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LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF SOUTH AFRICAN ENGLISH IN THE REALITY SHOW "MASTERCHEF"

Master's thesis

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Zagreb, 2021

SVEUČILIŠTE U ZAGREBU
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JEZIČNA OBILJEŽJA JUŽNOAFRIČKOG ENGLESKUG U REALITY PROGRAMU "MASTERCHEF"

Diplomski rad

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Zagreb, 2021.

Abstract

This paper analyses linguistic features of South African English language based on the corpus of an episode of the reality show where English is the language of communication. Different levels of linguistic analysis are analysed through the literature available, grouped into different varieties of South African English and summed up in the theoretical part of this thesis. In the empirical part examples are given to illustrate which features found in the literature can be heard in reality. Finally, general conclusions for some of the features are summed up at the end of the thesis, but more extensive analysis is needed in order to be able to give a more detailed look into comparison of the different varieties of South African English.

Key words: South African English, varieties, linguistic features, phonology, morphology, syntax

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1 Introduction

The Republic of South Africa (RSA), the southernmost country on the continent of Africa since 1996 has eleven official languages and the most used ones are Afrikaans - for more than a half of white South Africans, and English, whose speakers are descended mainly from British colonists. English is predominant in the official, educational and formal business sphere and it is often used in the public and commercial sphere of life.

The reality show *MasterChef South Africa* is the South African version of the cooking show under the franchise of *MasterChef.* For the purpose of this paper, episode 7 from year 2015 will be analysed, which is 44 minutes long. If we take into consideration, based on information from *virtualspeech.com,* that an average speaker can pronounce between 120 and 150 words per minute in a conversation, the data of this thesis will be based on approximately 5280 and 6600 words. Since the participants of the show come from different parts of the country, in this thesis morphological and syntactical description of multiple varieties of South African English will be provided.

2 Historical background

The first English-speaking community in southern Africa arose from the British occupation of the Cape in 1806, which resulted in the fact that their early Cape English was significantly influenced phonetically by Afrikaans, which by then had been established in South Africa for over a century. However, later settlements of English speakers during the 1850s were less subject to Afrikaans influence, especially those in the Province of Natal. (Wells 1989) According to Britannica, Natal is a former province of South Africa, which has been known as KwaZulu-Natal province since the abolition of the apartheid system. The more recently established English-speaking society of Johannesburg with the surrounding Witwatersrand, which dates from the end of the nineteenth century, combines the characteristics of both the Cape and Natal. (Wells 1989: 611)

As a result of the rather different regional and, above all, social structures of the early settlements, two South African varieties of English emerged: in Natal, which maintained close ties to Britain, Standard English was emulated as the prestige model, whereas ‘Cape English’, which was characterized by Cockney-like features, carried low prestige. As in other southern-

hemisphere of 'transported English', RP was the model until long after the Second World War, but has now been replaced by 'respectable South African English', largely based on the Natal accent. (Melchers and Shaw 2011: 115)

3 Varieties of South African English

Due to a complex multilingual and multicultural environment, South African English (henceforth: SAfE) is represented by a range of different societal and regional groups, such as 'coloured' speakers in Cape Town, white speakers of East Cape origin and Indian speakers, mainly in Natal. (Melchers and Shaw 2011)

3.1 Features of black South African English

Mesthrie (2008) takes examples to show characteristics of BlSAfE (henceforth: BlSAfE) from 'coloured' speakers who speak English fluently, i.e. mesolectal speakers, since today it is not that uncommon for black South Africans to speak English as their first language, especially when they are brought up in middle-class suburbs where English is the dominant L1.

3.1.1 Morphology and syntax

There are no specific distinctions between Standard English (henceforth: StE) and BlSAfE when it comes to tenses. However, as concerns aspect, one significant distinction is the fact that BlSAfE allows stative verbs to be used in progressive forms (*be + -ing):*

Even racism is still existing…

Mesthrie (2008) mentions also the following characteristics of BlSAfE in comparison to StE:

- usage of past *be* + *-ing* form for habitual actions (instead of *used to*)
  (1) *When my mother was here, she was here for a month, my father* ***was phoning*** *almost everyday.*
- exchanging past perfect forms with past simple
  (2) *She said she came looking for me.*
- usage of the phrase *can be able* which is specific to BlSAfE when compared to other varieties of South Africa

(3) *...so as this person can be able to hear me clearly.*

- usage of the modal *can* with the semantics of *might (5)* and *may* with the semantics of polite form of *could (6)*

  (4) *They can be wild, but they're human beings.*

  (5) *May you please lend me a pen.*
- usage of *wouldn't* as a polite form of *don't* in the phrase *I wouldn't know,* a characteristic which, according to Mesthrie (2008), can also be found in Indian South African English
- inversion of the auxiliaries and the subject in indirect questions

  (6) *...asked me what would I do if he could pay for my studies.*
- occurrence of *do*-support in indirect questions

  (7) *I don't know what did he say.*
- usage of the verb *be* in idiomatic constructions like in the following:

  (8) *I'm from his room.*

  (9) *Have you got a full squad today? - We are ten.*

In example (8) the verb *be* stands for itself + the verb of motion, where the sentence would have the meaning of 'I have just come from his room.' In the next one, (9), *be* is used after a pronoun and with numerical constructions and it corresponds to the StE construction 'There are ten of us.' According to Mesthrie (2008), this construction is specific to BlSAfE.

In addition to these, Mesthrie (2008) also mentions the features of BlSAfE in reference to negation, especially in *yes-no* questions. According to him "if the form of the verb *be* in the answer matches that of the question, the answer is always *yes*. If there is no match, the answer is *no."* (Mesthrie 2008: 492) Moreover, when it comes to expressions the following features can be noticed:

- using *that* instead of Ø in clauses
- not omitting *to* after causative main verbs like *let* and *make*
- simplification of comparative constructions
- double conjunctions
- "Other…other…" constructions instead of "Some…others…"
- often replacement of the zero article with *a*
- using adjectives as nouns where they can take an article and plural *-s*
- using the phrase "The most thing…" for "The thing I [verb] most…"
- treating non-count nouns as count

- omitting the plural *-s* ending on regular nouns
- substitution of *he* and *she* and *his* and *her*

3.1.2 Phonology

Van Rooy (2008) described phonology of the BlSAfE in Mesthrie's *Varieties of English 4.* He mentions the following:

- realization of central vowels as mid front vowels
- realization of schwa in the final syllable as a low vowel [ɑ̈]
- pronunciation of a lax [ʊ] in final closed syllables between a labial obstruent and a final lateral [l]
- diphthongs often realised as monophthongs
- presence of aspiration in syllable-initial plosives
- realization of dental fricatives [θ, ð] as plosives
- realization of palatal fricatives [ʒ, ʃ] as alveolar
- realization of rhotic [r] as trilled [r] or approximant [ɹ]
- lack of organization of syllables into metrical feet due to syllable-timed rhythm
- realization of stress on the second last syllable, except when the final syllable is super-heavy

3.2 Features of White South African English

According to Sean Bowerman: "White South African English (henceforth: WhSAfE) differs little superficially from other first language varieties of English, and Cultivated WhSafE approximates reasonably closely to southern British standards and even to RP norms. There are, however, some distinctly South African features in its morphosyntax, and particularly its vocabulary…" (Bowerman 2008: 472) Melchers and Shaw (2011) mention that the white speakers of South African English can be classified into those of East Cape origin, those that have a Natal accent and those that are members of the Transvaal working class.

3.2.1 Morphology and syntax

Bowerman (2008) enumerates the following features of WhSAfE:

- deletion of verbal complements after transitive and ditransitive verbs

- using the verb *busy* with present progressive
- using the past form of the verb *do* with an uninflected verb complement instead of *have* + past participle
- usage of adjectives with infinitive clauses
- *is*-inversion in constructions where a locative determiner is topicalised
- ellipsis of the preposition complement where there is sufficient context without it
- usage of the preposition *by* for *near, at, with*
- substitution of *for* for *of*

Some of the most distinctive features of WhSAfE are related to modal verbs. Bowerman (2008) mentions modal *must* which is used to express obligation, but in WhSAfE it has much less social impact and it is often used instead of more polite versions such as *should* or *shall*.

(11) *Must I make you some tea?*

In addition to *must*, negative form of the modal *will* is often used as a "softener" when making a request.

(12) *Won't you do me a favour?*

Bowerman (2008) explains that in such cases *won't* is pronounced with a rising intonation so that the question has the force of a command and it differs significantly from construction such as *Will you do me a favour?*

Other features of WhSAfE mentioned by Bowerman (2008) include:

- usage of present tense + *now* to express close future

(13) *Do you want to come over? – No, I'm sleeping now*.

In this instance the speaker is obviously not sleeping at the exact moment of uttering the sentence, but they intend to sleep soon. The same construction can be found in Afrikaans, and it has the same meaning.

- usage of construction *now-now* with the meaning "very soon"

(14) *I'll do it now-now.*

- usage of *no* in a non-negative way

(15) *How are you? – No, I'm fine.*

- usage of *never* for emphatic denial

(16) *Did you take my jersey? – No, I never.*

- usage of both types of comparison together

(17) *That's the most easiest course…*

- 3rd person singular agreement in the present tense

(18) *Does you go to school?*

- usage of singular form of demonstrative pronoun with plural nouns

(19) *It's because of this bags.*

- usage of *Is it?* as a response to a statement in any tense

(20) *I'm going overseas. – Is it?*

In (20), the speaker is trying to ask "Are you?", but instead he uses "Is it?", even though it does not agree with person or number in the statement.

Bowerman (2008) also mentions how the vocabulary of WhSAfE has been influenced by other languages such as Afrikaans, but also Portuguese, Indian and eastern European languages. As for the differentiation between British and American English, WhSAfE is more likely to follow British vocabulary.

3.2.2 Phonology

Bowerman (2008) gives many examples of the realization of the sounds in WhSAfE in a way that is removed from the RP. He also states the following general features of the WhSAfE pronunciation of the words:

- realization of voiceless plosives unaspirated in stressed word-initial environment
- realization of [tj] and [dj] as [tʃ] and [dʒ] in initial position
- realization of [h] in a voiced manner in initial position
- distinction of voiced and voiceless plosives
- realization of voiceless plosives in an unaspirated way in all positions

3.3 Features of Indian South African English

Mesthrie (2008) based his description of Indian South African English (henceforth: IndSAfE) on his fieldwork in the mid-1980s. He states: "IndSAfE offers and almost inexhaustible treasure trove of syntactic innovations as the variety moved from being a Second Language (L2) to being a First Language (L1) in the 1960s…" (Mesthrie 2008: 501)

3.3.1 Morphology and syntax

Mesthrie (2008) mentions present, past and future tense distinction as an important part of the IndSAfE system, with many alterations in regard to aspect and modality. He enumerates different features connected to the *be* + *-ing* construction, such as:

- usage of *be* + *-ing* in present tense for narration of historic present instead of the standard past tense *was*
- usage of *be* + *-ing* instead of *have* + past participle in sentences with adverbial phrase of time
- usage of *be* + *-ing* when talking about habitual actions instead of present simple
- usage of *be* + *-ing* with stative verbs
- omission of *be* in cluster simplification
- usage of habitual *be*

Mesthrie (2008) also noticed features such as:

- usage of *should* instead of *used to*

(21) *We should fright* instead of "We used to be afraid."

- avoidance of usage of the modal *shall*
- rare usage of the modal *may* in polite questions and replacement with *can*
- omission of the positive form of *do* in questions
- usage of *do* in subordinate clauses

(22) *I wonder where does it go in winter*.

3.3.2 Phonology

Mesthrie (2008) states: "South African Indian English is worthy of the attention of sociolinguists for a variety of reasons." (Mesthrie 2008: 188) He goes on to explain how this is

due to the historical reasons. This also resulted in usage of many words of Indian origin. (Mesthrie 2008). Finally, he enumerates the most common features:

- centralization of vowels
- rounding of unrounded vowels
- pronunciation of diphthongs as monophtongs
- retroflexion of plosives
- realization of [θ] and [ð] as dental stops [t̪] and [d̪]
- non-rhotic[r]
- usage of [ʔ] instead of intrusive[r]

4 South African English in *Celebrity Masterchef*

In the season of the reality show *Celebrity Masterchef* analysed for the purpose of this paper, there are contestants of different background, which gives the opportunity to compare the speech of different South African varieties. In many features they do not differ, but there are instances in which there is some variation in the pronunciation of the same word depending on the contestant. The contestants whose speech will be analysed in this thesis are Lorna (Lo), Lerato (Le), Merwelene (M), Patricia (Pa), Terence (T), Sade (S) and Chris (C). There are also three judges; Pete (Pe), Reuben (R) and Benny (B).

4.1 Grammar and morphology

There are many grammatical and syntactical features of SAfE described in the literature. However, the language used in the episode under consideration does not differ very significantly from the standard English language when it comes to grammar.

Some characteristics that can be found, however, are, for example omission of auxiliary verbs in the sentences and, more rarely, omission of articles.

So, **we done** a random draw. (R, 03:18)

You all ready? (R, 07:50)

So, **you got** olive oil in there. (R, 10:26)

Now, **you marinating** your little steaks in there. (R, 10:30)

This is what **we making.** (C, 11:35)

Remember to also check **temperature**. (R, 13:40)

You gonna choose **second** clash. (B, 04:50)

Omission of the auxiliary verb seems characteristic for one of the speakers, Reuben, a speaker of the IndSAfE variety. There is a mention of the omission of the auxiliary verb *be* in cluster simplifications by Mesthrie (2008) in his description of the IndSAfE, however, some of these omissions happened unrelatedly to clusters. For Chris there is only one instance of it happening, so it is not definite whether that is an exception or the rule for his speech. Omissions of articles are rare in the episode, and there is one instance of the usage of an article where its usage is somewhat disputable:

I made **a** parmesan sauce. (Le, 28:46)

In this example article is potentially redundant since *sauce* is classified as an uncountable noun, however, since the contestant is introducing her specific sauce to the judges, the usage of the article can be justified.

Another interesting feature noticed on two occasions during the episode is the lack of agreement of the noun and the verb in number, as well as the noun and the demonstrative pronoun:

…**elements** that really **complements** each other. (R, 12:55)

This puff pastries are showin' me flames. (S, 23:11)

Both examples come from the speakers of the IndSAfE variety, however this characteristic is not mentioned in Mesthrie's (2008) description of it, but it is mentioned by Bowerman (2008) in his description of the WhSAfE.

Apart from these features corroborated with examples from the episode, it is worth mentioning that all the speakers use different tenses and aspects correctly.

There are many more syntactical features mentioned in the literature which cannot be found in this episode. This is possibly due to the fact that the speakers analysed in this thesis are not of the same class as the speakers that van Rooy (2008), Bowerman (2008) and Mesthrie (2008) analysed.

4.2 Phonology

The first thing one notices when listening to the speakers of SAfE in this episode is a very tense and close realisation of the vowel [i:]. In most cases, it is also quite prolonged and stressed, even in cases where [ɪ] or a short version of [i] would be expected.

> Today, we have a **[na:.sti:]** little surprise for you. (Pe, 02:38)
>
> After today, there will **[ɵnli:]** be six. (Pe, 02:42)
>
> And, as usual, it will be **[fuli:]** stocked. (B, 06:54)
>
> Feel free to get **[ˈeni:]** ingredient. (B, 07:00)
>
> I would have liked to have, just **[meɪbi:]**, neatened up the mash potatoes… (Pa, 25:43)
>
> Definitely getting the **[ˈʧili]** and the dark chocolate. (Pe, 26:32)
>
> …would have given it more luscious, sort of, almost creamy **[konˈsistən.si:]**. (Pe, 26:55)
>
> I did some parmesan crepes with some fresh **[ˈstrɔbər.i:s]**… (Le, 28:33)

Another one of the main and most prominent noticed features is more open realization of schwa for all speakers, such as in the following examples:

> Join your contestants up on the **[ˈgæl.ɛ̲ri]**. (R, 00:40)

How does it feel **[tɛ̲ˈdeɪ]**? (Pe, 02:26)

So, we done a **[ræn.dœm]** draw… (R, 03:21)

I **[ˈrɛ̲li]** hope it's rice. (C, 05:09)

Another **[ˈlemɛ̲n]**! (Pe, 05:30)

Then you get the **[opoˈʨunɪ̲ti]** to call… (B, 06:27)

Onions with sweet glazed **[kærœts]** and **[ˈlemɛ̲n]**. (C, 09:17)

I've never seen such beautiful **[beɪ.kɛn]** in my life. (M, 10:20)

And I've made a **[ˈsælæd]**… (M, 16:57)

Mesthrie states: "The norm for final schwa in InSAfE is [ɛ], a half-open to open vowel." (Mesthrie 2008: 194) However, these examples show that the change from schwa to more open vowels happens through other varieties, too. Examples also show that this happens unrelatedly to the sounds coming before or after. Mesthrie (2008) stated that it happens in the final schwa, but in the episode, there are examples of this happening not only in the final syllable, but it can also happen in other positions in the word.

Another prominent phonological feature mentioned by van Rooy (2008) and noticed in contestants of different SAfE variety is the tendency to pronounce the palatal fricatives [ʃ] and [ʒ] and affricates [tʃ] and [dʒ] as alveolar [ɕ] and [ʑ] or [ʦ] and [ʥ]. The examples can be found all throughout the episode:

This will give you massive **[adˈvantɪʥ̲]** in the next **[ʦ̲ælɪntʃ]**. (B, 06:23)

Then you get the **[opoˈʦ̲unɪti]** to call any of the **[ʥ̲ʌʥ̲ɛs]** to come and help you in the **[ˈkɪʦ̲ɛn]**. (B, 06:28)

…to make it a magnificent **[dɪɕ̲]**. (R, 07:03)

I'd like to get my berries sautéed in some of this lemon **[d͡ʑu:s]** and **[ɕugə]**. (Le, 09:45)

But **[ɪnd͡ʑɔɪ]** yourself. (R, 10:08)

My **[t͡ɕærɪti]** is still, you know, on top of my mind. (Le, 10:11)

In addition to this, the final fricatives and affricates are sometimes affected by devoicing:

Today's **[praɪs]** is a bell. (P, 06:14)

The pantry will be open for the duration of the **[t͡ɕælɪnʧ]**. (R, 06:52)

Because the way it looks **[ɪs]** everything to me. (M, 17:10)

These examples show that final devoicing happens regardless if there is a vowel or a consonant coming before the final sound. Van Rooy (2008) mentioned this feature in the description of the BlSAfE, and none of the examples above came from the speakers of BlSAfE variety, therefore it seems that the feature can be heard in other varieties, too. However, there were not enough examples to be able to claim that this is a constant feature.

Another characteristic discussed in the literature is the lack of pronunciation of the sound [r] that come after the vowel in the word. Many examples of this can be heard in the episode:

We want the tastes to complement each **[ʌðɑ:]** (R, 06:03)

So don't take one **[ˈfleɪvɛ]** and overwhelm the other. (R, 06:05)

But for the **[lʉzɜ]**… (Pe, 06:34)

[bɪfo:] the end of today… (Pe, 06:41)

I'd like to get my berries sautéed in some of this lemon juice and **[ɕugə]**. [Lo, 09:45)

So, now you got olive oil in **[ðɛ:]**. (R, 10:30)

I've now **[lɜ:nəd]** when you put it in ice water it just goes… (M, 17:12)

I **[wɜ:kəd]** out the first one… (Pa, 18:35)

Don't stress that you need **[mo:]**. (Pe, 22:30)

Based on these examples, one can conclude that SAfE is consistently non-rhotic all throughout the corpus at hand. Instead of pronouncing the [r] in the rhyme of the syllable, the speaker usually prolongs the vowel preceding it. The examples mentioned were taken from different speakers, from different varieties, which leads to the conclusion that this is not specific to only one of them.

Van Rooy, who described the BlSAfE variety, also writes about the aspiration of the plosives and states: "Aspiration occurs regularly…" (van Rooy 2008: 184)

[tʰi:]. (Pe, 04:25)

[kʰærəts] (Pe, 04:31)

The judges tell us that it's a food **[pʰærɪŋ]**. (Lo, 10:45)

I'm **[ɪkˈsaɪtʰɪt]**. (Lo, 15:49)

[greɪtʰ]. (Lo, 15:52)

I put it in the **[wɔtʰɜ]**. (Lo, 16:17)

[tʰaɪ.mɪŋ] is essential. (C, 19:07)

The **[tʰi:]** is busy infusing with **[tʰaɪm]** at the moment. (Pa, 20:23)

And it's **[pʰiŋk]**. (T, 21:25)

If you get it right, it's really, really **[tʰæsti]**. (Lo, 23:58)

Most of the utterances with aspirated versions of the plosives come from Lorna, whose variety is BlSAfE, which corroborates van Rooy's (2008) description of its features. Aspiration can be noticed in other speakers' pronunciation, but not as consistently. In all examples, except for the one ([greɪtʰ]), aspiration happened with the plosives that are in foot-initial position.

Feature mentioned by both van Rooy (2008) and Mesthrie (2008) in their descriptions of the BlSAfE and IndSAfE is the pronunciation of diphthongs. In the episode, there are many examples of the contestants and judges "shortening" the diphthongs, and this can be noticed in the speech of black, Indian, but also white speakers.

It looks **[lɜ:k]** (like) … (S, 13:20)

So now it's just about getting the **[rɜ:s] [rɜ:t]** (rice right). (C, 15:15)

How long the **[bə:n]** (bone) is... (Pa, 18:34)

Then I have chilli chocolate on the **[sɐ:d]** (side) as well. (S, 26:21)

The idea was **[grɜæ:t]** (great). (R, 28:04)

I really need to step up my **[gɜ:m]** (game). (Le, 30:11)

According to these, the realization of the diphthongs as monophthongs is a noticeable feature of the SAfE, which can be perceived in different varieties of the language. Typically, the diphthong [aɪ] seems to be replaced by the allophone [ɜ:], [eɪ] is realized as [æ:] or the more close and more centralised version [ɜ:], and in one instance, the diphthong [əʊ] is shortened to a schwa.

As for vowel centralization, Bowerman (2008) observes that the vowel pronounced in the RP version of the word KIT is more centralised in WhSAfE. In his description of the BlSAfE, van Rooy (2008) states that the vowels in KIT and SIT are realised by a high front vowel. As for the IndSAfE, Mesthrie (2008) claims that the most common realisation of the KIT vowel is its centralised version [ɨ], and further retraction is possible before [l], such as in *bill* or *kill*. However, in the episode, a lot of the examples of centralization can be heard for the vowel [u]:

One for each of **[jʉ]** (Pe, 03:15)

Today you are going to make your own **[jʉni:k]** dish. (Pe, 03:17)

But for the **[lʉzɜ:]**... (Pe, 06:30)

The seven ingredients in front of **[jʉ]**… (Pe, 07:07)

The judges tell us that it's a **[fʉd]** pairing… (Lo, 10:45)

I'm going to attempt the chicken **[rʉlad]**. (Lo, 15:35)

As the examples at hand show, this feature seems to be very prominent for Peter and Lorna, even though their speech differs significantly in other characteristics. Therefore, one may conclude either that the feature is not specific to only one variety of SAfE, or that their speech has been influenced significantly by some other variety in their day-to-day life which resulted in some type of a mix of their speech production.

There are also examples of centralization of other vowels, such as [e], even though they are not as often as the centralization of [u]:

I'm gonna wrap it in some **[pɪ̱p.əs]**… (Lo, 15:39)

Doing something familiar like **[krɪp.s]**… (Le, 28:21)

Van Rooy (2008) also discusses the tendency of pronouncing dental fricatives [ð] and [Ɵ] as plosives [d] and [t]. However, in the episode under consideration, no examples have been found. All the speakers seem to soften the dentals where it is needed, so their sound is closer to fricatives than plosives.

[**ðə]** sauce is really something **[ðæt]** brings it together. (Lo, 23:50)

Apart from the different realizations of the sounds, rhythm is another important feature of SAfE. Van Rooy (2008) writes: “A very salient property is the syllable-timed rhythm of BlSAfE, as opposed to the stress-timed rhythm of most native varieties.” (Mesthrie 2008: 186) Examples of the black speakers in the show indeed exhibit syllable-timed rhythm:

I could do a lot with parmesan cheese. (Le, 01:10)

My charity is still, you know, on top of my mind, and I still don’t have enough for them. (Le, 10:13)

I really just hope that that lemon kicks and it comes through. (Lo, 11:00)

The sauce is really something that brings it together. (Lo, 23:50)

For other speakers, rhythm seems to be stress-timed:

You’re up next. (Pe, 04:15)

I can work with carrots. (T, 04:35)

Come on guys, get it onto that plate. (B, 24:45)

My original idea didn’t work out. (S, 25:29)

It’s fine, I would’ve liked to have just, maybe, neatened up the mash potatoes. (Pa, 25:35)

The examples at hand are in line with van Rooy’s (2008) description of the rhythm in different varieties of SAfE, even though the different variations of the rhythm can be found in various utterances.

4.3 Lexis

Even though the speakers do not tend to use colloquial language in their speech on the show, possibly because of the serious tone the show is trying to set, there are a few examples of colloquialisms and interjections during the episode. They are marked in bold in the following utterances:

> This puff pastry **are showin' me flames.** (S, 23:11)
>
> And let me see… What happens, **you know?** (Lo, 10:50)
>
> **Ya**, my original idea didn't work out. (S, 25:26)
>
> But, **ya…** There we go. (Pa, 25:43)
>
> **I'm gonna** wrap it in some peppers. (Lo, 15:39)
>
> I really need to **up my game**. (Le, 30:07)

As for borrowings, there were no examples of code-switching or the borrowing of the words in the analysed corpus, even though they are discussed by different authors in their descriptions of the SAfE varieties.

5 Conclusion

This thesis provides an overview of the linguistic features of some of the varieties of South African English as described in the literature, and their usage in practice based on the limited corpus of a reality show. Some of the features proved to be consistent and in accordance with the literature describing it. Cases in the point are the instances of pronunciation of diphthongs as monophthongs, like replacing the diphthong [aɪ] with a long version of [ɜ] or diphthong [eɪ] with a long version of [æ]. Another prominent and constant phonological feature turned out to be the close quality of the vowel [i], which also seems prolonged at the end of the words and centralization of the vowels, particularly the centralization of [u] to [ʉ].

The descriptions of the different SAfE varieties only to a certain point coincided with the present findings. In some cases, features mentioned in the literature were found in the corpus, such as the aspiration of the plosives characteristic of the Black South African English variety. However, in some cases, the features characteristic of a specific variety were uttered by speakers of a different variety in the corpus. For example, the devoicing of the final fricatives, which is described as a characteristic of the BlSAfE, was found in the speech of other varieties. Therefore, one may conclude that the dividing line is not so clear when it comes to the phonological differentiation of the speech between the varieties. Undoubtedly, communication between people of different varieties had influence on the features being mixed between them.

From a grammatical and morphological standpoint, the amount of characteristics mentioned in the literature and exhibited in the corpus differs significantly. Not many proved to be part of the speech of the contestants and judges on the show, which may lead to the conclusion that the theoretical part of the description of the SAfE needs some updating or that this research needs to be done on a corpus of a larger scale. The difference may be a result of the different types of speakers analysed by the authors in the literature and the subjects of this thesis. There were some examples of the omission of articles and auxiliaries, but not as many to be able to claim that this characteristic is still a constant part of SAfE.

The lexical level did not show many specific utterances, except for a few. The speakers analysed for the purpose of this paper do not exhibit code-switching and tend to stick to StE. Since the show is somewhat serious and tense, the conclusions may be different if the same speakers were analysed in a more relaxed and casual environment.

This thesis leaves us with the conclusion that more extensive research needs to be done in order to update the literature on characteristics of SAfE, especially focusing on the current state of the varieties and whether the dividing lines between them even exist. Based on the limited corpus used in this thesis, which did not cover all the varieties described in the literature, the conclusion is that some features which at some point might have been specific to one variety are now used by others. Finally, it is important to note that a larger corpus might lead to different and more general conclusions.

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