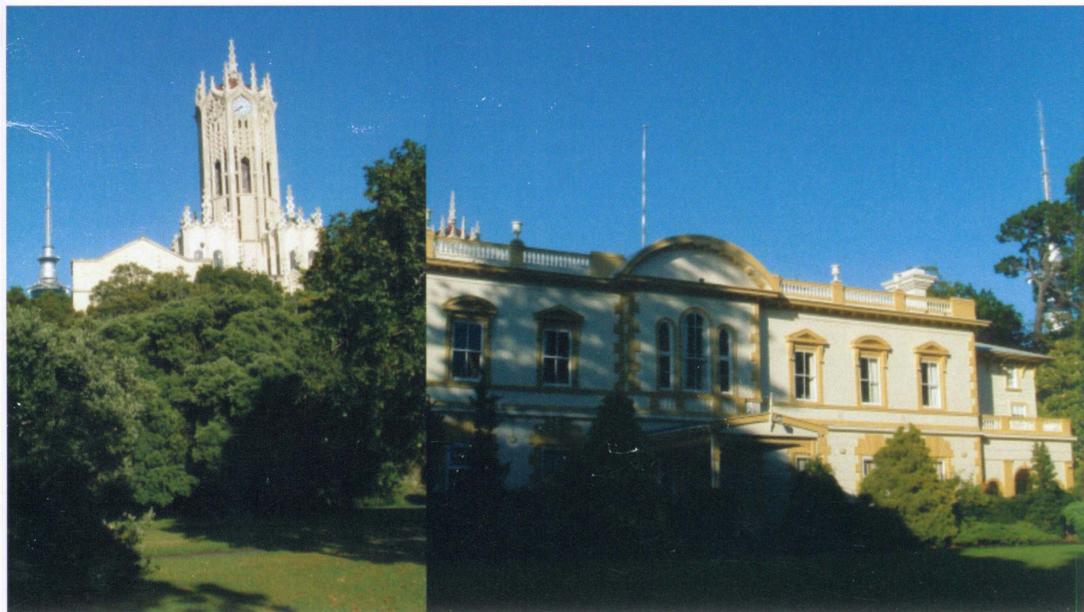




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13th LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY CONFERENCE, NZ
28-29 November 2012
The University of Auckland, New Zealand



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One vowel system for two languages: The vowel inventory of Bukharan Tajik-Uzbek bilinguals

One vowel system for two languages: The vowel inventory of Bukharan Tajik-Uzbek bilinguals This paper analyses the vowels of Tajik and Uzbek produced by two bilingual speakers from Bukhara, a city in which Tajik and Uzbek have been in contact for centuries. The analysis reveals a clear divergence between the standard Uzbek vowel system and the Uzbek vowel system which the Tajik-Uzbek bilinguals use — standard Uzbek /o/ and /ɔ/ are more central and more close, respectively, in the Bukharan bilinguals' Uzbek vowel system. The analysis also reveals an interlingual consistency between their Tajik and Uzbek vowel systems — the positions of the bilinguals' Tajik vowels in the F1-F2 space exhibit a striking resemblance to those of their Uzbek vowels. In other words, the Bukharan bilinguals' Uzbek vowel system diverges from the standard Uzbek vowel system in such a way that the divergence renders their Tajik and Uzbek vowel systems practically identical. This naturally suggests an influence of Tajik on the formation of the bilinguals' Uzbek vowel system. However, a few studies (e.g. Windfuhr 2009: 458) also exist that appear to point to an Uzbek influence on the formation of the Tajik vowel system. The vowel system that the Bukharan bilinguals utilize for both of their languages can therefore be identified, at least in part, as a product of bidirectional influences between the two contact languages, and contrasts with the vowel systems of a number of other contact languages which appear to be subject to the unidirectional influence of sociolinguistically dominant languages (e.g. Bullock & Gerfen 2004 and Lleó et al. 2008). This paper also includes an examination of formant data obtained from nineteen informants in Bukhara.

Bullock, B. E. & Gerfen, C. 2004. Frenchville French: A case study in phonological attrition. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, vol. 8 no. 3. 303-320.

Lleó, C., Cortés, S., & Benet, A. 2008. Contact-induced phonological changes in the Catalan spoken in Barcelona. In Siemund, P. & Kintana, N. eds. 2008. *Language contact and contact languages*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 185-212.

Windfuhr, G. 2009. *Persian*. In Comrie, B. ed. 2009. *The world's major languages* (Second edition). Oxon: Routledge. 445-459.