southern speakers. In the following, I will present some examples of how I have questioned Northern-informed doxa in my research.

3.2.1.1 Syllabification analysis

Descriptions of linguistic structures and linguistic theorisation have been dominated by research on European and American prestige languages (Steien et al., 2023; Steien & Yakpo, 2020). In the study of the participants' English pronunciation (see article 1 in part 2), I decided not to approach syllable divisions in polysyllabic words based on how these have been theorised in RP. Analysing syllable division in polysyllabic words proved to be less straightforward in the English speech of multilingual speakers from the Global South. Syllable boundaries are, in general, extremely difficult to determine empirically and must therefore be analysed theoretically[1] (see e.g., Kennedy, 2017, p. 205). In words like *winter* and *inkling*, the syllable boundaries can be analysed before word-medial clusters, i.e. [wi.nta | i.ŋkliŋ][2]; in between word-medial clusters, i.e. [win.ta | iŋk.liŋ]; or after word-medial clusters [wint.a | iŋkl.iŋ].

In words like *winter* and *inkling*, their syllable boundaries are usually analysed word-medially as

(1) *winter* → [win.ta]

(2) *inkling* → [iŋk.liŋ]

[1] A special thanks to professor emeritus Wim van Dommelen and the late professor emeritus Gjert Kristoffersen (personal communication, May 2021) for their input on the issue of determining syllable boundaries empirically.
[2] Phonetic transcriptions are here used to refer to the participants' pronunciation, using phonetic symbols previously used in descriptions of linguistic varieties in DRC and Uganda (e.g., Nassenstein, 2016; Odden, 2015; Schmied, 2008, 2012; Simo Bobda, 2001; Wald, 2009), rather than detailed allophonic descriptions, nor saying anything about phonemic status of the phones.

in line with the maximal onset principle (see e.g., Carr, 1993; Katamba, 1989; Nespor & Vogel, 2007; Spencer, 1996) combined with the sonority sequencing principle (see e.g., Giegerich, 1992; Lass, 1984; Spencer, 1996), and, according to several authors (McMahon, 2002, p. 106; see also Cruttenden, 2014; Hammond, 1999), phonotactic constraints in English that make nasals with or without following consonants impossible in onsets, thus blocking pre-cluster syllabification, i.e.

(3) *winter* → [*wi.nta]

(4) *inkling* → [*i.ŋkliŋ]

Questioning this Northern-informed doxa reminds me that the reasons for analysing the syllable boundary as (1) and (2) are based on phonological theories that take the language systems of monolingual speakers of American and European prestige languages as their starting point (e.g., Chomsky, 1968). The participants in my research are multilingual speakers with several resources from peripherised Bantu languages in their repertoire in addition to English and French resources. Thus, it might not be given that syllable boundaries in their English pronunciation should be analysed according to theories developed through a monolingual lens.

As mentioned in chapter 2.1, in the ecologies in eastern DRC and Uganda there is a statistical dominance of Bantu languages, *inter alia* Swahili, Kinyabwisha, Luganda, and arguably also Ugandan English and African Frenches, and thus a statistical dominance of Bantu phonotactics in the ecologies (c.f. Haugen, 1972; Mufwene, 2001; Steien & Yakpo, 2020). As further mentioned (ch. 2.1), in Bantu languages, nasals can be the first consonant in an onset cluster (see e.g., Hyman & Katamba, 1999; Odden, 2015; Wald, 2009). Prefixation of homorganic nasals giving potential Ugandan English pronunciations of *balloon* as *mballoon*, as mentioned by Nassenstein (2016; see ch. 2.1.1) further points to how, for speakers who have inhabited Bantu-dominant ecologies over time, onset clusters might be particularly sensitive to nasal presence. Thus, viewing English spoken by the participants as a Bantu(-like) set of resources, syllable divisions in words like *winter* and *inkling* could thus be analysed before the word-medial cluster, i.e.

(5) *winter* → [wi.nta]

(6) *inkling* → [i.ŋkliŋ]

Furthermore, according to SLA research, AL learners use the phonology of their first languages to understand AL perceptual input (see e.g., Flege, 1995; So & Best, 2010; Steien

& Yakpo, 2020). Given that the participants in my research acquired English as an AL while already having Bantu-dominant repertories, it is possible that they have filtered their AL English perceptual input through a filter of Bantu phonotactics. Similar observations have been made regarding English spoken by Luganda-dominant speakers (Katamba, 1989, p. 166). Consequently, in addition to the statistical ecological argument for syllabification before word-medial cluster, this analysis is also supported by research among multilingual speakers. Due to space constraints in the article (see article 1 in part 2), however, I ended up not specifying cluster position in syllables, but rather simply referring to consonant clusters in polysyllabic words according to their position in the word, e.g., word-initial or word-medial cluster. Thus, continually questioning Northern-informed doxa in phonological literature has allowed me not to take dominant syllabification analyses for granted and rather stay open to other alternatives.

3.2.1.2 Understanding consonant deletion and epenthesis

In the pronunciation study (see article 1 in part 2; see also ch. 6), I found that the participants employed multiple strategies, including consonant deletion, to avoid closed syllables and complex consonant clusters. At first glance, some of the participants' strategies seemed similar to descriptions of *L-Vocalisation* and *R-Deletion*, notions which have been developed to describe pronunciation patterns in some British English accents in the Global North, and have later been applied in some descriptions of postcolonial varieties of English (see e.g., Cruttenden, 2014; Schneider, 2007; Trudgill, 2017; Wells, 1982). However, these two terms were coined to describe changes that affect laterals and rhotic consonants, respectively, in word-final coda positions. My participants' consonant deletion is a more extensive phenomenon, affecting a range of consonants in a range of positions within words and syllables. I therefore chose not to use these two, primarily Northern-informed, labels and instead simply refer to the participants' strategies as consonant deletion.

Furthermore, I attempted to use the Northern-informed explanation of L1 influence to explain the participants' pronunciation strategies. This explanation was quickly abandoned, however. Firstly, the participants used pronunciation strategies that have been found in descriptions across linguistic varieties in the Congolese and Ugandan ecologies. According to previous descriptions of Ugandan English and pronunciations of loanwords in Bantu languages, the main strategy to avoid closed syllables seem to primarily be epenthesis (see Schmied, 2008; Wald, 2009). In descriptions of African Frenches, the main strategy to avoid closed syllables seems to primarily be consonant deletion (see Nimbona & Steien, 2019). When it comes to

strategies to avoid complex consonant clusters, previous descriptions of Ugandan and other African Englishes point to epenthesis as the main strategy in onset clusters and either epenthesis or consonant deletion in coda clusters (see Schmied, 2008; Simo Bobda, 2007), while in descriptions of African Frenches, epenthesis seems to be the main strategy regardless of syllable position (see Nimbona & Steien, 2019). In the pronunciation data from my participants, the Congolese refugees use both consonant deletion and epenthesis for both avoiding closed syllables and complex clusters (see article 1 in part 2). Accordingly, from looking at similarities with descriptions of relevant linguistic varieties in the ecologies, there seemed to be influence from more than one language, including languages that the individuals did not report having in their repertoires. One language, or L1, could thus not be said to be the dominant influence in the participants' English practices. Secondly, the participants cannot in fact be said to have one L1, since they have been multilingual all their lives (Steien & Monsen, 2022). The concept L1, or mother tongue, is thus unable to describe Southern multilingual realities (Steien & Hansen, 2015; see also Steien, 2021). Again, continually questioning Northern-informed doxa allowed me to use dominant explanations and analytical processes critically and not expect them necessarily to work with pronunciation material from Southern speakers.

3.2.1.3 Allowing a Southern research context to inform potential theoretical developments to Bourdieu's (1991, 1997) *theories*

An epistemological stance of continual questioning of Northern-informed doxa has also been fruitful when using theories by researchers from the Global North to understand emic perspectives on the value of English. In the second article (see article 2 in part 2; see also ch. 6), Bourdieu's (1991, 1997) conceptual framework of linguistic capital proved useful for understanding how and why the participants attributed value to English. However, their narratives also pointed to linguistic markets and speakers' exchange of capital operating for different reasons than Bourdieu's (1991) underlying motivations of individualism and competition, based on French middle-class society. In the participants' narrative, the main reason why English resources were constructed as valuable in their own lives was that they could be exchanged for 'help' for oneself and other people inside and outside one's *community of experience* (c.f. Kivimäki et al., 2023). Thus, while acknowledging that exchanging English resources as linguistic capital could be beneficial for themselves as individuals, the participants also positioned themselves as wanting to share with others, not compete with others (see article 2 in part 2). I therefore treated Bourdieu's (1991, 1997)

theories critically by not forcing my empirical data into his theories. Instead, my data could be used to question the emphasis on competition for individual gain in Bourdieu's (1991, 1997) theories. Might it perhaps be possible to envision his theories without individualism and competition as universal underlying motivations? I believe his conceptual framework still can be valuable as analytical tools in Southern contexts, while also acknowledging that some parts of his theories might not reflect Southern realities. Questioning Northern-informed doxa can thus be a helpful epistemological stance when employing theoretical frameworks originating in the Global North in a Southern context.

3.2.1.4 Being willing to disregard often used sociolinguistic concepts

When analysing the participants' emic perspectives, it became necessary to find a helpful term to refer to the group of UN refugees who were all originally from DRC, who had had long transits in Uganda, but who are now spread across countries in the Global North while still keeping in touch through digital communication. I first attempted to use Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of *communities of practice*, in line with doxa in sociolinguistic and ethnographic literature since the 1990s (see e.g., De Fina, 2020; Eckert, 1989) as an alternative to more traditional approaches of "studying homogeneous cultures" or speech communities "that can be defined more by … nationality or place of birth" (De Fina, 2020, p. 163; see also e.g., Labov, 1963). However, I eventually realised that CoP does not reflect well this specific group of Congolese refugees and, especially not, their current digital community and communication[3].

Using Gee's (2005) overview of commonalities in the various definitions of communities of practice (COP), I realised that the Congolese community cannot be described as a COP for multiple reasons. Firstly, after the refugees were settled in host countries, they rarely interact face-to-face, which many definitions of COP may take as an important characteristic of COPs (Gee, 2005, p. 591). In this sense, the specific community of Congolese refugees is similar to *imagined communities* as understood by Anderson (1991). Furthermore, their digital interactions are not necessarily characterised by "mutual engagement'" (Gee, 2005, p. 592), as their interactions are asynchronous and imbalanced.

Secondly, they do not necessarily share "a 'joint enterprise'", which "has been taken as definitive of a COP" (Gee, 2005, p. 591). In some sense they can be said to share a goal of wanting to move from being positioned as guests in their new countries of residence to being

[3] A special thanks to Dr Max Spotti for bringing this to my attention.

positioned as permanent inhabitants. However, such a goal is not necessarily without nuances for all the refugees. As Fidèle told me at one point when I asked him how he liked Norway so far, "I'd rather be in Uganda" (Fidèle, personal communication). Thus, the various Congolese refugees might have varied investment with regards to moving away from guesthood.

Finally, by focusing on communities of *practice*, what people share is primarily a practice. However, it is certainly not possible for anyone to 'practise' being a Congolese refugee with long transit in Uganda. Thus, what they share is not first and foremost a practice. Instead, what these people share is primarily a historical experience. What I found to be helpful instead, was to refer to this community of UN refugees from DRC with long transits in Uganda with historians Kivimäki et al.'s (2023) concept of *communities of experience* (see also Kivimäki et al., 2021, pp. 13–14). They explain that communities of experience "refer to people who recognize similarities in their experiences, who share and negotiate these experiences and their meanings with each other, and who start to identify themselves as a group, bound together with a sense of shared experience" (Kivimäki et al., 2023). I believe that the notion of *communities of experience* reflects this group of Congolese refugees more accurately and I therefore opted to use it in article 2 to refer to the participants' UN refugee community (see part 2).

3.2.2 Including Southern perspectives

In addition to questioning Northern-informed doxa, my research explicitly engages with Southern perspectives through choice of participants and their emic perspectives as the research focus, and thus brings previously unheard Southern *voices* (e.g., Blommaert, 2005a) into the global academic discussion on English as a global language. The participants in my research can be described as Southern for more reasons than just having lived most of their lives in countries in the Global South. Importantly, these speakers have been "excluded, silenced and marginalized" (Santos, 2012, p. 51) in all the linguistic ecologies they have been living (see ch. 2.2). Consequently, the participants can be described as Southern, not just in light of their background, but also due to continued processes of exclusion, silencing, and marginalisation of them and their voices (see also De Fina & Baynham, 2005, p. 2). Thus, a critical sociolinguistic approach made me reconsider whether I wish to continue the very practical trend of obtaining data from WEIRD participants, i.e. Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich and Democratic participants (see e.g., Henrich et al., 2010; Pennycook & Makoni, 2020), or bring in new perspectives from Southern participants into the global academic discussion on English as a global language. I chose to do the second.

The second way my research includes Southern perspectives is through explicit focus on the participants' emic perspectives (Hornberger, 2013; Pike, 1967), i.e. their understandings and ways of thinking as insiders. Grey and Piller (2020) highlight that "the strength of [emic approaches] is to bring into the literature more of the varied forms of, and views about, globalisation's effects on language practices and on sociolinguistic conditions" (p. 66). Focusing on emic perspectives provides a glimpse into participants' "subject reality (i.e. finding on how 'things' or events were experienced by the respondents)" with a "sensitivity to recurrent motifs salient in participants' stories" (Pavlenko, 2007, pp. 165–166). Thus, researching emic perspectives becomes a way of highlighting *the participants'* understandings and epistemologies and, ultimately, a step towards decentring Northern-informed doxa.

One might ask why it is valuable to use the term *Southern perspectives* in this context, as it overlaps significantly with other concepts like *inclusion/exclusion* (see e.g., Spivak, 1988) and *precarisation* (see e.g., Butler, 2009; Lorey, 2015). I believe that the value of a term like *Southern perspectives* lies in the fact that it makes the geographical South, i.e. Latin-America, Africa and South Asia, the proto-typical association with the word. This forces especially Northern researchers to change their scope completely from their own Northern research context to Southern research contexts that often differ significantly from their own life worlds. This can then become a form of that which education researchers sometimes refer to as *mimetic inauthenticity* (Willbergh, 2015), i.e. that it is easier to rethink one's own life worlds by focusing on completely different ones. This opens a "possibility of experiencing something new, something that we would not otherwise have seen" (Willbergh, 2015, p. 343). Consequently, engaging with emic perspectives by Southern participants can help us review Northern-informed doxa, and even re-imagine our understandings of Northern data as well.

3.3 An ideological argument

A critical sociolinguistic approach that questions Northern-informed doxa and engages with Southern perspectives forces us to acknowledge that all research is, ultimately, ideological (see e.g., Pennycook, 2022; Pennycook & Makoni, 2020). From research focus, choice of research partners and funding procedures, via choice of terminology and analytical procedure to theory building and practical uptake, every part of research includes ideological choices. Moreover, recognising that ideology informs every part of research also allows critical sociolinguists to have an explicit ideological agenda. In this section, some examples of ideological choices I have made are outlined before I explicitly state my ideological agenda.

Firstly, choosing to involve Southern speakers as research participants is itself an ideological choice. By not including them, I would, although unintentionally, have taken a stance that their practices, perspectives and epistemologies are not worthy of or irrelevant for inclusion in academic discussions on English as a global language. However, by not including them in our research, we run the risk of reproducing Northern-informed doxa that might not be empirically valid in all contexts.

Secondly, the choice to not use Received Pronunciation (RP) or General American (GA) as a reference accent (see e.g., Wells, 1982), a dominant approach in descriptive studies that focus on Global English speakers' English pronunciation (e.g., Edwards, 2014; Kruger & van Rooy, 2017; Schmied, 2008; Simo Bobda, 2000, 2010), has an ideological justification in addition to an empirical justification. Using one of these accents as a reference point is likely a pragmatic choice for many researchers as it makes it easier to compare studies that utilise the same analytical yardstick. This yardstick does, however, construct a scale of more or less RP- or GA-like pronunciation, a scale which, in SLA, is often operationalised as more or less successful English language learning (see e.g., Ortega, 2018). This dominant practice thus, albeit unintentionally, perpetuates normative ideologies, like a standard language ideology (see e.g., Milroy & Milroy, 2012).

Thirdly, in terms of choice of terminology, I could have chosen to refer to the participants in my research as *non-native* speakers of English, since English is an AL in their repertoire. However, this term is ideologically problematic as it indexes a learner position that does not adequately capture how English is a dominant language in their repertoire. Conversely, I could also have chosen to refer to some of them as *native* speakers of English, since they acquired English in early childhood and some of them have, themselves, referred to English as their mother tongue. However, their history and status are quite different from prototypically white native English speakers from the British Isles and the various places to which settlers from the British Isles emigrated, like the United States, South Africa and Australia (see also Piller & Bodis, 2022).

Finally, I could have chosen to theorise my participants as *new speakers* of English (see e.g., O'Rourke et al., 2015; Pujolar & O'Rourke, 2022), a term used as an alternative to 'non-native speakers' to refer to speakers of *minoritised* languages (c.f. Costa et al., 2018) who have chosen to acquire the minoritised language later in life and might be perceived as illegitimate speakers of the minoritised language by more traditional 'native' minoritised language speakers. However, even though there are definite parallels between new speakers

of minoritised languages and these Congolese refugees, there are also important differences between them that make it more challenging to use the term in other research contexts. Firstly, although both Congolese refugees in Norway and new speakers of minority languages are marginalised groups, they have experienced different types of marginalisation. The term *new speaker* came to be used in particular European contexts as a way to reject oppressive monolingual ideologies (O'Rourke et al., 2015). The Congolese speakers, on the other hand, may have been marginalised in Uganda due to their status as refugees of war and in Norway due to being immigrants, their skin colour and different cultural background. Thus, both groups have experienced marginalisation, but new speakers have been marginalised mainly because of monolingual ideologies while these Congolese refugees may be marginalised because of multiple ideologies. Secondly, even if new speakers and the Congolese refugees have acquired a minoritised language and English, respectively, as ALs, they have acquired them in different ways. New speakers have mainly learnt a minoritised language formally by choice, "through immersion or bilingual educational programs" (O'Rourke et al., 2015, p. 1), while the Congolese refugees have mainly learnt English informally, through exposure and usage, and not by choice (Steien, 2022; see also Canagarajah, 2021). Thirdly, while both English and minoritised languages can function as capital, they function as capital on different scales. English generally functions as capital on a global scale, and often on national and local scales as well. Minoritised languages function as capital on local and often national scales in certain countries and thus lack capital value on a global scale. Fourthly, even though both new speakers and the English-speaking refugees value their language, they value their language for different reasons. New speakers may strongly identify with their minoritised language and see it as their duty to learn the language well in order to save it (see e.g., Pujolar & O'Rourke, 2022). The Congolese refugees, on the other hand, have not displayed the same loyalty and identification with English. English has a more utilitarian value to the Congolese refugees (see article 2 in part 2 for a longer discussion; see also ch. 6).

While both English-speaking Congolese refugees and new speakers of minority languages are affected by ideologies of who is a *legitimate* language speaker, there may be different ways to reject these ideologies and revalorise them as legitimate speakers. The new speaker paradigm seeks to reject these ideologies and the native/non-native dichotomy and revalorise speakers' linguistic repertories and practices by referring to AL speakers of minoritised languages as 'new speakers' (e.g., O'Rourke et al., 2015; Pujolar & O'Rourke, 2022). In my research, I seek to continue this legacy of the 'new speakers' paradigm of rejection and revalorisation,

but not by labelling them as certain types of speakers. Saying that ‘English is capital to these forced migrants’ is my way of revalorising these Southern participants’ English, without using terminology that came to be used in very particular sociolinguistic contexts. Critical sociolinguistics, especially continuing the legacy of the ‘new speakers’ paradigm, thus affords me to have an explicit ideological agenda of revalorisation.

3.4 Summary

This chapter has presented ontological, epistemological and ideological arguments for the value of a critical sociolinguistic framework when researching English practices among speakers from the Global South with histories of forced mobility. The main ontological argument is that ontological understandings of *language* employed in critical sociolinguistics reflect well the dynamicity of language and communication among the present participants. The main epistemological argument is that the way knowledge production is approached in critical sociolinguistics, by questioning Northern-informed doxa and seeking to engage more with Southern, peripherised perspectives, has been completely necessary among the present multilingual speakers with their complex repertoires and life histories; these participants simply do not fit into all the descriptive categories and analytical frameworks that have, for the most part, been developed based on research on European and American prestige languages and life worlds. Finally, the main ideological argument is that critical sociolinguistics recognises that choices researchers make are not ideologically neutral, and thus critical sociolinguistics also opens up for explicit ideological agendas.

4 Conceptual frameworks

In my research project, I have found it useful to explore conceptual frameworks from other research fields relevant to my research, especially from contact linguistics (Mufwene, 2001) and sociology of language (Bourdieu, 1991, 1997), in addition to critical sociolinguistics in the sociolinguistics of globalisation tradition (Blommaert, 2010; Blommaert et al., 2005). Here I will explain why the analytical tools from contact linguistics, i.e. *ecology*, from sociology of language, i.e. *capital*, and from critical sociolinguistics, i.e. *scales* and *orders of indexicality*, proved helpful for making sense of my empirical data.

4.1 Linguistic ecologies

Viewing multilingual societies as *ecologies* consisting of several individuals' repertoires (see e.g., Haugen, 1972; Mufwene, 2001) reflects well the multilingual societies where the participants have lived. Norway has previously been described by Ljosland (2007) as a multilingual society potentially approaching what Fishman (1967) terms *diglossia*, i.e. one language per societal domain, since English seems to take over the domain of academia. However, the Norwegian society is most likely more complex than a diglossic situation would entail. The multilingual societies in Eastern DRC and in refugee camps in Uganda are even more complex. These societies are characterised by use of multiple languages across domains (e.g., Golden & Steien, 2021; Nakayiza, 2016; Steien, 2022; see also ch. 2). Since the concept *ecology* has room for more complexity, it thus works quite well when describing the macro spaces that the participants have inhabited.

Moreover, the way ecologies are theorised to function, where statistical dominance of linguistic resources in an ecology seems to strengthen the use of such resources in all the languages in the ecology (see e.g., Haugen, 1972; Mufwene, 2001, 2002), has been observed empirically in language contact studies (see e.g., Gussenhoven & Udofot, 2010; Steien & Yakpo, 2020; Yakpo, 2021), as well as having been observed among African speakers of English. As Schmied (2004) points out, "some speakers of African English exhibit 'interference features' although they do not derive from their mother tongue but from other languages used in the area" (p. 924-925). I observed similar patterns when Fidèle used pronunciation strategies that have been observed in African Frenches even if he did not report having French resources in his repertoire (see article 1 in part 2). He has, however, inhabited ecologies with French presence. Linguistic ecologies thus worked well for explaining why my participants showed an overall preference for open syllables and simple consonant clusters in their English pronunciation, using strategies like epenthesis and consonant deletion, since

such strategies have also been observed across multiple languages in those ecologies (see article 1 in part 2; see also ch. 6). An understanding of multilingual societies as ecologies thus reflects well the complexity of the societies the participants have inhabited and worked well for explaining my participants' situated English pronunciation.

4.2 Capital

Bourdieu's (1991, 1997) conceptual framework of *capital* has been used several times before in sociolinguistic research (see e.g., Blommaert, 2015; Coupland, 2001; Jaworski, 2001). I also found that this conceptual framework provided me with a helpful analytical tool when researching emic perspectives on English practices (see article 2 in part 2). Since the participants themselves related the value of English to opportunities for work, education, social relationships and belonging, seeing English as linguistic capital enabling exchanges with other forms of capital seemed like an adequate analytical lens for understanding the value of English for my participants (see article 2 in part 2; see also ch. 6).

4.3 Scales and orders of indexicality

In the third article (see part 2), sociolinguistic *scales* (Blommaert, 2010; Blommaert et al., 2005) enabled an analytic description of the participants' experience that English was suddenly lacking value in local interactions (see also ch. 6). Based on Blommaert (2007, 2010) and Blommaert et al. (2005), I understand sociolinguistic scales to be vertical social layers that are all negotiated in the same geographical or digital space, each with their own *orders of indexicality*, i.e. the indexicality of communicative resources on each scale is not random, but ordered.

Figure 3 visualises one way of understanding abstract sociolinguistic scales, as an upside-down pyramid showing the slightly overlapping – or scaled – nature of these social layers. Each coloured layer represents one sociolinguistic scale. The most local scale, the yellow layer at the bottom of the pyramid, is also the narrowest in terms of timespace, while the most global scale, the blue layer, is the widest in terms of timespace. Thus, the order of indexicality on the most local scale is mainly relevant at that specific time and place, while the order of indexicality on the most global scale may often be understood to be relevant more generally, i.e. over time and across geographical spaces. The right part of figure 3, is an attempt at visualising the same pyramid of scales but seen from above with each layer of the pyramid slightly spread out so that we can see how there is a different line pattern on each scale-level. This visualises how each layer may have a different order of indexicality.

Figure 3. Visualisation of sociolinguistic scales as an upside-down pyramid seen from the side and from above

Emphasising local-ness and scales in communicative encounters was especially helpful when analysing the participants' narratives of communicative breakdowns (see article 3 in part 2; see also ch. 6). Viewing their narratives of perceived failed English interactions as local communicative practices helps me go beyond the denotational meaning of their utterances and the co-text, the interlocutors, and the setting, to explore negotiated indexicalities and what characterised the interaction as an ideological space, on both a local and a translocal scale. Thus, zooming in on what took place from the perspective of the local spatiotemporal scale while connected socially to multiple sociolinguistic scale-levels affords me a wide understanding of context that proved helpful in the analysis of perceived local communicative breakdowns.

Finally, Blommaert (2010) and Blommaert et al.'s (2005) understanding of the value of linguistic resources as *scaled* works very well as an analytical lens for understanding local communicative practices where the value of English capital is not uniform, but varies, with potentially different values on each scale. In Highet's (2022; see also Highet & Del Percio, 2021) work on English in India, she describes how the value of English is fluctuating and dynamic in a new geographical location. Following her logic that the value of English fluctuates according to geographical location, my argument was developed that the value of English fluctuates in local interactions according to scalar orientation and may result in a devaluation of English resources. Thus, combining an understanding of English value as scaled (Blommaert, 2010; Blommaert et al., 2005) with an understanding of English value as fluctuating (Highet, 2022) led me to theorise that what I call 'scalar misunderstandings' can cause diminishing value of English in local encounters.

5 Methodology

This research project has been triangulated (see e.g., Patton, 2015; Yin, 2018) through two separate methodological phases: a production experiment and autobiographic interviews. I have chosen to be eclectic in choice of methodological approaches, because, as Rampton (2020, p. 19), citing Hymes (1996, p. 44), reminds us, "to engage with pressing real-world issues, [we must] recognis[e] that 'problems lead where they will and that relevance commonly leads across disciplinary boundaries'" (p. 19), which is not uncommon for sociolinguistic studies. In the words of Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz (2008), "[t]he history of sociolinguistics is … one characterized by ongoing cross-disciplinary interaction and influence" (p. 538). I have therefore drawn on multiple traditions depending on what I have needed to answer the research questions and to make sense of my empirical data.

Each of the present research project's methodological phases, and the methodological considerations that went into each of them, is presented in turn below. For each phase, I start by presenting how the data collection was designed, what took place during the data collection and how the data was analysed, before reflecting on limitations, transferability, and specific ethical considerations. As part of the larger collaborative research project KongNor, my research project "is reported to the *Norwegian Centre for Research Data* (NSD) and complies with the national and international ethical standards, and the national legal regulation of research" (Steien & Monsen, 2022, p. 11). The chapter ends with a note on how the phases are connected as one unified project.

5.1 Phase 1: Production experiment

5.1.1 Planning stage

The first methodological phase of my research project aimed to explore the Congolese refugees' English pronunciation, and, specifically, syllable structures in their English practices. Syllable structures had emerged as an interesting avenue for further research during earlier ethnographic fieldwork among these participants (Steien, personal communication). There were several anecdotal episodes where the Norwegian fieldworker misunderstood the participants due to English pronunciation that was unfamiliar to her, like when she inquired "Who is Andy?" when one participant pronounced the word *and* as [andi] (Steien, personal communication). Similar observations have been made in research on lingua franca communication, i.e. that if listeners hear what they perceive as unfamiliar syllable structures, they can misunderstand what their interlocutors are saying (see e.g., Deterding, 2013; O'Neal,

2015). Accordingly, syllable structures were chosen as the unit of analysis in the first phase. The specific research questions this first phase sought to answer were the following:

1. How do the participants pronounce words potentially ending in closed syllables?
2. How do the participants pronounce words with complex consonant clusters in writing?
3. What can their linguistic practices tell us about their preferred syllable structures?

To explore syllable structures, I decided to design a production experiment consisting of reading tasks and sociolinguistic interviews (see e.g., Drager, 2018; Labov, 2006), as this procedure allowed for elicited production data with varying degrees of researcher control and participant attention to pronunciation. I started by compiling a word list consisting of 41 target words and 19 fillers that the participants might potentially pronounce with consonant clusters, see figure 4. These potential clusters were of varying complexity, included various consonants, were in various vocalic environments and in various positions within the word. Moreover, apart from three words, all the focus words might potentially be pronounced with word-final closed syllables. The word list thus included several words that might trigger pronunciation strategies, like consonant deletion and epenthesis, which might ultimately point to a preference for certain syllable structures.

Long vowel + word final [ld]-cluster Mid-open back vowel + [ld] • Co**ld** • Bo**ld** • So**ld** Front close vowel + [ld] • Fie**ld** • Shie**ld** • Sea**led**	**Clusters with [l] or [r]** In word-final position: • Bicy**cle** • Chroni**cle** • Ici**cle** • Possi**ble** • Fi**lm** • Ki**ln** • Mi**lk** • Da**rk** • Pa**rk** In initial position: • **Cl**ass • **Cl**an • **Bl**ink • **Pl**ant • **Cr**ystal • **Cr**ash • **Cr**oss	**Clusters with three consonants** [ŋkl] • Twi**nkle** • Wri**nkle** • I**nkl**ing nasal + [s] + alveolar plosive • A**ngst** • P**ants** • L**ands** [sp] + approximant • **Spl**ash • **Spr**int • **Scr**ipt • **Squ**are • **Squ**int	**Others:** [sp] + approximant and [ŋkl] • **Sprinkle** Clusters with four consonants • **Extra**
Word-final clusters with [s] • Chi**ps** • Conv**ince** • Ri**nse** • Po**st** • Ju**st** • Ti**ps** • Almo**st**			**Fillers**

Figure 4. Focus words for word list with potential clusters marked in bold

The focus words and the fillers where placed in a pseudorandom order (see e.g., Drager, 2018), first alphabetically and then I manually changed the order of some of the words in order to avoid too much similarity in consonant clusters. The focus words in the word list were next used to create a short narrative containing a number of the same focus words.

Finally, I decided on two questions to elicit more informal speaking styles, asking them to describe a typical day for them in Norway and their thoughts about the weather in Norway.

The final protocol for the data collection in the first phase consisted of the following: 1) description of linguistic biography elicited from semi-structured interviews, 2) reading the word list, 3) reading the narrative, 4) sociolinguistic interview, and 5) checking hypothesis disguising (see appendix 1). To check whether the hypothesis had been disguised, the participants were asked what they thought the focus of the study was, to which they either answered that they did not know, or that they assumed it was to study their reading. None of the participants guessed that the focus was related to English syllable structure in particular or English pronunciation in general. The research focus was thus successfully disguised, potentially in accordance with the intended strategies for hypothesis disguising employed (see e.g., Drager, 2018), i.e. using fillers, pseudorandom order of the words in the word list, and multiple activities.

5.1.2 Data collection stage

The pronunciation data from the seven participants (see ch. 2.3) was collected in 2019-2020 by Guri B. Steien, the project manager of KongNor. Steien is the one who recruited the participants in Uganda in the summer of 2019 and kept in touch with them during their first two years of residence as they settled in Norway (see Steien & Monsen, 2022). Thus, the data collection in the first phase was collected by a fieldworker who had a relationship with the participants and was thus a familiar person to them while they were still settling into life in an unknown space. National Covid-19 restrictions starting mid-March 2020, following the global pandemic, further limited direct contact between the participants and myself. It thus made sense that Steien would be the one to collect the linguistic background interviews and pronunciation data. She did so in the participants' homes in order to ensure that they were in a safe environment (c.f. e.g., Agar, 2008). Since someone other than myself collected the data in the first phase, I might have wanted to ask follow-up questions to some of the things they said while describing their linguistic biographies. At the same time, the recorded material still comprised rich sources of data for further analysis.

5.1.3 Data analysis stage

To prepare my data for acoustic analysis, I first transcribed the spoken data orthographically and performed an initial content analysis of their linguistic biographies. Some of the findings from this initial stage influenced and informed analyses and foci in both phases. For instance, the participants mainly learnt English informally in Uganda through daily usage (see also

Steien, 2022). They explained that English resources were used in monolingual and translingual practice in schools in Uganda; with friends in the refugee camp, especially friends from Sudan who did not speak Swahili or Kinyabwisha; and at work in NGOs (e.g., Lucas: "For them, they speak English with us. That's how I came to know English. I started communicating with Sudanese. I started friendship with them"; Fidèle: "I was speaking English out of school because I was engaged with stakeholders, community members, NGOs, government"). In terms of intelligibility when speaking English with Norwegians, several of them were surprised by how fluent Norwegians were in English, potentially positioning themselves as better English speakers than Norwegian-dominant interlocutors (e.g., Christophe: "I didn't know that Norwegian people [are] fluent in English. I was surprised so many Norwegian people were fluent in English. They speak very good English. I'm really surprised"). They thought English spoken by Norwegians was easy to understand and had found that Norwegians understood them easily when the participants spoke English (e.g., Zépherin: "The Norwegian people I have met so far speaking English, I get it very well … They understand and I also understand"). Some of the participants mentioned that the main difference between Norwegians speaking English and the Congolese refugees speaking English, was that Norwegians speak faster than Congolese speakers do (e.g., Koïs: "English from here [i.e. Norway] is different because English from Africa, it's slower"). Their answers in the linguistic background interviews together pointed to English being an important part of the participants' everyday life in both Uganda and Norway.

The next stage involved using Praat (see Boersma, 2001) for phonetic analysis. Here I combined perceptual and acoustic analysis, while preferring the acoustic analysis over the perceptual analysis in cases of divergence in order to minimise L1 perceptual bias given that my L1 is Norwegian (see e.g., Flege, 1995; So & Best, 2010; Steien & Yakpo, 2020). During this stage, I had to make some decisions regarding phonetic transcription. Since there has been no previous study on the English spoken by these speakers, it is unknown which phones have phonemic status and where the articulatory boundaries between them are. Therefore, the phonetic transcriptions I used were quite broad in that no distinction has been made between nearby vowel qualities. For example, both [o] and [ɔ] were transcribed as [o], both [i] and [ɪ] transcribed as [i], and [ʌ], [æ] and [a] as [a], which is also in accordance with previous descriptions of East African Englishes (see e.g., Schmied, 2008 see also ch. 2.1). I further decided not to mark vowel length and word stress in the transcriptions, as it is likely that these features will have different realisations for speakers with complex tonal languages, like Bantu

languages and many Asian languages, in their repertoire than for speakers with less complex tonal languages, like Norwegian, or without tonal languages in their repertoires (see e.g., Steien & Yakpo, 2020; Wald, 2009).

Following these procedural decisions, I elected to focus my analysis on two types of variation, inter-speaker variation across all the participants, including Fidèle, during the word list readings and intra-speaker variation of one of the participants, Fidèle, across speaking styles, giving both breadth and depth to my analysis, see figure 5.

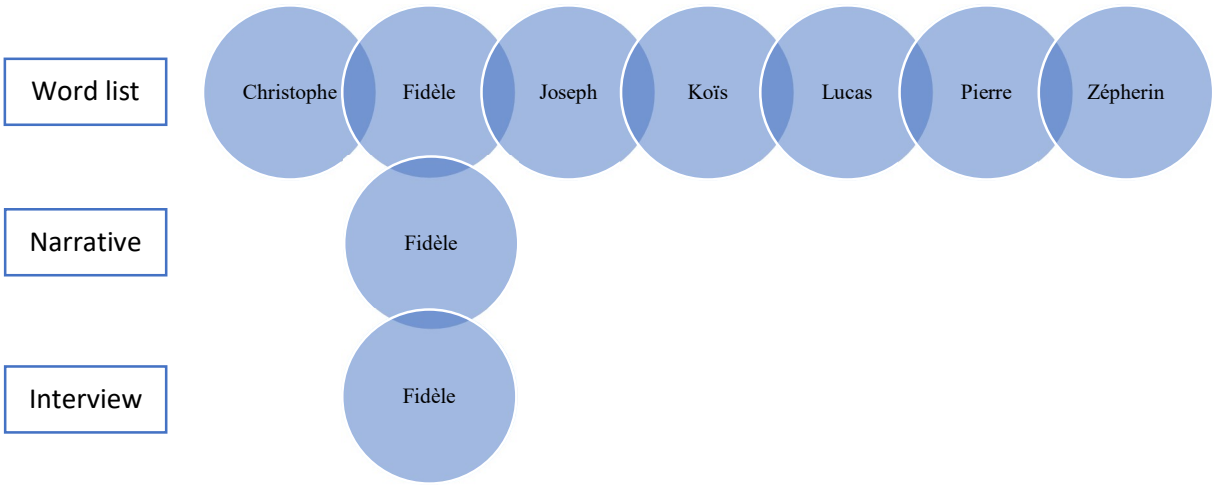

Figure 5. Overview of analytical focus in phase 1

This selection of data was then explored for potential patterns in the participants' English pronunciation. I started analysing the word list recordings first, which formed categories that I then applied when exploring patterns in Fidèle's pronunciation across speaking styles. For example, I started by describing the participants' pronunciations, e.g., with open or closed syllables and number of consonants in consonant clusters, before labelling their pronunciation strategy as consonant deletion and epenthesis.

The phonetic study in the first methodological phase is not meant to inform phonetics, but rather to inform the research fields of language and migration and English as a global language. If this study were to inform phonetics, there would have been certain limitations with regards to the phonetic transcriptions and analysis I have conducted. For example, during the acoustic analysis I mainly focused on clear presence/absence of vowels in spectrograms, in order to analyse e.g., presence of epenthesis, as opposed to comprehensive analyses of vowel formants and, thus, vowel quality. As opposed to phonetic research, this phonetic study

is meant to inform language and migration-research and English as a global language-research. It is an attempt at finding patterns in the participants' seemingly preferred syllable structures in English speech, what strategies they use to ensure these syllable structures in their pronunciations, and whether potential ecological influences may explain their English practices. Consequently, in-depth analysis of pronunciation strategies and discussion of the findings were prioritised in the first article (see part 2) over more detailed phonetic transcriptions and analyses.

5.1.4 Ethical considerations

During this first methodological phase, it became clear that the participants' informal learning of English resources and the dominance of English in their repertoires (see 3.1.3 above) made them quite different to most researched non-native speakers of English. In order to respect these different Southern realities, I made an ideological choice of not referring to them as non-native speakers of English (see also 3.3 for a longer discussion) and instead focused on them as multilingual speakers. Furthermore, I decided to not use descriptions of RP pronunciation as the norm(al) when I described the participants' practices. For example, I used phrases like "the participants pronounce the word with a complex coda cluster" in cases where these words were written with a complex coda cluster. Had I instead used phrases like "the whole cluster is realised", this would imply that the written form or standard RP pronunciations of the words would be the inherent pronunciation of such words. This would be very different from what I was trying to do, which was to describe their practices with less regard for "correct" or "inherent" pronunciation, i.e. common usage among RP speakers. As mentioned above (see ch. 3.2), this was a way of questioning Northern-informed doxa.

5.2 Phase 2: Autobiographic interviews

5.2.1 Planning stage

As became clear throughout the first methodological phase, the Kachruvian Global English framework had several limitations in the research context of English-dominant multilingual migrants from DRC, e.g., in terms of categorising the participants as ENL, ESL or EFL speakers and the framework's design based on speaker stability and linguistic variety homogeneity within national boundaries (see also ch. 1.3). I therefore sought a different theoretical framework, i.e. critical sociolinguistics (see ch. 3) and wished to combine a focus on the participants' English language structure with their English language practices. At this point, I reframed my research design to explore elements from all three levels of Silverstein's (1985) *total linguistic fact*, i.e. one study on language structures, one study on language

practices, and one study on language ideologies. The second methodological phase, out of a planned three phases, was thus meant to explore English practices. In line with recent foci within critical sociolinguistic scholarship (e.g., Beiler, 2023; Duman Çakır, 2022; Franker, 2013; Monsen, 2022; Sabaté-Dalmau, 2018; Steien, 2022) as well as a wish to understand the participants' practices without strong influence of Northern-informed doxa, I decided to focus on emic perspectives on English practices rather than direct observation of recorded practices.

To approach emic perspectives, I decided to use recorded semi-structured autobiographic interviews (Pavlenko, 2007) that were collected in combination with field visits (see also Baynham & De Fina, 2016; De Fina, 2020; Papen, 2020). As this second methodological phase entailed a more inductive approach than the first phase, I did not initially set out with a specific research question (see e.g., Blommaert & Dong, 2020). My aim was rather to get to know the participants and observe their communicative practices in their homes and in their regular sites for Norwegian learning, be open to things that might prove relevant later (e.g., Papen, 2020), and to facilitate interactions that might lead to co-constructed anecdotes and small stories (see e.g., Blommaert & Dong, 2020; De Fina, 2020; Georgakopoulou, 2015). Such anecdotes and small stories would hopefully concern the participants' experiences with and thoughts on English practices throughout their lives in DRC, Uganda and Norway. Importantly, I was not interested in "facts" or "truths" about their experiences, what Pavlenko (2007) refers to as *life realities* (see also De Fina & Baynham, 2005, p. 3), but their *subject realities*, i.e. "how 'things' or events were experienced by the respondents" (Pavlenko, 2007, p. 165; see also ch. 3.2.2). Furthermore, I recognised the situatedness of their co-constructed emic perspectives, i.e. I was aware that they might not construct the same answers were the interviews to be held, e.g., in another time or space, with another interviewer, in another language, or through another medium, like via electronic communication (see e.g., De Fina, 2020; Mann, 2011). Nevertheless, their situated narratives were the focus of the investigation, not because they were supposed to be representative of the participants' context-independent "stable views", but as a glimpse into dynamic subject realities constructed by participants with relatively unique, in the academic literature, life histories, i.e. life histories of forced South-South-North migration currently residing in Norway.

By the time I was ready to start the fieldwork, in the autumn of 2021, Norway was starting to open up again after a longer period of strict Covid-19 restrictions, and it was possible to visit others again without restrictions as to how many people were allowed to meet at the same time. I therefore decided to take on the role of fieldworker myself, rather than have someone

else collect data. This allowed for more ongoing analyses as I would have experienced the field myself, albeit as an outsider (Blommaert & Dong, 2020).

For this methodological phase, I wanted to embrace the qualitative aspects of ethnography fully and limit the number of participants to only two, referred to as Fidèle and Prudent (see ch. 2.3), to enable more rich descriptions of data. As with the phonetic data, the data from the second phase are in no way meant to be representative, but rather function as case studies of the experiences of two individual Congolese refugees in Norway. These two speakers provided two very interesting and complementary cases, as they are both refugees with English as one of the dominant languages in their repertoires, but they spent a different number of years in the English-dominant country Uganda and they were of very different ages when they came to Uganda, see part 2 article 2 for more detailed biographies.

5.2.2 Fieldwork stage

I conducted two field visits to each of the participants' homes and one visit to each of their Norwegian classes in the autumn of 2021, i.e. six field visits in total that lasted three to eight hours, and two 30-60-minute autobiographic interviews with each participant, i.e. four interviews in total. Following the field visits, I have kept in touch with the participants through sporadic informal communication from autumn 2021 to autumn 2023. This has facilitated ongoing contact after the field visits.

During the first visit with each participant, I was introduced to the participants and their families by Guri B. Steien, the fieldworker during the first methodological phase. Afterwards, we all chatted about daily life and Norwegian studies while the children were playing in another part of the living room. During the first visit with Fidèle, I noticed how he was very easy to talk to and was not afraid to steer the conversation. Fidèle's wife served dinner and we all shared the meal together. While there, other friends of the family came, were served dinner, and left. The atmosphere was very informal, and everyone was made to feel welcome. After a while, Fidèle and I went into another room to record the autobiographic interview, an activity he was familiar with from previous ethnographic fieldwork (see Monsen & Steien, 2022a). The interview conversation flowed easily and Fidèle quickly took charge and, again, steered the conversation to topics important to him. At the end of the visit, Fidèle invited me to come visit again, as a new friend of the family. He also expressed being very willing to help me with my research in any way he could.

For the second field visit to Fidèle's home I came alone. Again, we stayed in his living room with his wife, while the children played in another room, and shared a meal together. This time the atmosphere was a bit more tense for reasons unknown to me, although reflecting on this with fellow KongNor fieldworkers made me realise that this was sometimes the case for the other fieldworkers as well when they visited Fidèle (Steien, personal communication; Monsen, personal communication). Once Fidèle and I started the interview after the meal, however, the conversation flowed more easily. During both interviews, Fidèle was more interested in some of the topics and less interested in others. The third field visit was to the location of his Norwegian classes. Fidèle brought me to the classroom as his guest, found a place for me to sit, and introduced me to his classmates and his teacher. I observed the lessons and had breaks together with Fidèle and his classmates. The atmosphere in the classroom was relaxed. Fidèle was very active during the lessons and eagerly helped his classmates with language difficulties and computer problems. During the breaks I conducted what Rinaldo and Guhin (2022, pp. 42–43) refer to as participant observation conversations with him about language learning and ambitions for work.

The first visit to Prudent and his family's home was also in the company of Steien. Previously, Steien had told me not to worry if I did not get "proper answers" to questions about language and language learning, as she often struggled with that same issue when interviewing him. Steien had found that Prudent, being a very mission-focused Christian man, seemed more concerned with ministering to her than being a research participant, providing answers like "I learnt English because it was the will of God", i.e. not because of factors like his own motivations and efforts (Steien, personal communication). As a fellow Christian myself, I therefore spent some time talking with Prudent about faith, theology and mission work before I interviewed him. At one point during this conversation, Prudent said "I am speaking to you now as a fellow pastor", which I interpreted as him repositioning me from a potential recipient of evangelization to an equal conversation partner. After having shared a meal altogether, Prudent and I went to his office to conduct the autobiographic interview. At no point during this interview did he use "it was God's will" as an explanation for why things happened. Thus, it seemed that his having had the conversation about Christianity first and referring to me as a "fellow pastor", i.e. as an equal, he apparently did not see a need to emphasize a divine causal role.

At the second visit to Prudent and his family, I was welcomed as one of the family. This time, Prudent renegotiated our relationship as something like pastor and member of congregation,

or uncle and niece. He did this by, for instance, comparing his life a few years ago before having a family with my current position as a single woman without children, i.e. in a younger and, to him, a more unsettled phase. This pastoral role also came out somewhat more clearly during the second interview at this visit, with more emphasis on the role of God, although Prudent still provided rich answers about himself and his experiences, thoughts and actions.

When Prudent was talking about his experiences with using English in Norway during the interviews, I became aware that I sometimes had very different interpretations of Norwegian-dominant speakers' intentions than he did, particularly when he talked about how some Norwegians might not want to speak English with him and rather changed the language of the conversation to Norwegian (see article 3 in part 2). My initial thoughts when he first shared such experiences was that some Norwegian-dominant speakers might feel uncomfortable engaging in English practices with non-European speakers. I attributed such feeling of uncomfortability to dominant monolingual and native speaker ideologies in Norwegian society (see e.g., Beiler, 2021; Bøhn, 2016; Røyneland et al., 2018). These ideologies might easily make Norwegian-dominant speakers afraid of using pronunciation patterns themselves that they perceive to be different from British or American English pronunciation and thus make what they perceive as "pronunciation errors". Furthermore, not feeling comfortable when speaking English with non-Europeans could be due to lack of experience with listening to Africans speaking English (cf. Hellekjær, 2017), and, consequently, they might have worried that they would not understand unfamiliar English pronunciation of Congolese refugees in Norway. Finally, as a Norwegian myself, I assumed that these Norwegian-dominant interlocutors that Prudent was referring to might have changed the language of conversation to Norwegian due to a desire to help him with Norwegian language learning. During the interview with Prudent, I therefore had to actively set aside my interpretations as a Norwegian several times, and instead ask him repeatedly how he interpreted his experiences and interlocutors' intentions. To my surprise, he had completely different interpretations to me. He believed that his Norwegian-dominant interlocutors wanted to keep the interaction in Norwegian because of their, in his view, "pride" in their language. Thus, Prudent seemed to believe that they saw him as disrespectful if he would not speak Norwegian. This strategy, of putting aside my interpretations and asking him about his, thus actually allowed for much more rich data sets than had I not become aware of my own assumptions – it provided more insights into Prudent's emic understandings.

The third field visit was to Prudent's Norwegian class. Like during the field visit to Fidèle's Norwegian class, Prudent also introduced and treated me like his guest. I observed his Norwegian classes as well as an official meeting between Prudent and administrators. I also spent breaktimes and lunch with Prudent and his classmates. Interestingly, while Prudent and the other language learners positioned me as one of them by, for instance, inviting (and expecting) me to eat lunch with them, the teachers, on the other hand, positioned me as one of teachers, i.e. the Norwegians who ate lunch in a physically different room from the language learners. The teachers seemed very puzzled when I thanked them for the offer but preferred to eat lunch with the learners.

Throughout the day, I noticed that Prudent used his English resources to both make sense of new Norwegian words and as a communicative tool. For instance, he used the English words *stepfather* to understand the Norwegian equivalent *stefar* and went on to explain the concept in Norwegian based on his understanding of the English word. Later, as I relayed in article 2 (see part 2), I observed how Prudent and one of the administrators made use of English resources to check comprehensibility in a conversation concerning a police certificate of conduct. Finally, during participant observation conversations in breaks between lessons, Prudent emphasized that knowing both French and English made language learning a lot easier, possibly because English, French and Norwegian are all Indo-European languages and thus might seem similar to Prudent whose repertoire mainly consist of resources from Niger-Congo languages.

After each field visit, I recorded my field notes and reflected on the visit and the cumulative understanding I was forming through preliminary inductive analysis. I wanted to ensure a faithful rendering of the participants' answers. Therefore, the second interview with each participant had a member-checking function (c.f. Cho & Trent, 2006) in addition to providing more information. This gave the participants a chance to adjust any of my potential misunderstandings as an outsider. Furthermore, after the first field visits, I gradually started narrowing down the specific topic for investigation from emic perspectives on English practices in Southern and Northern spaces to emic value of English for speakers with histories of forced mobility.

5.2.3 Analysis stage

After the field visits, I conducted an initial content analysis (see e.g., Blommaert & Dong, 2020; Braun & Clarke, 2006) of the interview data. Throughout this process, I went back and forth between my analysis of the primary data, i.e. interview data and fieldnotes; insights from

contextual data in the form of previous research (e.g., Golden & Steien, 2021; Monsen & Steien, 2022a), and insights from ongoing fieldwork among these newly-arrived Congolese refugees in Norway (Steien, personal communication; Monsen, personal communication); and Bourdieu's (1991, 1997) theories on the value of linguistic resources. I decided to zoom in on specific interview extracts that gradually helped me gain insights into how they construct the value of English for themselves. These were moments when the participants showed particular investment and engagement in the topics of conversation and were analysed as a glimpse into their *subject realities* (Pavlenko, 2007), i.e. their life worlds and how they understood past events and experiences in their lives (see also Golden et al., 2021). My fieldnotes and observations were then analysed in light of the emic perspectives that were constructed during the interviews.

Several key themes were identified during the analysis, which I subsequently sought to shed light on by using Bourdieu's (1991, 1997) concept of linguistic capital as an analytical lens. At this point, I identified three "outlier" narratives. Overall, the participants constructed English as valuable as linguistic capital across geographical space and for beneficial exchanges of various types of capital (see article 2 in part 2; see also ch. 6). However, there were three narratives that portrayed the value of English differently. I therefore sought other complementary conceptual frameworks that could be used as an analytical lens for deeper analysis of these narratives. Blommaert et al.'s (2005) framework of sociolinguistic scales and orders of indexicality (see also Blommaert, 2010) proved helpful for such deeper analyses. Rather than conduct a planned third phase exploring language ideologies, I therefore elected to separate these 'outlier' findings out for a separate article that looked closer into those narratives of limited capital value of English in local situations (see article 3 in part 2; see also ch. 6).

5.2.4 Ethical considerations

During the planning, fieldwork and analysis I often reflected on the potential power asymmetry between myself and the participants and how my analytical gaze might be affected by differences between the participants and myself in terms of age, gender and race (cf. e.g., Busch, 2016; Rosa & Flores, 2017). I therefore employed several strategies to try and make this asymmetry less pronounced during the interviews and field visits (see articles 2 and 3 in part 2 for longer discussions), through choice of location (cf. Agar, 2008, p. 120), interviewing language (cf. Busch, 2016, p. 6; Mann, 2011, p. 15), speaking style (cf. Briggs, 1986), relinquishing strict control of the conversation topics (cf. De Fina, 2020, p. 155), and

setting aside time to get to know each other before the interviews. These strategies seemed to work well since the participants' enthusiastically shared their experiences. It is also possible that their enthusiasm was not caused by anything I did or did not do, but rather from, for example, their personalities, investment in sharing their stories, positive experience with the other fieldworkers, or something else.

5.3 One unified project

Even though I employed different methods for data collection and analysis in phases 1 and 2, they are connected in several ways. Firstly, they are both based on data collected from the same type of Southern participants, i.e. newly-arrived Congolese refugees in Norway, as presented in more detail in chapter 2.3. The number of participants differ; there are seven participants in the first phase and two participants in the second phase. These different numbers reflect a progression of more and more qualitative focus. One of the participants, Fidèle, was even an important part in both phases.

Moreover, (linguistic) ethnographic ways of thinking have informed both these phases (e.g., Agar, 2008; Blommaert & Dong, 2020; Briggs, 1986; Copland & Creese, 2015; De Fina, 2020; McGranahan, 2020; Shaw et al., 2015; Tusting, 2020). My research is not ethnographic *per se*, since 1) production experiments do not have *ecological validity*, i.e. they do not "capture the daily life conditions, opinions, values, attitudes, and knowledge base of those [I] stud[ied] as expressed in their natural habitat" (Cicourel, 1982, p. 15); 2) the fieldwork I have conducted is not as comprehensive as classic ethnography where the ethnographer might stay in the field for an extensive period of time; 3) I do not systematically compare what the participants say to what I observe them do; and 4) I have not used my micro-level data as a way of understanding macro-level contexts nor explored all possible aspects of macro-level context that might have affected micro-level local practices (see e.g., Agar, 2008; Blommaert & Dong, 2020; Copland & Creese, 2015). However, I have been inspired by (linguistic) ethnography in a variety of ways, some examples of which I will highlight here in the final part of this chapter.

The research focus in both methodological phases has been "to hone in on specific instances of everyday life and to evidence analysis in small instances of social practice" by focusing on phonotactic and emic perspectives on small instances local English practices (Shaw et al., 2015, pp. 8–9). In the second methodological phase, the research focus is more explicitly the "attention to people's emic perspectives" (Tusting, 2020, p. 1). I have, in both methodological

phases, been seeking rich, complementary data sets over aiming for strictly controlled and comparable data sets from the participants (see e.g., Blommaert & Dong, 2020). The findings from both methodological phases are not intended to be generalisable or representable for all Congolese refugees in Norway. Instead, the phases provide rich insights into syllable structures in English speech among seven participants with histories of forced South-South-North mobility and into emic perspectives on English practices among two participants with histories of forced South-South-North mobility, respectively.

In terms of data collection, real life has been influencing the process of data collection in both phases, which is not uncommon in ethnographic research (see e.g., Agar, 2008; Blommaert & Dong, 2020). Since all recordings took place in the participants' homes, with children present and daily life not pausing, this meant that some recordings included background noise that limited possibilities for acoustic analysis of some of the recordings in the first methodological phase. Despite their limitations for acoustic analysis, however, these recordings were very helpful as contextual data and for directing my analytic focus.

As for the analyses, I have been open to "complexity, contradiction and re-interpretation over time" in both methodological phases (Tusting, 2020, p. 1). For example, in the first phase, I used what proved helpful from the "large and historically well-developed [linguistics] toolbox of specific analytic approaches which can provide precise accounts of meaning-making processes as they happen" (Tusting, 2020, p. 1). At the same time, I also realised that I had to make a "conscious effort to resist the perceived empirical rigour, neatness and certainty of linguistic analysis and embrace the openness and uncertainty of ethnography" in the context of Southern participants with complex repertoires and in order to describe and understand my empirical data (Shaw et al., 2015, p. 8). Furthermore, in terms of analytical focus, in both methodological phases, I "studie[d] the local and immediate [linguistic] actions of actors from their point of view" (Copland & Creese, 2015, p. 13; see also De Fina, 2020; Pavlenko, 2007). Both phases are therefore micro-level studies of individuals' local English practices which have been analysed in light of the participants' life worlds and life histories, only drawing on macro-level contexts were relevant to the participants. Finally, transparency about positionality and "reflexivity about the role of the researcher" has been important throughout both methodological phases (Tusting, 2020, p. 1; see also Berger, 2015; Bourdieu, 1996, 2003; De Fina, 2020; Salö, 2018; Tracy, 2010). As Irvine and Gal (2000) have put it, "[t]here is no 'view from nowhere', no gaze that is not positioned" (p. 36).

6 Synthesis of articles

This chapter synthesises the three articles (see part 2) and the overall conclusion that English is capital for the forced migrants who have participated in this study. While I refer to the article abstracts for general summaries of the articles, I will here present the reframing of the findings from the articles in light of this overall conclusion. First, however, I start by describing how the articles relate to each other, in other ways than the methodological connections mentioned in 5.3. above, and how the project developed through the two methodological phases.

6.1 Relationships between the articles

As figure 6 depicts, there has been a chronological and thematic progression throughout my research.

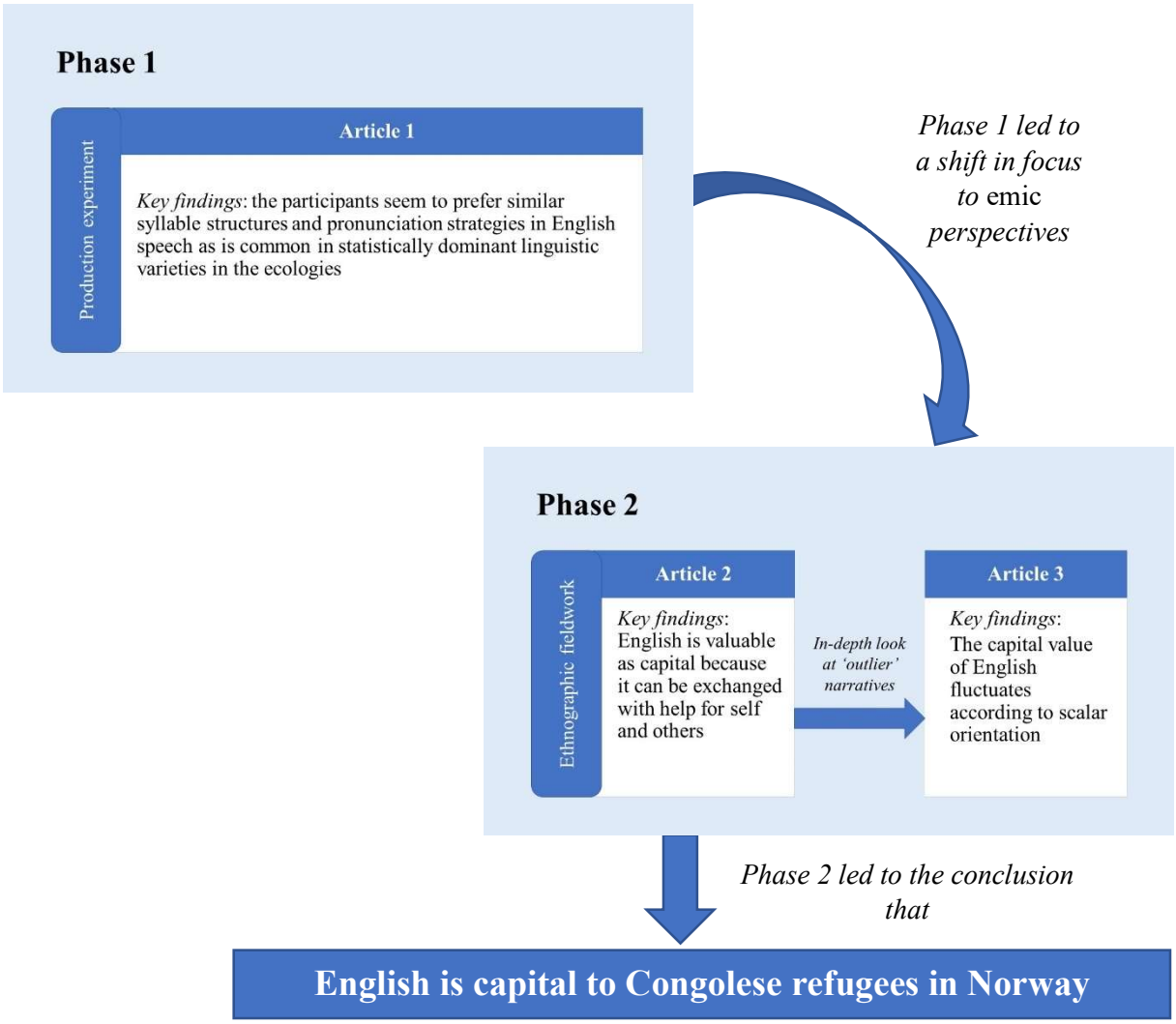

Figure 6. Chronological and thematic progression of the methodological phases

The three articles are thus connected chronologically, as can be seen from the numbering of the articles in figure 6. Article 1 was the result of the first methodological phase that used a

production experiment to gain insights into the participants' preferred English syllable structures and the strategies they employed to achieve this syllable structure. Articles 2 and 3 present the findings from the second methodological phase employing autobiographic interviews collected ethnographically. While the second article made use of both the interview data and fieldnotes from this phase, the third article was an in-depth study of a subset of narratives from the recorded interview data.

Figure 6 also indicates how my thematic focus evolved through the process. While article 1 focused on linguistic structure in English practices, articles 2 and 3 both focus on emic perspectives on English practices. As mentioned above, as I started the second methodological phase I had intended to include a third methodological phase focusing on language ideologies (see ch. 5.2). However, throughout the analysis of the ethnographic material for the second article, it became apparent that the data set was too rich for just one article, and I subsequently decided to write the third article based on the same data set as article 2 (see also 5.2.3 above). While working with articles 2 and 3, I came to the overall conclusion that English is capital to the Congolese refugees that participated in my study, as indicated in figure 6.

Finally, there is also an epistemological relationship between the three articles. All three articles question Northern-informed doxa, albeit in different ways. Article 1 demonstrated how the dominant Northern-informed concept L1 influence has its weaknesses when used to analyse pronunciation data from participants with long histories of living in Southern multilingual contexts. Subsequently, article 1 suggested employing ecological understandings of these Southern multilingual contexts and ecological exposure to explain the participants' English syllable structures, in line with Haugen (1972) and Mufwene (2001, 2002). Article 2, while demonstrating how Bourdieu's (1991, 1997) concept of capital may be fruitfully applied to understand Southern participants' emic perspectives on the value of English resources as travelling capital, also showed how underlying assumptions of individualism and competition in Bourdieu's (1991, 1997) framework needed to be adjusted when analysing these Southern speakers' emic perspectives. The second article also questioned whether individualism and competition might have to be challenged as central foundations in Bourdieu's (1991, 1997) framework in general. Finally, article 3 questioned Northern-informed doxa through using Blommaert et al.'s (2005) concepts of sociolinguistic scales and orders of indexicality critically as analytical lenses (see also Blommaert, 2010), while being willing to disregard this framework if it would not work with the empirical data. This

conceptual framework did, however, provide a good analytical lens for the narratives by these Southern participants. The framework was complemented with the suggested term 'scalar misunderstandings' to analyse communicative breakdowns that caused loss of English capital value due to different scalar orientation between the speaker and interlocutor, a term that was an extension of Blommaert et al.'s (2005) framework.

6.2 Reframing findings from the articles

In light of the conclusion from the second phase, that English is capital to newly-arrived Congolese refugees in Norway, it is helpful to go back and take a second look at the finding from the articles, and especially article 1, to see how the findings can be understood when viewed through this lens. Figure 7 presents how the focus of each article may be viewed in this way.

Figure 7. Reframing the focus on the articles in light of the overall conclusion

As indicated in figure 7, the pronunciation study in article 1 can be seen as a description of the participants' English capital. During their first year of residence in Norway, the participants' English capital was marked by syllable structures reflecting Eastern Congolese and Ugandan ecologies (see article 1 in part 2). Article 2 can be viewed as emic explanations of why English is valuable to the participants as linguistic capital, which they attribute to its potential for providing assistance for themselves and other people, inside and outside their community of experience (Kivimäki et al., 2023; see article 2 in part 2). Finally, article 3 can be viewed as an exploration into why the participants have experienced that English may lose its capital value, which I theorised might be due to 'scalar misunderstandings' (see article 3 in part 2).

7 Discussion of contributions

While the previous chapter synthesised and reflected on the connections between the articles and the overall findings from the three articles seen as a whole, this chapter focuses on how my research contributes in three main ways to research on English spoken by forced migrants from the Global South. Specifically, my research provides empirical, epistemological and ideological contributions. These three types of contributions are discussed in turn, with regards to what specific new contribution my research brings, how my research is beneficial, as well as what might have been lost without my research.

7.1 Empirical contributions

My study provides empirical documentation of English practices among newly-arrived Congolese refugees in Norway who have had long transits in Uganda, building on previous research by other linguists. Monsen and Steien and colleagues (2022a) have also done research among the same participants through the KongNor project (see also ch. 2.2). They focused on the participants' life histories from DRC and Uganda (e.g., Steien, 2022; Steien & Monsen, 2022), structural (e.g., Horbowicz, 2022; Nordanger, 2022) and emic (e.g., Monsen, 2022; Monsen & Steien, 2022b) perspectives on the participants' Norwegian language learning in Norway, and syntactic structures in the participants' English speech (Rørvik, 2022). Research among Congolese refugees in Norway further fits into an empirical tradition of sociolinguistic research among participants from the Global South (e.g., Netto et al., 2022; Piller & Bodis, 2022; Sabaté-Dalmau, 2018).

Complementing such previous research (e.g., Monsen & Steien, 2022a; Netto et al., 2022; Piller & Bodis, 2022; Sabaté-Dalmau, 2018), my research has provided phonotactic descriptions of English pronunciations (see article 1 in part 2) and emic perspectives on English as travelling capital (see article 2 in part 2), as well as local limitations of English as travelling capital (see article 3 in part 2) among forced migrants with South-South-North trajectories. In this way, my research has contributed to pushing the research frontier forward within the research field of language and (forced) migration.

Without the present empirical documentation, we would know much less about English spoken by refugees and these speakers' own perspectives on their English practices. Since English is a globally shared set of linguistic resources, and a set of mobile resources that migrants bring with them across social and geographical space, academic research on English as a global language is poorer without English-speaking refugees as research participants.

Unfortunately, refugees are not often engaged as research participants, so they might easily be excluded in linguistic research for practical reasons. Luckily, KongNor has allowed me access to Congolese refugees in Norway.

7.2 Theoretical contributions

Throughout my research, I have adopted a stance of questioning Northern-informed doxa as I have conducted research among Southern participants. I have suggested possible developments to Northern-informed dominant theories in cases where they might not capture Southern realities adequately. The first article (see part 2) highlighted how it might be problematic to employ a concept like L1 influence to explain these multilingual participants' English pronunciation patterns, as their pronunciation displays influence from multiple languages present in the linguistic ecologies of DRC and Uganda. In relation to article 1, chapter 3.2.1.1 also highlights how dominant (RP) English rules for syllabification may not necessarily work when analysing English pronunciation among multilingual speakers from the Global South; there might be other syllabification alternatives as well. The second article (see article 2 in part 2) revealed certain possible limitations in Bourdieu's (1991, 1997) conceptual framework of linguistic capital, related to underlying assumptions of individualism and competition as important motivations for social actions, motivations that I did not find to be present in my ethnographic material. Finally, the third article (see article 3 in part 2) suggested a development of Blommaert et al.'s (2005) conceptual framework of the value of linguistic resources as scaled, to use the term 'scalar misunderstandings' to describe misunderstandings that might occur in cases where interlocutors orient towards different scales.

These theoretical contributions are beneficial for destabilising the hegemony of Northern-informed theories and epistemologies, and for engaging with more diverse Southern realities. The suggested term 'scalar misunderstandings' can further add to our understandings of intercultural misunderstandings, emphasising that not all misunderstandings are caused by perceived unfamiliar linguistic practices, but might instead be related to diverging understandings of scalar orientation in local encounters. Furthermore, 'scalar misunderstandings' might help us understand more the dynamics of locally fluctuating value of linguistic resources, and why even English, which is generally seen as valuable across the globe as travelling capital, might be devalued during local encounters. Without the present research we would thus know much less about the complexities of the value of English in local encounters.

My research is furthermore a contribution to redressing the imbalance of what perspectives inform doxa, cf. chapter 3.2.2 above. By engaging with Southern perspectives in the form of data from Southern participants as well as their emic perspectives, my research is one more contribution to challenging Northern-informed doxa, contributing to balancing the scale of which perspectives inform doxa. My research here builds on previous research that has also questioned Northern-informed doxa, either implicitly or explicitly, and have engaged with Southern perspectives (e.g., Blommaert, 2005b; Bokamba, 2018; Canagarajah, 2021; Lane, 2018; Makoni, 2012; Monsen & Steien, 2022a; Mufwene, 2010; Nassenstein, 2020; Netto et al., 2022; O'Rourke, 2019; Pennycook, 2020; Ratele, 2019; Santos & Meneses, 2020; Steien et al., 2023; Urla et al., 2018). Together, my research and theirs add up, pushing the research frontier forwards and slowly changing doxa in the global academic discussion.

7.3 Ideological contributions

Finally, my research is also an ideological contribution as it seeks to revalorise English practices among multilingual speakers from the Global South. Similar to the use of the 'new speakers' lens (see ch. 3.3 above), referring to the English practices among these Congolese refugees as 'English capital' continues the legacy of the 'new speakers' paradigm of rejecting monolingual and native speaker ideologies. Labelling the refugees' English as capital may further contribute to revalorising them as legitimate speakers of English.

This lens, English as *capital*, thus opens up new ways of understanding multilingual speakers' repertoires and practices and pushes the research frontier forward in critical sociolinguistics. Without the present research, these Congolese refugees might easily be labelled learners and/or treated as 'illegitimate speakers' of English, 1) because of their background from Africa (see e.g., Garrido & Codó, 2017; Rosa & Flores, 2017), 2) because of the fact that their English practices diverge from the English practices of so-called 'native' speakers of English (see e.g., Ortega, 2018; article 1 in part 2), and, 3) because they come from DRC, a country where English traditionally have played a very small role in society (see e.g., Bokamba, 1995; Kachru, 1985; Kasanga, 2012). The present research highlights, however, that these speakers *are* fully functioning speakers of English that are able to exchange English capital for other forms of capital across Southern and Northern spaces as travelling capital. Furthermore, while article 3 (see article 3 in part 2) documented temporary loss of the participants' English capital in local encounters, these losses were not due to limited English competence, but rather local 'scalar misunderstandings' between the interlocutors. In this way, the present research has contributed to moving the academic discussion forward from describing

competencies and categorising speakers to focusing on the capital they carry with them across space.

7.4 Implication of reframing English as capital: beyond competence and classification?

There are several implications to reframing the research focus in studies on English spoken by speakers from the Global South from their English *competence level* and their English *speaker classifications* (see ch. 1 above) to English as *linguistic capital* to these speakers. Firstly, even if racism and xenophobia still exist in any ecologies (e.g., Rosa & Flores, 2017; Vigouroux, 2019), an academic discussion focusing on 'linguistic capital', regardless of competence level and speaker classification, may potentially over time construct more inclusive ideologies, as the term capital forces us to shift the focus from limitations to what speakers are able to do with their linguistic resources (cf. e.g., Ortega, 2018). Secondly, shifting the research focus from limitations to speakers' possibilities may influence our analytical gaze as researchers. Maybe we will notice more or other dimensions of English as a global language and English as travelling capital in the contexts of (forced) migration? Finally, giving Southern participants more inclusive and respectful treatment in the global academic discussion may ultimately give forced migrants more of a voice (cf. Blommaert, 2005a) in local communicative practices, i.e. reduce the potential for 'scalar misunderstandings' and influence of macro-level ideologies on the way speakers are treated in local encounters.

8 Concluding remarks

I started this extended introduction by describing my journey from researching English practices among speakers from the Global South from a more Kachruvian variationist approach to a more critical sociolinguistic approach. It became necessary to leave the Global English framework, and draw on other traditions, in order to make sense of the empirical data from the present multilingual participants from the Global South. Previous research on English practices among speakers in the Global South (e.g., Blommaert, 2005b; Bolander & Sultana, 2019; Highet, 2022; Hillman & Ocampo Eibenschutz, 2018; M. Irvine, 2022; Nassenstein, 2020) and on English practices among migrants from the Global South (e.g., Netto et al., 2022; Piller & Bodis, 2022; Sabaté-Dalmau, 2018), and now my research too, combine to demonstrate that it is possible to conduct research on English as a global language without Kachru's (1985) hegemonic model. One might ask, then, if there is still a need for Kachru's (1985) model at all? Might it be possible to envision the research field of Global English without Kachru's (1985) model having its continued status as doxa?

The initial research questions (RQs) I set out to explore in this doctoral project were the following:

> RQ 1: What is the level of English competence among Congolese refugees in Norway?
>
> RQ 2: What kind of English do Congolese refugees in Norway speak?
>
> RQ 3: What type of English speakers are Congolese refugees in Norway?

I will now explain why I have come to see them as ideologically problematic and attempt to give an answer to each of the questions, taking into account my research and its critical sociolinguistic framework.

The first question may point to a scepticism towards these speakers' English. Is it at a high "enough" level? The question, however, should rather be whether assessing their competence is important in the first place, and how this competence is determined. Should it be determined based on a comparison with monolingual native speaker performance? If so, which native speakers? RP or GA? As others have pointed out (e.g., Ortega, 2018), this is an unfair comparison as multilingual speakers will never have the same repertoire as monolingual speakers.

The RQs concern Congolese refugees *in Norway*. Thus, one might suggest that assessments of their English competence could be determined on the basis of rate of success in English-mediated communication with Norwegians. However, studies have shown that, at least in business communication, Norwegians are less used to cooperating with English speakers from Africa than from places like North America, Europe and Asia (Hellekjær, 2017). Some Congolese refugees in Norway have even been told that, "I'm sorry, but your English is too African" (Reinemo, 2023). Less experience with English spoken by people with African languages in their repertoires may thus cause difficulties for Norwegians in understanding the Congolese refugees when they speak English. Importantly, however, intelligibility in social encounters is a joint effort. As a consequence, it is unfair to place the communicative burden on the speaker only, as if the listeners are not actively involved in obtaining mutual intelligibility (c.f. e.g., Lippi-Green, 2012, p. 72). Thus, intelligibility for Norwegian-dominant speakers cannot be the yardstick for determining the participants' level of English competence.

Something like Council of Europe's (2020) Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) might be suggested to determine level of English competence? However, as has been shown previously (see e.g., Blommaert, 2010; and Blommaert & Backus, 2013 for a longer discussion), the CEFR framework itself is problematic and not even native speakers have the highest level of competence across all registers in their native language. If I were to answer RQ1 today, taking into account my research and its critical sociolinguistic framework, I would answer in the following way:

> RQ 1: What is their level of English competence?
>
> Answer: High enough to exchange English resources as travelling capital, generally in the way they wish, across Southern and Northern space.

The second question reflects a wish to place these speakers' English into a familiar box, like (East) African English (e.g., Schmied, 2008), Nativised English (e.g., Schneider, 2007), Learner English (e.g., Gilquin, 2015), English as a (multi)lingua franca (e.g., Jenkins, 2015), or local English (e.g., Mufwene, 2010), etc. These terms, however, do not capture the multilingual nature nor the currently dominant, but also dynamic, position of English in the participants' repertoires. Again, were I to answer RQ2 today, taking into account my research and its critical sociolinguistic framework, the answer might be the following:

> RQ 2: What kind of English do Congolese refugees in Norway speak?

Answer: Their own English, reflecting a life of forced mobility and having spent a long time in complex Southern ecologies.

Similarly, the third research question reflects a perceived need to place the participants into a familiar box of known English speakers, like native or non-native speakers of English (cf. Kachru, 1985). Any such boxes, however, become problematic as they are ideologically laden (see e.g., Ortega, 2018; Pujolar & O'Rourke, 2022, see 3.3 for a longer discussion). Answering the third research question today, I might answer the following:

RQ 3: What type of English speakers are they?

Answer: Currently English-dominant speakers.

Hopefully I have succeeded at this point in the extended introduction to demonstrate that my initial research questions are irrelevant, and somewhat problematic, when analysing English practices among speakers from the Global South. Based on the empirical data in the present research, we do not need to qualify or quantify speakers' level of English competence, nor classify them as certain types of speakers. Instead, I believe emic views on function (as linguistic capital) is enough and should be enough. Focusing on function only as the qualifying factor of who is considered a legitimate speaker of English opens up to a much more inclusive academic discussion on English spoken by Southern speakers.

Finally, the present research has contributed further demonstration of how it is possible to conduct research on English practices outside the research paradigm of English studies. By associating my research with the theoretical approach of critical sociolinguistics and the empirical research field of language and migration, the present research contributes to destabilising English practices as a unique research object apart from other communicative practices. English is unique in terms of its prestige and spread on a global scale, but not in terms of linguistic exceptionality. This destabilisation may open up academic conversations with other critical sociolinguists researching language and migration, research not necessarily focusing on *English* practices. Such a collaboration can enrich both the research fields of Global English and language and migration.

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Appendix: Protocol for phase 1

Part 1: Linguistic biography

Focus areas for the semi-structured interviews:

- How English was learnt
- Thoughts about own English accent
- Attitudes towards Norwegians speaking English
- Norwegian speakers' attitudes towards them speaking English
- Intelligibility in ELF communication between the Congolese refugees and Norwegians

Part 2: Word list

1.
After
Bath
Boss
Chronicle
Cup
Dress
Crystal
Face
Giraffe
Icicle

2.
Kit
Pants
Possible
Square
Sold
Sprinkle
Back
Angst
Bicycle
Cold

3.
Crash
Egg
Field
Goat
Inkling
Lands
Park
Put
Sealed
Tips

4.
Squint
Blink
Cat
Clan
Convince
Cross
Food
Film
Goose
Just

5.
Milk
Post
Rinse
Ship
Wrinkle
Splash
Bold
Chips
Class
Dark

6.
Extra
Foot
Happy
Kiln
Mouth
Plant
Shield
Sock
Sprint
Twinkle

Part 3: Narrative

It was a cold, grey morning. My brother had just convinced me to sell my bicycle to my cousin. And I'm glad I did. Now that it was sold, I didn't really miss it. I was actually really lucky. My cousin had seen this trick in a Hollywood film that he really wanted to try. He thought it was possible to take the bicycle out into the field and drive quickly over the big, square-shaped stone and jump over the creek. His classmates had given him some extra tips for how to do it, so he was well prepared. I finished the milk I was drinking and ran out to the kitchen. On my way out I knocked over Mum's plant by the front door, but I didn't care. I was too excited to watch my cousin jump over the creek.

When I arrived at the field, my cousin was getting ready. He set off and quickly gathered full speed. One of his classmates pretended to be a sports commentator and shouted:

"And he's off! He's heading for the stone. He makes a lunge for it – and – crashes! He's lucky though! He lands in the less stony part of the creek."

We all blinked and shouted as the water splashed everywhere. Fortunately, he didn't hurt himself. But it could easily have been me. And Mum would have been really upset if I came home with my new clothes all wrinkled, and I was sprinkling water everywhere. Especially since I hadn't picked up her favourite plant by the front door. So it was really lucky that I had sold my bicycle to my cousin. Now he had to deal with his Mum instead.

Part 4: Informal questions

Please describe a normal day for you here in Norway.

What do you think about the weather in Norway?

Part 5: Checking hypothesis disguising

What did you think was the focus of the study?

Part 2: Dissertation articles

Dissertation articles

Article 1

Syvertsen, I. (2022). Syllable structures in English speech produced by multilingual speakers with histories of mobility. In M. Monsen & G. B. Steien (Eds.), *Language learning and forced migration* (pp. 101–121). Multilingual Matters.

Article 2

Syvertsen, I. (forthcoming). What makes English valuable as travelling capital? A perspective from two forced migrants with South-South-North trajectories. *Conditionally accepted for Critical Multilingualism Studies.*

Article 3

Syvertsen, I. (forthcoming). 'Scalar misunderstandings': understanding forced migrants' narratives about perceived communicative breakdowns across space. *Conditionally accepted for Multilingua.*

1

7 Syllable Structures in English Speech Produced by Multilingual Speakers with Histories of Mobility

Ida Syvertsen

7.1 Introduction

Several refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) via Uganda to Norway have English in their linguistic repertoire. Although some have had some formal English teaching from DRC or Uganda, their English is mainly learnt through daily usage in Uganda. As one refugee explains, 'in Uganda, everything is in English'. The refugees mention speaking English *inter alia* when buying groceries, communicating with friends from other places in the refugee camps and with governmental and international workers. In other words, their English has mainly been learnt informally (see Steien, this volume, for a longer discussion) during their 10 to 30 years in Uganda, a linguistic ecology (Haugen, 1972; Mufwene, 2001; see also Section 7.2 below) where English is very visible in daily life.

Multilingual speakers 'flexibly combine linguistic features' they have in their repertoire (Jaspers & Madsen, 2019: 2). Since the refugees have Bantu languages in their repertoire, their English practices are likely unfamiliar to most English-speaking interlocutors with Norwegian as their dominant language. Norwegians are quite proficient in English, raking as number five among countries in Europe (Education First, 2020). However, Norwegians mainly use English for social media, popular culture, gaming, international tourism, higher education and international business (see e.g. Hellekjær, 2017; Røyneland *et al*., 2018). These contexts bring Norwegians into contact with interlocutors mainly from the Global North[1] and, thus, generally, few Bantu-speaking interlocutors. Furthermore, in Norway, monolingual practices are explicitly favoured (Røyneland *et al*., 2018) and deviations from Standard English often penalised (Bøhn, 2016). This leads to potential for misunderstandings, like when, during her ethnographic work, Steien once asked 'Who is Andy?' in response to one of the refugees pronouncing *and* as [andi]. Moreover, studies of English as a lingua franca show that mutual intelligibility often breaks down if speakers reduce consonant clusters, especially in word-initial and word-medial clusters (see e.g. Deterding, 2013; O'Neal, 2015). Communicative challenges might, therefore, influence both language ideologies and attitudes towards the refugees themselves.

This study explores syllable structures in the situated English practices of seven multilingual Congolese refugees with histories of mobility, seeking to answer the following research questions (RQs):

RQ1: How do the participants pronounce words potentially ending in closed syllables?
RQ2: How do the participants pronounce words with complex consonant clusters in writing?
RQ3: What can their linguistic practices tell us about their preferred syllable structures?

In Section 7.2, the ecologies and participants are presented. Next, Section 7.3 presents syllable theory, principles for syllable division, and descriptions of syllable structures in the relevant linguistic varieties. Section 7.4 presents and justifies methodological decisions and analytical challenges. Then, Section 7.5 presents the findings before Section 7.6 analyses and discusses them and answers the RQs. Finally, the conclusion looks ahead and provides some suggestions for future research.

7.2 Ecologies and Participants

Linguistic ecology here refers to 'socioeconomic and ethnographic environment in which a language has evolved' and 'systemic interaction of the linguistic codes in contact' (Ansaldo, 2009: 4; Mufwene, 2001). In a linguistic ecology, the most similar and frequently used linguistic features from different pedigrees tend to survive over time (Mufwene, 2001, 2002). The ecologies of Uganda and Eastern Congo are dominated by Bantu languages, including e.g. Kinyabwisha, Luganda, Swahili, Runyoro, Runyankore and Lusoga (see e.g. Gordon, 2005; Namyalo *et al.*, 2016). Furthermore, the former colonial languages, French and English, are present in the ecologies. The linguistic repertoires of the participants in this study reflect the complexity of these ecologies: all the participants have at least one Bantu language, English and often French in their repertoires (see Table 7.1).

Table 7.1 Overview of participants and their linguistic repertoires

Participant	Repertoires
Christophe	Mashi, Swahili, French, English, Luganda, Norwegian
Fidèle	Swahili, Kinyabwisha, English, Runyoro, Luganda, Norwegian
Koïs	Swahili and English, Norwegian
Lucas	Kinyabwisha, Swahili, French, English, Runyoro, Luganda, Norwegian
Joseph	Kinyabwisha, Swahili, French, English, Luganda, Runyoro, Norwegian
Zépherin	Kinyabwisha, Swahili, French, English, Luganda, Runyoro, Norwegian
Pierre	Kinyabwisha, Swahili, French, English, Luganda, Runyoro, Norwegian

Language contact studies have shown that, over time, source language (SL) suprasegmental features dominate in linguistic practices when contact varieties develop in

SL-dominated ecologies and continue to co-exist with them (see e.g. Gussenhoven & Udofot, 2010; Klein, 2013; Steien & Yakpo, 2020; Yakpo, 2021). The participants' English pronunciations are, therefore, likely to display suprasegmental patterns influenced by the Congolese and Ugandan ecologies. However, see Section 7.6.1 for a critical discussion on the related concept of L1 transfer.

7.3 Syllable Structures

7.3.1 Syllable theory

In this study, prominence theory (Jones, 1960) is used, where syllables are identified and counted according to sonority peaks (Cruttenden, 2014: 51). Since vowels have the highest sonority, presence of a vowel equals existence of a syllable.

In polysyllabic words, four principles are used in Received Pronunciation (RP) phonotactics to analyse syllabification (Cruttenden, 2014: 52). Firstly, the *morphemic principle* determines syllable boundaries in polymorphemic words corresponding to morpheme boundaries. Thus, in e.g. *restart* the word-medial cluster /st/ belongs to the second syllable since it belongs to the root. Secondly, the *phonotactic principle* states that if a monosyllabic word can begin or end in a certain consonant, that consonant can be analysed as onset or coda in syllables, respectively. For instance, in a word like *angle*, we analyse /ŋ/ as coda in the first syllable, since no words can start with /ŋ/ in RP. The *allophonic principle* concerns what typically happens to vowels in the presence of certain consonants, e.g. vowels are often shortened when preceding a fortis consonant. Thus, in e.g. *better*, the fortis consonant /t/ is analysed as coda in the first syllable. Finally, in doubtful cases, the *maximal onset principle* can be used, where syllabically ambiguous consonants are analysed as onset in the following syllable.

7.3.2 Syllable structures in relevant linguistic varieties[2]

In this section, descriptions of the syllable structures in the dominant linguistic varieties in the ecologies of Eastern Congo and Uganda are presented. Firstly, Bantu syllable structures are presented. Secondly, Ugandan English syllable structures follow (see also Rørvik, this volume, for more on English in Uganda). Finally, syllable structures in African Frenches are presented.

7.3.2.1 Syllable structures in Bantu languages

In Bantu languages, '[s]yllables are presumed to have the canonical shape (N)CV(V)'[3] (Odden, 2015: 2; see also Diprose, 2007; Hyman & Katamba, 1999). The CV structure leads to adaptation of loanwords according to typical Bantu syllable structure, 'e.g. *-jibu* "answer" < Arabic *jib*; *-skwizi* "hug romantically" < English *squeeze*, *starehe* "relax" < Arabic *-starih*.' (Wald, 2009: 901).

Regarding phonotactic restrictions on syllables, '[a]s a general rule, Bantu languages do not have obvious syllable codas' (Odden, 2015: 24). As for onset, Bantu languages permit

two complex onset clusters: either a consonant followed by a glide, [j, w], (CG) or a nasal consonant followed by any consonant (NC) (Hyman, 2003; Odden, 2015; Wald, 2009). According to Odden (2015: 27), '[t]he only phonological argument that N is in the onset is that no words end in a consonant, even a nasal, which leads to the conclusion that syllables cannot end with consonants' (Odden, 2015: 27). Wald (2009: 888) takes this argument further, stating that 'in view of their historical evolution in various Bantu languages, the prenasalised series of Common Bantu should probably be treated phonologically as an independent series rather than as [an NC] cluster'.

7.3.2.2 Syllable structures in Ugandan English

English was first introduced to the linguistic ecology of Uganda by British colonisers in the late nineteenth century. Throughout the colonial period, 'English was established only in élitist circles when the colonial powers tried to regulate communication within the administrative, legal and education system' and not enforced in any other parts of the ecology (Schmied, 2008: 152). Bantu languages, therefore, continued to co-exist and flourish (Schmied, 2008: 152–153). Post-independence, English was 'expan[ded] down the social hierarchy' (Schmied, 2008: 153).

Like elsewhere when English has been introduced into pre-existing ecologies, Ugandan English has 'acquir[ed] local characteristics' (Mufwene, 2010: 47). These can be found on several levels of the phonological system and 'seem to be the most persistent in African varieties, i.e. they are retained even in the speech of the most educated speakers' (Schmied, 2008: 158). Schmied's (2008: 158) explanation of this is that 'in many languages pronunciation seems to be the most flexible element, which can be used (subconsciously) to express subtle sociolinguistic messages of speaker identity and of distance from or solidarity with the listener'. This is in line with sociolinguistic theories of indexicality, emphasising that 'phonology provides meaningless elements to combine to yield meaningful elements, leav[ing] phonological units free to register distinctions in the collective co-existence that is the social world' (Eckert & Labov, 2017: 469).

In East African Englishes, including Ugandan English, there is a tendency to make word-final closed syllables into open syllables, by inserting a vowel. Schmied (2008: 162) explains that '[t]he vowels inserted or added are normally [ɪ] or [ʊ], depending on the occurrence of palatal or velar consonants in the environment (e.g. [hosɪpɪtalɪ] for *hospital* or [spɪrɪnɪ] for *spring*) or on vowel harmony (e.g. in [bʊkʊ] for *book*)'. In complex onset clusters, Bobda (2007: 415–416) maintains that, in African Englishes, 'the common pattern of cluster simplification in syllable onsets is vowel insertion', and, more specifically, 'anaptixis (insertion between two consonants), as opposed to prothesis (insertion of a vowel before an initial consonant)'. This is interesting when compared to patterns in south Asian Englishes, where there is a preference for prothesis, 'as in [ɪskul] *school*, [ɪsteʃan] *station*, [ɪspɪʧ] *speech*, [ɪsloθ] *sloth*' (Bobda, 2007: 415–416; see also Kachru, 1986). Finally, complex coda clusters are simplified in African Englishes, using one of two strategies:

'either … consonant deletion or … vowel insertion', a 'phenomenon [that] transcends sociolinguistic parameters like education and social class' (Bobda, 2007: 417; Schmied, 2008).

7.3.2.3 Syllable structures in African Frenches

African Frenches are contact varieties with a similar colonial history as English in Africa. French is part of the ecologies of Eastern Congo and Uganda and might, thus, influence the participants' English pronunciations.

Empirical research into French in Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Ivory Coast, Mali, Senegal and Togo, places that are far apart from each other geographically, demonstrate that African Frenches mainly use CV and CVC syllable structures, without complex clusters (Nimbona & Steien, 2019: 53). Thus, it seems likely that the same phonotactic patterns are evident in French in Congo. In order to avoid closed syllables, word-final consonants are regularly deleted, regardless of whether the consonant is an obstruent or a sonorant (Nimbona & Steien, 2019: 53). Moreover, epenthesis is normal to use in order to simplify complex clusters (Nimbona & Steien, 2019: 53). The vowel inserted is not random or mainly dominated by schwa. Instead, it is often the same vowel as found elsewhere in the word (Nimbona & Steien, 2019: 53).

7.4 Method and Data

7.4.1 Research design

The data collection in this study is designed as a Labovian-inspired sociolinguistic interview, eliciting pronunciations from different speaking styles (Drager, 2018; Labov, 2006). The interview took place within their first two years of residence in Norway and included the following:

(a) description of linguistic biographies;
(b) reading a word list;
(c) reading two short narratives;
(d) questions about everyday life and the Norwegian weather.

Observations of the whole material have influenced the foci and analyses, but the main data analysed here are the recordings of the word list (b) from all the participants. The word list contains 60 words, including 41 focus words. The focus words were chosen because they often are pronounced with consonant clusters and closed syllables in English accents worldwide. To complement the word list findings from the whole group, one participant, Fidèle, was chosen as a special case to analyse linguistic behaviour across speaking styles (see points [c] and [d] above), because his syllable structures are often noted in Steien's ethnographic field notes, e.g. his pronunciation of *technology*, [tekonolɔʒi], with epenthesis in the word-medial consonant cluster [kn] (Steien, this volume).

7.4.2 Data analyses

The recordings were transcribed orthographically and analysed phonetically using Praat (Boersma, 2001). During the phonetic analysis, both perceptual and acoustic analyses were conducted. In some cases, the two analyses diverged. Theories and empirical research of additional language (AL) acquisition of the phonology of the target language establish that AL learners categorise perceptual input according to phonology, not phonetics (Flege, 1995; So & Best, 2010; Steien & Yakpo, 2020). Thus, since the perceptual analyses were carried out by the researcher, i.e. me, and my native language is Norwegian while English is an AL in my repertoire, what I perceive when the participants speak English is affected by my phonology. Additionally, my orthographic knowledge and my language ideologies are likely to influence what I hear. Acoustic analyses minimise the risk of biased perceptions, which improves the reliability of the findings, and can more easily be replicated by others. Consequently, the acoustic analysis was preferred over the perceptual analysis whenever they diverged.

The pronunciations were further analysed to explore potential patterns of which cluster types might be simplified and, if so, how. During this phase of the analysis, an abductive approach was taken, allowing the researcher to go back and forth between inductive, data-driven analyses and deductive, theory-driven analyses. For this reason, the pronunciations in the word list were analysed in a more exploratory way and, together with insights from previous studies, this first exploratory descriptive analysis formed categories with which to approach the recordings from Fidèle's narrative and interview.

7.5 Findings

This section presents the findings from the study: Section 7.5.1 presents the findings for words ending in closed syllables and Sections 7.5.2, 7.5.3 and 7.5.4 present the findings from words with two-consonant, three-consonant and four-consonant clusters, respectively. In each section, pronunciations of monosyllabic words are presented first and polysyllabic words second. In monosyllabic words, syllable position is specified, while in polysyllabic words, only position within the words is specified, as it is unclear whether RP or Bantu (like) phonotactics should be used with the present material. Furthermore, the findings from the word list are presented first, before the findings from Fidèle's reading and spontaneous speech.

7.5.1 Closed and open syllables in word-final position

7.5.1.1 Findings from the word list

In monosyllabic words, the participants mainly pronounce the words with closed syllables (see examples in Table 7.2). The *square*, ending in the letter <r>, is pronounced by all the participants without a coda. This word thus has an open syllable.

Table 7.2 Monosyllabic words with word-final open/closed syllable

Written form	Pronunciation	Syllable
dress	[dɾes]	closed
clan	[klan]	closed
square	[skwea]	open

In polysyllabic words, almost all the participants consistently pronounce the words with open syllables word-finally (see examples in Table 7.3). All the words in this category have the letter <l> in word-final position. In other positions within words, a written <l> is pronounced as a sonorant, [l], as in *clan* [klan]. However, in word-final position, [l] is not pronounced, which makes the word-final syllables in these words open.

Table 7.3 Polysyllabic words with word-final open/closed syllable

Written form	Pronunciation	Word-final syllable
crystal	[kɾisto]	open
possible	[posibo]	open
bicycle	[baisko]	open

Tables 7.2 and 7.3 show that when words are read in isolation, the participants seem to pronounce the monosyllabic words with closed syllables, unless the word has a word-final <r>. Then the participants pronounce the word with an open syllable. In polysyllabic words, the pattern seems to be a preference for open syllables, e.g. [kɾisto] instead of [kɾistol]. The pronunciations of *square* and the polysyllabic words without sonorant can be analysed as consonant deletions,[4] a strategy for avoiding closed syllables in word-final position.

7.5.1.2 Fidèle's linguistic practices

In Fidèle pronunciations, there are several examples of avoiding closed syllables. Interestingly, unlike in the word list task, both monosyllabic words and polysyllabic words are affected by these strategies.

In monosyllabic words, Fidèle uses two different strategies to change closed syllables to open syllables, either deleting the coda consonant or inserting a vowel (see examples in Table 7.4): in some words, Fidèle's pronunciation is without an obstruent as coda; in others, Fidèle inserts a vowel, [i]; there is also an example of both epenthesis and obstruent deletion in the same word.

Table 7.4 Monosyllabic words without codas

Written form	Pronunciation	Strategy
creek	[kɾi]	obstruent deletion
with	[wiði]	epenthesis
and	[ani]	epenthesis + obstruent deletion

There are no instances of consonant deletion of word-final coda in monosyllabic words in spontaneous speech. Instead, Fidèle uses epenthesis only (see examples in Table 7.5). The vowels he uses for epenthesis, [i], [u] and [ə], are more varied in spontaneous speech than when reading.

Table 7.5 Monosyllabic words without codas

Written form	Pronunciation	Strategy
in	[ini]	epenthesis
then from	[denu fɾomu]	epenthesis
when	[winə]	epenthesis

In polysyllabic words, there is a mix of both consonant deletion and vowel insertion in both the narrative reading and in the interview. In the examples of consonant deletion, all but one of the deleted word-final consonants is a sonorant (see examples in Table 7.6).

Table 7.6 Polysyllabic words with consonant deletion

Written form	Pronunciation	Strategy
possible	[posibo]	sonorant deletion
cousin	[kazi]	sonorant deletion
wanted	[wante]	obstruent deletion
normal	[nomo]	sonorant deletion
wearing	[weɾi]	sonorant deletion
winter	[winta]	sonorant deletion

Like in epenthesised monosyllabic words, in polysyllabic words with epenthesis, the inserted vowel is either [i], [u] or [ə] (see Table 7.7).

Table 7.7 Polysyllabic words with epenthesis

Written form	Pronunciation	Strategy
pretended	[pitendedi]	epenthesis
on	[onə]	epenthesis
I'm	[amu]	epenthesis
because	[bikozi]	epenthesis
can	[kanu]	epenthesis
in	[inə]	epenthesis

7.5.2 Two-consonant clusters

7.5.2.1 Findings from the word list

In words with two-consonant clusters, some patterns emerge depending on whether the cluster is found as onset or coda. In monosyllabic words containing a two-consonant cluster as onset, the participants uniformly have complex clusters (see examples in Table 7.8).

Table 7.8 Monosyllabic words with complex onsets

Written form	Pronunciation	Onset structure
dress	[dɾes]	CC
cross	[kɾos]	CC
blink	[bliŋk]	CC

The same is the case in polysyllabic words with two-consonant word-initial onsets (see Table 7.9).

Table 7.9 Polysyllabic words with complex onsets

Written form	Pronunciation	Word-initial onset structure
crystal	[kɾisto]	CC
twinkle	[twiŋko]	CC

In words with two-consonant codas, there seems to be a pattern depending on consonant type in the cluster. Firstly, in monosyllabic words with two obstruents as codas, all the participants have complex clusters in coda position (see examples in Table 7.10).

Table 7.10 Monosyllabic words with two obstruents as coda

Written form	Pronunciation	Coda structure
post	[post]	CC
tips	[tips]	CC

Secondly, words with two sonorants as codas have varying pronunciations (see Table 7.11). All the participants have a complex coda in *kiln*. In *film*, however, only four pronounce the word with a complex coda. Three participants reduce the coda cluster by deleting one of the sonorants. There is thus inter-speaker variation as to whether a complex or simple coda is used.

Table 7.11 Monosyllabic words with two sonorants as coda

Written form	Pronunciation	Coda structure
kiln	[kiln]	CC
film	[film], [fil] or [fim]	CC or C

Thirdly, words with codas containing a sonorant and an obstruent are mainly pronounced with complex codas (see examples in Table 7.12). However, in *dark* and *park*, both containing a written <r> as part of their coda clusters, all the participants have a simple coda with obstruent only.

Table 7.12 Monosyllabic words with sonorant + obstruent coda

Written form	Pronunciation	Coda structure
cold	[kold]	CC
milk	[milk]	CC
rinse	[ɾins]	CC
dark	[dak]	C
park	[pak]	C

The word list contains one polysyllabic word with a two-consonant word-final coda, *convince*. Most participants pronounce the word with a complex coda, [ns]. Similarly, in the three polysyllabic words with two-consonant clusters word-medially, the participants mainly pronounce the words with complex clusters (see Table 7.13).

Table 7.13 Polysyllabic words with word-medial and word-final clusters

Written form	Pronunciation	Word-medial cluster
crystal	[kɾisto]	CC
convince	[komvis]	CC
twinkle	[twiŋko]	CC

7.5.2.2 Fidèle's linguistic practices

In Fidèle's reading and interview, there are a couple of examples of strategies to avoid word-initial onset: one with epenthesis and one with consonant deletion (see Table 7.14). In his pronunciation of *snow*, he inserts the close front rounded monophthong [y] between the [sn] cluster, thus making the word polysyllabic. This vowel is present in French and in Norwegian phonology, two languages that Fidèle reports not having in his repertoire, but which he has been and is exposed to due to their presence in the relevant African and Norwegian ecologies. The other example with cluster reduction is *pretended*. Fidèle pronounces this word with an obstruent only, making the complex word-initial onset cluster into a simple onset.

Table 7.14 Word-initial onset cluster simplification

Written form	Pronunciation	Word-initial onset structure	Strategy
snow	[syno]	C	epenthesis
pretended	[pitendedi]	C	sonorant deletion

In word-final coda clusters with two consonants, there are several examples of cluster simplification through consonant deletion both in reading and in spontaneous speech (see examples in Table 7.15). In some cases, a sonorant is deleted, e.g. *hurt*, [hat], while in others an obstruent is deleted, e.g. *kind*, [kain].

Table 7.15 Word-final coda cluster simplification

Written form	Pronunciation	Word-final coda structure	Strategy
sold	[sod]	C	Sonorant deletion
film	[fim]	C	Sonorant deletion
hurt	[hat]	C	Sonorant deletion
most	[mos]	C	Obstruent deletion
kind	[kain]	C	Obstruent deletion

Word-medially in polysyllabic words, there are some examples of cluster reductions during Fidèle's interview (see Table 7.16). In all these instances, a sonorant has been deleted.

Table 7.16 Word-medial cluster simplifications

Written form	Pronunciation	Strategy
learning	[laniŋ]	Sonorant deletion, [ɾn] → [n]
Norwegian	[noɾidʒian]	Sonorant deletion, [ɾw] → [ɾ]
also	[asu]	Sonorant deletion, [ls] → [s]

7.5.3 Three-consonant clusters

Like words with two-consonant clusters word-initially, the participants do not reduce word-initial clusters with three consonants in the word list task, neither in monosyllabic nor polysyllabic words (see examples in Table 7.17). Similarly, the word-medial cluster in *inkling* is pronounced with a complex cluster consisting of three consonants, [ŋkl].

Table 7.17 Word-initial onset clusters

Written form	Pronunciation	Word-initial onset structure
splash	[splaʃ]	CCC
squint	[skwint]	CCC
sprinkle	[spɾiŋko]	CCC

In coda clusters, on the other hand, there is variation in the complexities of the participants' clusters (see Table 7.18). For the word *pants* most of the participants have a three-consonant cluster as coda. In *lands*, on the other hand, three of the participants pronounce the word with a three-consonant coda cluster, while three others reduce the cluster by omitting [d]. One participant reduces the cluster even further, changing the complex coda into a simple coda with only one consonant.

Table 7.18 Three-consonant coda clusters

Written form	Pronunciation	Word-final coda structure
pants	[pants]	CCC
lands	[lands], [lans] or [lan]	CCC, CC or C

7.5.3.1 Fidèle's linguistic practices

In the narrative, Fidèle pronounces *blinked* as [blikt]. The coda cluster is thus reduced from a three-consonant cluster to a two-consonant cluster. Word-medially in polysyllabic words, there are two examples of consonant cluster simplification through deleting one or two consonants (see Table 7.19). In word-initial onsets there are no examples of cluster reductions.

Table 7.19 Word-medial cluster simplifications

Written form	Pronunciation	Strategy
children	[ʧidɾen]	Sonorant deletion, CCC, [ldɾ] → CC, [dɾ]
appointment	[apoiment]	Obstruent + sonorant deletion, CCC, [ntm] → C, [m]

7.5.4 Four-consonant clusters

The word list has two words containing consonant clusters with potentially four consonants, *angst* and *extra* (see Tables 7.20 and 7.21). In *angst*, two participants have a four-consonant cluster coda. The other five use different strategies to simplify the consonant cluster. Some omit a consonant and pronounce the word a three-consonant cluster coda, while others use epenthesis, making the word disyllabic.

Table 7.20 Pronunciations of *angst*

Written form	Pronunciation	Word-final coda structure	Strategy
angst	[aŋgst]	CCCC	
	[aŋst] or [agst]	CCC	Consonant deletion
	[aŋgəst]	CC	Epenthesis
	[aŋəst]	CC	Epenthesis + consonant deletion

Table 7.21 Pronunciations of *extra*

Written form	Pronunciation	Word-medial cluster	Strategy
extra	[ekstɾa]	CCCC	
	[estɾa] or [ekʃɾa]	CCC	Obstruent deletion
	[esɾa]	CC	Obstruent deletion

The word *extra* is pronounced with a four-consonant cluster by three participants. Two pronounce the word with a three-consonant cluster, omitting one of the obstruents. Finally, one participant omits two obstruents, reducing the cluster to a two-consonant cluster.

7.5.4.1 Fidèle's linguistic practices

Extra is the only word with a four-consonant cluster used by Fidèle in the other activities. When he reads the word in narrative, he omits two obstruents. His pronunciation, [esɾa], has a two-consonant word-medial cluster.

7.6 Analysis and Discussion

7.6.1 Strategies to avoid closed syllables

Although there are examples of closed syllables in word-final position, the participants sometimes use strategies to avoid closed syllables, similar to descriptions of African Frenches. In the word list task, mainly polysyllabic words are affected by such strategies. In Fidèle's reading and interview, on the other hand, both monosyllabic and polysyllabic words are affected. It thus appears that open syllables are preferred in speaking styles where the participants might pay less attention to pronunciation, like reading a narrative or conveying a message in spontaneous speech.

Among the explanations that can be used for English pronunciations in different geographical places, first language (L1) influence is often preferred. For the present study, *l-vocalisation* (see e.g. Wells, 1982) and rhoticity can explain pronunciations with open syllables in written words with word-final [l] or rhotic consonant [ɾ, ɹ]. However, there are limitations to using these explanations on the present material.

Bobda (2007: 419) points out that 'syllabic /l/, from which [l-vocalisation] derives, is unlikely in an African English variety'; thus 'the rule applies only in [monolingual, first language] varieties like Cockney'. Furthermore, in the present study, the sonorant [l] is only affected in word-final coda position, not pre-consonantally, as in Cockney pronunciations like [fɪʊm], *film*, and [toʊd], *told* (Wells, 1982: 313–317). Consequently, l-vocalisation might not be the best explanation for pronunciations in the present study, as a phoneme is omitted rather than replaced, e.g. [sod], *sold*.

It is, however, possible to use rhoticity to explain the participants' practices regarding word-final [ɾ, ɹ] and classify their English practices as non-rhotic, like descriptions of other East African Englishes (see Section 7.3.2.2), since the participants only use a rhotic consonant pre-vocalically, possibly due to *Founder Principle*[5] (Mufwene, 2001: 28). Unlike most non-rhotic accents (Cruttenden, 2014: 315–316; Wells, 1982: 219), however, they do not use linking /r/, as in Fidèle's pronunciation [we a] *where I*. This has been observed in a few other non-rhotic accents, like Multicultural London English, South African English and Singapore English (see Trudgill & Hannah, 2017: 23, 36, 48, 141), along with Southern American English (Kurath, 1964 referred to in Gick, 1999: 31). As such, rhoticity can explain some of their pronunciations. However, rhoticity cannot explain deletion of obstruents or other sonorants, like the lateral [l] and nasals [m, n, ŋ], or epenthesis word-finally.

Looking to the participants' L1 is also problematic, as this is a Northern concept that does not reflect Southern multilingual realities (see e.g. Golden & Steien, 2021). Instead, we might use Mufwene's (2001, 2002) ecological approach. Open syllables are dominant in Bantu languages, Ugandan English and African Frenches and word-final consonants are often affected by either consonant deletion or epenthesis in order to make the word-final syllables open (see Section 7.3.2 above). Open syllable preference is thus a similarity across the linguistic varieties and the syllable structure that is used the most in the ecologies. As

such, it is not surprising that a preference for open syllables should be prevalent in the English practices of the participants in the present study.

7.6.1.1 A closer look at word-final epenthesis

In the narrative and spontaneous speech, Fidèle uses three vowels for word-final epenthesis: [i], [u] and [ə], schwa. To some extent, vowel similarity within or near the epenthesised word can explain choice of vowel. Some words containing [i]-insertion, also have [i] in the word itself and some words with [u]-insertion also contain a back vowel (see examples in Table 7.22).

Table 7.22 [i]- and [u]-insertion in words with the same vowel

Written form	Pronunciation
with	[wiði]
then from school	[denu fɾomu skul]

There are also some examples of vowel similarity in a nearby word, progressively or regressively (see examples in Table 7.23).

Table 7.23 Vowel similarity in close proximity to the word

Written form	Pronunciation
pretended to be	[pitendedi tu bi]
Norwegian with them when	[noɾidʒən wið ðem winə]

There are some cases which cannot be explained by vowel similarity (see examples in Table 7.24). These words do not contain nor are in proximity to a similar vowel. Furthermore, all three different vowel insertions, [i], [u] or schwa are present in these exceptions.

Table 7.24 Epentheses with dissimilar vowels

Written form	Pronunciation
brother had just	[bɾada hadi jast]
and I'm glad	[and amu glad]
kitchen. On my way	[kitʃe onə mai wei]

Vowel similarity might thus explain some of Fidèle's inserted vowel choices. However, when the word-final consonant is analysed too, an interesting pattern emerges. Firstly, in all cases with schwa insertion, the word-final consonant is [n], e.g. [winə], *when*. Secondly, all but one of the [i]-insertions take place in words ending in an alveolar consonant, e.g. [bikozi], *because*. Thirdly, all but one of the five [u]-insertions take place in a word ending

in a nasal, e.g. [fɹomu], *from*. This means that words ending in word-final [n] might be particularly sensitive to variation in syllable-opening strategies, as Fidèle's pronunciations show that these words might, in addition to sometimes being left unchanged, e.g. [sin], *seen*; either have consonant deletion, e.g. [kazi], *cousin*; schwa-insertion, e.g. [onə], *on*; [u]-insertion, e.g. [kanu], *can*; or [i]-insertion, e.g. [bini], *been*.

Fidèle's choice of inserted vowel is different from previous descriptions of Ugandan English (see Section 7.3.2.2 above). His vowel insertion patterns are more like African Frenches (see Section 7.3.2.3 above), where vowel similarity influences choice of inserted vowel. Finally, influence by the preceding [n] is a further interesting finding different from the other linguistic varieties in the ecologies and is something that should be explored more in future.

7.6.2 Strategies to avoid complex clusters

The findings of the present study indicate that word-initial onset clusters are rarely reduced through epenthesis or consonant deletion. This is different from previous accounts of both Ugandan English and African Frenches, where onset clusters are avoided (see Section 7.3.2.2– 7.3.2.3 above), and Bantu languages, where only NC and CG onset clusters are allowed (see Section 7.3.2.1 above). Thus, the participants seem to allow more consonants in onsets than Ugandan English, African Frenches and Bantu languages. This could have to do with the speaking style in the word list, i.e. reading written words in isolation. Fidèle uses consonant deletion once in *pretended* and epenthesis once in *snow* when reading and in spontaneous speech, respectively. The vowel insertion in *snow* is anaptyctic, i.e. inserted between the consonants. His epenthesis practice, then, is similar to what Bobda (2007) has reported for other African Englishes.

Previous accounts of Ugandan English maintain that the main strategy for cluster simplification in onsets is through epenthesis (see Section 7.3.2.2 above). This is less clear from the present study as there is only one example of epenthesis, in addition to one of consonant deletion. Thus, in less careful speech, there might be potential for both simplification strategies in onset clusters. However, more research is needed to confirm this.

In the present study, word-medial clusters and word-final coda clusters with more than two consonants seem the be the main clusters to be reduced, either through consonant deletion or epenthesis. This is like Bantu languages, African Frenches and Ugandan English, linguistic varieties that all disfavour complex clusters. However, while African Frenches mainly use epenthesis to simplify consonant clusters, the participants' pronunciations in the present study are more like Ugandan English and Bantu languages, where both consonant deletion and epenthesis are strategies used to simplify clusters. As such, it appears, again, like several languages in the ecology contribute to influencing the participants' English practices.

7.6.3 The participants' syllable structures

RQ1: How do the participants pronounce written words ending in closed syllables?

In careful speech, deletion seems to be the preferred strategy in polysyllabic words word-final simple codas, e.g. *chronicle* [kɾoniko], while monosyllabic words are pronounced with closed syllables. In less careful speech, there is variation in open and closed syllables. Epenthesis appears to be the main strategy, also in monosyllabic words, e.g. *been* [bini]. Vowel similarity and preceding consonant seem to influence which vowel is inserted. [n]-codas stand out, as they can be subject to deletion, [i]-, [u]- or schwa insertion.

RQ2: How do the participants pronounce words with complex consonant clusters in writing?

In word-initial onsets, there are few examples of cluster reductions, regardless of cluster complexity. In word-final codas, consonant clusters only seem to be simplified in clusters with three or more consonants in careful speech, e.g. *angst* [agst]. There are more examples of consonant deletion in word-final codas in less careful speaking styles, e.g. *film* [fim]. Similarly, word-medial clusters are not reduced in careful speech, but occasionally in spontaneous speech, e.g. *also* [asu]. Although there are some examples of epenthesis in consonant clusters, e.g. *angst* [aŋgəst] and *snow* [syno], the main strategy when encountering complex clusters seem to be consonant deletion.

RQ3: What can their linguistic practices tell us about their preferred syllable structures?

The participants in this study appear to favour open syllables; complex clusters in onset position mainly; and few consonants word-medially, (CC)CV(CC). Using Mufwene's (2001, 2002) ecological approach, it appears that the syllable structures of Bantu languages, African Frenches and Ugandan English have strengthened each other over time, through similarity and frequent usage. Thus, although French and English are historically European languages, for the participants in the current study, their (CC)CV(CC) syllable structures in their English speech are shaped by the dominant structures in their ecologies, rather than British English syllable structure. The language introduced to the local ecology has thus taken on the local syllable structure. This is similar to what is observed with other suprasegmental features, where European languages are introduced in SL dominated ecologies (Steien & Yakpo, 2020; Yakpo, 2021). Thus, within the linguistic ecology of Uganda, it is unlikely that the English syllable structure of multilingual Congolese refugees will become more like British English syllable structures.

7.7 Conclusion

This study has contributed with empirical, sociolinguistic research of suprasegmental variation among an under-researched group, i.e. newly-arrived Congolese refugees in Norway. The main findings include the participants' use of deletion and epenthesis strategies to avoid closed syllables and complex consonant clusters. The syllable structures

of their situated English practices seem to have been shaped by the similar and frequently used syllable structures in the Ugandan ecology.

Something that should be explored more in future is syllable divisions in polysyllabic words to find out whether their syllable division in their English practices should be analysed according to RP or Bantu phonotactics. Furthermore, future studies might explore more naturally occurring data, exploring whether similar tendencies are present in these contexts. Interaction studies might also reveal if and where misunderstandings arise and how they are repaired and/or prevented in interactions between Congolese refugees and Norwegian interlocutors.

Theoretically, this study has demonstrated how employing an ecological approach, mainly used in contact studies, might provide fruitful interpretations of the participants' English pronunciations. This approach involves a rethinking of Northern concepts like L1, additional language, and societal and individual multilingualism, and being more open to Southern experiences and understandings. The present study has thus opened a new avenue for researching English spoken by individuals with varied linguistic repertoires and shown an alternative to traditional Kachruvian approaches, which continue to label multilinguals speakers as non-native speakers or learners and compare their competence with monolingual native-speakers' competence. Instead, it is possible to understand people's linguistic practices through considering the ecologies in which they reside.

Had the Congolese refugees stayed in Uganda, their English syllable structure might probably not change much in future. However, as Blommaert (2010: xiv) says 'language [is] something intrinsically and perpetually mobile, through space as well as time, and *made for* mobility' (original emphasis). Today, they and their English practices are in Norway, an ecology dominated by more closed syllables and complex clusters than the Congolese and Ugandan ecologies. Future studies might reveal whether the suprasegmental features the Congolese refugees contribute to the ecology will endure over time, as well as how Norwegians react, linguistically and ideologically, to the presence of these repertoires in Norway's ecology.

Notes

(1) See Pennycook and Makoni (2019) and Pennycook (2020) for a longer discussion of the Global North and Global South.

(2) Following Pennycook and Makoni (2019), the term 'varieties' is used to denote abstracted generalisations of language practices among a group of speakers. Thus, the participants in this study do not necessarily *use* the described structures of the varieties, or linguistic systems, in situated interactions. However, the previous accounts of syllable structures in these group-level varieties are used as a starting point for understanding the current participants' situated linguistic practices.

(3) Some accounts include CVC structures as well for Bantu languages. However, in these cases, the start of a geminate consonant makes up the coda consonant (see e.g. Hyman & Katamba, 1999: 351).

(4) The terms *consonant deletion* and *epenthesis* are problematic as they have normative connotations. However, in this chapter the terms are used heuristically. They do not refer to the participants' individual phonology, but rather to their pronunciations compared to other English varieties world-wide.

(5) The term *Founder Principle* is used in the same way as Mufwene (2001: 28–29), i.e. 'to explain how structural features of [contact varieties] have been predetermined to a large extent (though not exclusively!) by characteristics of the vernaculars spoken by the populations that founded the colonies in which they developed'.

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2

What makes English valuable as travelling capital? A perspective from two forced migrants with South-South-North trajectories

This paper reports findings from autobiographic interviews on the value of English resources as travelling capital. The participants in this study are two refugees of war from the Democratic Republic of Congo who have had long transits in Uganda before being resettled to Norway by the United Nations. These refugees attribute value to English resources as linguistic capital due to their potential to provide help for oneself and others, inside and outside one's community of experience. Consequently, these findings may challenge central foundations in Bourdieu's framework of capital and exchange, foundations that assume individualism and competition for limited status to be important underlying factors in why social actors exchange linguistic capital for other forms of capital. The findings further complement research on language and migration with more emic perspectives from speakers with forced South-South-North trajectories, as well as research on the value of English resources globally that often focus on more macro-level perspectives.

Keywords: language and forced migration; emic perspectives; Global South; linguistic capital; Global English

Introduction

Recent years have seen an upsurge in forced migration worldwide. The trajectories of such forced migration are both from the Global South to the Global South, referred to as South-South migration, and from the Global South to the Global North, referred to as South-North migration (see e.g., Monsen & Steien, 2022a; Netto et al., 2022; Thomson, 2014; Vigouroux, 2019). The ongoing war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is one example of a conflict that has resulted in displaced Congolese people in other African countries, like South-Africa and neighbouring countries like Uganda and Tanzania; as well as across the Global North, including Norway in northern Europe, where they have been resettled by the United Nations (UN) (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2019; Steien & Monsen, 2022; Thomson, 2014; Vigouroux, 2019).

Refugees from DRC who have spent a decade or two in transit in countries like Uganda and Tanzania often pick up English and other local languages used in their new localities (see e.g., Bokamba, 2018; Steien, 2022). By the time some of them are resettled in the Global North by the UN, these speakers thus often have the global language English in their multilingual repertoires, a language that travels well since it "allow[s] insertion in large transnational spaces and networks" (Blommaert, 2010, p. 46). As a global language, English is generally viewed as highly valuable travelling capital as a lingua franca and as linguistic capital that helps individuals access other forms of capital (see e.g., Bayyurt, 2021; Crystal, 2012; Grey & Piller, 2020; Jenkins, 2015; Norton, 1997; Rindal, 2013; Saraceni et al., 2021). The present article explores emic values of English resources for two individuals with histories of forced South-South-North migration. 'Emic' here refers to the participants' "local point of view" (Hornberger, 2013, p. 112), their perspectives as insiders, i.e. how they conceptualise their experiences, how they orient themselves in the world, etc. (Pike, 1967; see also Grey & Piller, 2020). The focus in this article is on how these two individuals construct the value of English in autobiographic interviews (Pavlenko, 2007) in 2021 following personal life histories of forced South-South-North trajectories.

The next section presents the two participants and their life histories, as well as the *linguistic ecologies* (c.f. Haugen, 1972; Mufwene, 2001) relevant to their spatial trajectories in order to contextualise the participants' life histories. Next, the research context and data collection procedures for the present findings are presented. After that, the conceptual lens utilised for the analysis is presented, as well as previous research utilising this conceptual lens in order to show how the present study builds on and differs from previous research. Once all relevant background information and analytical tools are presented, the main analysis follows, in which is presented the main findings related to why the participants attribute value to English as travelling capital. Finally, the article ends with a discussion and some concluding remarks.

Ecologies and participants' life histories

The participants in this study are referred to by the pseudonyms Fidèle and Prudent. I was introduced to them through a collaborative research project that conducts linguistic ethnography among 14 newly-arrived Congolese refugees in Norway (see next section below). Fidèle and Prudent are two of these 14 Congolese refugees who have had long transits in Uganda. Together with their families, Fidèle and Prudent have been settled by the Norwegian government in different semi-rural areas in the eastern part of Norway. For both Fidèle and Prudent, English forms a dominant part of an otherwise quite complex multilingual repertoire. They differ from each other in terms of length of time spent in an English-dominant ecology and the age they were when entering this English-dominant ecology. As such, they provide complementary narratives of experiences with English practices across the Global South and the Global North. In this section, I give a brief presentation of the linguistic ecologies relevant to the participants' trajectories before zooming in on the participants' life histories and repertoires.

Ecologies in Eastern DRC

DRC has been independent from the brutal and exploitative Belgian colonial rule (see e.g., Fabian, 1986; White, 2000) since 1960, for about 60 years. However, colonial language ideologies have in many ways prevailed, e.g., in continuing the policy of French being an official language, French being the medium of instruction in education, and the ideologically ambiguous status of Swahili and Lingala (see e.g., Bokamba, 1995, 2018, 2019; Fabian, 1986). DRC is a highly multilingual country with figures for living languages ranging from 210 (Eberhard et al., 2023) to 214 (Bokamba, 2018), "of which four serve as national languages (NL: Kikongo, Kiswahili, Lingála & Tshiluba)" (Bokamba, 2018, p. 436). English is not one of its main languages, and has been labelled a "foreign language", mainly a school subject and "scarcely used in public given the infinitesimal number of fluent speakers" (Kasanga, 2012, p. 50), although its usage and visibility in the linguistic landscape is increasing in the larger cities, like Kinshasa and Lubumbashi (Kasanga, 2012, 2019). In terms of communicative practices and language ideologies in eastern DRC, where Fidèle and Prudent were born, ethnographic research has shown that speakers engage in monolingual and translingual practices with resources from French, national and local languages (Golden & Steien, 2021), pointing to translanguaging being viewed as normal and not marked, which is similar to South Asian communities described by Canagarajah (2013).

Many of the Congolese refugees in Norway, including Fidèle and Prudent, are from the Kivu region of DRC (Monsen & Steien, 2022a). This region "has been war-torn for several decades" (Monsen & Steien, 2022a, p. 7). Congolese refugees from this area were forced to flee their homes "due to an immediate threat of sexual violence, plundering, killings and forced recruitment to militias" (Monsen & Steien, 2022a, p. 7; see also Mathys, 2017;

Meger, 2010). They have often fled to neighbouring countries, like Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda (UNHCR, n.d.).

Ecologies in Uganda

Uganda has been independent from British colonial rule since 1962, i.e. for about 60 years like DRC. Further like DRC, colonial language policy has influenced current macro-level language ideologies, for instance, English being the most prestigious language in the country (Nakayiza, 2016). While having less documented living languages than DRC, Uganda is still a multilingual country with 41 living languages (Eberhard et al., 2023). The official and *de facto* national language in Uganda is English, while Swahili was made a second official language in 2005, although causing few practical changes to language policies in the country (Meierkord, 2016; Nakayiza, 2016). Like in DRC, Swahili also has an ambiguous status in Uganda as "it is unfortunately still associated with the military and the "troubled" times in the 1970s and 1980s" (Schmied, 2008, p. 154).

Previous ethnographic fieldwork among newly-arrived Congolese refugees in Norway (Steien, personal communication) have highlighted the multilingual nature of the refugee camp where many of them stayed in Uganda. This refugee camp catered for refugees from DRC, Sudan and Rwanda. In the refugee camp, both English and Swahili seemed to function as linguistic capital that could be exchanged for shelter, food, friendships, education and work. Furthermore, ethnographic fieldwork (Monsen, 2022; Steien, personal communication) and research on refugee camps for Congolese refugees in Tanzania (Thomson, 2014) have found precarious living conditions and lack of opportunity for individuals to plan for the future. According to Fidèle, the quality and status of the primary education offered to refugees in Uganda is questionable. He explained to me in one of the interviews that current unemployment rates in Uganda discourage people from prioritising school, and that the school days themselves are often too long for the children, without any meals provided by packed or served lunches, and the children walk 30 to 50 km to get to school on roads where girls in particular are vulnerable to violence. Other Congolese refugees have stayed in Kampala, where they had to find housing, food, etc. with less support from NGOs than those refugees who stayed in refugee camps, and thus experiencing precarity in other ways (Steien, personal communication). Some Congolese refugees have obtained some higher education in Uganda and many Congolese refugees also have work experience from Uganda, although there are large differences between the refugees. Often women have less education and formal work experience from Uganda due to being young mothers, while men might have been more likely to be able to pursue higher education and work experience.

Such living conditions may make individuals more dependent on fellow refugees with similar experiences, for example in Congolese churches, and perhaps even foster a strong collectivist culture (see e.g., Triandis, 2015). Congolese refugees who share the experience of having been UN refugees in Uganda stay in touch, in person and digitally, despite having been settled across different countries in the Global North. They have a strong sense of community, despite not being physically in the same geographical location, Uganda, anymore, which is similar to Anderson's (1991) concept *imagined communities*. They can thus be seen as what Kivimäki and colleagues (2023) refer to as a *community of experienc*e , i.e. "people who recognize similarities in their experiences, who share and negotiate these experiences and their meanings with each other, and who start to identify themselves as a group, bound together with a sense of shared experience" (Kivimäki et al., 2023).

Ecologies in Norway

As mentioned in the introduction, many of these Congolese refugees in transit in Uganda were eventually resettled in Norway by the UN in 2019-2020. The Norwegian state further settles refugees across Norway. Norway has been an independent country since 1905, i.e. for about a century. Unlike DRC and Uganda, Norway was not colonised, but in unions with its neighbouring countries for c. 500 years. As it was perceived as a provincial and remote part of the unions with both Denmark and Sweden, Norway very much developed a history of perceived monoculturalism and monolingualism, although the minoritised population has long been multilingual with e.g., Sámi, Kven or Romanì resources in addition to Norwegian resources (Røyneland et al., 2018). Today, the majoritised population in Norway have multilingual repertoires with Norwegian and English resources and often some German, French or Spanish resources (Røyneland et al., 2018). The minoritised population have multilingual repertoires with Norwegian resources, either indigenous or non-European resources, and often English resources (Røyneland et al., 2018). Norwegians in general have "functional fluency" (Bokamba, 2018) in English and Norway is ranked among the top five countries in the world in terms of non-native English proficiency (Education First, 2021). English-speaking Congolese refugees may therefore use English as a lingua franca in Norway, with most of their Norwegian-dominant interlocutors, an example of which is given in the analysis. In fact, until the war in Ukraine, Congolese refugees with long transits in Uganda were the only group of refugees who had any shared communicative resources with Norwegians, as most refugees came from Syria, Afghanistan and Somalia, where English is in less use than in Uganda. There might however be ideological reasons for avoiding English in Norway.

There are competing ideologies related to English in Norway. On the one hand, having English in one's communicative repertoire gives access to symbolic capital and intentional identity positioning using English resources (see e.g., Rindal, 2013). On the other hand, there is anxiousness that English may peripherise and even replace Norwegian in one or more domains (see e.g., Ljosland, 2007; Røyneland et al., 2018). This anxiety, together with a history of perceived monolingualism and monoculturalism, may have led to "normative monolingualism" (Grey & Piller, 2020, p. 56) in Norwegian society, with translanguaging being highly marked and monolingual Norwegian practices encouraged on several scales, like in the work place and in the media (Røyneland et al., 2018). For Congolese refugees, this means that they are required to undertake a mandatory national one-year to two-year Introduction Programme, introducing them to the Norwegian language and Norwegian society, customs and values (see e.g., Monsen & Eek, 2022; Monsen & Steien, 2022b; Pájaro, 2022; Steien & Monsen, 2022). This is a political choice since they actually share English resources with Norwegians and might thus practically have been able to live their lives in Norway without knowing Norwegian. This language policy and its underlying language ideology is reminiscent of how Vigouroux (2019) has described language learning for migrants in South Africa:

> the learning of the host language(s) is often framed as a moral duty, a "debt of hospitality" … that migrants are expected, if not summoned, to pay. Failure to do so (for whatever reason) is taken as a deliberate act against the "welcoming" host society and as indexing the migrants' unwillingness to integrate. (p. 35)

Fidèle's life history

Fidèle fled DRC at the age of five and spent 23 years in Uganda before coming to Norway in 2019, at the age of 29. He hardly remembers anything from DRC and refers to Uganda as his home country. In Uganda, Fidèle got married to a fellow Congolese refugee and had children

of his own. He was immersed in an English-speaking environment in Uganda for over twenty years and attended English-medium education, both primary, secondary and some higher education – although not uninterruptedly, due to the financial cost of education. In Uganda, he worked as a primary school teacher for a while and started an NGO catering for fellow refugees in the refugee camp. He refers to English as his "mother tongue", displaying how English is a significant part of his identities. In autumn 2021, when I collected data for the present study, Fidèle had multiple Bantu languages – Swahili, Kinyabwisha, Runyoro and Luganda – in his repertoire, as well as English and some Norwegian resources. He was attending mandatory Norwegian language learning classes, and did voluntary work at an NGO in Norway, and continued his work with for the NGO in Uganda remotely. His dominant languages in the autumn of 2021 were English and Swahili.

Prudent's life history

Prudent was older than Fidèle when he fled DRC, at 23 years old. As a result, he has more memories than Fidèle from DRC and he attended French-medium education in DRC. He was first introduced to English formally in DRC through the school subject English. Soon after arriving in Uganda, he took a one-year language course in English offered by Catholic missionaries. Like Fidèle, Prudent also got married to a fellow Congolese refugee and had children in Uganda. In total, Prudent spent 13 years being immersed in an English-speaking environment in Uganda. Like Fidèle, Prudent also got married and had children in Uganda. He served as a pastor in a Congolese church and worked for a Christian NGO in Uganda. At 36 years old, he came to Norway in 2019. In autumn 2021, his multilingual repertoire included resources from several Bantu languages – Kitembo, Swahili, Lingala and Luganda – as well as French, English and some Norwegian resources. Prudent was also attending mandatory Norwegian language learning classes and continued his ministry work in Uganda remotely. Prudent's dominant languages in the autumn of 2021 were English, Swahili and French.

Research context

The data presented in this article are part of an ongoing, collaborative research project called *Language across time and space: Following UN-refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo to Norway* that conducts linguistic and ethnographic research among 14 newly-arrived Congolese refugees in Norway (Monsen & Steien, 2022a). The project was initiated in 2019, once the Norwegian government agreed to settle c. 3000 UN quota refugees, of whom were c. 1000 Congolese refugees in transit in Uganda (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2019). One of the fieldworkers travelled to Uganda to conduct ethnographic fieldwork in the localities where these refugees had been residing for 10-30 years (Steien & Monsen, 2022). She recruited research participants "through a self-enrolment method" with the help of facilitators from the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) (Steien & Monsen, 2022, p. 9). 10 of the participants are men and 4 are women. They range in age from their 20s to their 50s, and most of them have come to Norway with a spouse and children. They all have multilingual repertoires consisting of resources from several Bantu languages and often French and/or English resources (Steien & Monsen, 2022), having been shaped by being part of ecologies dominated by Bantu, English and French resources for decades (Syvertsen, 2022; see also Mufwene, 2001; Steien & Yakpo, 2020). Such multilingual repertoires with resources from multiple pedigrees are not unusual for people from this part of Africa (see e.g., Bokamba, 2018). In fact, as Bokamba (2018) puts it, having resources from multiple languages in your repertoire "is not an option, but a daily requirement" (p. 433) in countries like DRC and Uganda. Apart from English resources, the other resources in their repertoires

may also function as linguistic capital in multiple ecologies. However, in this article I only zoom in on what makes *English resources* valuable for the participants, as a set of resources that, as mentioned above, travels well and has been researched extensively, although with less focus on the perspectives of individuals from the Global South.

The same fieldworker who met the participants in Uganda has continued to be in regular contact with the participants since their arrival in Norway in 2019-2020 (Steien & Monsen, 2022; Steien, personal communication). Like many other countries world-wide, Norway also went into lockdown following the outbreak of the global Covid-19 pandemic in Norway in mid-March 2020. Some of the Covid-19 restrictions the Norwegian government imposed was to limit the number of visitors allowed in people's homes. Consequently, while these restrictions were in place in varying degrees of strictness (c. March 2020-August 2021), only one fieldworker was in contact with the participants and collected linguistic and ethnographic data that were later analysed by herself and the other members of the collaborative research project, some of which was published in an edited anthology (Monsen & Steien, 2022a). Findings published in this anthology, as well as discussions with other fieldworkers in the project (e.g., Steien, personal communication; Monsen, personal communication) inform my understandings of the present material.

The data analysed in the present article are extracts from autobiographic interviews (Pavlenko, 2007) that I conducted with two of the 14 participants in the autumn of 2021, as well as fieldnotes from field visits, also during the autumn of 2021, that I conducted in familiar locations for these participants and fieldnotes from sporadic ongoing contact between the participants and myself from autumn 2021 until spring 2023. Specifically, I conducted two field visits to each of the participants' homes and one to their adult learning centre where they are studying Norwegian, all in the autumn of 2021. In total, there were six field visits, lasting between three and eight hours each. The first field visit to each of the participants was conducted together with the above-mentioned fieldworker who met them for the first time in Uganda and whom the participants considered a friend by 2021. After the first field visit, both the participants contacted me directly, without using the other field worker as a go-between. Both of them invited me to visit them again and offered to help me further with my research.

I recorded four autobiographic interviews, i.e. two with each participant. The interviews lasted approximately 30 to 60 minutes each, and focused on exploring the participants' *subject realities*, meaning "how 'things' or events were experienced by the respondents" (Pavlenko, 2007, p. 165) with respect to their histories of English practices in DRC, Uganda and Norway. During my fieldwork the focus was narrowed down to exploring 'emic' perspectives (cf. Hornberger, 2013; Pike, 1967; see also Grey & Piller, 2020) on why the participants perceived English resources as valuable after having inhabited both the Global South and the Global North. Importantly, I do not use the term 'emic' here to suggest that the participants' perspectives are representative of or generalisable to all Congolese people, nor to all Congolese refugees in Norway. Since the autobiographic interviews afforded me a glance into their subject realities, I use the term 'emic' here to refer to the "local point of view" of the two participants as individuals. Furthermore, since the data was collected ethnographically, I did not seek controlled or balanced data sets from multiple participants. Instead, I here explore rich data from two participants that might help us understand more of why English as travelling capital may be constructed as valuable to individual speakers with forced South-South-North trajectories.

Throughout the data collection process, I was very aware of the potential asymmetric power relation between myself and the participants, and dimensions like gender, age and race that might influence what I notice (Busch, 2016, p. 6; Rosa & Flores, 2017). What struck me as the most salient influence throughout the fieldwork and analysis was that we have very different backgrounds: I have grown up in a peaceful country like Norway with freedom to

relocate as I wish, while they have traumatic life histories of war and forced mobility and have been settled in Norway due to a macropolitical decision between the UN and the Norwegian government. Because of this, all the fieldwork was carried out in places where the participants were likely to feel comfortable (cf. Agar, 2008, p. 120), i.e. in their homes and in their regular sites for Norwegian language learning. The interviews were further conducted in one of their dominant languages (cf. Busch, 2016, p. 6; Mann, 2011, p. 15), English, while use of other resources, like Norwegian, was initiated by the participants. I also strove to make the interview setting more like a normal conversation through, for instance, intonation and providing anecdotes of my own (cf. Briggs, 1986), and encouraged them to go off on tangents they were passionate about and tried to not control the conversation topics too much (cf. De Fina, 2020, p. 155). Reducing the potential asymmetry actually became a joint effort, as both Fidèle and Prudent actively repositioned themselves and me as more equal interlocutors, by steering the conversation to topics in which they were invested and, at times, providing explanations that positioned me as lacking knowledge and understanding of various topics. Both of them also separately treated me as their guest when I visited each of their sites of Norwegian language learning to shadow the participants for a day, by showing me around the learning centre, introducing me to their fellow language learners and their teachers, saving me a seat close to them in the classroom, and inviting me to join them and the other learners for lunch as the most natural thing in the world. Through these gestures, Fidèle and Prudent made me feel welcome and positioned me more and more as "one of them".

Through thematic analysis of the recorded autobiographic narratives, I identified a number of key themes. I initially assumed that the autobiographic narratives might indicate patterns of varying reasons for English being valuable as linguistic capital in distinct geographical locations, e.g., English being valuable as linguistic capital in Uganda for some reasons and valuable as linguistic capital in Norway for other reasons. The thematic analysis instead pointed to patterns of English being valuable since it could be exchanged as linguistic capital for help, and this help was beneficial on a number of *scales* (cf. e.g., Blommaert, 2010; Blommaert et al., 2005). That is not to say that the ecologies the participants have inhabited are similar or interchangeable in general. The thematic analysis indicated that the way these participants construct the value of English as linguistic capital in Norway in 2021, following a lifetime of forced migration, was patterned according to scales and not according to geographical locations. These themes that were identified through the thematic analysis will be explored in turn in this article, through the analytical lens of linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991, 1997) and in light of observations from field visits and ongoing contact with the participants.

Capital as an interpretive lens

The value of English resources is understood here through the lens of Bourdieu's (1991, 1997) concept of language as *capital*, i.e. whether English resources can be exchanged favourably. *Capital* refers to resources that are exchangeable for other forms of desirable resources (Bourdieu, 1997). Bourdieu (1997) operates with three main types of capital: economic capital, social capital and cultural capital, with linguistic capital being a form of cultural capital.

Linguistic resources do not inherently equate to linguistic capital. Instead, so-called "legitimate competence" in a given space "can function as linguistic capital" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 55). Competence, in this context, does not simply refer to linguistic accuracy. Rather, Bourdieu (1991) refers to situated socially acceptable competence, such as having resources that both interlocutors in a situated encounter associate with prestige (see also Blommaert et al., 2005). This can, for instance, mean that "knowing the right kind of language or variety

can enable access to desired resources such as jobs or to public and private services provided by the state (i.e. airline businesses, health, education)" (Duchêne et al., 2013, pp. 5–6), as well as connections, friendship, a sense of belonging, cultural knowledge and cultural artefacts.

Several studies have demonstrated that language practices exist in different hierarchical relations depending on geographical and social space (e.g., Beiler, 2021; Blommaert, 2009; Guido, 2018; Holm et al., 2019). Thus, what constitutes "legitimate competence" in a given encounter is influenced by the dominant language ideologies in the given space, as well as how individuals position their resources as socially valuable. Within Bourdieu's (1991) framework, social actors exchange different forms of capital to increase their social status and power. He thus views society as functioning with a linguistic market structure, where each social actor competes with other actors for a limited amount of status and capital (Bourdieu, 1991). Speaking certain languages or varieties, for instance, can give you higher status, which might, in turn, give access to more material capital.

English resources enabling help

As stated in the introduction, the aim of this study is to understand the participants' view of the value of English resources in their own lives. The participants mainly attribute the value of English to the somewhat vague word "help". English resources being exchangeable for "help" is quite a pertinent theme, which is illustrated clearly by their narratives I present in the following excerpts. Furthermore, the participants' explanation of who will benefit from the "help" can be seen from the perspective of scales (e.g., Blommaert, 2010; Blommaert et al., 2005), since three different levels are identified – oneself, one's community of experience, and others outside one's community of experience. Thus, this section is structured into three parts in accordance with each scale: oneself, one's community of experience, and others outside one's community of experience.

Help for oneself

Firstly, English appears to be of value to the participants because it can help them personally. In one of the interviews with Prudent, he was asked about his experiences of coming to Norway with English already in his repertoire, to which he answered the following:

> **Excerpt 1**
> Prudent: Yeah, it was useful to me. (…) To me, yeah, it was difficult to Madame, but it was useful to me, because, (…) I'm not in a stranger language, yeah, just Norwegian, which is strange, but English not strange to me, yeah. It was very, very wonderful, really, when I met people to who are speaking English. (interview with Prudent)

Prudent answers here by drawing a comparison between himself and his wife. He explains that coming to Norway was more difficult for his wife, because English is not a dominant language for her. For him, on the other hand, it was a relief to discover that many Norwegians actually speak English. Thus, English seems to have a general ability to function as linguistic capital to be exchanged for any economic, social or cultural capital.

One specific example of how English provides help for Prudent himself was observed during the third field visit. During this visit, I joined Prudent for a whole day at the adult education centre where he was based. At one point, Prudent was asked to come into one of the administrator's office in order to discuss formal requirements for his work placement in a kindergarten. The discussion centred on the importance of being formally prepared for the work placement, in this case having obtained a police certificate of conduct, roughly equivalent to a British Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, prior to the placement.

During this Norwegian-dominant conversation, the administrator appeared to notice that Prudent did not understand the Norwegian word *forberedt* [EN: prepared]. She asked him, "*Du forstår 'forberedt'*? [You understand 'prepared'?] Prepared", to which Prudent answered "*Ja* [Yes], before". In this case, the value of English resources can be said to lie in its ability to help resolve a misunderstanding that could have led to serious consequences for Prudent if it was not cleared up, i.e. he might not get the work placement. Consequently, since the administrator here used English resources, this made it possible for Prudent to exchange his English resources as linguistic capital for the information he needed to make sure that he could obtain a police certificate of conduct, which in turn made it possible for him to take part in the work placement.

Fidèle also emphasizes how speaking English has value for him in terms of being exchangeable for help for himself, specifically in terms of enabling him to get higher education, work and settling into a new life in Norway. When asked during the final interview if there was anything that we had not talked about with regards to English being beneficial, Fidèle listed several experiences, see excerpt 2.

> **Excerpt 2**
> Fidèle: In Norway, I can move in all Norway now, because of my English. Like last year I travelled to Sweden, because of my little English I was convinced to travel myself using the map. So, English has helped me to study the map very well. I've made friends. And now I can attend some conferences here in Norway, especially in Oslo. (…) English it has helped me in many, many things. I am who I am because of the little English I know. Yeah, English it has helped me to go to university in Uganda and I've got some little profession now. I've worked with local people, with international people. (interview with Fidèle)

In excerpt 2, Fidèle explains how English has been beneficial for him personally, enabling geographical mobility, map reading abilities, higher education and work, conferences, identity formation, and development of friendships. Some of these friends Fidèle introduced to me during my field visits. English resources, then, are constructed by Fidèle as being valuable. This value is attributed to being exchangeable for other forms of cultural, social and economic capital.

Help for one's community of experience

Secondly, Fidèle and Prudent seem to be concerned with group solidarity in that they want to help, not just themselves, but also others in their community of experience. The Congolese church where Prudent served as a pastor was mainly made up of Congolese refugees who used Swahili as one of their dominant languages. During one of the interviews, possibly because he knew I was a fellow Christian, he spent some time describing the church as bilingual, with interpretation into English if the sermon was given in Swahili, or into Swahili if the sermon was given in English. At first, this confused me. Why would they use English in church if everyone understood Swahili? In excerpt 3 we see Prudent's answer.

> **Excerpt 3**
> Prudent: So, I mean, when they are preaching, well, you're preaching in Swahili, then they interpret in English. Or you are preaching English, they interpret in Swahili. Those ones who are there, they don't know English, they can pick some of what's there. They can learn from there also. So, you use those strategies (…) These people will not remain with them forever. They can also move from there to other places. So, when did they know the language, (…) that language can help them there. (interview with Prudent)

Prudent here points out that people were part of this church in Uganda for a limited time only. He was therefore concerned about the church members' linguistic resources. In excerpt 3, Prudent seems to imply that he wanted to ensure that the church members had legitimate linguistic competence which could be used as linguistic capital in their future locations. Being an English speaker himself, he had the ability to exchange *his* linguistic capital for future social, cultural and economic capital that would benefit *his fellow Congolese refugees*, through this informal language learning strategy with bilingual sermons. This means that, in addition to English linguistic capital providing individual help for Prudent himself, this capital is constructed as further enabling him to help his community of experience.

Both during informal conversations during the field visits and during the recorded autobiographic interviews with Fidèle, it became clear that, like Prudent, he is also concerned with fellow refugees. In excerpt 4, we see an example of this.

> **Excerpt 4**
> Fidèle: I started organization which now is helping hundreds of people, both for children and women who are in different critical conditions. I've connected with international people in Africa. I have helped many organizations in different capacities. (…) Yeah, it has helped me, English. Yeah, it has helped me much. We have donors of my organization in UK. We have people in France. This is because of English. (interview with Fidèle)

Fidèle attributes his ability to start an NGO to help refugees in UN refugee camps in Uganda to having English in his repertoire. However, during the second interview he specified the important point that English capital is not necessarily valuable alone, without other forms of capital. In excerpt 5, we see how Fidèle highlights the importance of pairing linguistic capital with social capital.

> **Excerpt 5**
> Fidèle: If you have no connections, the language it will not help you. But if you know the language, and you already have integrated in the people, so it will be easier for you. You have two things: Language (…) [and] Connections. (…) Because of what? Network. (…) You feel appreciated, you feel you feel like "I'm at home". You feel like you can share your problem with somebody. (…) Yeah, so if we have language [and if] we have people, no matter if you have job, as long as you have people, you will feel like, yeah, I'm in a community. (interview with Fidèle)

Thus, starting an NGO and connecting professionally with international people are examples of economic capital that Fidèle has obtained *inter alia* from exchanging his English resources as linguistic capital. At the same time, we see that this economic capital is not for individual gain only. Like Prudent, he wished to obtain this capital for collective gain, i.e., for the benefit of his wider community of experience.

After coming to Norway, Fidèle has continued managing the same NGO in Uganda from Norway. Being an English speaker has allowed him to start a Norwegian branch of his NGO in Norway within his first two years of residence in Norway. It appears that having English capital may very likely have been a contributing factor to why this process has taken relatively little time, since it allows him to draw on English resources in his communication with Norwegians stakeholders.

Excerpts 3 and 4 show that English resources are valuable to Prudent and Fidèle because they can be exchanged as linguistic capital for social, cultural and economic capital, often in combination with other forms of capital, as emphasised in excerpt 5. The capital they gain from exchanging English capital is of benefit, not only to Prudent and Fidèle

individually, but also to their whole community of experience, Congolese refugees. This may challenge Bourdieu's theory of exchange, where the resulting capital obtained is mainly for individual gain. It could be argued, however, that wanting to help your own social group is an extension of helping yourself, because it is *your* social group, of which *you* are a part, and on which *you* are dependent. Yet, the next section will demonstrate that the participants do wish to help others outside their community of experience as well.

Help for others outside one's community of experience

Thirdly, there were several instances during the interviews when the participants expressed that English resources were valuable for enabling them to help other people, outside their immediate community of experience. Prudent, for instance, saw being an interpreter as helpful to international workers in DRC; see excerpt 6.

> **Excerpt 6**
> Prudent: (…) they [international workers] are strangers who are coming for my home country. And I can help them. When, to communicate it … to let them know other things, which, I mean, in my area, if they don't really have the language. Because I can become an interpreter to them. That was my goal. I could help them by joining them to other languages which they don't know. They know English (…) I know also English. But then other languages which are there, for example Swahili or Lingala, I can be (…) the interpreter, yeah, so that they may understand to each other through me. (interview with Prudent)

In extract 6 we see that Prudent experienced English resources to be valuable as linguistic capital in DRC because they could be exchanged for work as an interpreter, leading to enhanced economic capital. Prudent had noticed that Europeans and Americans were struggling with communication in DRC. Since the more rural Congolese population mainly spoke local Bantu languages (see "Participants and their trajectories" above), Prudent had experienced that he was in a position to help them with communication. Since he has multiple Bantu languages, together with French and, especially English in his repertoire, Prudent could facilitate communication between internationals and Congolese speakers.

The way Prudent constructs his motivation here, by saying that "I can become an interpreter to *them*. That was my goal. I could *help them* by *joining them* to other languages which they don't know" (emphasis added) focuses on his intention to be of service, rather than how his English resources could be exchanged for this role, or economic capital, as individual gain for himself. From the perspective of these international workers, it might have seemed like he wanted to achieve a higher social status by associating with them, or to access possibly more lucrative financial benefits for himself and his family. However, what is explicitly constructed in his answer is rather a focus on wanting to be of assistance, not necessarily added status or financial opportunities.

Similar motivations of wanting to use his English resources to help others outside his community of experience have been observed in Norway as well, both during and after the field visits in the second half of 2021. During 2022, he often prepared, recorded and shared sermons online for an international audience, mainly in English. Choosing to conduct these online sermons in English might be understood as a means to make his message accessible to more people. As such, his English resources can be exchanged for cultural capital that, within his worldview, will be beneficial to his audience for development in their faith. This audience does not only consist of fellow Congolese refugees. Consequently, his English capital can be said to be exchanged in a way that he perceives to be of benefit to other people, outside his community of experience, as well, perhaps even on a global scale.

Fidèle expressed similar sentiments of English enabling him to help other people than just Congolese refugees. Continuing from how English has been valuable to him for enabling practical help for fellow refugees (excerpt 4), he further explains how English enables him to "help back to Norway", see excerpt 7.

> **Excerpt 7**
> Fidèle: I'm now helping back to Norway through volunteering with *Røde Kors* [The Red Cross]. I'm a refugees' guide in a Red Cross to help there fellow refugees (...) Yeah, and this is because of English, because when we are going for the meeting there, we always speak in Norwegian, but when I'm not convinced in Norwegian (…) so they speak in English because I speak English. (interview with Fidèle)

In excerpt 7, Fidèle explains that he is doing voluntary work with the Norwegian Red Cross. The Norwegian Red Cross do work in Norway among migrants, including, but not limited to, Congolese refugees in Norway. Their work is also highly varied, including work among children and teenagers, people suffering from loneliness, paramedic work, and other ways in which local communities need support (The Norwegian Red Cross, n.d.-a, n.d.-b). Thus, when Fidèle mentions "help[ing] fellow refugees", this group of refugees is not limited to Congolese refugees.

Fidèle explicitly (excerpt 7) attributes his volunteering opportunity to having English resources. Consequently, English is constructed as valuable as it can be exchanged for voluntary work. Again, however, the focus is not on the individual benefits he might gain in the form of status, money, work experience, network, etc. Instead, his focus is on using his resources to help people who are struggling in Norway. As such, it seems clear that Fidèle expresses a wish to share the capital he receives, from exchanging English as linguistic capital, with anyone suffering, regardless of whether they are part of his community of experience.

Discussion

There were several instances during their narratives where the participants can be said to construct English as valuable for favourable exchanges with other forms of capital. In none of these instances can the value of English be related to characteristics of the language itself, e.g., being an aesthetically pleasing language, which seemingly underlies an integrative motivation to language learning (see e.g., Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Neither does the value of English seem to be related directly to potential for status and symbolic power, like Bourdieu (1991) implies. Ultimately being a helper may lead to status, but that is not what the participants explicitly construct in the interviews with me. Neither is English constructed as being beneficial for intentional identity positioning (cf. e.g., Bucholtz, 2010; Rampton, 1995). Instead, two key findings were crystallized through the analysis. These two relate to 1) that the participants are mostly concerned with meeting needs, and 2) that the capital they gain through exchanges is not necessarily solely for their own personal benefit. Each of these will be discussed in turn.

The word *help* is often used by the participants to explain how English resources have been advantageous for them. English resources are constructed as valuable for both giving and receiving help. This help can be financial, social, cultural, or related to learning languages. This is similar to what Bokamba (2018) and Steien (2022) have found to be the case for language learning in DRC and Uganda, as well as what Canagarajah (2021) highlights is the case among any refugees, i.e. that the value of linguistic resources is not related to "a choice to access new ideas and identities" (Canagarajah, 2021, p. 575), but a necessity for being able to access food, transport, etc.

Constructing the value of English resources as enabling help, however, deserves some more attention. These participants have lived in precarious conditions over decades where they have been continuously dependent on others (see "Participants and their trajectories" above). No trace of shame related to receiving help seems to be evident among the participants. Instead, they often express gratitude for help they have received themselves, as well as a "pay it forward" mentality of wanting to help others in return. It might be that living under such conditions has made help a necessity, a normal part of life. Furthermore, it might be that living with precarity has limited their chances of exchanging English as linguistic capital for other forms of capital, for instance for personal enjoyment in the form of being able to access English-speaking literature and entertainment, than those forms related to practical assistance.

The received help, or capital, is, moreover, not just for individual gain. Often, the reason the participants construct for why they wish to exchange English linguistic capital for other forms of capital, is that it might provide collective gain as well. For example, Fidèle's wish to go to university in Uganda was related to his wanting to help fellow refugees living in difficult circumstances in the refugee camps in Uganda. His being an English speaker enabled him to go to university. Similarly, Prudent wanted to use his English resources in church, not to gain something for himself, but rather to assist fellow members of the Congolese church in Uganda in adding English resources to their repertoires in order to enable them to use English resources as linguistic capital in the future. Fidèle and Prudent thus do not explicitly mention being motivated by obtaining personal status or wealth when exchanging capital. Instead, their answers present them as being concerned with collective well-being.

Beyond collective well-being for other Congolese refugees, both Prudent and Fidèle focus on helping others outside their social group too. This might possibly be related to the aforementioned "pay it forward" mentality that seems to have developed from living with precarity over an extended time. Perhaps precarity not only has the potential to create a strong collectivist culture within one's community of experience, but also to foster a wider culture of sharing, even with people outside one's community of experience. Regardless, the findings from this study overall do not fit Bourdieu's (1991) emphasis on social actors competing with each other for limited amounts of capital. Perhaps the linguistic market that the participants have experienced in DRC and in Uganda has functioned in a somewhat different way to the French society Bourdieu (1991) based his theory on? Instead of individuals mainly competing with each other for limited capital, sharing limited capital seems to be the norm for Prudent and Fidèle to a larger extent. Consequently, the underlying assumption in Bourdieu's (1991) theory, of competition for individual gain, might have to be adjusted for future studies following the present empirical findings.

Concluding remarks

This article has provided emic insights from two forced migrants with South-South-North trajectories to the academic discussion on the value of English resources. Through analysis of key excerpts from autobiographic interviews and observations of two Congolese refugees in Norway, this article has argued that the participants attribute the value of English resources as travelling capital mainly due to their potential for enabling help for themselves, their community of experience, and other people outside their community of experience. Thus, the present article has shown that Bourdieu's (1991, 1997) concept of linguistic capital can be fruitfully applied to analyses of the value of linguistic resources among speakers from the Global South.

Furthermore, some potential limitations in Bourdieu's framework have also been uncovered. These limitations are mainly related to the question of who gains from social exchanges. While Bourdieu (1991, 1997) emphasises individualistic gain, the findings in the

present article highlight a possible extension of Bourdieu's (1991, 1997) framework, i.e. that benefits from exchanges with English capital may be intended for other people as well.

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3

‘Scalar misunderstandings’: understanding forced migrants’ narratives about perceived communicative breakdowns across space

Abstract: This paper analyses forced migrants’ narratives about perceived communicative breakdowns across space. The analyses of their narratives reveal that the value of English resources is diminished in some local interactions, even if all interlocutors share English resources. This renegotiation of the value of English resources is attributed to ‘scalar misunderstandings’, i.e. a mismatch between intended and interpreted scalar orientation. Since English has different indexicalities on each scale, a misrecognition of the intended scalar orientation of the speaker can potentially lead to the speaker being positioned differently by their interlocutors than how they would position themselves. Such ‘scalar misunderstandings’ have real-world ramifications for multilingual speakers with histories of mobility, forcing them to silence and potentially leading to economic exploitation, causing feelings of discrimination, and making it more difficult to develop personal relationships in new spaces. The present paper complicates dominant discourses on the value of English resources globally. These discourses often position English as always being a practical option in lingua franca communication due to increasing numbers of English speakers worldwide. However, the present paper demonstrates that sharedness is not always a factor to rely on in local communicative practices. The present study relates this to the value and indexicality of English across different scales.

Keywords: scalar orientation; emic perspectives; language and forced migration; indexicality; Global English

1 Introduction

Over the past few years we have seen increased migration across continents from the Global South to the Global North following war, conflict and violence (UNHCR 2021b). One such migrant group is refugees of war originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo (henceforth DRC) with long transits in Uganda. Since 2019, several thousand of these Congolese refugees have been resettled from refugee camps in Uganda to Norway by the United Nations (henceforth UN). These form part of the statistic of around 26 million refugees worldwide in 2019 (UNHCR 2021a). Many of the Congolese refugees that arrived in Norway in 2019 have had highly complex linguistic repertoires since childhood (Swahili,

Kinyabwisha, French, etc.). In Uganda, many have added English and other resources to their repertoires. In Norway, while these refugees are learning Norwegian, they can use English as a lingua franca, since English is a shared resource with a lot of people in Norway.

English resources are therefore likely to be valuable as travelling *capital* (c.f. Bourdieu 1991, 1997) to such forced migrants since "[i]nternational languages such as … English allow insertion in large transnational spaces and networks" (Blommaert 2010:46), like in Uganda and Norway. In a broader study exploring emic views of the value of English in their own lives (Syvertsen forthcoming a), I found this to be the case: some newly-arrived Congolese refugees in Norway did in fact construct English as travelling capital across space in autobiographic narratives, in accordance with other macro-level studies on English as a global language (see e.g., Bayyurt 2021; Crystal 2012; Grey and Piller 2020; Jenkins 2015; Norton 1997; Rindal 2013; Saraceni, Rubdy, and Tupas 2021; Seargeant 2012). The participants in that study constructed English as valuable because it can generally be exchanged for money, work, friendships, education, etc., not only for one's own gain, but also for the benefit of others, inside and outside one's *community of experience* (Kivimäki, Malinen, and Vuolanto 2023; Syvertsen forthcoming a). However, through the thematic analysis I conducted for that study, I identified three 'outlier' narratives that did not seem to fit the overall emic views that the participants were constructing. These 'outlier' narratives described instances they had experienced in their lives of English resources surprisingly not being valuable. In this article, I zoom in on these three 'outlier' narratives to explore them in more detail on the micro-level, i.e. focusing on the participants' emic understandings of English resources becoming devalued. I will argue that these constructions of sudden English value loss may be due to local mismatches between speakers' intended scalar orientation and listeners' interpreted scalar orientation.

In this article, I mainly draw on Blommaert et al. (2005) and Blommaert's (2010) concepts of scale, orders of indexicality and polycentricity to analyse these narratives. The analysis reveals that interlocutors may attribute different value to English practices depending on scalar orientation. There is thus potential for communicative breakdowns when interlocutors orient towards different scale levels. Thus, what I refer to as 'scalar misunderstandings' can arise when interlocutors orient themselves towards different scale levels.

In the following section relevant macro-level perspectives are presented. I provide a brief presentation of previous research on language ideologies in the context of migration and how the value of linguistic resources may be renegotiated for migrants in new spaces. Then, the two macro spaces the participants refer to in their narratives, Uganda and Norway, are presented in this section to help the reader understand the background of the participants, not to suggest that any patterns of 'scalar misunderstandings' are more common in one geographical space over the other. These macro-level perspectives are simply presented as a backdrop for the present micro-level analysis. In the third section, I present the participants and the ethnographic context of this study, before the analytical lenses of scales, orders of indexicality and polycentricity that are used in the analysis are presented in the fourth section. In section five, the narratives and the analyses are presented, before the article ends with some concluding remarks.

2 Language across space

Previous research on language ideologies and globalisation has demonstrated that the value of linguistic resources is not stable and universal, but dynamic and fluctuating, being renegotiated when encountering new social spaces (e.g., Blommaert et al. 2005; Duman Çakır 2022; Guido 2018; Holm, O'Rourke, and Danson 2019; Park 2013; Piller and Bodis 2022; Zheng 2022). For example, Holm et al. (2019) show that English-speaking migrants on the

Faroe Islands experience a devaluation of their English resources as they enter Faroese society, where English has a lower value on the national scale than Faroese and Danish. Guido (2018) show how English-dominant asylum seekers from Sub-Saharan West-Africa are routinely repositioned as learners of English by Italian-dominant intercultural mediators in Italy. Piller and Bodis (2022) demonstrate that many multilingual students with English as their dominant language are routinely repositioned as learners needing to prove their English language proficiency (henceforth ELP) in their applications for studying in Australia. Through analysing criteria for ELP listed according to countries, Piller and Bodis (2022) argue that this repositioning seems to be due to the applicants being citizens of non-white countries and that such entrance criteria position English as a global, but mainly white language.

What these studies point to is firstly that the value of speakers' linguistic resources may be renegotiated due to dominant monolingual and native speaker ideologies in their new geographical localities. Similar ideologies are dominant in the Northern space in which the participants in this study reside, i.e. Norway. In Norway, English is often used as a lingua franca in business communication, mostly with European, North-American, and, to some extent, Asian business partners (Hellekjær 2017) and English is a dominant language in academia in Norway (Ljosland 2007). The majoritised population in Norway is often bilingual with Norwegian and English resources, while the minoritised population is often multilingual with Norwegian, either indigenous languages or various non-European languages, and sometimes English. Translingual practices with non-European languages tend to be quite marked in Norway (Beiler 2021) and monolingual practice with Norwegian is encouraged on most scales (Røyneland et al. 2018). English practices approximating British or American English accents tend to be the most prestigious (Beiler 2023; see also Reinemo 2023), for instance in high-stake exams (Bøhn 2016), although adolescents sometimes prefer a less

Anglo-American norm for their English practices (Rindal and Piercy 2013). When the English resources of the participants in this study are "*inserted into regimes of language valid in that particular space*" (Blommaert et al. 2005: 198, original emphasis), i.e. Norway, the relative value of their English resources may, therefore, be renegotiated in local interactions in Norway, due to their English practices sounding less like British or American English than the English practices to which Norwegians are generally exposed and value (see e.g., Beiler 2021; Hellekjær 2017; Reinemo 2023; Syvertsen 2022). This may especially be the case if the scalar orientation during the interaction is less global and more national and local.

Secondly, the studies on language ideologies and globalisation mentioned above point to speakers and their English resources being renegotiated due to their biographical background as 'others' (see e.g., Blommaert et al. 2005; Garrido and Codó 2017; Guido 2018; Sabaté-Dalmau 2018; Vigouroux 2019). This is part of what Grey and Piller (2020) refer to when they state that "linguistic phenomena may be proxies for other inequalities and social tensions" (p. 58). Research has shown how this type of renegotiation, where using 'valid' linguistic resources in the new locality is not enough as you also need to have a 'valid' background, may often happen to English-dominant speakers with an African background (Garrido and Codó 2017; Guido 2018; Sabaté-Dalmau 2018). Garrido and Codó (2017) have for instance put into words how African speakers of English may be ideologically *delanguaged* when these speakers' multilingual capital is symbolically erased in the new localities where their communicative resources have a lower local value. Such delanguaging of African speakers of English may be said to be an example of the intersection of linguistic discrimination and racism (see e.g., Rosa and Flores 2017). Although dominant ideologies in Norwegian society position contemporary Norwegian society as less racist than "in the past and in remote/other nations" (Massao 2016:20), racism and practices of 'othering' immigrants and their communicative practices are definitely present in Norway as well (see e.g., Beiler

2021; Gullestad 2002; Massao 2016; Massao and Skogvang 2023; Reinemo 2023). Thus, the participants in the present study, with their African background, may be subjected to racism and 'othering' practices in Norway, which may contribute to further devaluing their English resources in Norway.

Before coming to Norway in 2019, the participants spent a significant amount of time in an English-dominant Southern space, i.e. Uganda. Most speakers in Uganda are multilingual with linguistic resources from multiple pedigrees, including Luganda, Swahili and English, that they use in monolingual and translingual practices across multiple scales (see e.g., Nakayiza 2016; Schmied 2008; Steien 2022). The participants' English practices share many similarities with Ugandan English, and their communicative practices overall point to Bantu pronunciation patterns functioning as translingual patterns regardless of their engaging in more monolingual Swahili, French or English practices (Syvertsen 2022; see also Steien and Yakpo 2020; Steien, Jensen, and Svennevig 2023). This is similar to descriptions of communicative practices in Uganda as well (see e.g., Nimbona and Steien 2019; Schmied 2008; Simo Bobda 2007). Thus, when the participants' English resources are "*inserted into regimes of language valid in*" Uganda, monolingual and native speaker ideologies may have less impact on renegotiations of the value of the participants' English resources.

As mentioned, many Congolese refugees, including the participants in this study, also have Swahili in their repertoires, often as a dominant language. Swahili resources, like English resources, may have a practical, translocal value across neighbouring countries as a lingua franca in DRC and Uganda. However, dominant local ideologies in Uganda seem to be related to the country's history of Swahili being the language used by the army and may thus for many still index oppression (Nakayiza 2016:78), unlike in DRC, where Swahili functions as a regional lingua franca (Bokamba 2018). Thus, English resources might be a better choice for a lingua franca. From linguistic background interviews among newly-arrived Congolese

refugees in Norway, it seems that these refugees viewed English as very salient in Uganda, using phrases like “in Uganda, everything is in English” and “everyone communicates with people in English in Uganda, after 1 year people start using the language themselves” (Steien, personal communication). Previous research has also pointed to the importance of English resources for Congolese refugees in Uganda as a means of survival, given that English resources are needed for, e.g., accessing food (Steien 2022). Thus, English may be experienced as highly valuable across geographical space (see e.g., Syvertsen forthcoming a), although other local languages are present and used in the ecology as well, like Luganda. Since Luganda is less used in DRC, Luganda may index a more local or Ugandan identity than more translocal linguistic resources, like English and Swahili.

Geographical spaces and their dominant ideologies may thus very likely have been contributing factors in devaluing the participants’ English resources in the participants’ narratives, both those from Uganda and those from Norway. However, the focus in this article is on emic understandings, i.e. how the participants themselves construct the diminishing of the value of their English resources, and I will not speculate in macro-level ideological influences in the present analysis. That is not to say that macro-level influences do not exist nor that they are less important than micro-level influences, only that the focus here is micro-level emic understandings. Zooming in on the emic perspectives *only* may help us see other factors that can cause renegotiations of the value of linguistic resources.

3 Participants and ethnographic context

The participants in this study are referred to by the pseudonyms Prudent and Fidèle. Prudent was in his early twenties when he fled to Uganda from DRC and he spent just over a decade in Uganda as a UN quota refugee (Steien and Monsen 2022; Syvertsen 2022, forthcoming a). Fidèle, on the other hand, was five years old when he fled to Uganda, where he spent just over two decades as a quota refugee (Steien and Monsen 2022; Syvertsen 2022, forthcoming a).

They both arrived in Norway in 2019 and at the time of the present fieldwork in 2021, they had both spent about two years in Norway. Prudent and Fidèle's multilingual repertoires consist of resources from Kitembo, Swahili, French, English, Lingala, Luganda, Norwegian and Swahili, Kinyabwisha, English, Runyoro, Luganda, Norwegian, respectively (Steien and Monsen 2022). Apart from Norwegian and French, these resources have mainly been picked up through day-to-day interactions in DRC and in Uganda (Steien 2022), something which is not uncommon for speakers from Central African linguistic ecologies (Bokamba 2018).

Prudent and Fidèle are two of in total 14 research participants in a collaborative longitudinal research project following UN Congolese refugees via Uganda to Norway. This longitudinal project utilises linguistic analyses of communicative practices and Norwegian language learning together with ethnographic fieldwork to form a more holistic understanding of language and forced migration (see e.g., Golden and Steien 2021; Monsen and Steien 2022; Syvertsen forthcoming a). The narrative data presented in the current article are extracts from four autobiographic interviews that I conducted with the participants, two with Prudent and two with Fidèle, in the autumn of 2021. The second interview with each participant also had a member-checking function (Cho and Trent 2006), where I shared my preliminary summaries and interpretations with them during the second interview so that they had the chance to clear up my potential misunderstandings and unnuanced understandings. I also asked them to elaborate on certain topics from the first interview to see whether they would reiterate their answers.

The interview data was collected ethnographically within a context of field visits to each of the participants' homes and regular sites of Norwegian language learning spread out over three months in the autumn of 2021, in semi-rural areas in the eastern part of Norway. Since the time of the fieldwork, I have kept in sporadic contact with Prudent and Fidèle, i.e. until summer 2023. All this ethnographic material – autobiographic interviews, fieldnotes

from field visits and ongoing contact with the participants, as well as previous research among the same group of Congolese refugees in Norway (see Monsen and Steien 2022), and discussion with other researchers in the collaborative research project – have influenced my research focus, interview extract selections, and analyses.

In my analysis of the participants' narratives, I am here less interested in what *actually* took place during the narratives they construct, and, instead, more interested in what Pavlenko (2007) refers to as the participants' constructed *subject realities*, i.e. "how 'things' or events were experienced by the respondents" (Pavlenko 2007: 165). In this way, in the words of Baynham and De Fina (Baynham and De Fina 2016:12), "narrative proves an invaluable resource for researchers interested in how people make sense of their social worlds and work with and against others to construct them". Thus, narratives from autobiographic interviews can be a means of tapping into 'emic' perspectives (Pike 1967). Hornberger (2013) explains 'emic' as "the local point of view: … the ways of being, knowing, doing, …, i.e. as they make sense of them" (p. 112).

In this article, I refer to the participants' emic perspectives as individuals and not as representatives of other Congolese refugees in Norway. Thus, this is a micro-level analysis of two individuals' 'outlier' narratives of English resources diminishing in value. One might wonder what the value of such a small-scale study is, if the aim is not for it to be representative and generalisable. However, these are examples of misunderstandings and communicative challenges that might take place in intercultural encounters where English resources might have been valuable. Digging deeper into 'what went wrong' in three examples may therefore help us understand English encounters in the context of migration better.

The narratives analysed in this article concern memories the participants present as having been somewhat uncomfortable. The participants chose to recount those memories to

me, while being recorded, the same day that they met me. There are several possible reasons for this. Firstly, the interviews took place in their own homes. That might have created a more relaxed atmosphere (Agar 2008:120). Secondly, I was introduced to them by another fieldworker who knows them well and whom they trust. Thus, we had something in common, everyone knowing the other fieldworker well. They might have felt more comfortable since the other fieldworker indirectly gave me her recommendations. Thirdly, we spent time getting to know each other informally over a shared meal in their homes before the interviews. Setting aside time to build a relationship might have led them to trust me prior to being recorded. Fourthly, the participants had taken part in several recorded interviews with the other fieldworker. This meant that recording devices and interview discourse was not completely foreign to them. Furthermore, the interviews were conducted in English, one of their dominant languages, with instances of translanguaging initiated by the participants (Busch 2016:6; Mann 2011:15). Finally, I shared with them that I had been living in an African country for a while and that I share their Christian belief, which made them treat me less as an ignorant outsider, and more like a recent addition to the family.

4 Analytical lenses

This section presents the analytical lens used for understanding the participants' narratives. Relevant concepts – *space*, *scale levels*, *orders of indexicality*, *polycentricity* – will be presented in turn. Afterwards, these terms will be employed to explain how the value of linguistic resources may be devalued in local encounters, and how this may be related to misunderstandings in local encounters.

The term *space* is used here, similar to Blommaert et al. (2005) and Blommaert (2010), to denote both horizontal geographical context and vertical social context. Vertical social context is ordered hierarchically in *scale levels*, each scale with its own ordered indexical meanings of linguistic practices, i.e. "systemic patterns of authority, of control and

evaluation" (Blommaert 2007:117) referred to as *orders of indexicality* (Blommaert 2007, 2010; Blommaert et al. 2005). This means that within each geographical space, there are multiple layers, from the more local scale level of e.g. your family, to translocal scales, like the national scale level. The indexical meaning of linguistic practices will then depend on scale level. If you, for instance, find yourself in Oslo, the capital of Norway, the most prestigious language practices in that one geographical space will depend on the scale level you are orienting towards. On an international scale, the most prestigious practice might be English monolingual practices; on a national scale it might be Norwegian monolingual practices; and on a more local scale among a friend group of teenagers it might be translingual practice with Norwegian *and* English resources or translingual practice with resources from Norwegian and minoritised languages. As such, each space has two important dimensions: a tangible geographical dimension, as well as an intangible social dimension of scale levels with different orders of indexicalities on each scale. This further means that each space is *polycentric*, in that there are multiple centres of authority over the indexical meaning of linguistic practices, centres that are spread across scale levels (Blommaert 2010; see also Wang 2019).

In order for linguistic resources to be valuable in local encounters, one's resources must fit with a shared situational understanding of legitimate competence. Importantly, legitimate competence does not refer to some "*properties of individuals*" (Blommaert et al. 2005:205, original emphasis) or whether you are able to employ "correct" or Standard Language practices, but rather what is negotiated as the "right kind of language" (Duchêne, Moyer, and Roberts 2013:5) or practice within each local encounter. As mentioned above, encounters take place in a geographical space, which consists of multiple scales towards which one can orient, each with their own order of indexicality. Thus, linguistic resources

generally can be valuable in most encounters, while still able to lose or change their value if orienting towards different scales.

In this study, local (re-)negotiation of the value of English resources is analysed as a way to understand the participants' narratives of communicative breakdowns. There are multiple reasons why communication can break down and misunderstandings arise. Such situations are often treated as cases of linguistic misunderstandings, for instance not understanding what another person says due to unusual (to the listener) pronunciations or inability to paraphrase messages (e.g., Kachru and Smith 2008; Deterding 2013; O'Neal 2015; Swan and Walter 2017). However, as Blommaert et al. (2005: 198, original emphasis) highlight "*communication problems*" can also arise as "*the result of how individuals and their communicative 'baggage' are inserted into regimes of language valid in that particular space*". The metaphor "baggage" captures the way Blommaert (2009:424) talks about repertoires as more than just a collection of linguistic resources: "The fact is … that someone's linguistic repertoire reflects a *life*, and not just birth, and it is a life that is lived in a real sociocultural, historical and political space". Thus, speakers' repertoires are scaled anew in new spaces as they encounter other speakers with different histories, which can lead to communicative breakdowns. What might have been, for example, an unmarked language practice in one geographical space might suddenly be interpreted as highly marked and indexing particular identities, as demonstrated in previous studies (e.g., Blommaert et al. 2005; Guido 2018; Highet 2022; Holm et al. 2019; Piller and Bodis 2022). It is also possible that within one geographical space, language practices can have various values depending on scalar orientation, as Elordui & Aiestaram (2022) demonstrated in their research on Instagram discourse among students in the Basque Country. They found that Basque-speaking students attribute different values to varieties of Basque in their Instagram discourse, "depending on the scale they are using, which in turn affects what counts as the most adequate or 'best'

language" (Elordui and Aiestaran 2022:522). In theory, it is then possible for misunderstandings to arise if interlocutors orient towards different scales.

5 Narratives of 'scalar misunderstandings'

In this section, three narratives are presented. In all these three cases, English is being constructed as having a limited value in the local encounter (see Section 4). The excerpts are included verbatim and in standard orthography. For the sake of readability, however, details, like false starts, backchannels and overlaps, are not included. Each of the narratives is presented and described in turn, before they are analysed as specific misunderstandings where the intentions of the participants did not match what they believed their interlocutors to understand. Specifically, I will argue here that the participants' narratives can be interpreted as narratives about being positioned differently by interlocutors from what the speakers intended and that this may be due to local 'scalar misunderstandings'.

5.1 English practices at the Ugandan bazaar

During one of the interviews, I asked Prudent about his language practices in DRC and Uganda. He explained that in DRC, he would only use English with international people, or what he refers to in the interviews as "white people"; otherwise he would use local Bantu languages. When he came to Uganda, he realised that Ugandans did not speak the Bantu languages he had in his repertoire, but English was a shared resource he could potentially use with his new interlocutors. In some situation, however, like the one he refers to in excerpt 1 at the bazaar, he realised that this shared resource was not necessarily a helpful resource in all situations:

Excerpt 1. Interview with Prudent

1	Ida:	So, when you were in Uganda, English wasn't just important to communicate
2		with white people, but also with Ugandans?
3	Prudent:	Not only English. I learnt also the local language, which is called the Luganda,

because when you live there, when you bring in English to markets, they can trick you, they can steal your money, because he is not Ugandan. He doesn't know Luganda and he's a stranger so we can increase the price to him so that we may get his money because he seems he has a lot of money because he's a stranger and like that's it, yeah. So, I started, you know, learning Luganda and I can speak now Luganda.

In excerpt 1, I summarise what Prudent has said earlier in the same interview about his English practices in Uganda (excerpt 1, lines 1-2) in order to check whether I had understood him correctly. Prudent subsequently starts describing how his repertoire expanded (excerpt 1, line 3) before moving on to a narrative (excerpt 1, lines 4-8). The narrative concerns the possibility of being economically exploited at the bazaar, which he attributes to speaking English. Prudent became somewhat emotional at this point in the interview; it was hard for him to talk about this. These were clearly uncomfortable memories for him. Even if English was a shared resource between him and the sellers at the bazaar, he was not able to use this shared resource to conduct his shopping in a desirable manner. It is difficult to know what actually took place during these interactions at the bazaar. Perhaps the sellers really believed he was rich and wanted to make the most money out of him for themselves. Perhaps the sellers' practices were motivated by racism. See Section 5.4 for a longer discussion.

After the exchange in excerpt 1, the topic of the conversation changed to the number of languages he had in his repertoire and his experiences with using different Bantu languages in DRC. At one point during the interview, Prudent had finished describing his typical language practices in DRC and became silent, waiting for me to lead the conversation onwards. I then steered the conversation back to Uganda (see excerpt 2 lines 1-2), and again, his experiences at the Ugandan bazaar came up, this time elaborating and intensifying the narrative he constructed in excerpt 1:

Excerpt 2. Interview with Prudent

1	Ida:	So, then you went to Uganda and then the languages changed a bit, that you
2		used.
3	Prudent:	When I went to Uganda, they don't know Kiswahili, they don't know French,
4		they don't know Kitembo, they don't know Lingala. So, I have to use the little
5		English which I learnt to school from Congo. And it pushed me now to
6		advance in English, so that if I go to market, I can use English. But, when I
7		reached now to market, I found other realities there. Which realities were that?
8		It was a reality of people of the market want to steal your money, because you
9		don’t know the what? The Luganda. So, because I spend many years there,
10		about 14 years in Uganda, so, I have to learn also Luganda, the mother
11		language which was there in Uganda.

In excerpt 2, Prudent starts by expressing that most of the linguistic resources in his repertoire at the time – Swahili, French, Kitembo and Lingala resources –were not shared with people he met in Uganda (excerpt 2, lines 3-4). One set of resources he did share with people in Uganda was English, which he assumed he could use for different purposes, for instance at the bazaar (excerpt 2, lines 4-6). He goes on, however, with a similar narrative to the previous one (excerpt 1, lines 4-8). However, there are some notable differences in modality. In excerpt 1, Prudent seems to focus on the sellers’ *possibility* to increase prices for non-Luganda speakers, “they *can* trick you, they *can* steal your money” (excerpt 1, lines 4-5, emphasis added), “we *can* increase the price to him so that we *may* get his money” (excerpt 1, lines 6-7, emphasis added). In excerpt 2, on the other hand, Prudent’s focus seems to be more on *intentions* to exploit non-Luganda speakers, “people of the market *want* to steal your money” (excerpt 2, line 8, emphasis added). He thus seems to amplify his interlocutors’ actions from a perceived possibility to exploit to a perceived intention to exploit. In both excerpts, Prudent attributes being a victim of economic exploitation to not speaking the dominant local Bantu language Luganda, “He doesn’t know Luganda and he's a stranger” (excerpt 1, lines 5-6) and “because you don’t know the what? The Luganda” (excerpt 2, lines 8-9).

When Prudent explains that his Bantu and French resources were not shared with Ugandans, “When I went to Uganda, they don't know Kiswahili, they don't know French, they don't know Kitembo, they don't know Lingala” (excerpt 2, lines 3-4), he constructs these linguistic resources as less valuable to him in Uganda than they were to him in DRC. Contrasting these resources to English resources, which he presents as a possible means of communication, constructs English resources as being valuable across spaces: “So I have to use the little English which I learnt to school from Congo. And it pushed me now to advance in English, so that if I go to market, I can use English” (excerpt 2, lines 4-6). English is thus constructed as having a transnational value as opposed to his Bantu and French resources, which are mainly constructed as having a national value in DRC. He goes on in his narratives, however, to explain how English practices led to economic exploitation at the Ugandan bazaar (excerpt 1, lines 4-8; excerpt 2, lines 6-9). Within the local scale of buying and selling at the Ugandan bazaar, Prudent thus constructs the transnational value of English resources as being renegotiated: English resources no longer comprise “legitimate competence” within that scale and diminish in value.

5.1.1 Misunderstanding 1: being positioned as rich

In excerpts 1 and 2 above, Prudent said that sellers could and would increase prices when he tried to buy groceries. Prudent attributed this increase in price to the fact that he did not speak Luganda, the local language. In Prudent’s narrative, not speaking Luganda seems to index being “a stranger” (excerpt 1, lines 7-8), or, in other words, an outsider. Furthermore, he relates being an outsider to being rich. In his words, the sellers concluded that “he [Prudent] seems he has a lot of money because he's a stranger” (excerpt 1, lines 7-8). In these situations, English was a shared resource that could, in theory, easily have been utilised as the language of trade. However, Prudent’s narrative demonstrates that being a shared resource does not necessarily make it a real option. According to Prudent, speaking English at the Ugandan

bazaar rather than the dominant local language, Luganda, here means that you may easily be positioned by your interlocutors as a rich outsider. For Prudent, this results in his English resources losing their value at the bazaar.

Prudent, with his then current life history before going to the bazaar in Uganda, constructed English practices as unmarked and used for indexically neutral meaning-making on a local scale. When he actually entered this space, he realised that English practices were not neutral at the market, but rather indexed being rich. In general, being positioned as rich might entail that you are positioned as having higher social status. However, whether being positioned as rich is positive or negative during interactions depends on scalar orientation. On a higher scale, like the transnational or even global scale, it might be viewed as a good thing to be seen as rich, as this may position you as having higher social status. On a more momentary local scale, however, this positioning brought certain economic problems for Prudent as a refugee with very limited resources. This is related to the more specific timespace on lower scales; in those local here-and-now situations, Prudent had only carried with him a limited amount of money. Thus, being taken to be rich might have been good in general and if all interlocutors had orientated themselves towards a higher scale. In these local situations at the bazaar, however, being positioned as rich was solely negative for Prudent. As such, I argue that the reason why English resources were renegotiated to have lesser value for Prudent in this situation can be interpreted as a misunderstanding of intended scalar orientation and understood scalar orientation: his interlocutors seemed to orient themselves towards a transnational or global scale while Prudent oriented himself towards a local scale. The result of this mismatch in scalar orientation was a renegotiation of the value of English.

5.2 English practices with some Norwegians

In one of the interviews with Prudent, we also talked about his experiences with English practices after coming to Norway. He emphasised several times how useful it was for him to

have English resources in his repertoire when coming to Norway. In excerpt 3 (lines 1-2) I recap what he had previously mentioned in the interview, in order to make sure I understood his experience. At this point, he expands on his experiences and recounts a narrative where he reacted with feelings of being discriminated against, due to his attempting to engage in English practices with his interlocutors:

Excerpt 3. Interview with Prudent

1	Ida:	Yeah, so that is your experience, not just with us here, but in general, here in
2		Norway that it's easy to use English.
3	Prudent:	In Norway it’s not easy to use English, because some Norwegians don't know
4		English. Yeah, when you speak to someone with English, he will return to
5		Norwegian. And others don't want. They can speak in English, but they don't
6		want to use English, they want to use just the Norwegian.
7	Ida:	Why do you think that is?
8	Prudent:	Yeah. Norwegians, they want to give the value to their language, yeah,
9		Norwegian. They want to give the value to their language, and they are proud
10		with their language.
11	Ida:	So, how is that for you, when you try to speak English to someone, and you
12		see that they don't want to speak English back?
13	Prudent:	It can hurt me little, but not too much, because I understand the area where I
14		am. I'm a stranger. And another thing: I was prepared that the official
15		language in Norway is Norwegian. I was prepared before. So, it can be bad,
16		little bad for me, but not too bad because I was prepared before I come to
17		Norway.
18	Ida:	So, if you had not been prepared before you came, how do you think that
19		would be?
20	Prudent:	It could be as if discrimination. Yeah, it could discrimination. All, they are
21		pride. They are pride with their language. Also, they don't want us, yeah, they
22		don't want us, that's why they want to complicate, just complicate us or they
23		want to backbite us (…) For example, if someone knows that I don't know the

language Norwegian, then he starting talking to people. I'm saying he's talking about me in Norwegian, which I don't understand. It's the fear even I cannot hear, because I don't know, perhaps they want to sell me? Perhaps they are cooperating so they may kill me? [laughter] Many questions will come inside you, because you don't know the language.

In excerpt 3 above, lines 3-6, Prudent describes encounters with some Norwegians where he would attempt having an English conversation with some Norwegians, to which they would respond in Norwegian, thus, seemingly not wanting to engage in English practices with him, and instead use solely Norwegian resources. Prudent explains that such experiences make it difficult to engage in English practices in Norway (excerpt 3, line 3). Prudent here attributes their perceived refusal to speak English to two possible reasons: it might be because these Norwegians "don't know English" (excerpt 3, lines 3-4) or because these Norwegians "don't want to use English" (excerpt 3, lines 5-6). The rest of the excerpt follows the subsequent conversation where I attempted to understand more of his immediate reactions in such encounters and his perceptions of why such encounters might take place (excerpt 3, lines 7-28). As a Norwegian who has grown up in Norway, I immediately thought of several reasons why Prudent might have experienced that some Norwegians did not want to speak English with him. During this interview, however, I wanted to set aside my own assumptions and inquire after Prudent's understanding of why some Norwegians refused to engage in English practices with him. Consequently, I asked him throughout this exchange to elaborate on his answers to try and unpack his interpretations and their emotional effects on him (excerpt 3, lines 7, 11-12, 18-19).

In excerpt 3, lines 8-10, Prudent constructs an answer to why some Norwegians might not want to speak English. Prudent relates their unwillingness to engage in English practice to national language ideologies. He constructs a view of linguistic pride among Norwegians, where people in Norway "give value to their language" (excerpt 3, line 9) through speaking

that language. Prudent builds on this in lines 13-14 when he says that “I understand the area where I am. I'm a stranger” (excerpt 3). He thus constructs Norway as a specific social space where he is an outsider. This echoes something Prudent mentioned earlier in the same interview about language practices in DRC with interlocutors who do not speak Swahili:

Excerpt 4. Interview with Prudent.

1	Prudent:	In Congo. … when we … are in my village, they don't know Kiswahili and
2		we have to respect them, and the respect is to speak whatever they mother
3		language is. Yeah, that’s it.

In excerpt 4, Prudent explicitly ties the practice of speaking someone’s mother tongue to showing respect. This might explain why he believes that speaking Norwegian is an appropriate way to show respect to a language or to people. In lines 13, 20 and 27-28, we see the emotional effect of this ideological interpretation on Prudent: “it can hurt me” (excerpt 3, line 13), “it could feel as if discrimination” (excerpt 3, line 20), and “[m]any questions will come inside you, because you don’t know the language” (excerpt 3, lines 27-28).

I asked him again about these feelings of discrimination during a second interview to see whether he would use the same words at a different time (excerpt 5, lines 1-4). In excerpt 5, Prudent elaborates on feelings of discrimination (excerpt 5, lines 5-6) and explains how, while still in Uganda, he was introduced to what he was led to believe was Norwegian culture (excerpt 5, lines 6-11):

Excerpt 5. Interview with Prudent

1	Ida:	I have been thinking a lot about what you said last time, with sometimes when
2		you talked to Norwegians and you speak to them in English and they want you
3		to speak in Norwegian, that sometimes that can feel like discrimination,
4		sometimes.
5	Prudent:	Yeah, that's gonna feel like discrimination … So, for me, it's like I took it
6		like a punishment. … I was prepared about Norwegian when I was doing

orientation to come to Norway … They can speak English and they can understand you, but they will not answer you in English. They can answer in Norwegian. because they're pride with their language. Yeah, they are pride with their language. So, their language is there. Their language there is the first language and they like it themselves. That's what they told me.

In excerpt 5 line 5, this emotional reaction of discrimination is repeated and even amplified through adding the word “punishment” (excerpt 5, line 6). During both interviews, Prudent was affected by the emotional difficulty of the topic. At one point during the first interview (see excerpt 3 above), he joked about it when he said, “I don't know, perhaps they want to sell me? Perhaps they are cooperating so they may kill me?” and laughed afterwards (excerpt 3, lines 26-27). He might have made the joke to conceal anxieties. It might also have been the case that he deliberately exaggerated his emotional reactions for comic effect in order to show that they did not affect him much in everyday life. His choice of words, however, point to the colonial histories of DRC and Uganda, see section 5.4.

In excerpts 3 and 5, Prudent conveys experiences of not being able to use English resources during some conversations with Norwegian-dominant speakers. Prudent distinguishes between “Norwegians [who] don’t know English” (excerpt 3, lines 3-4) and Norwegians who “can speak in English, but … don't want to use English” (excerpt 3, lines 5-6). Thus, Prudent constructs English as a having limited value in some situations when he is communicating with Norwegian-dominant speakers. He attributes this limited value to either English not being a shared resource or, in cases when English is a shared resource, to unwillingness to engage in English communication. The consequence, he explains, of the second reason is insecurity and feelings of being discriminated against and being punished. Prudent constructs the value of English resources as renegotiated within local encounters with some Norwegians. Again, English resources no longer comprise “legitimate competence” within that space and are devalued.

5.2.1 Misunderstanding 2: being positioned as lacking appropriate respect

In excerpts 3 and 5, Prudent recounts a narrative of being asked by English-speaking Norwegians to conduct interactions in Norwegian rather than English. Like the previous narrative from the Ugandan bazaar, his interlocutors shared English resources with him. As he says, “They can speak in English, but they don't want to use English, they want to use just the Norwegian” (excerpt 3, lines 5-6). For Prudent, such requests to speak in Norwegian rather than English could be attributed to what he understood to be the dominant language ideology in Norway.

Prudent constructs the following understanding of language ideologies in Norway: “Norwegians, they want to give the value to their language, yeah, Norwegian. They want to give the value to their language, and they are proud with their language” (excerpt 3, lines 8-10). Here Prudent constructs an understanding of linguistic pride among Norwegians, where the way to “give the value to their language” seems to be to engage in Norwegian practices when communicating with Norwegians in Norway. English practices thus seem to be constructed by Prudent as indexing inappropriate behaviour as they do not give appropriate value to the Norwegian language. Hence, it seems that speaking English in Norway might result in being positioned as lacking the appropriate respect, since the speaker does not give appropriate value to their language by speaking their language.

Prudent explicitly relates his understanding of language ideologies in Norway to two things: 1) Norway is a specific social space where he is a stranger and 2) the cultural orientations about Norway that he attended in Uganda. As he puts it, “I understand the area where I am. I'm a stranger. And another thing: I was prepared that the official language in Norway is Norwegian. I was prepared before” (excerpt 3, lines 13-15). In excerpt 5, he reiterated the significance of the cultural orientation and added that “[t]heir language [Norwegian] there [in Norway] is the first language and they [Norwegians] like it themselves.

That's what they [the people conducting the cultural orientation] told me" (excerpt 5, lines 10-11). Additionally, it is possible to see an implicit link with his understandings and how he constructs his experience with multiple linguistic resources in DRC (excerpt 4). Consequently, similar indexicalities of using someone's mother tongue are constructed in both DRC and Norway. It thus seems that to Prudent these patterns of indexicality are positioned on a translocal and transnational scale, almost being a universal indexical trait of speaking someone's first language.

The narrative Prudent constructs in excerpts 3 and 5 depict a failed attempt at trying to use English resources in an unmarked way for meaning-making purposes during interactions with English-speaking Norwegians. What he experienced instead, seems to be that he was unwillingly positioned as lacking respect for the Norwegian language, thus expressing a marked indexical message. Prudent constructs his intended scalar orientation to be the local scale level, where he believes English practices are unmarked and simply used for linguistic meaning-making purposes. The reactions of his Norwegian-dominant interlocutors make Prudent construct their interpreted scalar orientation to be towards the national scale, where English practices index a lack of appropriate respect towards the Norwegian language. Thus, according to Prudent's narrative, there was a mismatch between the intended, local, scalar orientation and the interpreted, national, scalar orientation, resulting in a devaluation of English resources.

5.3 English practices when waiting for public transport in Norway

Several times during the interviews, Fidèle compared his experiences with English practices in Uganda and Norway. Like Prudent, Fidèle's general experience was that English resources could be employed in Norway, across intra-national geographical spaces and across scales. At the same time, he mentioned that there were instances he found it difficult to engage in English practices in Norway. He provided two reasons for this. The first reason was that he

was not always sure whether the other person speaks English. In Uganda, on the other hand, he explained that this insecurity about the other person's linguistic repertoire was not present at all: "Where I'm coming from, you know, most people they speak English, because it's like official language". He thus attributed that confidence that everyone can speak English to the fact that English is one of the official languages of Uganda. The second reason for why he sometimes found it difficult to engage in English practices in Norway refers to a specific cultural characteristic he had noticed after coming to Norway, related to appropriate behaviour when waiting for public transport:

Excerpt 6. Interview with Fidèle

1	Fidèle:	Most Norwegians they reach the bus station or *tog* [train]. They will come.
2		Another will come, standing there, not even near here, will come. Music or
3		earphones [with gestures of putting on headphones] (…) Before corona, there
4		was social distancing. So, how will you talk with somebody who are social
5		distancing? You see? So, when corona came, that's why corona don't affect
6		most in Norway, because social distancing was before corona. You see, it is a
7		culture.

In excerpt 6, Fidèle describes what type of behaviour he has noticed when the majority of Norwegians are waiting for public transport. He explains how people physically stand quite far apart (excerpt 6, lines 1-2), often while listening to something using headphones (excerpt 6, lines 2-3). Fidèle goes on to compare this type of behaviour to "social distancing" (excerpt 6, lines 3-7). As mentioned above in section 3, Fidèle arrived in Norway in 2019, a few months before the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic. The experience of the global pandemic led to many neologisms. Like many other countries around the world, Norway went into lockdown in March 2020 and the government encouraged "social distancing", meaning keeping a physical distance of at least one metre from one person to another. That is what Fidèle is referring to here (excerpt 6, lines 3-6). He has noticed an interesting parallel between

typical behaviour when waiting for public transport, before March 2020, and mandatory "social distancing" in all social encounters after March 2020 (excerpt 6, lines 3-5). He notes that this mandatory "social distancing" did not make much of a difference to most Norwegians. Fidèle concludes that this is a cultural characteristic of Norway (excerpt 6, lines 6-7).

Fidèle here constructs a narrative of the majority of people in Norway not wanting to engage in communicative practices when waiting for public transport. He reaches this conclusion from observing them standing physically far apart and wearing headphones. What Fidèle is expressing here is that these Norwegians did not align with his expectations about appropriate English practices, based on his life history up until that point. At first, he viewed English as valuable for making friends and getting practical help in Norway, regardless of social situation. Through his lived experience during his two years in Norway, however, he had realised that this is not always the case. He thus constructs the value of English to be renegotiated within the local scale of waiting for public transport. English thus has less value for him in such situations. Fidèle attributes the loss of English value in situations like this to a cultural norm in Norway. This cultural norm has resulted in him finding it difficult, at times, to engage in English practices in Norway. Like the situations brought up by Prudent, English resources thus no longer comprise "legitimate competence" for Fidèle within that scale, and English resources become devalued.

5.3.1 Misunderstanding 3: being positioned as rude

The third narrative (excerpt 6) recounts the realisation Fidèle constructs of English resources losing their value in the local scale of waiting for public transport in Norway. This can be understood as another example of a 'scalar misunderstanding'. Fidèle seems to have been orienting towards a national scale. At a national scale in Norway, Fidèle construct English to constitute a set of unmarked linguistic resources that are shared with his interlocutors and that

he has previously had success utilising. His interlocutors, on the other hand, seem, according to Fidèle, to orient more towards hyper-local scale. Fidèle constructs waiting for public transport in Norway as a national cultural "ritual" with certain expectations regarding how to behave in a culturally appropriate manner, in this case preferably not engaging in any communicative practices with other people present. Thus, there seems to, again, be a mismatch between intended scalar orientation and what is perceived to be the interpreted scalar orientation. When such a 'scalar' misunderstanding takes place, the result is that Fidèle does not play by what Bourdieu (1990) calls the "rules of the game" of the hyper-local scale of waiting for public transport. Thus, Fidèle seems to construct his being positioned by his interlocutors as being rude, as any communicative resources at this hyper-local scale indexes intrusiveness. Consequently, the value of English is constructed to have been renegotiated and diminished in this type of local encounter at the bus stop.

5.4 Potential experiences with racism

Prudent's two narratives of experiences at the Ugandan bazaar and while communicating with some English-speaking Norwegians, contain a few utterances that might be interpreted as experienced racism. Prudent expressed how sellers at the bazaar had the opportunity to and wanted to exploit him economically because he was a stranger who did not speak the dominant local language, "we may get his money because he seems he has a lot of money because he's a stranger" (excerpt 1, lines 7-8) and "people of the market want to steal your money, because you don't know the what? The Luganda" (excerpt 2, lines 8-9). During his narrative on Norwegian's not wanting to engage in English practices with him, Prudent explicitly says that "they [Norwegians] don't want us, yeah, they don't want us" (excerpt 3, lines 21-22), uses words like "discrimination" (excerpt 3, line 20; excerpt 4, line 5), and makes the aforementioned joke about Norwegians possibly plotting to sell or kill him in situations where he is *de facto* excluded from Norwegian-dominant conversations because he

is not able to keep up with what is being said (excerpt 3, lines 26-28), potentially alluding to DRC and Uganda's colonial pasts (see e.g., Fabian 1986; White 2000).

Fidèle and Prudent both expressed feelings of being excluded and of being positioned as strangers, outsiders or 'others'. These feelings were attributed explicitly to being new in a very different social space where they had not yet picked up the dominant linguistic resources or behavioural rules of the game in the new locality. They did not explicitly attribute these experiences to racism, colour differences, linguistic practices or status as refugees. That is not to say, however, that the participants have not experienced racism, nor that no racism was present during the actual situation the participants narrate about. The allusions to slavery and murder, albeit through the use of humour, do point to colonial discourses of racializing minorities (c.f. e.g., Rosa and Flores 2017). More than being 'new', it may well be that they were victims of racism in these instances in Uganda and in Norway due to their background, either as members of a different ethnic group in Uganda, similar to experiences of Francophone African immigrants in South Africa (see Vigouroux 2019), or as black Africans in the predominantly white Global North, similar to the experiences of English-dominant African immigrants in Spain (see Garrido and Codó 2017; Sabaté-Dalmau 2018).

6 Concluding remarks

The present study has analysed three narrative where English resources were perceived as having lost their value. These narratives were constructed by multilingual migrants from the Global South who have histories of forced mobility. In these narratives, the migrants recount situations where English could have been used as the language of communication, but instead was felt not to be a real option, because speaking English made their interlocutors position them differently from what they intended. I have argued that these narratives can be understood as instances of a mismatch between speakers' intended scalar orientation and

interlocutors' interpreted scalar orientation and suggested the term 'scalar misunderstandings' to conceptualise this type of misunderstanding.

The consequence of these scalar misunderstandings is that the participants are "condemned to silence" (Bourdieu 1991: 55). In the above excerpts, the participants show how English is, at times, not a real option for them in spoken interactions. The interesting thing is that English was a language shared by all the interlocutors, and, as such, might seem like a very practical choice. Prudent and Fidèle's experiences, however, point to different ways in which the value of English resources is renegotiated in some specific situations, in fact, not even being seen as an option. Together, these extracts show how Prudent and Fidèle were "*de facto* excluded from the social domains in which this competence [Luganda or Norwegian] is required" (Bourdieu 1991: 55).

This study has complicated the academic discourse on English as a global language. While many Global English scholars emphasize the value of English resources worldwide due to the practicality of English being an increasingly shared set of linguistic resources and their high prestige (e.g., Crystal 2012; Jenkins 2015; Seargeant 2012), this study has shown that English might not necessarily be viewed as the best choice in local interactions, even when it is shared among all the interlocutors in the interaction. The polycentricity of situated encounters can cause 'scalar misunderstandings' as English practices have different indexicalities depending on scalar orientation, potentially causing English resources to actively be deselected in favour of locally dominant languages and communicative practices.

Furthermore, the present study has demonstrated that Blommaert et al. (2005) and Blommaert's (2010) analytical concepts of *polycentricity* due to multiple layered *scales* with *orders of indexicality* work well for analysing narratives of English practices among multilingual speakers from the Global South with histories of forced mobility. Thus, these

analytical concepts may potentially be employed again in future critical sociolinguistic studies with participants from the Global South.

The present article has further added to our understandings of the value of English resources in the context of migration from Africa to the Global North. While previous research on devaluation of English among African migrant have focused on the impact of macro-level dominant ideologies on the value of individuals' linguistic resources (e.g., Garrido and Codó 2017; Sabaté-Dalmau 2018; Vigouroux 2019), the present study has demonstrated how such previous research may be further complemented with a micro-level focus on emic perspectives on diminishing value of English. In a world of increasing mobility across geographical space, more knowledge of potential misunderstandings that can arise in intercultural communication, and ways to understand the complexity of these, both on the macro- and the micro-level, can potentially help us approach increasing intercultural encounters with more "willingness to collaborate with others and their diverse repertoires" and greater "ability to accept unpredictable outcomes and go along with them" (Canagarajah 2022:37).

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Recent years have seen an increase in forced migration from the Global South to the Global North. Norway is one such country in the Global North that hosts UN refugees from the Global South. Many refugees in Norway from the Global South are born in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and have had long transits in Uganda. These Congolese refugees often have French and/or English resources in their repertories when coming to Norway. There has been some research on French practices among newly-arrived Congolese refugees in Norway, but hardly any studies on English practices. In this article-based dissertation, I address this gap in previous research by exploring English practices among a group of newly-arrived forced migrants from DRC via Uganda to Norway.

This is a critical sociolinguistic study that takes up recent calls for questioning academic doxa primarily informed by Northern perspectives and engaging more with Southern perspectives. English practices have been approached through 1) a phonetic study on syllable structure in English speech and 2) a qualitative study of two newly-arrived Congolese refugees' emic perspectives on English practices. The main conclusion is that English is valuable as linguistic capital to the forced migrants in this study. This dissertation contributes to the research fields language and migration and English as a global language by documenting English practices among an under-researched group of speakers; by suggesting developments to theories developed in the Global North based on my empirical research on English practices among forced migrants from the Global South; and by revalorising English practices among newly-arrived refugees from DRC via Uganda to Norway.