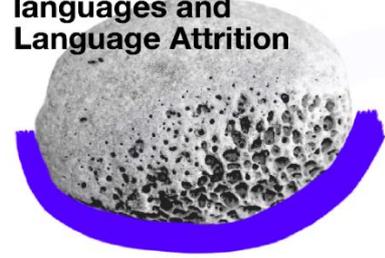


Refugees, Heritage languages and Language Attrition



Provisional programme [22/12/2020]

28 April 2022, Auditorium B 2 (Building 02)

Panel: 9.15 – 11.15 am

Dinara Stepina

Language maintenance and attrition among Dari speakers in Russia

Although Afghan communities in Russia seem to demonstrate a strong desire to transmit their home languages to the next generations, there is a general invisibility of immigrant and refugee languages, speaking which is perceived as a sign of incomplete integration and assimilation. These two conflicting tendencies resulted in a wide continuum of language acquisition and attrition levels among 1,5 and second generation Russian Afghans: my observations show that there are cases when young Afghans educated in Russian do not actively speak their parents' languages and demonstrate extremely low level of listening comprehension, while some other young Afghans raised in Russia are lucky enough to speak more than one home language fluently alongside Russian (for example, when the family is mixed Tajik-Pashtun).

My research was primarily focused on Dari speakers. Using Iranian Farsi as the language of interviews (alongside Russian) allowed me to add some important points to my research. First of all, although first generation immigrants seemed to understand me perfectly, second generation Dari speakers struggled to comprehend quite a lot of things, even though many of them still supported the idea of Dari and Farsi being the same language. While that could be due to language attrition and change, the fact that the younger speakers were educated in a different language and were only exposed to the vernacular Dari which is a lot more distinct from the standard Farsi, added a lot to their language abilities. Moreover, even those who have maintained quite a high level of productive and receptive bilingualism, demonstrated some signs of attrition (omitting the ezafe particle, using plural forms of nouns with numerals, etc.), which I will focus on more in my talk.

Short CV:

Education: 2009-2014 - Astrakhan State University (Russia) Cultural Studies, Persian Language, BA. 2014-2016 - Saint Petersburg State University (Russia), Minority Languages and Language Policy, MA. 2018 – current time: Institute for Linguistic Studies, Russian Academy of Science, PhD

Work: 2017-2018 – Russian as a Foreign Language teacher (Afghan Cultural Center, Moscow)

2018 – current time: Russian and English as a Foreign Language teacher, Children of Saint Petersburg & European University at Saint Petersburg, Junior Research Fellow (Anthropology of Language and Migration)

Rita Luppi

Linguistic Impressions of Second Generation German-Speaking Israeli during Their Trips to Germany and Austria. A longitudinal study

The second generation German-speaking migrants to Palestine/Israel during the Nazi period could be defined as a “transition generation” (cf. Betten 2016: 377) that was confronted, among others, with a language issue.

In 2019 I conducted new narrative interviews in Israel with some second generation German speakers, who were first interviewed by Anne Betten within the framework of the so-called “Israel Corpus” project (e.g. Betten 2010, 2014; cf. <http://hdl.handle.net/10932/00-0332-C453-CEDC-B601-2>). The still high proficiency of a part of them (mainly the first child) is mostly due to the fact that, in many cases, German was the “family language” spoken at home, only later at school replaced by Hebrew as the main language, since they all strived for a complete linguistic and cultural identification within the Israeli society (Betten 2011).

Language plays a key role in shaping identity (e.g. Ige 2010, König 2010) and narrative interviews with migrants offer a useful means for investigating the subjects’ perspective on language experiences (König 2010). In addition, tourism has become one of the major contexts for being confronted with the others’, and thus with one’s own, linguistic diversity (Plewnia/Rothe 2011).

On the basis of a selection of some representative case studies, my paper aims at discussing how the interviewees thematise their linguistic impressions during their trips to German-speaking countries: how do they perceive German and their German-speaking competence on such occasions? Do their linguistic formulations interact with emotional display? What kind of feelings do emerge? In particular, since evaluations of this kind are verbalised both in Betten’s and in my interviews, I will adopt a longitudinal approach in order to investigate if (and if yes, how) the speakers’ standpoint has changed over time.

Short CV:

Rita Luppi is a PhD candidate in German Language and Linguistics at Milan University. Her doctoral research investigates the use and the function of retellings in separate autobiographical interviews. Her main research interests centre around conversational analysis, discourse analysis, written and oral language. She holds a MA in German Linguistics at Bologna University.

Themistoklis Papadopoulos

The Languages of Immigration in Greece and their Educational Status

The present study examines the languages of the immigrant populations in modern Greece. Since 1990, many European and other populations immigrated to Greece. The successive governments had to review their linguistic and educational policy in order to help the immigrants become adjusted to new conditions in the Greek society. As far as the immigrant populations are concerned, many changes took place in the last few years. The two main reasons for this transitions are the economic crisis and the arrival of a big number of refugees from the Middle East. The aim of this study is to analyze the linguistic and educational policy of the Greek state

which was applied to the immigrant and refugee populations until now and to juxtapose it with the current situation of the so called new minority languages in Greece.

Short CV:

PhD in Applied Linguistics obtained in Université Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle, specialized in language policies and multilingualism/multiculturalism in modern societies.

Independent researcher

Publications: 6 in French, 2 in English, 2 in Greek

Liliana Correia

Heritage language use, attitudes and intergenerational language transmission within Portuguese families living in Germany

According to the United Nations (2019), nearly 272 million people live in a country in which they were not born. As migration flows intensify, contact between languages/cultures also increases and the number of individuals who grow up exposed to more than one language/culture significantly becomes larger, making host societies progressively more multilingual and multicultural (Guardado, 2018). Nevertheless, although the protection and promotion of multilingualism/multiculturalism are part of the agenda of international organisations such as the UN/UNESCO (2003) and the Council of the European Union (2009), many societies still foster assimilation attitudes which do not value the linguistic and cultural diversity of minority groups (Faneca, 2013; Romaine, 2010). Having to deal with multiple socioeconomical and political issues associated with the hosting of the increasing number of migrants, several host countries relegate to second plan questions related to the preservation of the language of origin of their new citizens, making its intergenerational transmission and maintenance (almost) the sole responsibility of migrant families. In fact, parents have been reported in the literature as the key players in the intergenerational transmission of the language of origin (i.e., the heritage language (HL)), since they “are the first HL contact for second generation immigrant children and the main source of HL for those children” (Brown, 2011:31). Thus, whether the transmission/acquisition of the HL is a successful process seems to be highly dependent on several factors related to HL practice within migrant families as well as to the valorisation of the minority language by its speakers and host societies (Montrul, 2016; Pearson, 2007).

In this talk, I am going to present data from a recent research focused on HL use, attitudes and intergenerational language transmission within Portuguese families living in Germany – a country which hosts 123 thousand Portuguese-born migrants (Pires *et al.*, 2018). Twenty-six Portuguese-migrant families with 6-10-year-old children participated in this study. Parents filled in a sociolinguistic and language attitude questionnaire. Children participated in a face-to-face structured interview centred on their attitudes towards the languages under acquisition. Children also participated in two experimental tasks (Brownell, 2000a/b; Costa, 2011; Cunha, 2011) aimed at assessing their HL proficiency (receptive and productive vocabulary).

Results show that all the parents consider the transmission/maintenance of the HL important and encourage (to different degrees) their children to use it. Rationale and strategies for transmitting the HL vary from parent to parent. Integrative motivations (i.e., communication with extended family members and Portuguese-speaking peers; transmission/maintenance of the culture of origin) are at the core of the rationale presented by most of the parents. Language use in the home, HL classes, and spending holidays in the country of origin are the most-used strategies to transmit the HL. Regarding the children, most of them (62%) hold positive attitudes towards the acquisition of the HL, with 46% showing a preference for speaking the HL over the majority language. Affection, cultural affiliation, and communication with Portuguese speakers (mainly relatives) are the stated reasons for the aforementioned preference. Nevertheless, some children also reported feeling ashamed of speaking Portuguese when among native speakers due to their self-perceived low proficiency level in the HL. As for societal attitudes, the host country doesn't

seem to hold unfavourable attitudes towards the transmission/acquisition of Portuguese - only two parents (8%) reported having been advised not to speak Portuguese with their children. However, some children (15%) reported having been prohibited by teachers to speak Portuguese at school. The main results from correlation analyses show that: (i) parents' attitudes are positively correlated with the children's attitudes and the quantity of HL use in the home; (ii) the children's vocabulary knowledge is positively associated with the input quantity within the nuclear family, with the richness of the input and with the cumulative length of exposure to the HL.

Short CV: **Liliana Correia**

Liliana Correia holds a master's degree in Portuguese as Foreign or Second Language. Currently, she is a PhD student in Language Sciences (Applied Linguistics) at University of Minho. Her research interests focus on Heritage Bilingualism, namely on the lexical development of heritage speakers of European Portuguese.

**Refugees, Heritage
languages and
Language Attrition**



28 April 2022, Auditorium B 2 (Building 02)

Panel: 3.45 – 5.45 pm / 15h45 – 17h45

Pedro Guijarro-Fuentes & Cristina Suárez-Gómez

Tense and Aspect in Bilingual Speakers of English as Heritage Language and World Englishes

English heritage language speakers have been exposed to English since childhood and have acquired the language at home. English is one of their first languages, but they have other dominant languages. The proficiency level and command of English differs, because it is used as a home language and they may not have received any formal instruction. Their English frequently exhibits features comparable with language contact situations, such as code-switching and language attrition. Regarding speakers of World Englishes, these are also products of language contact and acquisition processes. These varieties have also emerged in multilingual settings and their speakers also show different levels of proficiency. The purpose of this presentation is to build bridges between both varieties. We will present an experimental study with sequential and simultaneous child heritage speakers in adulthood on the acquisition of Tense and Aspect. The experimental study will be complemented by an original pilot study to check whether the previous results hold for English-Spanish bilinguals from Mallorca (Spain). Based on two linguistic tasks with a total of 100 speakers, we observe child HS, regardless of their degree of bilingualism, perform like monolingual L1 speakers, and generally outperform L2 learners. Regarding World Englishes, these varieties are independent and go beyond the specific influence(s) of the languages in contact in that they show nativized features which can be further analyzed in the

light of cognitive determinants of learning. As to the expression of Tense and Aspect, these are also challenging grammatical features in the acquisition process which mainly depend on a semantic-pragmatic context that is constrained by time specifications. We will demonstrate that despite their own idiosyncrasies, there is a shared core in both types of English, as a Heritage Language and as Postcolonial Languages, justified by cognitive factors of learning and language contact.

Short CVs:

Pedro Guijarro-Fuentes is a Professor in Spanish linguistics at the University of the Balearic Islands and has headed multiple projects on the acquisition of various phenomena on Spanish language. He has authored and co-authored numerous journal articles, book chapters and books, published by various international publishers and in high impact journals. He has organized many professional meetings and has been a participant in many professional conferences.

Cristina Suárez-Gómez is a Senior Lecturer of English Linguistics at the University of the Balearic Islands. She has participated on multiple projects on language variation and change in English and World Englishes. Her main areas of research are English historical syntax, English historical sociolinguistics, dialectal variation in English, from both synchronic and diachronic perspectives, and morphosyntactic variation in World Englishes.

Christoph Gabriel & Jonas Grünke

Patterns of language dominance in German-Turkish heritage bilingualism: the case of adolescent learners of French

The contribution focuses on heritage bilingualism and concomitant language dominance patterns by analysing six German-Turkish high school students, who have grown up in Northern Germany (ages 15–17). We calculated dominance scores for the participants based on the interplay of language use and self-assessed proficiency as indicated in a sociolinguistic questionnaire, which categorized them as balanced bilinguals. However, proficiency measures in both languages revealed that all but one participants score higher in German than in Turkish concerning reading comprehension (LGVT, Schneider et al. 2017) and writing skills (Klinger et al. 2019). This finding might be explained by the fact that they generally use German in public and educational contexts, while Turkish is restricted to the familial domain, as a closer look at the questionnaires shows.

Furthermore, to determine how strongly the Turkish spoken by the bilinguals is affected by CLI from the environmental language German at the prosodic level, we compared their productions to control data recorded from (a) Turkish monolinguals and (b) monolingual German learners of Turkish. Measurements of rhythmic and intonational properties showed that the bilinguals' prosody does not substantially deviate from the monolinguals'.

Finally, as Turkish largely patterns with French regarding rhythm and intonation and thus might constitute a source of positive transfer, the HL speakers' prosody was also assessed in their foreign language French. However, they did not perform better than a control group of monolingual German learners. We interpret this finding as showing that in a clearly German-dominated domain such as the educational system the degree of activation of the HL Turkish is low and French seems to be mainly acquired through the majority language. To make HL speakers benefit from their first language at school, both activation and awareness of its structural properties should be fostered in the multilingual classroom.

Short CVs:

Christoph Gabriel is Full Professor of Romance Linguistics at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany. His research focuses on phonetics/phonology, multilingualism, and migration-induced linguistic change.

Jonas Grünke is a PhD candidate in Romance linguistics at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany. His areas of interest include phonetics/phonology, sociolinguistics, and multilingualism.

Hideyuki Taura & Amanda Taura

Ebb and Flow in L2 Proficiency and Brain-Activation as one moves from One Linguistic Environment to Another

What happens to one's professional expertise and skills as an interpreter after one year's break from the job? Our previous research involved tracking a novice, but highly proficient Japanese-English bilingual interpreter for six years (from age 22 to 28) by investigating the changes in his English proficiency and brain activation. The current study examines an additional year when he gave himself a year's break, to see if the skills he had developed were maintained linguistically and if his brain was working in the same way as the previous year.

Yearly data collection was two-fold: brain activation data and linguistic data. A Verbal Fluency Task (VFT), which is often used in neurolinguistic research to tap into the language faculty of the brain (i.e. Raucher-Chene *et al.*, 2017; Clark *et al.*, 2014), was used to collect the brain imaging data through the functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (fNIRS) device (Shimadzu OMM-3000, a 42 channeled machine). A wordless picture book "Frog, where are you?" (Mayer, 1969) was used to elicit spontaneous oral narrative data to examine the participant's English skills in terms of accuracy, fluency, complexity, and vocabulary.

Six years of interpreting experiences had pushed his English to the stage where he was able to deliver English at a faster speed and with more varied lexical choices whereas his accuracy and narrative skills remained unchanged due to a ceiling effect (accuracy and narrative skills had reached almost 100% from the very first data collection). The brain activation data revealed more economical energy allocation after two years of professional interpreting – leaving more resources for his less dominant English.

The new set of data collected after a year's break were collected using the same procedures as before, which are linguistically and neurolinguistically analyzed to provide answers to our research question.

Short CV:

Hideyuki Taura obtained MA and PhD at Macquarie University, Sydney. Currently holding a position as director of International Institute of Language and Culture Studies along with professor of Applied Linguistics at Graduate School of Language Education and Information Science at Ritsumeikan University in Japan. Research interests include bilingual language attrition and acquisition, bilingual cognitive development, and interpretation in bilingual brain.

Amanda Taura is an ESL lecturer at Setsunan University, Osaka. Her research interests include Japanese-English bilingual development from linguistic and identity perspectives.

Konstantina Olioumtsevit, Despina Papadopoulou, Theo Marinis

Vocabulary learning in refugee children: Teaching and assessment approaches

In recent decades, there has been a great increase in non-Greek speaking immigrants/refugees enrolled in formal Greek education. According to previous research, the rates of dropout of school are considerably high, and immigrant students' performance in Greek seems to be characterized by a persistent proficiency and vocabulary gap. Taking the above findings into account, the main research question here addressed is the following: Which teaching techniques and strategies may enhance the immigrant/refugee students' language abilities in Greek as a second language?

The present study is ongoing and, according to the research plan, the data collection will start in October 2019. School age students in Greek Reception Classes coming from different language and cultural backgrounds will be recruited. They will attend three educational interventions – flashcards, pantomime, context – aiming at vocabulary learning. Each intervention will be employed for 4 hours, with a 2-hour session taking place per week. For all interventions, “environment” will constitute their thematic domain, while the target-words will include high-frequency and level-appropriate nouns and verbs. The students will complete a short test before and after each intervention as well as a group of tests before and after all interventions. The latter will be comprised of a screening test, story retelling, a word association task, and the digit backwards test. Students' L1(s), L2 Greek, and L3 English will be used during teaching and/or testing.

Qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis will be applied; the former will focus on the implications of the selection of the L1/L2/L3 as the medium of instruction or testing and the linguistic diversity in the classroom, while the latter will focus on the performance of the students on the tests employed. The ultimate objective is to provide guidelines regarding appropriate teaching techniques and strategies to teachers who work with immigrant/refugee students.

Short CVs:

Konstantina Olioumtsevit is a PhD student at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in the framework of the EU project *MultiMind*. Her research interests lie in the areas of neurolinguistics, bilingualism, language processing and teaching, with her empirical work reflecting these qualities.

Despina Papadopoulou is associate professor of linguistics at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Her research mainly focuses on language processing, bilingualism, second language acquisition and teaching. She has extensively published in these areas and has been involved in a number of projects. She is currently the PI of a *MultiMind* project.

Theo Marinis is professor of multilingualism at the University of Konstanz and at the University of Reading. His main research areas are language acquisition and processing in populations with (a)typical language development. His research work has been extensive and funded by different research councils. He is currently coordinating the *MultiMind* project, among others.