

Language diversity and linguistic identity in Brittany: a critical  
analysis of the changing practice of Breton

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PhD

2006

## CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP/ORIGINALITY

I certify that the work in this thesis has not been previously submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that this thesis has been written by me. Any help I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature

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## Acknowledgements

There are many people whose help in preparing this thesis I would like to acknowledge and many others whom I would like to thank for their support.

Many thanks go to Alastair Pennycook, Francis Favereau and Murray Pratt for their encouragement, support, advice and guidance; to Julie Chotard, Amandine Potier-Delaunay, Justine Gayet and Catherine Smith for their proofreading and help in formatting. Thanks too to my family and the many friends and colleagues along the way who encouraged me to keep going. Special thanks go to Astrid and Daniel Hubert who lent their farmhouse to a stranger out of the kindness of their hearts.

Finally, thanks go to the generosity of all those who participated in the research both formally and informally. Without their contributions this would not have been possible.

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## Abstract

This thesis explores the ways in which linguistic diversity is represented, articulated and theorised in the context of the promotion of Breton, a minority or lesser-used language spoken in the region of Brittany in western France. In doing so it seeks to provide a critical analysis of the changing practice of Breton and the different ways in which the language is mobilised as a vehicle for personal and collective identity. It provides a historical reading of the development of a sense of Breton identity through the language, locating the changing practice of Breton, particularly following the revival movement that began in the 1960s, in a socio-political and socio-cultural context.

In tracking these functional and symbolic transformations of Breton, the thesis takes a theoretical approach that can broadly be described as belonging to the discipline of critical language studies. Working from this critical perspective, it explores the way different language ideologies frame issues of linguistic diversity and examines the way notions of language, linguistic diversity and identity are epistemologically constructed. In doing so it argues the need for greater critical awareness of the effects these ideologies may have on diversity, with a view to developing more effective ways of promoting diverse language practices and linguistic identities in Brittany.