

# Table of contents

## Acknowledgments ix

### CHAPTER 1

#### Introduction 1

- 1.1 Aim and scope of the present work 1
- 1.2 Levelling and standardisation 4
- 1.3 Variationist sociolinguistics 5
- 1.4 Social and stylistic functions of sociolinguistic variation 8
- 1.5 Variation in French and English; and across languages generally 10
- 1.6 Structure of this book 11

### CHAPTER 2

#### Patterns of phonological variation 13

- 2.1 Introduction 13
- 2.2 Patterns of phonological variation in English 16
  - 2.2.1 The marker variable: Social-linguistic factors 16
  - 2.2.2 The social-class-style relationship in marker variables 19
  - 2.2.3 The indicator variable 22
- 2.3 Patterns of phonological variation in French 24
- 2.4 French speakers' reactions to a 'levelled' accent: An evaluative test 31
  - 2.4.1 The speaker samples 32
  - 2.4.2 The listening test 33
  - 2.4.3 Results 36
    - 2.4.3.1 Replies to question A 36
    - 2.4.3.2 Replies to Question B 39
    - 2.4.3.3 Replies to question C (ii) 43
- 2.5 Summary and discussion: Summary of results 49
- 2.6 Discussion: Phonological variation in French 50
- 2.7 General conclusions emerging from the perceptual test 51
- 2.8 Historical factors influencing the levelling of French 57
- 2.9 The distinctive nature of the French situation 60

## CHAPTER 3

- Socio-stylistic variation in French phonology 63**
- 3.1 Introduction 63
  - 3.2 The French linguistic variables under discussion 63
  - 3.3 The corpora 64
    - 3.3.1 The Dieuze corpus 64
    - 3.3.2 The Paris corpora 66
    - 3.3.3 Analysis of the data 66
  - 3.4 The /r/ variable in the Dieuze corpus:  
Influence of sampling and elicitation methods 67
  - 3.5 Differences in articulation rate across speech styles  
in the Dieuze data 80
    - 3.5.1 Lexical input, connected speech processes and articulation  
rate 84
    - 3.5.2 Articulation rate and speech style 87
    - 3.5.3 Factors influencing articulation rates in the Dieuze corpus 88
    - 3.5.4 Relation between articulation rates and variable deletion  
of weak segments 93
  - 3.6 Influence of phonological factors upon style shift 98
  - 3.7 Lexical input into /r/-deletion in *Or*: A phono-lexical analysis 100
  - 3.8 Further lexical factors:  
Variable deletion in the context word-final obstruent + /l/3.9  
Social factors influencing hyperstyle variation:  
The Paris corpora 109
  - 3.10 Discussion 112
  - 3.11 Summary and conclusion 116

## CHAPTER 4

- Grammatical variation 121**
- 4.1 Introduction 121
  - 4.2 Grammatical variation in French: The example of negation 122
  - 4.3 Grammatical variation in English 125
  - 4.4 Variable interrogation in French 134
  - 4.5 Intermediate conclusions 141
  - 4.6 Issues of comparability: Variation and change in grammar 143
    - 4.6.1 Grammatical variation in Canadian French 144
    - 4.6.2 Relation between variation and change: The example of *ne* 145

- 4.6.3 Non-polarised grammatical variation in English 151
- 4.6.4 Beyond the variationist method 152
- 4.7 Summary 154
- 4.8 Intraspeaker variation in grammar 156
- 4.9 Intraspeaker variation in *ne* 159
  - 4.9.1 Variation in *ne* in the Dieuze corpus: Identification difficulties 160
  - 4.9.2 Other excluded tokens 162
  - 4.9.3 Patterns of variation in *ne* in the Dieuze corpus: Linguistic factors 163
  - 4.9.4 Issues connected with speaker choice: Token numbers 168
  - 4.9.5 Relation between discourse and intraspeaker variation in *ne* 171
- 4.10 Conclusion to the intraspeaker analysis of *ne* 174

## CHAPTER 5

### Variable liaison 177

- 5.1 Introduction 177
- 5.2 Definition of liaison 177
  - 5.2.1 Liaison consonants 178
  - 5.2.2 Liaison avec enchaînement 178
  - 5.2.3 Liaison sans enchaînement 179
- 5.3 Liaison categories 180
  - 5.3.1 Invariable liaison 180
  - 5.3.2 'Erratic' liaison 181
  - 5.3.3 'Fausse' or 'incorrect' liaison 183
  - 5.3.4 Variable liaison 185
    - 5.3.4.1 Phonetic factors influencing variable liaison 186
    - 5.3.4.2 Syntactic factors influencing variable liaison 186
    - 5.3.4.3 Sociolinguistic factors influencing variable liaison 187
- 5.4 Variationist studies of liaison: problems of comparison 189
  - Ågren (1973) 189
  - Malécot (1975) 189
  - Ashby (1981a) 190
  - Encrevé (1988) 191
  - Green and Hintze (1990, 1992) 192
  - De Jong (1991) 192
  - Armstrong (1993) 192
  - Smith (1996, 1998) 196

|       |   |     |
|-------|---|-----|
| 5.4.1 | Liaison in Montreal French              | 197 |
| 5.5   | Variation and change in liaison         | 198 |
| 5.6   | The stability of liaison                | 200 |
| 5.7   | Prospects for liaison sans enchaînement | 206 |
| 5.8   | Summary and conclusion                  | 207 |

## CHAPTER 6

### **Variation in the French lexicon** 209

|       |   |     |
|-------|---|-----|
| 6.1   | Introduction  | 209 |
| 6.2   | Previous studies of variable lexis                                    | 209 |
| 6.3   | Lexical variation in the Dieuze corpus                                | 211 |
| 6.4   | Structure of the chapter  | 212 |
| 6.5   | Identification and analysis of lexical variables in the Dieuze corpus | 213 |
| 6.5.1 | Classification of lexical items                                       | 214 |
| 6.5.2 | The issue of lexical frequency  | 216 |
| 6.6   | Lexical variation on the interspeaker dimensions                      | 218 |
| 6.7   | Semantic equivalence across speech styles                             | 223 |
| 6.8   | Summary and conclusion  | 230 |

## CHAPTER 7

### **Summary and conclusion** 235

|     |  |     |
|-----|--|-----|
| 7.1 | Summary of the issues discussed in this book | 235 |
| 7.2 | Variation in French phonology                | 235 |
| 7.3 | Variation in French grammar                  | 237 |
| 7.4 | Variation in French liaison                  | 239 |
| 7.5 | Variation in French lexis                    | 241 |
| 7.6 | Limitations of this study                    | 241 |
| 7.7 | Directions for future research               | 242 |

## **Appendix** 245

## **References** 255

## **Index** 267