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The "I" in sociolinguistics: The role of subjectivity in ethnographic fieldwork

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This paper illustrates the importance of reflexivity for the awareness of a researcher's subjectivity in (socio)linguistic work on tourism, particularly during fieldwork. It shows that a researcher's positionality, i.e. their loyalties to epistemological conceptions and tools, crucially affects every part of the research process, reaching from the inception of the topic, to the choice of the relevant methodology and participants, to such apparently objective procedures as statistical analyses. This is illustrated by a study applying Q-methodology from psychology used to investigate language choices in the tourist space of Zanzibar. The method's focus on subjective views of the participants makes it a powerful tool to raise a researcher's awareness of their own subjectivity with respect to the research process. Ultimately, the paper argues, such constructionist approaches to science produce more valid results in linguistics, as well as in other areas of science in general.

Introduction

In February 2016 I had just left behind the noisy streets of Dar es Salaam and had flown to Zanzibar, a semi-autonomous archipelago in the Indian Ocean. In Tanzania, I had gotten used to speaking Kiswahili, the country's official language, as many people only knew a few words of English, if they spoke it at all. This was very different from the situation in Zanzibar, where English is much more widespread, and phrases like *hakuna matata* ('no problem' used as general phatic marker), which I was greeted with and came across frequently in the linguistic landscape (cf. Figure 1), were so different from the Kiswahili I had learnt and used on the mainland. Given my, albeit limited, background in African Studies, I found these greetings odd, even annoying because they seemed to assume that I was just another tourist, not able to speak proper Kiswahili. It was then that I developed the idea for a new project on language choices in the tourist space of Zanzibar.

A description like the one above, setting the scene for the linguistic analysis to follow, is uncommon in a (socio)linguistic paper (accounts like Mietzner's (2017: 34-35) are notable exceptions). While encountered more frequently in anthropology, a first person view is rather avoided in linguistics, specifically in more quantitatively oriented work where the objectivity of the analysis supposedly needs to be strengthened (Hyland 2001). A first person outline of the reasons for choosing a certain object of study or methodology is usually not provided. This is not perceived to be scientifically relevant, even found to be unscientific as mentioned by Mruck and Breuer (2003: para. 1, own translation): 'talking about yourself is – at least in those research areas that

Figure 1. Hakuna matata scarf in a guest house in Zanzibar (© Susanne Mohr)

are not immediately concerned with research on academia – still unappetizing' ("über sich selbst zu sprechen hat – zumindest für die Wissenschaftsfelder, die sich nicht unmittelbar mit Wissenschaftsforschung beschäftigen – immer noch etwas Unappetitliches").

In this article I argue that a researcher's viewpoint, their *positionality*, is not to be neglected, indeed relevant and even necessary to consider, as it influences the research process from the choice and theoretical contextualization of the topic over the data collection process to the data analysis (cf. Angouri 2018). This importance of a researcher's positionality and its impact on the research process has been recognized and is even central in (linguistic) anthropological approaches as illustrated for instance in Paris' (2011) work on language used by youths in South Vista, California, Bucholtz' (2012) research on youth styles at a California high school and Wijngaarden's (2016) investigation of perceptions of the Other in cultural tourism at a Maasai village in Kenya. The importance of positionality has also been acknowledged in some sociolinguistic work, especially in an ethnographic framework as

proposed by Gumperz and Hymes (1986), and specifically in the discussion of methodologies in sociolinguistics by Rampton (2007) and Rampton et al. (2015) for instance. However, in sociolinguistic research on tourism this reflection on positionality and a researcher's subjectivity has, with a few exceptions like Storch (2017) and Mietzner and Storch (2019), not been emphasized enough. Recognizing this negligence and in the spirit of transdisciplinarity, I introduce a method from the field of behavioural psychology (Stephenson 1935, 1953) that has so far only rarely been used in linguistics (e.g. King & Carson 2017; Lundberg 2019) but is well suited for the study of subjective viewpoints among participants, as for example language attitudes, and the researcher's own viewpoint alike. Its use is demonstrated by presenting as an example a study on language choices among tourists in Zanzibar.

Subjectivity and reflexivity, or the field as political space

In this paper, I have chosen to write from a first person perspective. Thus, I want to acknowledge that I am "a particular individual – rather than an omnipotent, authorial voice whose identity is disguised" (Lutkehaus & Cool 1999: 437). I would like to break with the tradition of "author-evacuated" texts (Geertz 1983) and made this decision in order to emphasize the fact that research is an inherently reflexive process (Wijngaarden 2016) which depends vitally on an individual's, i.e. the researcher's, ways of thinking about a topic, their subjective viewpoint, or positionality: "the ways in which we make meaning of the research process is always subject to our positioning as researchers" (Angouri 2018: 69).

The abovementioned *reflexivity* is a postmodern term that describes the awareness of the researcher's effect on the situation they observe. This effect is twofold. On the one hand, there are possible effects of the researcher's (physical) presence, which are usually advised to be minimized in (ethnographic) research (e.g. Hammersley & Atkinson 2007). However, researchers are usually connected to the object of their studies (Davies 1999: 3) and thus inevitably influence the research process and, in turn, its results. In my own research, I have often experienced that my presence influenced the data collection process, proving the field to be a very political space indeed (Dimitriadis 2001). Thus, as a white person I was automatically perceived as possessing authority in Tanzania, a fact that was addressed by my participants on several occasions (Mohr 2018a) and has been discussed by other researchers working in postcolonial settings (e.g. Wijngaarden 2016). In language attitude focused projects, I hence usually worked with a local colleague who conducted most of the data collection (cf. Mohr & Ochieng 2017) in order to minimize this observer's paradox. Reflecting on these issues before and during data collection, considering them during data analysis and addressing them in the publication of results should be an important part of the research process. Luckily, nowadays it usually is.

The second kind of effect researcher might have on their research and one that is rather impossible to avoid, is epistemological positioning, loyalties to certain theoretical and methodological traditions (Angouri 2018), or a *subjective* point of view. Thus, the choice of a research topic and question is heavily influenced by what is conceivable and seems meaningful in a certain scientific context, at a certain point in time (Mruck & Breuer 2003). In the situ-

ation described in the introduction, I was quite annoyed by being greeted in an, what I felt to be, inauthentic manner that seemed to emphasize my role as a tourist in Zanzibar. I felt (and sometimes still feel) this way because I had learnt Kiswahili and was acquainted with cultural and anthropological studies of tourist settings. I felt almost cheated by the lack of authenticity, a central concept in tourist settings (Dann 1996). Given my academic training, experience and the area of linguistics I work in, my first choice of method to study the tourist space (and my annoyance with it) was ethnographic participatory observation and interviews, which I applied during a first fieldwork trip. This choice of method equally has an effect on research (Mruck & Breuer 2003) and is itself a result of my epistemological position, my subjective view. It was only by coincidence, reading an article from the field of tourism studies/anthropology (Wijngaarden 2017) that I found a methodology that seemed equally well suited to investigate my chosen topic (cf. the following Sections). It was however completely new to me and significantly changed my position towards the subject matter and the interpretation of the data after my second fieldwork (cf. Mruck & Breuer 2003).

Given this negotiation of possible theoretical viewpoints and methodologies of data collection and, subsequently, analysis, "the field" and how we operate in it methodologically is a very political space, which challenges the neutrality of the researcher (Angouri 2018). It amply illustrates that all research is ultimately con-ducted from the subjective perspective of the researcher. This seems problematic, given that 'the demand for the exclusion of the researcher's subjectivity is one of the imperatives of modern academia' ("die Forderung nach dem Ausschluss der Subjektivität der Forschenden einer der zentralen Imperative der wissenschaftlichen Neuzeit ist") (Mruck & Breuer 2003: para. 5, own translation). However, as will be shown later, according to Q-methodology, there is no objectivity without subjectivity (Watts & Stenner 2012: 29). The key to a meaningful interpretation of research data in a way that represents participants' lived experiences and creates a power balance between the researcher and the researched (Angouri 2018: 69-70), is being conscious of *one's own* subjectivity. From a psychological point of view, subjectivity is not so much a state but an activity (Watts and Stenner 2012: 26), and I maintain that we can best become aware of it if we actively reflect on it, emphasizing the intricate link of subjectivity and reflexivity.

Q-Methodology for the study of subjectivity

As outlined above, "a scientific focus on the subjective is uncommon" in modern academia (Watts & Stenner 2012: 30). However, Q-methodology[1] developed by William Stephenson (1935, 1953) does indeed aim at a first person, subjective kind of science, which is of the same standing as the traditionally more accepted objective science (Watts & Stenner

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[1] "Q" is meant to oppose "R" approaches, which refer to quantitative (statistical) analyses. Q is thus not conceptualized as a quantitative methodology, despite its use of statistical analyses. Factor analysis used in Q is, in opposition to other statistical approaches, very exploratory in nature. The perception of Q, which varies depending on the audience presented to from too quantitative because of its statistical component to too qualitative because of a lack of large participant numbers and "experimental" use of factor analysis, emphasizes the influence of positionality and subjectivity on the research process. Thus, the perception of this methodology, which to me is a mixed method, depends largely on the other researchers' methodological and epistemological background.

2012: 27). Basically, Q-methodology is a form of discourse analysis (cf. Stainton Rogers 1991) as it identifies the relevant social viewpoints on a certain subject matter in the data, which it studies systematically (Brown 2008). It is an inherently constructionist[2] and reflexive method, operating on the principle of *abduction*. That is why it is closely related to the awareness of the researcher's subjectivity discussed in the previous section. "Abduction consists in studying the facts and devising a theory to explain them" (Peirce 1931[1958]: 90) and is thus similar to induction. Rather than describing an observed phenomenon on the basis of the data like induction, abduction intends to find an explanation for observations though. Importantly, abduction is not related to pre-existing theories but aimed at the generation of new ones (Watts & Stenner 2012: 39), which emphasizes the constructionist aspect of the method.

Q-methodology itself combines qualitative and quantitative approaches, making it inherently a *mixed method*, and is frequently used in the social sciences, recently also in tourism research (cf. e.g. Stergiou & Airey 2011; Wijngaarden 2016, 2017), but has only rarely been applied in linguistics. The EUROMEC networks' research strand on multilingual identities in European cities (http://www.euromec.eu/) is one notable exception (King & Carson 2017). Given its focus on social viewpoints, the methodology is very well suited for the study of (language) attitudes, which have an affective component and are closely related to opinions and beliefs (Garrett 2010). It could however, also be used to study other aspects of (socio)linguistics.

The method consists of five steps, combining qualitative (steps 1-4) and quantitative (step 5) procedures:

1. The compilation of a "concourse" (Stephenson 1982) presenting all existing views on a topic

2. Assembling a Q-sample, usually consisting of 40-80 statements representative of all views on the topic

3. Choosing participants to sort the Q-sample

4. The execution of the Q-sort by the participants, consisting of rank ordering the Q-sample according to (dis)agreement

5. The conduction of an inverse factor analysis, clustering participants according to common viewpoints

Ideally, the Q-sort should be followed by an interview with the participant (Watts & Stenner 2012). As such, the inclusion of quantitative procedures in a methodology focusing on subjectivity amply illustrates that even seemingly objective (quantitative) methodologies are subject to personal influences by the researcher.

In the following, each step of the procedure is explained in more detail.[3]

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[2] See Watts and Stenner (2012: 41-43) for the distinction between social constructio*nism* (related to the social and sociological aspects of the meaning-making process) and social constructi*vism* (referring to individuals' selective perceptions, experiences and viewpoints which shape the meaning-making process). While Stephenson's original conception of Q-methodology was constructivist in nature, Q is nowadays frequently used in a constructionist fashion.

[3] For an elaborate explanation of the first two steps of the methodology, the reader is also referred to Mohr (in press).

Compiling the concourse

The concourse as conceptualized by Stephenson is an identifiable "universe of statements for any situation or context" (Stephenson 1986: 44). Practically, it is simply "the overall population of statements from which a final Q-set is sampled" (Watts & Stenner 2012: 34). These do not necessarily have to consist of text but might be pictures or other material objects. Often, these "statements" are views on the topic expressed in the literature, but they might also consist of data collected in the field at an earlier research stage (e.g. artefacts collected, views expressed by participants in interviews). For my project, I collected a mix of all of these types of statements, resulting in an inherently multimodal concourse. Examples are provided below.

1. A definition of "Hakuna Matata Swahili" (Nassenstein 2019: 130) in the literature: "Hakuna Matata Swahili (HMS) refers to the basics of Kiswahili, the most widespread language at the East African coast, acquired by tourists in the context of their vacation"

2. Pictures of the linguistic landscape (cf. Figure 1) and language-related touristic objects like fridge magnets or postcards (Figure 2)

3. Observations made during an earlier fieldwork stage (Figure 3) and opinions expressed in interviews a transcription extract is provided in example (1)

Figure 2. Postcard from Zanzibar (© Susanne Mohr)

Figure 3. Field notes from an earlier fieldwork in Zanzibar (© Susanne Mohr)
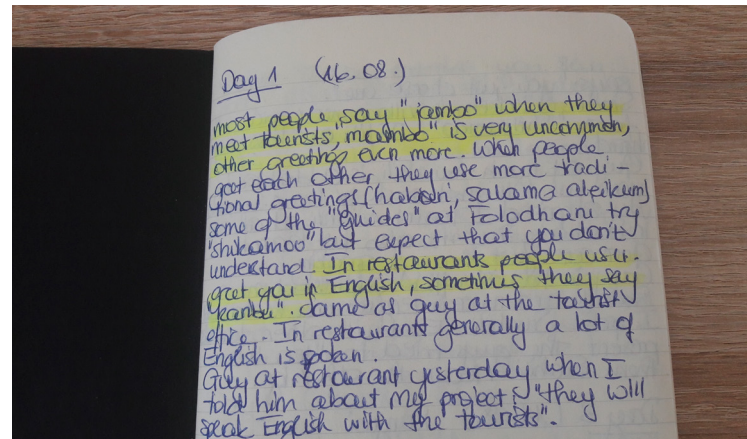
(1) Interview with Ali[4], tour booking clerk at a hotel in Jambiani in 2017; minute 19:56-20:38; S1 = Ali, S2 = interviewer (me)

<S1> is true <S2> okay </S2> yeah this jambo is only for you know uh there is a song called <SINGING> jambo jambo <SINGING> <S2> yeah </S2> <SINGING> bwana </SINGING> <S2> yeah </S2> <SINGING> habari gani </SINGING> so this swahili uh in in europe i think most of the people they know this this song <S2> mhm </S2> yeah yeah and if eh if you go to the tu- youtube then you can find this <S2> yeah </S2> this song yeah in swahili but , europe they uses jambo when they come here <S2> mhm </S2> yeah they use jambo jambo because they know jambo is just like hi [yeah <S2> yeah] yeah </S2> so only for the tourists they use jambo but for for us normally we use hujambo </S1>

This step of the methodology already involves a lot of possible subjectivity on the part of the researcher, as it depends on their knowledge of the relevant literature, as well as the issues they notice and find worth reporting and collecting in the field. Further, determining when the point of saturation is reached is a subjective decision too. Generally, this is the case when no new information on a subject can be gathered (Watts & Stenner 2012), so this is obviously subjectively determined. This was also the case in my study and I reflexively established criteria to make this decision easier: I decided to stop collecting material when I had consulted a) studies from different fields I am acquainted with and found relevant to my study, i.e. linguistics, anthropology and tourism studies,

and b) had made observations and conducted interviews with different types of participants in the main tourist hot spots of Zanzibar, i.e. on the North, East and West coast of Unguja island. It was however not possible to read all relevant literature on my topic or conduct interviews with all tourists and hosts in Zanzibar. Thus, my subjective point of view definitely influenced my study.

Assembling the Q-sample

The task of assembling the Q-sample is dependent on factors that are not directly related to the researcher, such as the target group that is supposed to sort the sample. However, the choice and formulation of the individual statements, which again need not be in textual form but can consist of visual material for instance, is subject to the researcher's opinion. For my study, I worked in a structured way, identifying a) the language practices most frequently used in the tourist space of Zanzibar as observed in earlier fieldwork, i.e. English, Kiswahili, HMS and the tourists' native languages, and b) the most frequently mentioned reasons for language choices brought forth in the literature, observed by me and mentioned in interviews in earlier fieldwork. I then combined these aspects in all possible and meaningful ways and reduced the number of resulting statements to 30. As mentioned above, the number of statements chosen is usually larger than that but there seemed to be a limit to the number of statements my participants would be able to and want to sort, given that they would do the sorts in a foreign language and with limited time due to work

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[4] The name is a pseudonym.

(hosts) or planned leisure activities (tourists). Choosing English as the language to formulate the statements in accounted for comparability of the answers of both groups. Further, specifically among the tourist group it would have been difficult to find another language shared by the majority of them or even operating in each participant's native language, given the linguistic diversity of the space and my own language knowledge that does not include all the languages I encountered, like Tagalog, for instance. Sample statements are provided in (2) and (3). All decisions related to the compilation of the Q-sample were again subjective in nature and influenced the outcome of my study.

(2) For communication with Zanzibaris I use phrases like "hakuna matata" or "jambo" because they sound nice.

(5) For communication with Zanzibaris I use my mother tongue because I identify with it.

Importantly, I left some of the statements open to some extent, in order to minimize my own influence on the research process and emphasize the agency of the participants more. This is in line with tendencies to humanize research (e.g. Paris & Winn 2014), i.e. acknowledging participants as "co-producers of knowledge" and entering a dialogue with them. Therefore, I asked the participants to fill in a short questionnaire before doing the sort, in which they had to indicate which language they thought they used most frequently with tourists/hosts in Zanzibar. This language then had to be inserted in some of the statements, such as:

(4) For communication with tourists/Zanzibaris I use *the language indicated in question 10 in my questionnaire* because it is a sign of wealth.

While I found it risky to leave the research instrument open so much, it proved extremely rewarding in the end as I was able to obtain results I had never anticipated, such as some tourists preferring Kiswahili for communication with Zanzibaris because they feel it is a sign of education and wealth, and it allowed me to enter many interesting discussions with my participants. In this way, the methodology was able to free me from my own epistemological suppositions, which emphasizes its value for reflexive approaches (in sociolinguistics).

Choosing participants

Choosing participants for a Q-study is not easy, as it is generally advisable to work with people who have strong opinions on a topic (Watts & Stenner 2012). In a multi-person study, as in any investigation, the relevant target groups that have an opinion on the subject matter, need to be identified. This, again, as well as the identification of individual participants, is a subjective choice made by the researcher. In my case, the target groups were tourists on the one hand and hosts on the other, as I aimed at comparing the viewpoints of both groups. Given my experience with the different tourist locations in Zanzibar, I also decided to collect data in different locations, i.e. a) in Stone Town where culturally interested tourists visit the sights of the Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage site, b) in Nungwi on the North coast where tourists go for beach holidays and there are many package tourists,

and c) Paje on the East coast where kite surfers and other water sports enthusiasts spend their holidays. This equally afforded for a wide variety of work environments among the hosts. I then aimed at finding 20 participants among each of the groups; in the end I was able to collect data from 22 tourists and 18 hosts[5]. As Q was developed for studying individual viewpoints of only few participants (Stephenson 1935, 1953), it works extremely well with small participant groups such as mine. Q does not claim generalizability or representativeness and I do not claim either for my results. Rather, Q aims at illustrating the range of views, sometimes conceptualized as discourses, on a topic among the participants (cf. e.g. Stainton Rogers 1997/1998). The subjectivity of this step of the research process, i.e. selection of the participants, and my study in general is demonstrated again here.

A short overview of the socio-demographic background information of the tourist group, whose responses are taken up in the Section on the statistical analysis, is provided in Table 1.

Participant	Been to Africa before	Length of holiday	Native language(s)	Other language(s)
T1SlfST	no	6 days	Slovenian	English
T2GERfST	Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania	7 days	German	English
T3NLmST	Morocco, Tunisia, Kenya, South Africa	8 days	Dutch	English, some Bahasa Indonesia, some German
T4GERfST	Egypt	14 days	German	English, French, Kiswahili
T5UKfST	13 different countries	11 days	English	French
T6JPmST	Egypt, Senegal	18 days	Japanese	English, Chinese, German
T7KORfST	no	3 days	Korean	English
T8USmST	no	9 days	English	NA

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[5] One Q-sort from the hosts' group could not be used because the participant did not finish it. I thus ended up with 17 Q-sorts from the hosts.

T9UKRfN	Egypt	10 days	Ukranian	English, Russian
T10ITmN	Tanzania	4 days	Italian	French, some English, some Kiswahili
T11ITmN	9 different countries	4 days	Italian	English
T12USfN	no	6 days	English	NA
T13UKBrafN	no	8 days	Portuguese	English, Spanish
T14TZfN	6 different countries	3 days	Kiswahili	English, Chinese
T15DKmN	Tanzania	5 days	Danish	English, Kiswahili
T16NLfP	Egypt	4 days	Dutch	English
T17PKmP	Tanzania	4 days	Urdu	English, Punjabi, Kiswahili
T18BfP	Morocco, Burkina Faso	7 days	French	English, Spanish
T19USfP	South Africa	14 days	English	Mandarin
T20GERfP	Egypt	19 days	German	some English
T21DKfP	Malawi	14 days	Danish	English
T22AUTmP	Tanzania	14 days	German	English

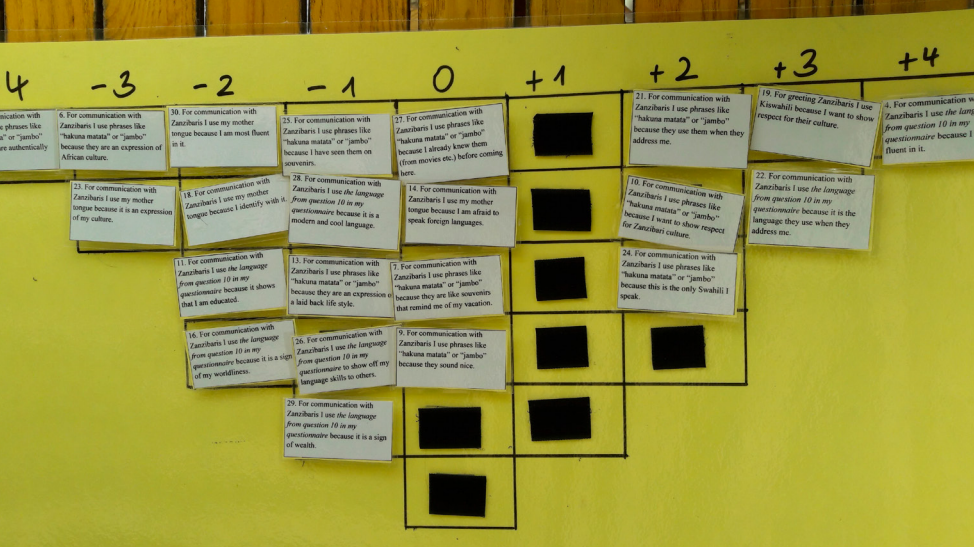Table 1. Socio-demographic background of the tourist participants

Figure 4. Sorting grid used for the Q-sort in Zanzibar (© Susanne Mohr)

Performing a Q-sort

A Q-sort initially seems similar to a scale in a questionnaire but is different in one important aspect. This step of Q-methodology consists of the participants rank ordering the Q-sample, in my study printed on cards, according to (dis) agreement with the statements. While this is similar to Likert-type scales, the important difference is that in a Q-sort the participant evaluates all statements *in relation* to each other, thus expressing their personal viewpoint on a topic. This step is possibly the one that is least likely to be subject to any influence by the researcher's opinion, however, influence by their presence is likely and awareness of that influence can only be reached by reflexivity (cf. Wijngaarden 2016).

During the sorting process I did not comment on any of the choices my participants made or on any of their comments concerning the statements, trying to minimize my influence. In several cases, however, I had to make clear that the statements on the cards were not my own opinion. It was only after the participants had finished sorting that I engaged in a conversation, sometimes offering my own opinion on the subject and engaging in a dialogue (cf. Paris & Winn 2014). This is in line with general practice that involves a follow up interview after the sort. In these conversations, I also usually asked about the things my participants had written in the brief questionnaire they filled in before doing the sort, like previous travels to Africa or their motivation for working in tourism. I also gave them the opportunity to ask me questions, according to the idea that in fieldwork, the interrogation goes both ways (Davies 2000). I have never received as many requests for information on the results of my study as I did using Q, which demonstrates the appropriateness of the methodology for the topic and for engaging with participants.

I did not audio-record any of the conversations as is generally advised (Watts & Stenner 2012) because it quickly transpired that most participants were not comfortable with that. For the sort itself I used a forced 4-point scale distribution, i.e. a fixed grid shaped like a bell curve upside down (Figure 4). I decided to do this as it is usually easier to complete a sort in a forced distribution than applying a free sort, in which participants would be able to assign as many statements a -4, -3, -2 etc. value as they wish, leaving some points on the grid empty (Watts & Stenner 2012). In practice, only few participants complained that they would have preferred a free distribution. The grid was laminated and little pieces of Velcro affixed to the individual squares to allow for conditions on the often windy beach.

I chose a 4-point scale, which results in a relatively flat distribution that is well suited for participants familiar with a topic and likely to have strong opinions on it (Watts & Stenner 2012: 80). As my participants were all immediately concerned with the subject, I suspected that they would have strong opinions. It turned out that they did and that my distribution could have been even flatter as there were several people who felt they needed more fields on either end of the scale. This also shows the subjectivity of my choice in this regard.

Conducting an inverse factor analysis

The last step in Q is rather quantitative, consisting of the conduction of a factor analysis, clustering participants according to common views. This was executed using the dedicated software package PQMethod (Schmolck 2014). For the tourist group, four factors were extracted and rotated[6], explaining 64% of the study variance. 19 of 22 sorts loaded significantly on one of these factors, a factor loading of +/- 0.47 was significant at the p < .01 level.

Participants significantly associated with one factor share one common viewpoint. So called exemplars, i.e. sorts conducted by the individual participants, were then merged to form what is called a *factor array*, a single typical Q-sort for each factor. The factor array is calculated according to a procedure of weighted averaging. To interpret it, the statistical analysis has to be combined with the researcher's understanding of the subject matter, and possibly participant comments, emphasizing the subjective nature of this step.

In my study, I combined the statistics with the socio-demographic data of the participants, observations, as well as participants' comments in the interview to interpret the factor arrays. The interpretation of one factor among my tourist participants is provided as an example in the following Section.

An insight into tourists' views on language choices in the tourist space of Zanzibar

My study aimed at finding out *for what reasons* tourists and hosts use the language practices that have been found to form part of the tourists' and hosts' linguistic repertoires in the tourist space of Zanzibar (Mohr 2018b). Given its focus on uncovering subjective viewpoints, I considered Q-methodology well suited for answering this question. The method's emphasis on subjectivity also made me aware of *my own stance* towards the topic repeatedly, thus making the research process an interrogation that truly went both ways (Davies 2000) and emphasizing Q-methodology's value in terms of reflexive approaches. For instance, I had to remind myself not to get involved too much or show feelings of annoyance towards the choice of certain language practices among my participants. I did, at one point, also lay a Q-sort myself in order to find out where I stood in relation to my participants' views, similar to other techniques of self-reflection employed in research, such as self-interviews (cf. Bolam et al. 2003). In this way, I stayed conscious of my identity as a researcher, which crucially incorporates my observational standpoint (Wijngaarden 2016).

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[6] Factor rotation is not a common procedure in factor analysis. However, in Q-methodology, it allows for a by-participant instead of by-variable analysis.

In the following, I provide an interpretation of the first and most common viewpoint on language choices among the tourists, unified by the idea of "respect for host culture above anything else" on the tourists' part, thus illustrating the process of interpretation in a Q-study. Nine participants are significantly associated with this factor, six are female, three are male, their average age is 44. They were interviewed at all three locations of data collection in Zanzibar and stayed there for an average of 7.1 days. One of them (T18BfP) had been to Zanzibar before, six had already been to other African countries. The participants' nationalities are Belgian, Brazilian, Dutch, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Pakistani, Slovenian, and Ukrainian. Two of them speak Kiswahili and all of them reported to use English most frequently with Zanzibaris, except for T17PKmP who lives in Tanzania and mentioned both Kiswahili and English.

The most important motivation for making language choices in this group is a perfor-

Figure 5. Shop sign in a mall in Cape Town (© Susanne Mohr)

mance of respect for an imaginary host culture, which is why I later on called this viewpoint "performance of imaginaries" (Mohr in press). The importance of performance on the tourist "stage" has been emphasized by Edensor (2001), the (re)production of imaginaries in tourism by Salazar (2006), for instance. This reported practice, i.e. linguistically respecting the host culture, among the tourist group equally applies to Zanzibari culture (10: +4, 19: +3, 2: +2)[7], as it does to what they perceive as African culture in general (6: +2). For them, these two concepts seem interchangeable as also exemplified by their lack of distinction between Kiswahili and Hakuna Matata Swahili, as a touristified, simplified version of Kiswahili (Nassenstein 2019), e.g. *jambo* lacking a person and negative marker like *si-* (= 1S.NEG) or *hu-* (= 2SNEG). The participants report to use HMS and Kiswahili to almost the same degree (10: +4 for HMS, 19: +3 for Kiswahili). The fact that the participants cannot distinguish between Kiswahili proper and HMS possibly stems from the fact that most of them do not speak Kiswahili proper, which is underlined by T7KORfST's question uttered before the sort, concerning what Kiswahili is. This is in line with the participants perceiving *hakuna matata* or *jambo* to be authentically African (20: +1), thus merging all African languages and cultures into one overarching concept. This might be due to the presence of HMS expressions in the mainstream media worldwide, where Kiswahili is depicted as a symbol for the African continent as a whole (cf. Halliday 2014). Due to this influence, expressions like *hakuna matata* can also be found in the linguistic landscape of other African countries, such as South Africa (Figure 5).

[7] The number before the colon refers to the number of the statement, i.e. 1 to 30, the number after the colon refers to the ranking of the statement, i.e. -4 to +4.

This also makes many people acquainted with HMS expressions: the participants have not specifically learnt any for their vacation (5: -1), possibly because they did not need to. They have a media-influenced, sometimes even cartoonish idea of Africa (and Zanzibar in extension) as shown by T11ITmN wearing a t-shirt with a picture of "Tintin in Africa", a famous Belgian cartoon whose depiction of people from Africa is rather racist, on it. This idea of Africa and Zanzibar that is not according to fact is emphasized by the rating of several other statements. The fact that Zanzibaris understand Kiswahili best (15: -1) or use it when addressing tourists (8: 0), seems to be of little importance for the participants' language choices. (Dis) agreement with these ideas significantly (at the $p < .01$ level) distinguishes them from the other viewpoints, i.e. factors, identified ($z = -0.18$ and $z = 0.25$ respectively). This implies that these tourists have their own impression of Zanzibari (or African) culture, in which real Zanzibari interlocutors only play a small role.

Least important for the participants' language choices is showing off their language skills in front of others (3: -3, 26: -2, 29: -3).

Conclusion

This paper aimed at illustrating the importance of subjectivity and reflexivity in (socio) linguistic work on tourism, particularly in the field. A researcher's positionality crucially impacts every step of the research process, which I have illustrated using examples from my research on language choices in the tourist space of Zanzibar. I have also demonstrated that Q-methodology, although developed for psychology, can be a helpful, reflective tool in making a researcher aware of their subjec-

tivity and in navigating the difficult waters of "the field" as political space (Dimitriadis 2001) in (socio)linguistics. Many factors, including the traditions of our discipline, affect which approaches we apply to our research or what we see in our data. This paper is a plea to acknowledge the importance of self-reflexivity to become aware of these influences, this subjectivity, no matter which particular research methodology we use. Ultimately, this constructionist approach seems well suited to produce better research, whether under the guise of third person objective accounts or first person narratives.

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