Contents

Preface x

1 Introduction **1**

The identity of identity 1
What language has to do with it 2
Fundamental types of identity 3
Construction and multiplicity 6
Other terms used in current research 9
Identity as a linguistic phenomenon 11

2 Linguistic Identity and the Functions and Evolution of Language **15**

Identity and the traditional functions of language 15
Identity and the phatic and performative functions 17
Does identity constitute a distinctive function of language? 20
'Over-reading': identity and the evolution of language 25
Conclusion 39

3 Approaching Identity in Traditional Linguistic Analysis **41**

Introduction 41
Classical and Romantic views of language, nation, culture and the individual 42
The nineteenth century and the beginnings of institutional linguistics 46
The social in language: Voloshinov vs Saussure 48
Jespersen and Sapir 51
Firth, Halliday and their legacy 56
Later structuralist moves toward linguistic identity: Brown & Gilman, Labov and others 58
From 'women's language' to gender identity 61
From Network Theory to communities of practice and language ideologies 63

4 Integrating Perspectives from Adjacent Disciplines 67

Input from 1950s sociology: Goffman 67
Bernstein 68
Attitudes and accommodation 70
Foucault and Bourdieu on symbolic power 73
Social Identity Theory and 'self-categorisation' 76
Early attempts to integrate 'social identity' into sociolinguistics 77
Communication Theory of Identity 80
Essentialism and constructionism 83

5 Language in National Identities 92

The nature of national identities 92
When did nationalism begin? 95
Constructing national identity and language: Dante's *De vulgari eloquentia* 98
Taming and centring the language: Nebrija and Valdés 102
Language imagined as a republic: Du Bellay 106
Fichte on language and nation 109
Renan and the Kedourie–Gellner debate 111
Anderson's 'imagined communities' and Billig's 'banal nationalism' 115
De-essentialising the role of language: Hobsbawm and Silverstein 119
Studies of the construction of particular national-linguistic identities 125
Europe 126
Asia 128
Africa 130
Americas 130
Australasia and Oceania 131

6 Case Study 1: The New Quasi-Nation of Hong Kong 132

Historical background 132
The 'myth' of declining English 134
Samples of Hong Kong English 140
The formal distinctiveness of Hong Kong English 144
The status of Hong Kong English 148
The functions of Hong Kong English 150

Chinese identities 151
Constructing colonial identity 154
The present and future roles of English 158

7 Language in Ethnic/Racial and Religious/Sectarian Identities 162

Ethnic, racial and national identities 162
From communities of practice to shared habitus 167
The particular power of ethnic/racial identity claims 168
Religious/sectarian identities 172
Personal names as texts of ethnic and religious identity 176
Language spread and identity-levelling 181

8 Case Study 2: Christian and Muslim Identities in Lebanon 194

Introduction 194
'What language is spoken in Lebanon?' 195
Historical background 196
Distribution of languages by religion 197
The co-construction of religious and ethnic identity: Maronites and Phoenicians 198
Constructing Islamic Arabic uniqueness 200
Recent shifts in Lebanese language/identity patterns 203
Still more recent developments 207
Renan and the 'heritage of memories' 208
Linking marginal ethnic identities: Celts and Phoenicians 212
Language, abstraction and the identity of Renan 215
Maalouf's utopian anti-identity 220

Afterword: Identity and the Study of Language 224

Notes 228

Bibliography 235

Index 256