The bookseller and the basket ball player: tales from the French Polonia.[1]

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the story of some individuals from French Polonia, focussing in particularly on two speakers from the group studied, through the lens of close quantitative and qualitative analysis of their speech. The mixed method approach used to throw a spotlight individuals' lives, histories, aspirations, experience of migration, stances in relation to dual and multiple identities helps in the telling of their individual stories and has implications for migrants globally. It has been customary to see quantitative analysis particularly as not always picking up the detail necessary to access the fine detail of individuals' situations. It is hoped to demonstrate that quantitative analysis when sensitive to currently evolving categories in the current world situation, and when combined with qualitative investigation of the data gathered, will propose an effective method of gaining access to peoples' life histories in a way that using only qualitative analysis, or case studies, or indeed quantitative analysis on its own, do not.

To this end, the paper addresses issues of the methodological appropriateness of quantitative versus qualitative data, particularly in relation generally to second language acquisition (SLA) and migration. The issue of individual variation has been a theme in SLA literature almost since its inception, evoked in general overviews of the field (for example Ellis, 1994; Myles & Mitchell, 1998), as well as in individual studies (Dewaele & Furnham, 2000; Regan, 1995). There is a general acceptance that individual variation is a reality in SLA, but quantitative studies of second language (L2) speakers, which deal in aggregations of large numbers of informants and data, are sometimes said to 'swallow up' the detail of individual behaviour in their analyses. These issues have been addressed, for example, by Bayley (2002) and Regan (2004), both of whom show by quantitative analysis that individual variation patterns frequently follow group patterns. This paper aims to further explore this relationship between quantitative (specifically variationist) analysis and individual variation, in relation to L2 Polish speakers of French.

In relation to this theoretical issue, the paper demonstrates that while the quantitative results provide a general picture of the overall trends in the Polish participants' speech variation, further qualitative analysis reveals an interesting picture of individual stances against the backdrop of these overall trends. So

while it remains true that individual speaker patterns tend to replicate group patterns, it appears that qualitative investigations can provide crucial detail which amplifies the emerging picture of peoples' language use.

The participants in the study, as migrants, differ crucially from the speakers described by much previous sociolinguistic research, who are usually less mobile and often live in a relatively 'static' physical situation. A consequence of migrants' mobile lives in a globalised world is language practices and usages different from practices and usages of more traditionally situated speakers. Research approaches today need to take into account the trajectories of peoples' lives, and the subsequent variation in their use of language resources, for instance, (Pennycook, 2012). According to Blommaert (2010), 'Mobility is the great challenge: it is the dislocation of language and language events from the fixed position in time and space attributed to them by a more traditional linguistics and sociolinguistics… It is the insertion of language in a spectrum of human action which is not defined purely in relation to temporal and spatial location, but in terms of temporal and spatial trajectories.' This paper investigates how Polish migrants living in France use the linguistic resources at their disposal as they negotiate different time and space zones. For this an investigation which touches on indexicality in relation to their acquisition and use of variation patterns in their L2 (French) was put in place. In this context, a quantitative analysis of the variation patterns in their speech was first carried out. Following this detailed investigation of these speech patterns, is an exploration of their function for the communicative needs of these mobile speakers currently living in France, having come from Poland and, in some cases, intending to return to Poland. In this sense, these speakers are very different from the more settled 'speech community' so central to traditional variationist studies of L1 speech.

Quantitative results of the study of the Polish speakers show a detailed picture of their speech, but as we noted earlier, further unpacking the individual variation was found to deepen and broaden the picture. Analysis of the use of one particular variable, *ne* deletion, in French, by the Polish speakers show general patterns but also indicate individual agency in the face of social structural norms. Intriguing individual differences indicated by the quantitative results suggest the need for further probing.

What follows now is a description of the social and historical context from which our participants emerge: a short history and description of Polish emigration to France in the past few hundred years and the recent story of those particular Polish people who participated in our study.

Poles in France
Emigration has been a staple feature of the Polish societal landscape for at least two hundred years (for a historical overview of Polish migration to France see Debaene, this volume; Nestor, this volume; (Regan, forthcoming), Poles have emigrated to France in great numbers for centuries. It is estimated that French Polonia amounts to eight hundred thousand or even one million; only in the United States is the number of Poles greater than the numbers in France.

Various waves of migration took place since the 19th century. This study focuses on Poles living currently in France, and deals with one of the main migration phases in France. The first period, not addressed in this study, is the post World War Two migration, when great numbers of Poles moved from Poland to work in the mining regions in Alsace and northern France. "Push and pull" mechanisms were primarily economic in this period. The majority of newcomers found employment in mining and agriculture.

This study addresses post-1980 migration, which consists of two phases: before 1989 and afterwards. Migration during the period 1980-1989 is frequently referred to as "Solidarity migration". The highest outflow of people took place during and in the aftermath of martial law (1981-1983), when the Communist Party in power in Poland enabled one-way cross-border movement. In terms of factors which influenced the decision to emigrate, Solidarity migration is a complex phenomenon. Despite the common notion that this outflow of people was made up of anti-communist activists, forced to escape political repression (Zalinski, 2005), economic factors also played a non-negligible role in this migration wave as well (Habielski, 1995). Polish people who came to France before 1989 usually intended to stay permanently. Emigration in 1989 and afterwards took place after the round-table talks and the collapse of the Iron Curtain. Free movement of people across the borders facilitated migration, which was primarily economically motivated. Those Poles who came to France after 1989 were, in the vast majority of cases, economically motivated and intended to stay for a few years, save up enough to invest in Poland and then to return.

There appears to exist no completely reliable data as to how many Polish people entered France in the 1980s. Anecdotally, the number of people who came and settled down in France between 1980 and 1985 is 100,000 . There are two explanations for the absence of such data, as Elżbieta Sayegh (Consul at the Polish Embassy in Paris) suggests (personal communication) – (1) the period of the 1980s is still too recent for historical or even sociological studies; (2) the general tendency for the Poles who arrived in France prior to the collapse of communism in 1989 was to immediately integrate into French society. They were rapidly dispersed into the host society, rather than forming recognisable Polish "communities". Also, Polish people were effectively granted political asylum, work permits, and, in a matter of three years, French citizenship. No systematic attempts were made by the French to count Polish newcomers, as confirmed in the interviews with the employees of the Polish Consulate and the Polish Literary Institute (Elżbieta Sayegh, personal communication, Polish Embassy in Paris, May 2007; Wojciech Sikora, Polish Literary Institute, Maison-Laffitte, personal communication, May 2007). Around 90% of Polish people who entered France before 1989 applied for political refugee status and the procedure was operated by OFPRA - l'Office Français de Protection des Refugiés et Apatrides. Ponty provides earlier data from OFPRA (e.g. for the 1950s when 20,000 Polish immigrants benefited from the right of asylum), but does not, however, provide figures relevant to the period in which the informants of our study emigrated to France (Ponty, 2004).[2]

THE STUDY
A central issue of the wider study was an investigation of language as an indicator of integration. Sociological literature frequently cites language as one of the most important indicators of integration by migrants. Despite this claim, detailed analyses of language, are rare in fact. For this reason, the study focuses on the close analysis of language acquisition and use as an instrument for gauging degrees of integration, stances of the speakers in relation to integration and, ultimately, a fuller picture of the lives of Polish migrants to France. Case studies of particular groups of migrants are valuable in the creation of a more complete picture of what it means to be a migrant, which is perhaps the more usual situation of people globally in the twentieth century.

As noted earlier, the focus of this chapter is on language practices and language use by migrant speakers. A related, more specific question, is which causal variable or variables are most important in both the development and use of speech patterns and whether these play a part in or are indexical of the integration process of the individual into the host society. L2 acquisition literature has always found that length of residence and proficiency play an important role in language development and integration. Based on previous findings, this study hypothesised that length of residence in France, as well as proficiency in French, would correlate with use of the informal variant, *ne* deletion, in contemporary spoken French.[3]

Informants

The informants for the study are a group of speakers of Polish nationality at two research sites: Lille and Paris. Lille was chosen as it is situated in the northern mining regions where many Poles had settled in the 19th century. Migrants settling in the North benefited from the 'chain migration' phenomenon in that many had relatives already settled in the areas around Lens or Dunkerque. Paris has been a consistent location for Polish migration for many years. Polish migrants found that Paris presented many opportunities in terms of work and accommodation as well as Polish organisations and support centres which facilitate the initial contact with France. The informants in this study emigrated to France between 1960 and 1995. The length of residence for the speakers varies from 40 to 15 years at the time of interview. Their ages ranged from 40 to 70 years and they worked in a range of different occupations.

Methodology

The speakers were interviewed in their own home, place of work or in public spaces such as cafés and restaurants, by and large the sort of places which would have figured normally in the daily lives of the speakers. The interviews were free conversations, very 'lightly' directed by the interviewers. The conversations frequently elicited narratives of personal experience, either present or past. Several speakers spoke of their life in Poland; some of the older people told stories of the Second World War. Many told of their experience of leaving Poland and migrating to France, as well as stories of parents or relatives who had come to France in previous generations, to the mining areas in the north of France.

Each interview lasted at least two hours, and each was conducted by two interviewers, one Irish and one Polish. The presence of a co-ethnic interviewer had the advantage of creating a relaxed relationship, based on shared experience and cultural knowledge.[4] In addition to the 'sociolinguistic interviews', prior meetings with the speakers had been held by the Polish L1 interviewer; this elicited both ethnographic data as well as further reflections in Polish on the issues of identity, integration and experiences in France. Both sets of interviews were analysed subsequently and the data from both were integrated in the final analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS
The interviews were transcribed coded and analysed using GoldVarb 2001 (Robinson et al., 2001), a PC version of Goldvarb 2.0 for Macintosh. The original multivariate programme (called Varbrul, Rand & Sankoff, 1990) was developed by Sankoff and Labov and others to model variation in language.[5]

Multivariate analysis of speech from a variationist perspective seeks to model variation in speech by calculating the relative effect of multiple affecting factors on the production of particular variants. For a more complete account of variationist analysis see Poplack & Tagliamonte (2001), Guy (1993), Tagliamonte (2006, 2012), Tagliamonte & Walker (2010), and Meyerhoff (2006). The constructs and methods of variationist analysis have been used in the analysis of L2 speech in the past few decades (Adamson, 1988, 2009; Bayley & Preston, 1996; Bayley & Regan, 2004; Young, 1991).

Variationist analysis and L2 speech
The Varbrul computer program is a set of computer programs designed to analyse naturally occurring data and the social and linguistic distribution of variable forms. It is essentially based on a statistical regression model. Many statistical procedures are not appropriate for this data because naturally occurring data tend to have a large number of empty cells (because many combinations are linguistically impossible or very unlikely, and so this gives rise to lots of empty cells). A procedure such as Anova, for instance, is good for balanced data that emerge from controlled experimentation. It is inadequate to handle the kind of naturally occurring data that are collected in studies of interlanguage variation. So in relation to variable linguistic data, what we need is a way of modelling simultaneously the multiple and cross-cutting contextual and linguistic constraints on variation. And we need to determine the relative weight of the factors (linguistic and social) which affect it, whether these social factors are ethnicity, gender, age or effect of context in acquisition. Versions of the Varbrul program have been described by Cedergren and Sankoff (1974), Rand and Sankoff (1990) Sankoff, (1988), Guy (1988, 1993), Tagliamonte (2006), Paolillo, (2002), and Walker (2010). For SLA researchers, a comprehensive 'how to' is found in Young and Bayley (1996).

The program quantitatively models variable yet systematic data. Native speech shows patterned variability (Labov talks of "orderly heterogeneity"); variable rule analysis models this variability. The approach variationists in SLA have taken is that 'it is unlikely any single contextual factor alone can explain the

variability in the data.' (Young & Bayley, 1996). Multivariate analysis best deals with the multifactorial aspect of L2 data. Initially it used what was referred to as 'variable rules', a term which was part of early terminology in relation to categorical and optional rules. In fact the program probabilistically models choices made by the speaker and calculates the strength of the factors which constrain these choices. "Variable rules" tell us not only what is possible, but what is likely and unlikely. They provide precise quantitative information. And they are probabilistic in focus rather than deterministic. Given that many factors contribute to the occurrence of a linguistic entity, we need to try to see the pooled contribution of each of these elements. The ultimate aim is to add more information to the model, to account for everything in the data and to explain or adequately represent spoken language.

In sum, variation analysis examines the alternating forms of a linguistic variable , for example, *je ne sais pas* vs. *je sais pas,* and notes which features, linguistic and social, co-occur with these forms. These correlations are modelled quantitatively, so that the 'best fit' is found for the model proposed. And the model provides the maximum amount of information possible on the choice of variant. The program tells us the overall likelihood of the phenomenon occurring; not just whether something occurs or not, but how often, and what is the weight of the factors which affect it. We need to know other information, for instance, whether certain groups of speakers or indeed individual speakers are more likely to use it more than others, or if it is more likely to appear in certain linguistic contexts than others.

Varbrul works by determining in a principled way the probabilistic weight each constraint (or factor) contributes to the operation of a rule, especially in the sort of data sociolinguists treat. The program calculates the weight for each factor and assigns a value ranging from 0.00 to 1.00. That range indicates the degree to which a factor promotes the operation of the rule (the higher the value, the greater the influence). Theoretically, weights below 0.50 inhibit the operation of the rule and those above it promote it. As with all figures and numbers in statistics there can be a certain arbitrariness in 'cut-off' points. It is more informative to see the entire range of the scale as an indication of increasing likelihood that the rule applies, and an indication of the relative strengths of the factors.

The variable: *Ne* deletion
Deletion and retention of *ne* is a stable variable in spoken French. It is not particularly undergoing change (although rates have increased in the recent past in native speech) and so is a feature the L2 speaker would become aware of as an intrinsic part of spoken French which they hear from native speakers. But unlike a fluctuating, incoming variable undergoing change, it may be more easily acquired along with the constraint patterns which accompany it (that is, the patterns of relative strength of the factors which affect its use).

In spoken French, *ne* is deleted variably to a great or lesser extent by all members of French-speaking communities throughout the world. It is a powerful indicator of formality, power and solidarity, style, register and so on and has a network of

relationships with sociolinguistic factors such as age, sex and social class. It often co-occurs with other such stable sociolinguistically sensitive variables in French as the variable use of *tu* as opposed to *vous*, or *on* as opposed to *vous* and *nous*.

Based on previous research on L1 as well as L2 speakers (Ashby, 1981, 2001; Dewaele & Regan, 2002; Regan, 1996; Gillian Sankoff & Vincent, 1977; Gillian Sankoff & Vincent, 1980) factor groups (or factors) hypothesised to constrain the variability in the data were lexicalisation, following phonological segment, preceding phonological segment, subject of sentence, subject of verb, verb type, and presence/absence of clitic. Social factors were length of residence, gender and age (see Table 1). We excluded occurrences such as 'ils ne parlaient que polonais', and all infinitival propositions ('de ne pas sortir'). We also excluded consecutive repetitions of the negative particle, geminates such as « on entend pas » « on en veut pas, personne n'en veut ».

Table 1 Factor Groups with examples from the corpus
Gender
- Male
- Female

Age
- 50+
- -50

Following phonological segment
- Vowel   Maintenant il est pas bien avec Atena
- Consonant   Je savais pas quoi

Preceding phonological segment
- Vowel   Tu fais pas la tête pour ça
- Consonant   Elle a pas dit pauvre

Structure of verb
- Main   Je souviens plus le prix
- Copula   À 5 heures c'est pas possible
- Modal / Auxiliary   Je peux pas dire quelle note

Clause Type
- Main   Je voulais pas repasser et parler
- Subordinate   Parce que au début c'était pas possible

Sujet
- Pronoun   J'ai pas encore fini l'école pour aujourd'hui
- Noun   L'armée de résistance ne voulait pas le reconnaître
- Zero   Ne fermez surtout pas cette institution !

Object clitic
- zero   Les agences polonaises sont pas tout à fait honnêtes
- Present   Le Polonais il se tient pas ensemble

Lexicalisation
- non-lexicalised phrase   Ils téléphonent pas chez nous pour la chercher
- lexicalised phrase   C'est pas toujours ça ; il faut pas faire ça ; il y a pas ; je sais pas.

Length of Residence

Post WW2 (1945)
- ……….. (1981-1983)
- Recent (1989, fall of communism)

RESULTS

Table 2 presents the results of the Varbrul analysis. The Polish speakers of French L2 have an 83% deletion rate, which is similar to French L1 rates (Armstrong, 2002; Coveney, 1998). And, by and large, in the case of the French Poles, the constraint ordering is similar to L1 constraint order. Constraint order is the hierarchical arrangement of the relative strength of factors which affect the variation and can thus produce a fine-grained picture of the structure of variation in speech. While in the case of the Polish speakers in France, the constraint order was relatively similar to native speaker patterns, there were nevertheless some differences. For instance, the factor 'presence of clitics' was significant for the Polish speakers, but non-significant for native speakers (Ashby, 1981), and in the case of lexicalisation, the Polish speaker order is the reverse of L1 speaker order. Similarly, Meyerhof, et. al. (2009) found, in relation to Polish speakers living in Edinburgh and in London, that while many of the factor groups had similar constraint ordering to that of L1 English speakers, some were different. However, while the group results for constraint hierarchies were, by and large, similar to native speaker patterns, on the other hand, the rates are very variable according to individual speakers. Inter individual variation is to be expected in L2 speakers, as noted at the outset, and is frequently found in studies of second language acquisition.

Table 2. Varbrul results: *ne* deletion in speech of Polish L2 speakers of French

Factors	Occurrences of deletion N : 974	%	. p
Gender			
• Male	465	84	ns
• Female	509	80	ns
Age			
• 50+	541	80	ns
• -50	433	85	ns
Following phonological segment			
• Vowel	457	81	.379
• Consonant	517	83	.611
Preceding phonological segment			
• Vowel	308	84	ns
• Consonant	666	78	ns
Structure of verb			
• Main	563	79	.374
• Copula	235	88	.757
• Modal / Auxiliary	176	60	.575
Clause Type			
• Main	824	84	.533
• Subordinate	150	72	.350
Sujet			
• Pronoun	915	85	.548
• Noun	22	30	.063
• Zero	37	37	.448
Object clitic			
• zero	816	80	.445
• Present	158	92	.786
Lexicalisation			
• non-lexicalised phrase	620	80	.558
• lexicalised phrase	348	87	.259
Length of Residence			
Post WW2 (1945)	159	90	.682
• .... (1981-1983)			
• Recent (1989, fall of communism)	815	82	.418

Participants

- **MARIUSZ** .343
- **HASSAN** .376
- ANNA **.793**
- **Daniel** .276
- Elena .249
- Gaby .226
- **Henri** **.808**
- Joanna .478
- **Kieran** **.891**
- **Louis** **.874**

Input 0,898
Log likelihood = -407,865 Significance = 0,073

Effect of Factors on *ne* deletion in the speech of Polish L2 speakers of French

In this section first the effect of the various factors is discussed in relation to the group results and then two individual speakers are foregrounded.

Length of Residence (Migration Wave)
A specifically 'Polish' factor group, 'Wave of Migration' is significant. Those speakers who arrived in France earlier deleted more (.682) than those who arrived later (.418). So length of residence is an important constraining factor in the use of *ne* deletion in spoken French.

Age
Despite the fact that the results for the analysis of age as a factor were non-significant, the percentages showed that the tendencies were those of native speakers. Those speakers who were aged less than 50 years omitted *ne* a bit more than those who were older than 50 (85% vs. 80%). These figures approach those of native speakers in relation to age. Ashby (2001), in relation to L1 speech, found that 86% younger speakers deleted *ne* as opposed to 76% of older speakers.

Gender
Likewise, although the factor group 'gender' was not significant in the Varbrul analysis, indications show that men use the vernacular variant slightly more than women, as is the case with native speakers, and indeed with other L2 speakers (84% for men as opposed to 80% for women).

Following segment
Results for 'following sound segment' were in the expected direction: the Polish speakers follow the constraint pattern of native speakers in relation to this factor. They tend to omit *ne* when the following segment begins with a consonant (.611). As Ashby (1976) points out, the fact that a following vowel disfavours deletion is in accord with universal CV structure.

Verb
Syntactic structure of the verb showed that the Polish speakers omitted *ne* significantly more when using a copula (.757) than modals or auxiliaries (.575).

Clause type
This factor was found to be significant and is similar to L1 and L2 usage in French in previous studies: Ashby (1976), for L1 speakers, found main clause caused deletion at .70 and subordinate clause at .40, while Regan (1996), for L2 speakers who spent a year in France, found main clause deleted at .64 and subordinate clause at .32. The Polish speakers in the present study show the same constraint order: main .53 subordinate .35.

Subject type
The range in the figures (from highest to lowest) in relation to subject type is significant. If the subject is a pronoun, .548, but if a noun phrase, .063. The speakers frequently used imperatives which favoured retention of *ne* .448. Table 3 is a comparison of the Polish speakers *ne* deletion in relation to noun phrase with other L2 speakers (Regan, 1996) and L1 speakers (Ashby, 1976).

Table 3. Comparison of Polish speaker variable use of subject type with L1 and other L2 speakers

	L1 speakers Ashby (1981)	L2 speakers (Irish) Regan (1996)	L2 speakers (Polish)
Noun Phrase	.28	.02	.063
Pronoun	.64	.53	.548
No subject (imperatives)	N/A	N/A	.448

Object clitic
The presence of an object clitic favoured omission of *ne* (.786). In relation to L1 speakers, Ashby (1976) did not find this factor to be significant but Regan (1996) in relation to L2 speakers did find it was significant. L2 speakers may well be behaving differently in relation to clitics, perhaps for processing reasons.

Lexicalisation
Interestingly, the results for deletion of *ne* in lexicalised phrases (Table 4) run counter to what has been previously found in relation not only to L1 speakers (Ashby, 1981) but also for L2 speakers (Regan, 1996). As for previous studies, the factor group itself was significant in the Polish L2 data. However, unlike the speakers in the previous studies, the Polish speakers retained *ne* in the lexicalised phrases. It is possible that unlike the Irish speakers the Polish speakers use the formal version of L1 'chunks'. It is also true to say that pragmatic factors can play a role in use of chunks and at times *ne* is retained for emphasis. It is not impossible that these adult speakers who are frequently talking about their futures and their childrens futures might have used more emphasis than Irish student speakers.

Table 4 *Ne* deletion in L2 speech

	Irish speakers Regan (1996)	Polish speakers
non-lexicalised phrases	.33	.558
lexicalised phrases	.78	.259

Individual Variation

Table 5. Individual speakers and *ne* deletion rates

Participants			
• **Bernard**			.376
• Catherine			**.793**
• **Daniel**			.276
• Elena			.249
• **Henri**			**.808**
• Joanna			.478
• **Kieran**			.891
Input 0,898 Log likelihood = -407,865 Significance = 0,073			

As mentioned earlier, in common with all groups of L2 speakers there is considerable individual variation in the rates of variant usage (Table 5). The Polish speakers vary considerably in their rates of *ne* deletion, a point which will be discussed in greater detail later.

Insights from individual conversations
Both the pre-interviews in Polish and the main interviews in French revealed much about stances of the speakers regarding France, the French, their own place in France, their identity, their attitudes to the French language and their own language acquisition process. The Poles who came to France during the Solidarity movement intended to settle permanently in France and build a life for themselves there. Their wish to integrate was very strong and they felt that learning French was crucial in this enterprise. Most of the speakers in our study had little or no French when they arrived in France. They commented that it took them a year or two to acquire enough French to cope with daily life and another couple of years to feel comfortable interacting with French people. The few who had taken some French in school in Poland found that the school French they had learnt was very different from the French they found themselves using in France and so they virtually had to start over in the learning process. They actively enhanced their learning process by watching television, reading newspapers and magazines, interacting with French people as much as possible, avoiding Polish speakers and taking language courses. Many found the process difficult and frustrating at times:

> « surtout qu'on pouvait pas communiquer (…) c'était horrible c'est vrai pendant deux trois premiers mois où (…) on a tas de choses à dire aux gens et puis eux ils ont tas de choses à nous dire aussi et bon finalement

y a toujours un blocage parce que bon on était avec des dictionnaires pendant deux mois on se déplaçait toujours partout avec des bouquins comme ça dans un sac parce qu'on pouvait pas faire autrement » [female speaker]

« au début sans travail je savais pas parler (…) les premiers mois on est comme les nouveaux nés ». [Elena]

An initially striking feature of the informants' reflections was their own feeling that they are perceived by the French as a 'model minority ' type group. Many told us of the good reputation Polish people have in France and their feeling that this perception facilitated their integration into French society. They felt that the French perceived them as a hardworking community who have contributed to the economy of the region without adding to crime levels or compromising the public and social good.

« ils voient que ces immigrés polonais (...) ils sont catholiques pratiquants plus que nous les Français / et ils sont justes ils sont bien élevés les hommes sont bien habillés ils se bagarrent pas ils se cultivent et ils se forment et en plus ils reviennent avec des diplômes ». (Alfred)

DISCUSSION

The quantitative results revealed an interesting general picture of the speech patterns of these Polish L2 speakers of French. We now know that, by and large, the Polish speakers are following the general patterns of French L1 speakers, both at the levels of rates and of constraint ordering. The factors which affect the variation of *ne* deletion in the speech of native speakers are the same ones which constrain the variation in the speech of the Polish informants, with a few exceptions. So, we have a detailed picture of the variation patterns among the Polish speakers of French. This tells us that the Polish speakers are accommodating to French norms (whether consciously or unconsciously). These general results are invaluable information in our investigations. Amongst many other findings, they confirm our hypotheses that length of residence is important in the adoption of vernacular speech norms. They also indicate that proficiency affects use of vernacular variants. The fact that the speakers as a group are accommodating in so wholesale a fashion both in rates of deletion and in patterns of constraint hierarchies, seems wholly in keeping with the speakers' attitude towards France, the French, and their view of French perception of themselves as a model minority.

The figures resulting from the Varbrul analysis provide a wealth of empirical detail about speech patterns of the speakers. Despite the overall patterns that quantitative analysis has clearly demonstrated, a close look at individual deletion rates reveals a high degree of variability. When we look at deletion rates for the whole group of speakers, we find interesting facts in relation to those individuals at either end of the continuum. Whereas for the group as a whole we find that the longest stay in France correlates with the highest deletion rates and that those most proficient in French also delete most, we also find that the figures for two

individuals run counter to this direction. At the two ends of the continuum, we see that the book seller (Mariusz), a very high proficiency speaker and who has the longest length of residence, has, in fact, the lowest deletion rate, and on the other hand, the basket ball player (Anna), who has been in France for less time, is deleting at a very high rate. Anna's high deletion rate is all the more interesting as women tend to have lower rates of vernacular variants in the case of stable variables, such as *ne* deletion. The intriguing case of these two speakers prompted a further investigation into the trajectories of their lives; qualitative evidence provides further information about these lives and the choices of the individuals.

Brief portraits of the two speakers show contrasting experiences and profiles. In France, they have very different occupations and their interests, aspirations and aims are very different. The book seller presents himself as a highly educated person; he was a *directeur des études* in an engineering school in France, and in Poland, he had been awarded a doctorate in engineering in *automatisme.* He was born in 1948 and arrived in France in 1983. He first left Poland to teach his speciality (*informatique*) in Algeria. Having an advanced educational level, after retirement he decided to open a Polish bookshop in Lille in 2003 with his daughter-in-law who complains of a « désert culturel » in the region. He has a near native proficiency level of French (only noticeable were some omission of articles and non-liaisons in a few phrases). He generally uses a relatively standard register of French. He left Poland, seeking a better economic situation. Now in France, he runs the Polish book shop in Lille. He presents himself as the embodiment of Polishness: he is an expert in Polish literature, Polish history, Polish culture, and his shop is a hub of Polish social life. During the two hours we spent talking to him, people stopped in to say hello. He was a great storyteller and told many stories about the history of Polish migrants in France.

He laments the lack of knowledge and interest in Polish heritage on the part of Polish people. He talks of those who "pretend" to be Polish and yet speak an inferior Polish: " ce..n'est qu'« un argot de rase campagne » he says. Or later, when speaking to a Polish academic compatriout: « madame si avec un tel polonais vous allez donc là-bas au Congrès où il y a que des professeurs de votre niveau je vous conseille quand même de le présenter en français ». Here we see him alluding to a high standard of Polish which the average, or even the educated, French Pole does not reach. Better to speak French at the conference than present in substandard Polish. He reports his speech in formal French and uses subordinate clauses, a rarity in spoken French ("si, avec un tel polonais..").

He sees his function and aim as that of setting standards: leading and encouraging people to discover their Polish heritage and identity. He talks about the history of Poland, and informs us of various facts about history and language during the conversation. He prides himself on his education and knowledge of Polish:

> « mais vous savez quand je lis la poésie française / et la poésie polonaise je trouve le vocabulaire de la poésie française bien plus modeste que la poésie polonaise notre langue est difficile mais a une richesse de vocabulaire telle (...) mais grâce à ça justement elle peut transmettre de la finesse que j'ai trouvé dans aucune autre langue moi moi je suis fier d'être Polonais c'est-à-

dire d'abord de parler une langue compliquée pour apprendre ensuite les langues qui sont toutes plus simples que la mienne ».

In fact several of those speakers with a higher level of education in Polish obtained in Poland before arrival in France perceive Polish as 'above' French in terms of difficulty. He talks of his ambition to build a house back in Poland and retire there.

In contrast, Anna, the basketball player, is a more recent economic migrant. She has two children, and is very focused on her future life and that of her family. Whereas the bookseller has invested heavily in intellectual and cultural domains to negotiate his trajectory through migration, she has invested in sport. It is her physical prowess which was her passage to her new country and life. She and her husband (both basketball professionals) came to France as soon as it was permissible. Under the communist government it was impossible to leave Poland as an athlete before the age of 27. They came with a 2 year contract intending to return. At the time of coming they had a 6 year old daughter. Their son, a second child, was born in France. Despite the elder child's initial reluctance to speak French, the children became the reason for the couple's remaining in France. They found the French welcoming, by and large, and invested heavily in making their lives work in their new country. Anna talks about the fact that it is perfectly possible for her to stay in touch with the new technologies such as social media as well as the older ones like television and radio. However despite her access to these technologies, she maintains that she does not really keep in touch with happenings in Poland. In addition, although they make visits to Poland where they have family, she still comments that the links between the relatives are relatively tenuous. Her focus is squarely on France and her family's future in France. Where Janusz talks about building a house in Poland, and discusses construction, Anna talks about builders she is employing to work on her house in France.

The two speakers, Anna and Janusz, are positioned in opposite directions in space and time. Janusz orients himself towards Poland, and wants to take people back to Poland and its cultural and literary past. Anna orients herself towards contemporary France and the future. She speaks a casual contemporary French and has a high rate of *ne* deletion. Whereas Janusz told us he wanted to return to Poland, Anna seems totally caught up in making a future for herself and her family in France. Between them they represent a Janus-like positioning on the part of migrants in general; on the one hand looking back towards the lost country land and on the other looking towards the future in the new receiving country. These two individuals represent, at a local level, structural patterns which characterise migration as a whole.

CONCLUSION
Our detailed Varbrul analysis shows, as expected, that Length of Residence is a crucial predictor of *ne* deletion. However, when we looked closely at individuals we found that there were some whose deletion rates did not correspond exactly to this generalisation, with two individuals standing out from the overall general pattern. This contrasting pair of speakers, at the opposite ends of the quantitative continuum, is an interesting example of how qualitative data and

ethnographic detail provide complementary 'layers' of individual lives. While the quantitative data demonstrates general patterns of L2 acquisition, and identifies exceptions to these general patterns, it is the qualitative data that provides explanation for the anomalies revealed through analysis of the quantitative data. The two research processes each contribute something to the ultimate picture we build up of language use and how it relates to peoples' life journeys. Quantitative data provide an accurate picture of a group of speakers' language patterns. Qualitative analysis provides the personal data that makes each individual a unique case. Combing the quantitative and qualitative data shows how individuals can stand out against the background of the broader social structural categories, depending on the stances they take. These two contrasting speakers demonstrate that, while overall categories are a useful predictor of patterns of L2 acquisition, individuals are more than simply exemplars of such overall categories. Their personal biographies and current relationships with others in their society lead to significant variations from overall patterns.

Our qualitative findings do not undermine earlier quantitative findings that LOR may be the best predictor of use of vernacular variants, but demonstrate that these generalisations are true only at a general level. Other factors may be important, since humans are complex and we cannot explain what they do by reference to broad social and linguistic generalisations. Each person has their own story which helps account for outcomes in their language usage. In the case of the basketball player and the bookseller, we have a generalisation which is true, but we discover on closer analysis that we must allow for individual variation explained by their individual stories: their stances in particular contexts, the construction of various identities, their aims and ambitions for the future. The reality of life is 'kaleidoscopic, complex and complicated, often a patchwork of overlapping activities' (Blommaert & Dong, 2010). Qualitative analysis helps us to capture more closely the complexity of this reality.

This individual variation may be more significant for migrant speakers, who are more mobile than L2 learners in previous studies. The language repertoires of migrants have recently been described as "emergent" (Blommaert, 2010) The use of *ne* deletion is part of the linguistic repertoire available to the L2 speakers, to be used, perhaps not always in the same way as by L1 speakers, but for different functions. The book seller is indexing a cultured self – a cultured *Polish* self, paradoxically, and the basket ball player is using a highly native-like feature (*ne* deletion) to index a 'young very native French' identity. She is using a native form but for a slightly different function – to index identity. She is using language as a resource, in fact. The basket ball player is using a specific 'bit' from her repertoire to fulfil a particular need; to present herself as a contemporary French person with a future in France. In fact both speakers, are using variation patterns of *ne* deletion in an emblematic fashion rather than simply a communicative one. So it may be true in the generality that L2 acquisition and, specifically, the adoption of vernacular norms is an indication of integration but, in the specific, individual cases may run counter to the generalisation, as in these cases of language practices as indicators of identity rather than integration.

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Endnotes:

[3] Both interviewers gauged proficiency by agreeing on criteria of high or medium proficiency, using use of articles and use of verb tenses, both problematic to Polish L1 speakers of French L2, as general indicators.
[4] The interviews were conducted by Debaene and Regan during three field trips to Lille and Paris (May-Oct. 2007).
[5] The computational analysis was carried out by Isabelle Lemée and Vera Regan.