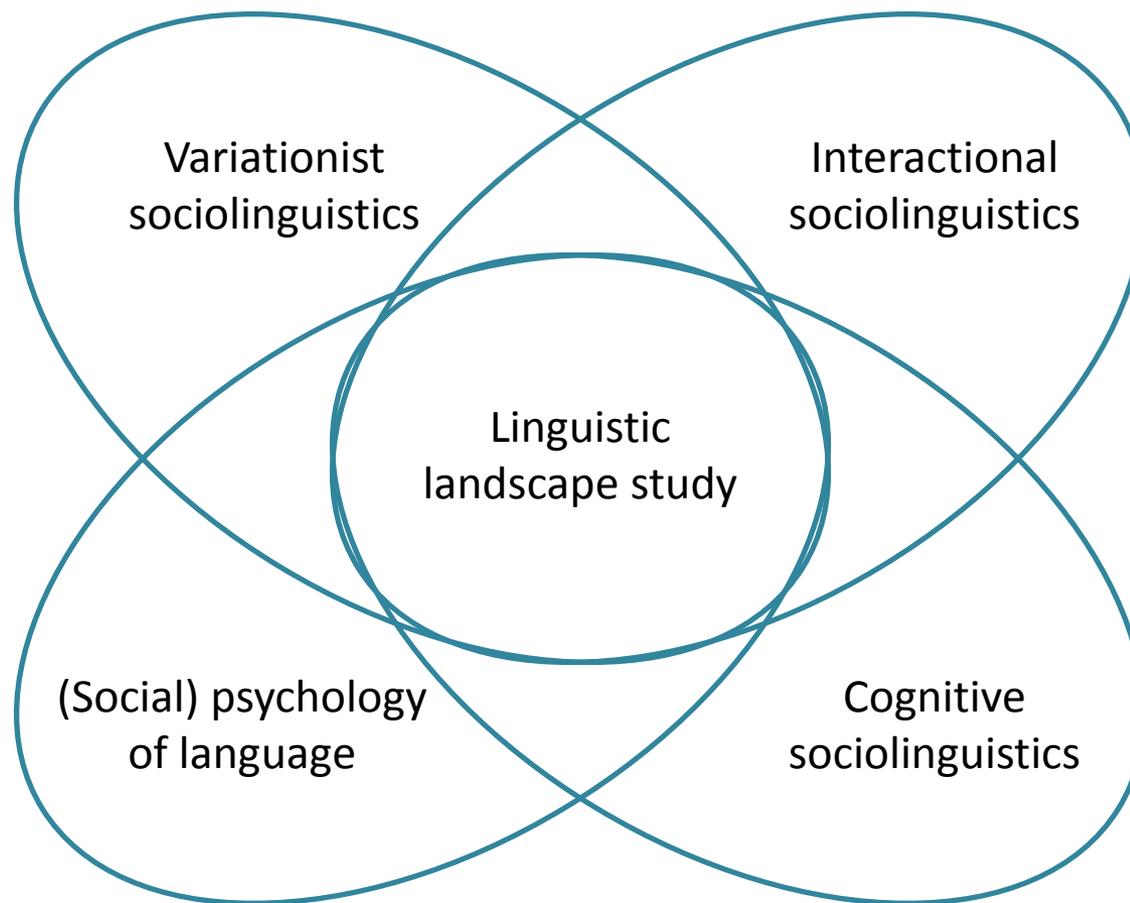


English in the linguistic landscape of Vienna, Austria (ELLViA) – outline and rationale of a new project

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1., ELLViA



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Three stages in research on sociolinguistic variation (Eckert 2012, Schilling 2013):

- Variation as a correlate of situational and social factors
 - Variation as a response to audiences
 - Variation as a resource in the active creation, presentation, and negotiation of interactional identities and relationships
- > 'Variation as dialogue'

Bakhtin (1986[1952-53]:95-96)

- When constructing my utterance, I try to actively determine [the listener's] response. Moreover, I try to act in accordance with the response I anticipate, so this anticipated response, in turn, exerts an active influence on my utterance [...] When speaking I always take into account the apperceptive background of the addressee's perception of my speech: the extent to which he [sic!] is familiar with the situation, whether he has special knowledge of the given cultural area of communication, his views and convictions, his prejudices (from my viewpoint), his sympathies and antipathies - because all this will determine his active responsive understanding of my utterance. These considerations also determine my choice of a genre for my utterance, my choice of compositional devices, and, finally, my choice of language vehicles, that is, the style of my utterance.

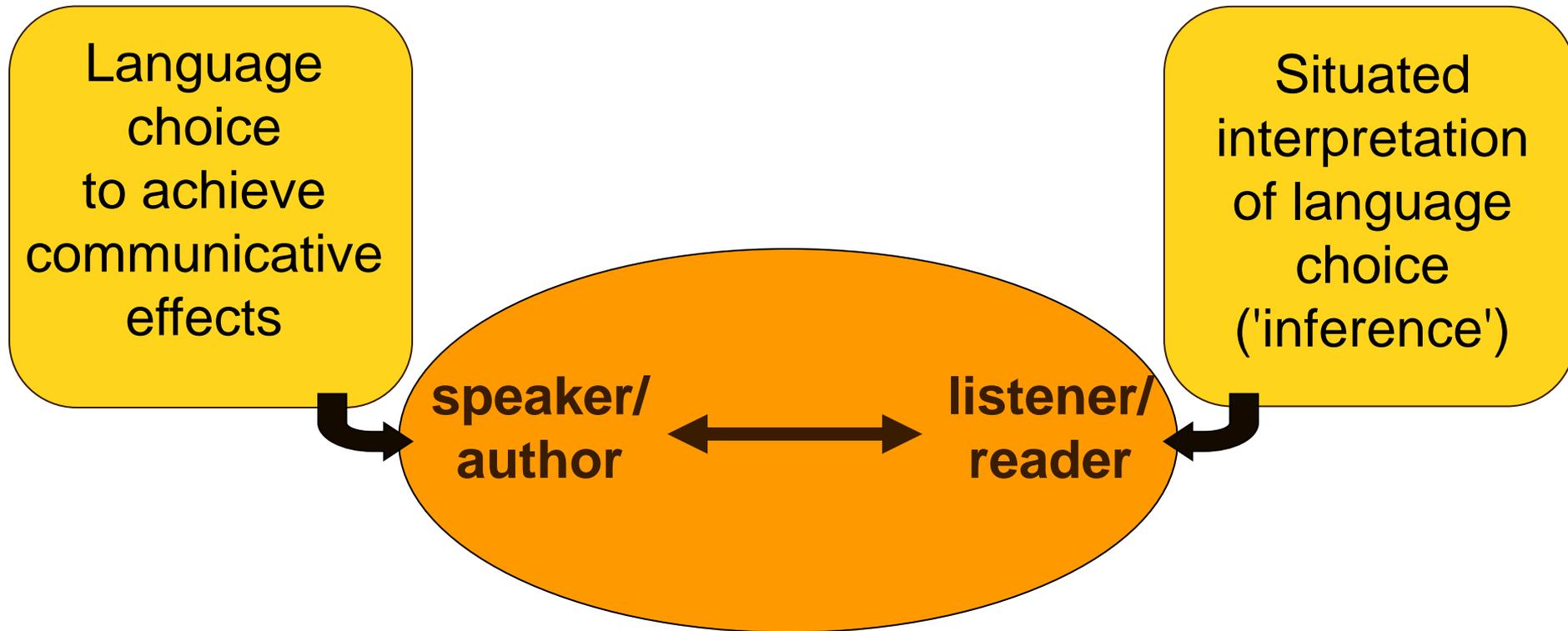
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Erickson (1986:316)

"[T]alking with another person [...] is like climbing a tree that climbs back."

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Variation as dialogue



Contextualization (Gumperz 1982)

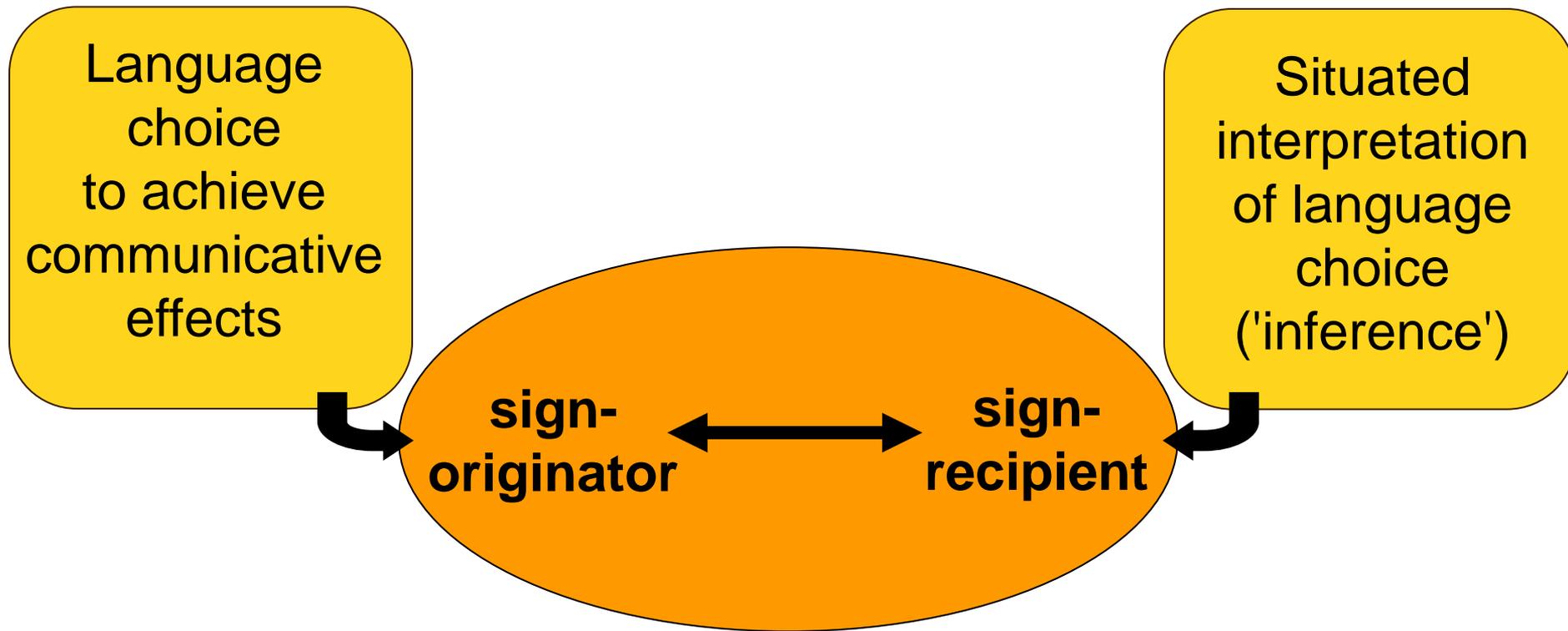
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Contextualization (Gumperz 1982, Auer 1995):

- all activities by which participants activate, make relevant, maintain, revise, delimit, cancel – in short, index - any aspect of interactional context as relevant for locally situated meaning-making
- > One such activity is language choice (code-switching, style-shifting).

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Variation as dialogue in the linguistic landscape



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Variation as dialogue in the linguistic landscape



sign-
originator



sign-
recipient

'modern'
'international'
'dynamic'
'Youth
language'
'cool'
'prestigious'
etc.

Association

Social associations regarding 'People who use English'/ the English language?

Perception

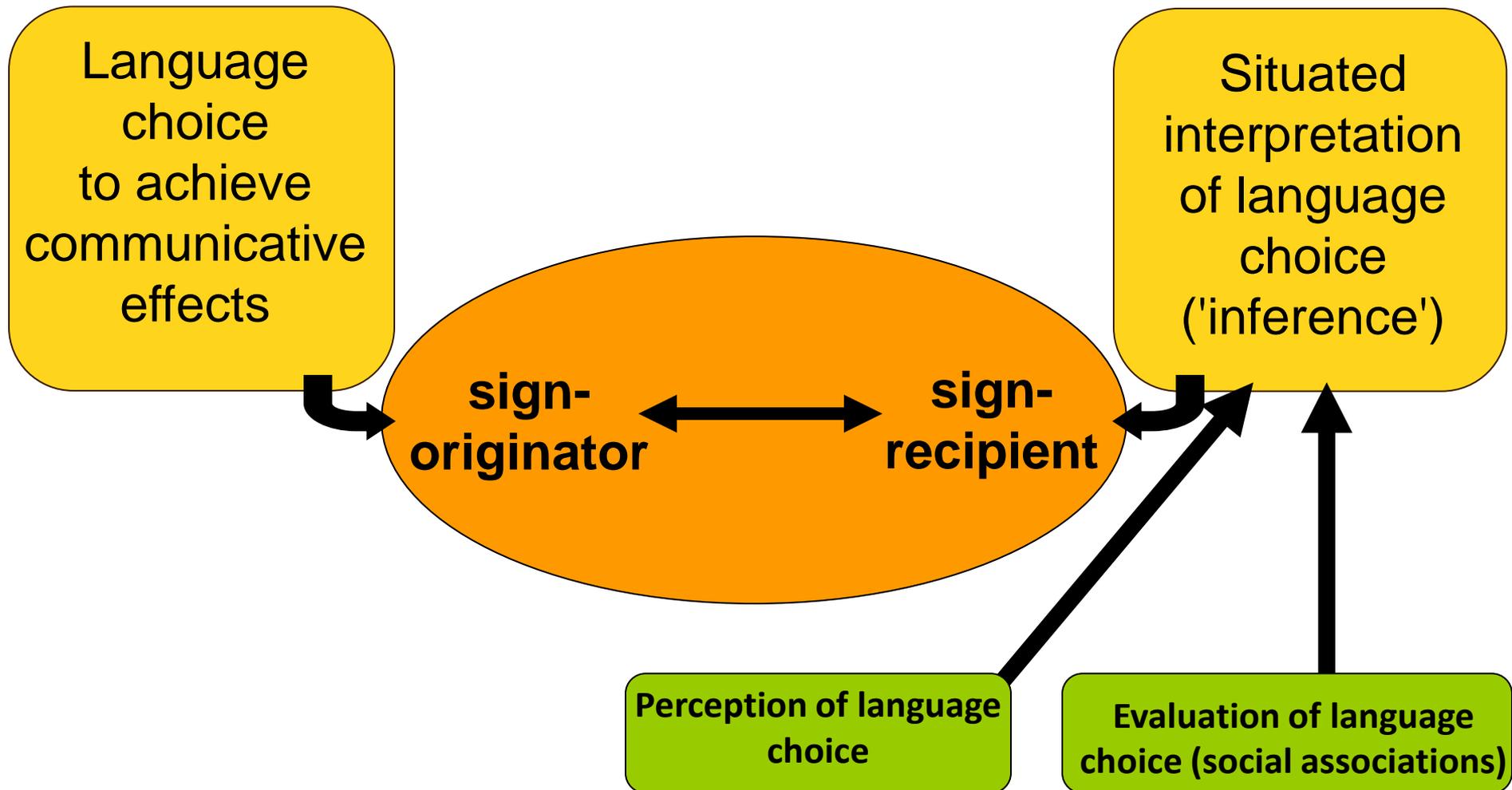
"English!"

[Hairstyle]



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Variation as dialogue in the linguistic landscape



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Variation as dialogue in the linguistic landscape



sign-
originator ↔ sign-
recipient

"English!"

Social meaning of
English
(in Austria,
versus German):
'modern',
'international',
'dynamic', 'youth
language', 'cool',
'prestigious' etc.

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Module 2:

'Establishing what constitutes English language use to Viennese LL sign-readers'

"English!"



Social meaning of English (in Austria, versus German): 'modern', 'international', 'dynamic', 'Youth language', 'cool', 'prestigious' etc.

sign-
originator ↔ sign-
recipient

Module 1: 'Locating and describing English language use in the Viennese LL'

Module 3: 'Establishing the social meanings Viennese LL sign-readers commonly associate with English language use'

Module 1:

'Locating and describing English language use in the Viennese LL'

- Variationist study of the Viennese LL
> Generate and analyze a corpus of LL signs

Module 2:

'Establishing what constitutes English language use to Viennese LL sign-readers'

- Psycholinguistic study of perceptions of English vs. German in lexical items occurring in the LL

Module 3:

'Establishing the social meanings Viennese LL sign-readers commonly associate with English language use'

- Language attitude study of the social meanings of English (vs. German) using items occurring in the LL

Module 1:

'Locating and describing English language use in the Viennese LL'

- Variationist design: count-all data collection, following the 'Principle of Accountability':
"[...] any variable form [...] should be reported with the proportion of cases in which the form did occur in the relevant environment, compared to the total number of cases in which it might have occurred." (Labov 1969:738)
> All instances of writing are recorded in the field (via photography)
- Stratified sample of administrative districts as proxy for different groups of local sign recipients
- 6 districts, selected in pairs:
 - High percentage of 20-29 year olds (8th distr.) vs. 65+ year-olds (19th distr.)
 - High percentage of multilingual inhabitants (16th distr.) vs. low percentage (21st distr.)
 - High tourist activity (1st distr.) vs. low tourist activity (18th distr.)
- 4 streets in each district: 2 with high / 2 with low commercial activity
=24 streets in total
- 200m stretch of each street (100m to the left/right of the geographical midpoint)

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Findings

- 1 street done (23 to go...)
- 4 days fieldwork in a team of 2
- 1260 items with writing counted
- 1598 photos taken

- 3 items per meter of street!

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