

Language, Identity, and Intercultural Communication

A joint conference of the BAAL Intercultural Communication Special Interest Group and The Annual Bloomsbury Round Table

Dates: 9 -10 June, 2011.

Location: Birkbeck College, London

Keynote speech 1:

Identity and subjectivity in the era of globalization

Claire Kramersch
University of California, Berkeley

Time: 10:15-11:15, 9 June; venue: MAL B20

In his little book *Fear of small numbers* (2006), the social critic Arjun Appadurai reflects on the reasons why identity has become such a hot topic in studies of globalization. He sees a link “between minorities *within* the modern nation-state and the marginalization *of* the nation-state by the forces of globalization.” (33). While immigrants are called upon to ‘reconstruct’ their identities upon arrival in a new country (Pavlenko & Lantolf 2000), nations themselves are under pressure to define what it means to be French, German or American when nation states are slowly losing much of their economic and political sovereignty. Appadurai notes that “the mysterious roamings of finance capital are matched by new kinds of migration, both elite and proletarian, which create unprecedented tensions between identities of origin, identities of residence, and identities of aspiration for many migrants in the world labor market.” (Appadurai 2006:37) The current focus of intercultural communication research on the *identities* of learners and speakers of other languages can be seen as a response to this new anxiety “about foreign goods . . . foreign languages, foreign migrants, or foreign investments” in a global economy (22). The efforts of some applied linguists to view an individual’s identity as multiple, changing and conflictual (Norton 2000) have aimed at making bilingual and bicultural minorities less threatening by helping them reconstruct themselves within a pluralistic democratic society. Such a reconstruction reduces anxiety by making the Other predictable and controllable, but it risks sacrificing difference for diversity, subjectivity for identity. This paper takes as an example the (re)construction of Americans’ sense of self in Barack Obama’s speech of 12 January 2011 at the memorial for the victims of the shootings in Tucson, Arizona. It examines how the speech deals with a traumatic incident of American political violence in light of the foreign political violence wrought upon the United States on 11 September 2001. It shows how in an era of globalization identities and subjectivities are easily confused and how it is more important than ever to analytically distinguish one from the other.

Keynote speech 2:**Performing the institutional self**

Celia Roberts

Kings College London

Time: 2:00-3:00, 10 June; venue: MAL B20

Selection processes, which are a key instrument of institutional order, combine the linguistic technologies of the examination and the confession to make the individual startlingly visible (Foucault 1977). Candidates are required to perform according to implicit institutional standards which they are unfamiliar with or resistant to. Despite the diversity training in place in most organisations, differences in performance rapidly produce inequalities as every move in the interview or exam is socially evaluated.

This 'quiet sorting process' (Goffman 1983) masks the performativity of individuals. The wider the gap between institutional evaluative norms, and candidate style and positioning, the more performance work has to be done. Micro-analysis of video-recorded selection processes for low-paid jobs and medical settings will shed light on some of the tensions between the institutional apparatus and linguistic/cultural diversity.

Abstracts of individual presentations (in the order of presentation and venue)

11:15-11:45, 9 June; MAL B20

Identity, power, language and the configuration of the intercultural space: the case of Ecuadorian migrants in Spain

Théophile Ambadiang & Isabel García Parejo

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid & Universidad Complutense de Madrid

Intercultural communication is generally studied among speakers of different languages, i.e. with the idea that intercultural divergences are intimately linked to communicative and linguistic differences, the underlying hypothesis being that commonalities relative to language and communication may reduce such divergences. In the light of the interaction between Ecuadorian migrants living in Madrid (Spain) and the majority group of Spaniards, this paper argues that although the use of a common language favours intercultural communication, the way interaction evolves may have positive or negative effects on it and thus determine the dynamics internal to the intercultural space. In our case, part of Spaniards' discourse on and attitudes towards Ecuadorian migrants have othering effects, at least in the opinion of the latter. In reaction to this negative categorization and the differences relative to power associated with it, Ecuadorians tend to categorize themselves as culturally more different from Spaniards than is actually the case, given that both groups belong to so-called Hispanosphere.

Some interesting consequences follow from our discussion. On the one hand, sharing a common language is not sufficient for intercultural communication to occur, in so far as it is heavily influenced by the intersubjectivity and agency of the speakers involved in it. Moreover, sharing a common language may induce an illusion of unproblematic cultural interactions based on whichever commonalities are subsumed under or linked to that language. On the other hand, the fact that the strategies adopted by Ecuadorians in the construction of their identity are not always in alignment with their language practices suggests that the intercultural space is not devoid of inconsistencies. In this sense, interactions involving dialectal differences show even more clearly the complexity of the linguistic dimension, intended as the locus of the tensions that occur between requisites relative to social categorization and the necessity to intercommunicate.

11:45-12:15, 9 June; MAL B20

The Cultural Memory of Language: an analysis of absence

Susan Samata
Birkbeck College

Among the ‘concatenation of ruptures’ that, according to Connerton, characterize our ‘globalized’ society, that of inter-generational change of language produces subtle but profound effects. Replacement of one language by another, usually in the context of migration or colonisation, evokes strong emotion in the ongoing debates among sociologists, politicians, educators, linguists and others, surrounding migration and multiculturalism.

This paper describes my current study of second generation immigrants who, although often officially presumed bilingual, cannot, in fact, use the first language of their parents or grandparents, either in daily communication or to read. I approach this project in Applied Linguistics, from a Cultural Memory Studies perspective, using techniques, developed in Psychology, of interpretive phenomenological analysis.

Linguistics studies language attrition, acquisition and bilingualism, but lacks conceptual tools to address the situation of a language no longer accessible to people whose cultural identity, both private and public, may otherwise be bound up with its speakers: there exists no language to analyse. Cultural Memory Studies, however, has developed perspectives from which to view the effects of a vanished past on the present. Moreover, Cultural Memory Studies encompasses both the collective and the individual, through what Erll has called ‘an operative metaphor’ and ‘the fact that no memory is ever purely individual’. Similarly, language operates within the individual brain, but cannot develop outside of the context of a community. Communities shift, languages shift; how do individuals cope?

12:15-12:45, 9 June; MAL B20

Linguistic Identity-Play Amongst Sephardic Jews in Bulgaria: A Narrative Study

Leah Davcheva & Richard Fay

Intercultural Learning, Education & Research

The community of Sephardic Jews in Bulgaria who, to some extent, know the language commonly termed Ladino (but often called Judesmo by the community itself) is dwindling. We are interested in how the members of this diaspora community draw upon their Bulgarian and Ladino resources to define themselves, to articulate their various identities, and to communicate within and beyond Bulgarian society. We are exploring such intercultural area of communication and linguistic identity-play through a narrative study of the lived language experiences of the (often elderly) members of this Sephardic community in Bulgaria. The project involves several languages (and therefore issues of translation and representation) as well as the use of researcher narratives to develop reciprocal reflexivity between ourselves (necessary, given our differing identities and linguistic resources). We are discovering that our storytellers work creatively with what is available to them in Ladino (Judesmo) - the traditional but endangered language of cultural affiliation for them - and, at the same time, also perform their identities in Bulgarian - which, for their ancestors, was more a language for communication and transaction and less a language of affiliation. Our study involves an exploration of their linguistic identities in three zones of expression: (1) within the Sephardic community in Bulgaria (an intra-community zone); (2) within the overall Bulgarian society (an intranational but also intercultural zone); and (3) within the international Ladino/Spanish-oriented world of Sephardic Jews. We begin our discussion by setting the research context, and then highlight the innovative methodological features (namely reciprocal reflexivity through researcher narratives and multilingual research processes). We then present some of the narrative data and our analysis of it with view to establishing how some members of the Sephardic Jewish community in Bulgaria use the language resources they have to perform their complex national and diasporic identities.

1:30-2:00, 9 June; MAL B20

Language & identity: the impact of Nigerian video-films on diasporic communities

Francoise Ugochukwu

Department of Languages, Open University

Today, while 54% of Nigerian migrants live in the United States, a significant 10% are found in the United Kingdom, and the Nigerian Diaspora in Britain is probably the largest in Europe. Research carried out between January and March this year shows that meeting others either face-to-face or online through social networks, helps Nigerians keep in touch; this occupies 72.7% of the 2011 respondents for a significant portion of their free time. Part of this recreational time is equally spent together with other Nigerians or Africans viewing video films in Nigerian languages, massively preferred to foreign films. 87.2% of respondents clearly perceive language as part of their cultural heritage and identity, a legacy to be cherished and protected especially in diasporic situations, a vital tool to communicate with older relatives in Nigeria and keep in touch with one's roots; this marked interest for language also reveals the premium placed on communication among long-term migrants. Those films might be accused of keeping Nigerians abroad in limbo, resisting acculturation and rooted in a 'neither here nor there' space, yet they have empowered them to reclaim their culture and history and present it to others. This paper, based on two sets of questionnaires and interviews dated 2009 and 2011, seeks to evaluate the impact of Nigerian video-films among diasporic communities in the UK and reasons behind the success of these films among resettled Nigerians, focusing on Igbo and Yoruba speakers. It investigates the potential importance of language in viewers' motivations and practices, the role played by the cultural message of the language in identity-reinforcement within the Nigerian community, and the impact of these video-films on the revival of language and cultural practices among diasporic communities.

2:00-2:30 9 June; MALB20

You lot will never learn: How British migrants in south-west France construct identity online

Michelle Lawson

Dept of Linguistics and English Language, Lancaster University

The phenomenon of lifestyle migration, a deliberate and often escapist route towards a “better life”, (O’Reilly and Benson 2009) is attracting current research interest. One interesting theme seen in recent studies of British migrants in France is the claim that many settlers appear more driven by the search to be distinct from other ‘less integrated’ compatriots than by a desire to identify with the French community (Benson 2009). To date there has been no linguistic analysis of how such migrants actually use written discourse to construct and define their social identity. Specifically, I examine postings from an online forum established for migrants and consider how members construct identities in relation to the online community. I evaluate the relevance of Communities of Practice theory (Wenger 1998) as a theoretical frame to understand the interactions of this group, applying the concepts of participation and reification to the shared practices and collective learning of the forum users. I extend this with a model of language use, and for this initial study a Critical Discourse Analysis is used to investigate whether examples of online conflict show attempts to construct identity or to create power relations by using generalised perspectives and stereotyping to represent social groups (van Dijk 1997). Linguistic analysis includes how social actors and groups are represented, and how social events are represented at levels of abstraction and generalisation (van Leeuwen 2009).

Results suggest that while some members align themselves with a supportive role, others use discursive strategies to construct identity that is distinct from the stereotypical out-group, and to maintain ideological boundaries between the more established settlers and those who have recently arrived. These results give some linguistic support to previous studies by giving evidence of how language is used to construct negative representations of the newcomers based on stereotypical group membership.

References

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2:30-3:00, 9 June; MALB20

Self-expression, solidarity, and accommodation: A-B-A codeswitching pattern in complementary school classroom interaction

Rika Yamshita

University of Tokyo

Codeswitching in intergenerational interaction in a migrant community involves not only the speaker's preference of language or the sociocultural identity, but also accommodating to, and dissociating and associating with another. When an interaction involves more than two participants, issues on solidarity with one group and self expression in seeking others' attention emerge.

In this paper, I discuss this issue through detailed analysis of examples of a particular sequential pattern (A- B- A) of codeswitching by Japanese-Urdu bilingual pupils with the teacher in a complementary school context. In the sequence, pupils seek the teacher's or the other pupils' attention, accommodate to and dissociate with the teacher, and show and maintain the pupils' solidarity by codeswitching. The pupils successfully organise and manage the teacher-pupil conversation, maintaining solidarity with the peers and expressing their positions at the same time.

The sequential pattern:

A Pupil: PRE-QUESTION COMMENT (pre-pre) or (pre)

B Pupil: QUESTION/REQUEST (pre) or (question)

C Teacher: QUESTION/REQUEST RESPONSE (ans)

D Pupil: POST-QUESTION COMMENT

A Pupil: Japanese

B Pupil: Japanese/Urdu/English

C Teacher: English/Urdu/Japanese/non-verbal cues

D Pupil: Japanese

Another point which should not be overlooked is how self-expression can take different forms in different language/cultures and social identity the speakers try to bring about. The first and the last part of this sequence shows how pupils express themselves and align themselves in the classroom activities through their speech as learning pupils, which may be more language/culture specific.

In sum, this study is in line with previous views of codeswitching as one of the multilingual practices which index identity in the discourse. Here, the solidarity among the bilingual pupils and accommodation/dissociation with the teacher, and expressing their child learner identity in the classroom are manifested through the codeswitching sequence.

3:00-3:30, 9 June; MALB20

Social identity, language attitudes and public communication in Montreal

Ruth Kircher

Queen Mary, University of London

As the urban centre of Quebec, Montreal is home not only to many francophones but also to comparatively large communities of anglophones and allophones (that is, those who have a mother tongue other than French or English). It is generally assumed that it is in this city that the future of French in Quebec will be determined, and in order to ensure the survival of French, the provincial government strives to make it the language of public communication amongst all Montrealers – regardless of their linguistic and cultural background. However, language planning of this kind must take account of the attitudes of those who will be affected by it, for it is unlikely to be effective if it does not have support at the grassroots level.

This talk thus presents the findings of a recent study of francophone, anglophone and allophone Montrealers' attitudes towards French and English in terms of the two main dimensions of language attitudes, status and solidarity. The study was conducted amongst 147 college students and it made use of one direct and one indirect method of attitude elicitation, namely a questionnaire and a matched-guise experiment. The findings indicate that language attitudes in Montreal are determined by different forms of social identity, some of which are unique to this particular context (such as self-identifications as Canadians versus Quebecers, or as Montrealers versus Quebecers) and others that are more global (such as an international youth identity expressed with the help of English). The talk discusses the implications of these findings for the potential success of planning measures that seek to make French the language of public communication amongst Montrealers of all linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

3:45-4:15, 9 June; MALB20

Doing 'being a Cambodian radio DJ in English'

Stephen H Moore

Department of Linguistics, Faculty of Human Sciences, Macquarie University

This presentation will report on research that explores what it means to be a radio disc jockey (DJ) working in a foreign language in one's own country. More specifically, it seeks to shed light on how a DJ's persona (i.e., her professional identity) is created and maintained in monologic institutional discourse in a foreign language with an unseen audience. The vast majority of radio discourse analysis deals with dialogic talk, and much of it has been undertaken by conversation analysts (see, for example, Hutchby 1991; 2005). Indeed, almost by definition, CA analyses of radio discourse are centred on 'talk in interaction' and how each successive turn attends to what was said in the previous turn(s). What has not yet been reported in the literature are any accounts of radio 'talk in interaction' in the absence of interlocutors, a not uncommon phenomenon in radio broadcasts. This paper seeks to address this gap through investigating the radio talk of a DJ working in Cambodia. DJ Shakira is a popular Cambodian DJ with a regular weekend program at a Phnom Penh radio station. Three hours of her programs broadcast in 2008 are investigated using Goffman's (1981) framework for conceptualizing 'radio talk' in terms of speech production bases (i.e., scriptedness), and production formats (i.e., voice), complemented by conversation analytical (CA) methods which provide a fine-grained analysis of her 'talk in interaction'. The data show how DJ Shakira's persona is discursively constructed through her talk.

4:15-4:45, 9 June; MALB20

Co-constructing, Co-expressing and Co-enacting Identification: the Case of an Intercultural Couple on Chinese Television

Fred Dervin¹ & Minghui Gao²

¹ Universities of Turku/Eastern Finland/Helsinki, Finland & ² University of Turku, Finland

Intercultural couplehood is often viewed and represented as two different cultures “interacting”, “clashing”, “mixing”... This differentialist-essentialist understanding seems to be shared by “global common sense” as well as many researchers (Piller, 2007; Dervin, 2011). Contrary to the current flow of anti-essentialism, research on intercultural couplehood often ignores the fact that identities are co-constructed by people – instead of cultures – (Piller, 2002, 183; Dryden, 1999, 16). Of course we need to bear in mind that this does not occur in a “free-floating” manner where “anything goes” (Bauman, 2004) but in a sort of “pull-push” approach. This is why the concept of identification, reflecting co-construction, has been suggested to go “beyond identity” (Cooper & Brubaker, 2000), especially when the latter is related to static forms of culturalism and essentialism.

Studies on intercultural couples have often relied on interviews and/or questionnaires. Our study looks at a special way of dealing with intercultural couplehood: media construction of an intercultural couple on Chinese television. As one of the thousands of intercultural couples in China, Mr. and Mrs. Deng’s story has been widely reported by Chinese media. Based on a transcription of the analyzed show, during which the couple was interviewed, we are interested in how the Dengs are presented and co-constructed through different perspectives (themselves, the host, the audience and in terms of language use). We are especially interested in if and how differences – cultural, ethnic, linguistics, individual... – are used by the participants to enact the couple’s identification. In order to do so, a dynamic ‘liquid’ approach to linguistic discourse analysis (Dervin, 2011), through dialogism and utterance theory, will serve the purpose of examining this phenomenon by identifying the voices and the related discursive strategies that contribute to create and ‘imagine’ the couple. A discussion on what can be achieved and the shortcomings of working on identification concludes the paper.

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4:45-5:15, 9 June, MALB20

How Do Bilingual Couples Negotiate

Yvonne Chi

Birkbeck College

The research focuses on a detailed analysis of the language negotiation between bi/multilingual couples by investigating how people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds interact during conversations. Specifically, the usage of discourse markers in disagreements will be discussed. All language use is potentially indirect depending on the addressee and cultural rules for interpretation (Kiesling & Johnson, 2010). In real life, shared understandings occur only occasionally while communication breakdowns are more likely to be noticed (Eelen, 1999). Thomas (1983) divided cross-cultural pragmatic failure into Pragmalinguistic and Sociopragmatic failure. The latter refers to the mismatch of various cultural values, such as in/directness. However, it is ethnocentric to claim that one language is more in/direct than another simply because the rules of courtesy are different in each language (Wierzbicka, 1991). In the case of bi/multilingual couples, the speakers employ the strategy of language switching when using certain discourse markers.

Data collected from 20 Taiwanese-foreign couples living in UK and Taiwan with 14 nationalities involve over 21 hours of audio recordings. Conversational analysis of the participants' talk demonstrates their different attitude, preference, and cultural values during the interaction. Half of the couples tend to choose the same language as the dominant one in the country while code-switching also occurs frequently in their conversations. The findings of the study demonstrate how negotiation markers, pause, reiteration, humor and code-switching play a significant role in conflict.

References

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11:15-11:45, 9 June; MALB34

Listener Identity and Perceptions of Foreign Accent: the Effect of Ambiguity Tolerance

Valentina Seravalle

Royal Holloway, University of London

This paper draws on the results of recent research undertaken to explore the concept of identity interpreted as an individual's tolerance of ambiguity (Budner 1962), and its role in intercultural communication where foreign accent is involved. In particular, the hypothesis was explored that, as a sort of counterpart to its impacts on sound learning (Guiora 1984; Kramsch 2002), tolerance of ambiguity plays a role in the degree of flexibility each listener applies to their perceptions and evaluations of foreign accented speech and foreign accented speakers.

The hypothesis was addressed by means of an empirical investigation where 150 listener-judges were presented with a set of speech excerpts produced by speakers from different L1 backgrounds and asked to evaluate them for global foreign accent (intelligibility, comprehensibility and accentedness) and speakers' characteristics (pleasantness, status and competence). The listener-judges were also asked to complete a language identification task. Results showed a statistically significant trend for the listeners' perceptions and evaluations to deteriorate as a function of increases in ambiguity intolerance. The effect of ambiguity intolerance was confirmed as statistically significant across all outcomes. On average, ambiguity intolerance accounted for 20% of the variation in the listeners' responses. Its contribution to explaining the response variation in the L1 identification task was also statistically significant.

However, a study of the interplay of ambiguity intolerance effects with the effects of other covariates, such as the listeners' familiarity and experience with the sample languages, suggested that, when ambiguity intolerance is not low, mere exposure to different languages and cultures would not be sufficient to reduce manifestations associated with ambiguity intolerance, such as stereotyping. The paper presents the implications of the above findings on intercultural communication, and discusses strategies designed and implemented by L2 researchers and practitioners "to facilitate learners to [...] think critically with respect to cultural norms, and learn to live with the ambiguity inherent in cross-cultural encounters." (Ilieva 2001: 2).

11:45-12:15, 9 June; MALB34

Identification as native or intercultural speaker: searching for evidence in language learners' conversations

Jane Woodin

Sheffield University

This paper explores the implications of moving from a native speaker to an intercultural speaker paradigm. It proposes that even within a NS-NNS context (as defined by tandem learning - an educational language exchange between native speakers and learners of each others' language) there is evidence of interlocutors a) not 'behaving' along the (perhaps expected) lines of their linguistic speech community, and b) blurred roles with regard to who is the native speaker. Thus NS-NNS conversations are useful ground for uncovering actions which can be evidenced as intercultural as opposed to native speaker-like.

The evidence is drawn from conversations where interlocutors are focusing on the task of discussing word meaning. Consideration is given to self-and other positioning in relation to the word meaning under discussion. Particular emphasis is given here to interlocutors' 'decentring' from their perspectives and adopting that of their partner (see Byram, 1997). It is proposed that interculturally constructed competencies are enacted through the activities of the interlocutors as they struggle to develop shared understandings with their partners. These shared understandings are not always reliant on the traditional national/language divide, but involve competencies which require in-interaction movements such as 'holding on', 'letting go', perspective-taking and leaving; thus providing opportunities for the development of intercultural competence which goes far beyond knowledge acquisition of syntax and lexis. Implications for native vs. intercultural speaker assessment are considered.

References

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12:15-12:45 9 June; MALB34

Intercultural encounters in the wings of academia:

Participation, identity and language in the early stages of two L2 students' master's dissertations

Hania Salter- Dvorak

Northumbria University

This paper presents the 'lived experiences of multiple language users' (Kramsch, 2009) by examining tertiary socialisation of two L2 masters students in Anglophone Academia. I argue that capturing such experiences is complex both ethically and practically, and present a methodological innovation for doing so. Following the 'academic literacies' approach (Street and Lea, 2000), I take an ecological view of academic literacy as being 'not just about texts, but about actions around texts' (Ivanic, 1998:62). In order to make visible the practices which contribute to the development of academic literacy, I extend Goffman's (1959) 'frontstage backstage' metaphor for investigating interaction in institutional life by adding a new dimension: the wings. I argue that it is in this informal social learning space that intercultural encounters (many of which are fleeting) can provide or deny affordances for learning.

Locating the study in an academic socialisation framework (Lave and Wenger, 1991), in which courses are seen as 'communities of practice', (COPs), with their particular discourses and practices, I examine how these shape the intercultural encounters between students and faculty during the early stages of the masters dissertation (choice of topic and writing the proposal). Drawing on data from a situated ethnographic longitudinal study, I present a contrastive analysis of two cases. The findings show that tertiary socialisation, rather than being a smooth one way process, is a dynamic dialectic involving factors such as learner identities, language, power relations, agency and affordances offered by the learning context, all of which contribute to negotiating membership of the COP. I argue that, while studying in an L2 presented considerable challenges for both students, the discourses espoused by their course COPs led to the formation of different learning identities, positioning one as a 'competent apprentice' and the other as an 'uneasy apprentice'. Academic literacy thus emerges as fluid, contingent and dependent on context rather than as a static phenomenon.

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1:30-2:00, 9 June; MALB34

Multiple Identities in Intercultural Communication in a Thai EFL Context

Noparat Tananuraksakul

South-East Asia University, Bangkok, Thailand

Globalisation is widely seen to drive intercultural contact in many contexts. In an EFL context, international businesses may abound, yet interactions with culturally different others for the locals may be less. Thailand is included because locals generally need to use Thai for daily life only. The context in turn gives them a particular disadvantage in acquiring English, the most common studied foreign language. This paper discusses a research into promoting intercultural contact among EFL undergraduate students and qualitatively exploring their intercultural experiences with a focus on feelings of security (confidence) and dignity (self-worth) in a Thai context. In promoting intercultural contact, I assigned 38 students enrolled in my Cultures of English-Speaking Peoples class to conduct interviews with culturally different others outside the classroom during leisure time and submit me their reports. Then I interviewed them. The overall outcomes showed that they all encountered a process of constructing and negotiating multiple identities. Before their intercultural interactions, they individually constructed similar identities (excitement, worry, shyness and fear) because of their perceptions that their English was inadequately competent and that their interactants would not understand their English. During the interactions, they had to negotiate similar identities (confidence, courage and self-worth) because they commonly felt discouraged, afraid, upset, and lost face when being asked to repeat what they said and did not understand unfamiliar words and accents. They also had to culturally negotiate their identity consideration (Kreng-jai in Thai) when approaching foreign target groups for the assignment. After the interactions, to an extent they commonly managed to negotiate these identities: confidence, courage, pride and self-worth because they perceived that some interactants linguistically accommodated them and made them feel at ease, showing their friendliness and willingness to interact. Such intercultural interactions they experienced reflect Thais' typical characteristics, positively and negatively affecting English acquisition in this context.

2:00-2:30, 9 June; MALB34

Perceptions of identity in multilingual language students

Clara Molina

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain

Student papers produced as an assessment task for the module “European cultural identities” provides the raw data for inspecting beliefs about identity in first-year university students from diverse countries. The module, ingrained within a multilingual bachelor degree in language, culture and communication, presents a transdisciplinary introduction to the construction and representation of identities against the setting of cultural studies, exploring the relationship between language, culture and identity from a range of viewpoints. Philosophical, psychological, sociological and anthropological insights into the notion of identity are complemented with geographical and historical insights into Europe as a cultural construct, and with sociolinguistic and political enquiries into the cultural and linguistic diversity of the European context. With a focus on multiculturalism, multilingualism and globalization, the notion of diversity is explored so as to enhance student awareness, departing from a thorough reflection on the self. In the first contact session, students are requested to write who they are, and after a number of lectures and discussion seminars, they go on to rewrite their self-description upon the basis of reflecting about the items mentioned (or not) by classmates in the first description. An insight into the tabulated results of the student intuitive descriptions of their personal identity reveals significant facts about the way in which younger generations construct their identity, and how an overt focus on the construction of identity provides students with further tools of analysis. This paper presents the items mentioned by students in their intuitive approaches to themselves, the questions suggested by the lecturer for reformulating the description, and the items discussed in the revised self-description, to conclude with a discussion of the findings in relation to language and identity in educational settings.

2:30-3:00 9 June; MALB34

The Mediation of Cultural Identity in Student WebChat

Helen O'Sullivan, Gillian Martin, & Breffni O'Rourke

Trinity College Dublin

Intercultural communication frequently does not take place in face-to-face settings, but is mediated by technologies. This paper analyses Irish and German students' explicit and implicit representation of their cultural identities in WebChat discourse from an ongoing blended learning project in intercultural communication, SpEakWise (2007 to date). Even in a native language WebChat poses various challenges to smooth communication compared with other media, such as necessary recourse to symbolic substitutes for nonverbal and paralinguistic behaviour and interwoven turn-taking structures. In SpEakWise, these challenges are exacerbated by interlocutors writing in a non-native language and analysing their own cultural representations and positions even as they perform or enact them within their discourse. Additionally, there is the issue of online identities being performed differently from offline identities (cf. Kramsch, 2009: 179). The end result is a very complex kind of intercultural communication.

The proposed presentation builds on a pilot analysis of stereotype dynamics (Kashima et al., 2008) in one WebChat in which even as students considered and contested notions of cultural identity, they were apparently debating these in ways which conformed to communicative norms and cultural categories previously identified in the literature as relevant to Ireland and Germany. Working with Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) sociocultural linguistic approach and adapting conversation analysis to WebChat for the qualitative microanalytic methodology (cf. Negretti, 1999), this paper reviews data in the last two years in light of the key question: To what extent might students' cultural identities as Irish/German speakers be ontologically prior to their WebChat discussions with each other, appearing in relatively stable ways across the set of data, and to what extent is there a reconstruction and renegotiation in situ? The analysis will shed light on the dynamics of intercultural communication and cultural representation as mediated through WebChat.

3:00-3:30, 9 June; MALB34

Multilingualism among Brussels based civil servants and lobbyists: perceptions, practices and power positions

Attila Krizsán and Tero Erkkilä

University of Helsinki

This presentation explores the multilingual and multicultural aspects of community-building, networking and communication in the EU's political and administrative system. Our focus is on the role of language use both as an instrument for community-building and as means of pursuing interests. In order to track these aspects we investigated the networking and communicative preferences of EU civil servants and lobbyists based on broad-scale survey data (277 surveys completed) and thematic interviews (17 hours of recorded materials). The topics cover our respondents' working experiences in Brussels, their national versus European identities, and their communication and networking in a multicultural and multilingual environment.

The questions we seek to answer are: In what ways do people living in Brussels and working for EU institutions and interest groups perceive this location as a multilingual and multicultural environment? How decisive is the role language(s) play(s) when small groups and coalitions or more permanent networks are built in the EU's multilingual administration system? Are power relations influenced by the use of different languages in this setting?

Our findings indicate that multilingualism appears on various levels in different social contexts. However, all of these contexts are heavily dominated by (Euro-) English even if the majority of the respondents are bilinguals at their work, bi/trilinguals in their free-time, and monolinguals at home. It also seems that in their professional routines our respondents are highly aware of the relationship of language(s) to power and they prefer the usage of more power-neutral language policies even if this comes with the cost of mutual intelligibility. This implies that multilingualism plays a less significant role in the social and working lives of our respondents and the construction of their cosmopolitan identities than previously assumed.

3:45-4:15 9 June; MALB34

Language at work: native and non-native speech acts in Business English

Rachele De Felice

University of Nottingham

This paper presents some of the findings of a corpus-based analysis of speech acts used in a workplace or business context by both native and non-native speakers of English. In particular, we focus on how speakers express requests, opinions, and give advice to others.

Data-driven analysis allows us to outline a model of these speech acts in native English, drawn from both spoken language (from the Cambridge and Nottingham Business English Corpus, CANBEC) and email data (from the Enron email corpus). The lexical and structural characteristics identified are then compared to those of the same speech acts in non-native English, as found in email data produced by students of Business English.

The combination of corpus analysis and natural language processing tools allows us to obtain a detailed description of the data, highlighting features ranging from the most common words and phrases to the verb tenses and syntactic structures typical of each speech act.

Where differences between native and non-natives speakers are identified, we consider whether these negatively affect comprehension and/or perceived politeness of the message. These insights can then be used to assist those having to use English in intercultural workplace contexts.

4:15-4:45, 9 June; MALB34

Culture and identity in intercultural communication through English as a lingua franca: empowerment or irrelevance?

Will Baker

Modern Languages, University of Southampton

This presentation aims to explore the relevance of culture and identity to understanding intercultural communication through English as a lingua franca (ELF). It has been suggested that ELF may be a 'simplified' language that is culturally neutral and that discussions of identity and ELF are therefore misplaced. However, it is mistaken to assume that any communication, including intercultural and lingua franca, is neutral. All communication involves participants, settings and purposes, none of which are neutral. Nevertheless, it would be equally mistaken to view English, or rather Englishes, from a simplistic language-culture-nation association in which the language somehow carries with it the Anglo-American cultures of the 'inner circle'.

What then would cultural and identity expressed through EFL look like? Might it be best to avoid any reference to 'cultural identity' as too broad a concept to be of any use? In this presentation it will be argued that culture and identity are relevant categories for understanding intercultural communication through ELF. By examining data taken from a number of studies of intercultural communication in a tertiary institution in Thailand, a setting where English predominantly functions as a lingua franca, the relevance of these concepts to both the participants in ELF interactions and as a productive research approach will be demonstrated. The complexity of the relationships will be drawn out, illustrating the tensions between powerful national cultures and identifications, including those of the native English speaker, and the freer liminal cultures and identifications that emerge through ELF communication. It will be suggested that ELF approaches present an alternative to the dominance of native speaker ideology, cultures and identities and offer an empowering model of language use that better reflects the current status of Englishes in intercultural communication.

4:45-5:15, 9 June; MALB34

Using English to Assert Chinese Identity and Spread Chinese Language and Culture

Gulbahar Beckett & Tammy Slater

University of Cincinnati & Iowa State University, U.S.A

Numerous changes have occurred in the P.R.C during the last two decades. Arguably, the most notable change is that of English language education which now starts from kindergarten—if not earlier—in most places in the country, all in the name of progress, opportunity, and globalization. English is implemented in various forms including English-as-a-medium of instruction in universities and English immersion in K-12 system (Feng, 2009; Knell, et al, 2007; Kong, 2009) with mandates by the country's Ministry of Education.

Some have applauded this unprecedented push for and speedy spread of English while others have generated concerns (e.g., Beckett & MacPherson, 2005; Hu, 2008). Critics argue that such a spread of English could have a negative impact on the Chinese language and culture because the global spread of English is seen as a product of colonialism as well as a potent instrument of cultural control (e.g., Pennycook, 1998). These critics also argue that the push for English in the P.R.C. privileges already powerful and leaves the underprivileged further behind.

Despite the critical pros and cons in the literature, there has been little empirical research exploring the learners' views on this change. This paper discusses findings of a study that explored 34 junior students who were taking some of their Finance courses in English at a northwestern Chinese university. Findings indicate support for the spread of English with few of the participants raising criticism about the speedy promotion of English in the P.R.C. Instead, the majority believed that English can benefit the country and its people by offering a useful tool for global competition. They also saw English as a useful resource for asserting Chinese identity and spreading Chinese language and culture globally. These and other findings of the study as well as suggestions for further research will be discussed.

10:00-10:30 10 June; MAL B20

Cultivating intercultural dialogue through English language education in a UNESCO-associated program

Jan Van Maele, Katrien Mertens & Sergio A. Scatolini

GROUP T – International University College Leuven

International English-language programs commonly approach their language courses for students whose mother tongue is not English from a remedial perspective, ignoring native and advanced speakers. When it comes to effective and appropriate communication across cultures, though, every speaker has a vital role to play regardless of their language proficiency. If ‘supporting multilingual students is not a matter of remediation but of mediation’ (Shapiro, 2009), what English language support is needed for enhancing the quality of intercultural dialogue?

The authors address this question within the framework of a program in Development Studies at Group T, Belgium. The program, which is structured around UNESCO’s Four Pillars of Education, fosters intercultural dialogue among its mixed student body of home and foreign students. In accordance with Byram’s (2008) axiom of being intercultural, student experiences of dialogue (Isaacs, 1999) are made the focus of attention, analysis and reflection.

As to better understand student experience of intercultural dialogue, an exploratory study was conducted in the spring of 2011 with a view to developing a course module that takes a cultural approach to English communication skills. The study builds on a socio-psychological framework, giving special attention to strategies for establishing and maintaining intercultural relationships (Landis, Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Hoffman, 2009). Participatory class observations and a dual moderator focus group led to formulating an initial understanding of these themes. Students then participated in a half-day training session, covering skills from Ting-Toomey’s (1999) intercultural communication model: listening, verbal empathy, identity support, reframing, and collaborative dialogue skills. Afterwards, the focus group convened to revisit the discussed themes.

In the presentation the authors report on the findings of the study and offer recommendations for developers and teachers of English language support programs in view of an enhanced intercultural dialogue.

10:30-11:00 10 June; MAL B20

Intercultural communicative competence among adult distance language learners – two case studies

Dr. Uwe Baumann

Department of Languages, The Open University

This paper will discuss the intercultural communicative competence of adult learners of a modern foreign language at a distance. It will draw on the framework of intercultural communicative competence developed by Byram (1994, 1997) with the so-called five *savoirs* forming the centre of this framework and present two case studies of learners of German who study this language at the Open University UK in distance mode – one following a beginners' course, one studying an advanced course. The presentation will apply the conceptual framework to these two case studies and investigate the level of intercultural communicative competence that these mature students brought to their study. It will also analyse the intercultural communicative competence gain that may have occurred through their study. These two case studies are based on semi-structured interviews conducted by telephone. The presentation will also reflect on the particular methodology used for this investigation and the issues arising from conducting such research in a distance learning environment.

11:00-11:30, 10 June; MAL B20

Intercultural dialogue: A new domain for intercultural competence

Prue Holmes

Durham University

Current approaches to language teaching emphasise the importance of intercultural competence. But more recently, the concept of intercultural dialogue has gained interest and currency in intercultural communication, and more generally, as a concept that embodies collaboration and engagement among transcultural communities and in intercultural encounters. Yet, there has been little theoretical exploration of its complexity or application, for example, where intercultural communication or intercultural conflict is concerned. In this paper I offer a theoretical investigation of this concept, linking it to conceptualisations of dialogue, ethics, interfaith dialogue and intercultural competence. I also explore a new and related concept “intercultural responsibility,” informed by concepts of faith, ethics, and citizenship. Specifically, by drawing on complex intercultural problems in our daily work and social encounters across religious, cultural, ethnic, and national boundaries, I investigate how these concepts impact intercultural communication and competence, in particular, in a world increasingly polarised by religious fundamentalisms and inter/intra-national conflict. In doing so, I offer a more complex understanding of intercultural dialogue and its possibilities.

11:30-12:00 10 June; MAL B20

Language materials for the development of intercultural communicative competence

Carlos Rico Troncoso

Leeds Metropolitan University

Language materials, in particular coursebooks, are a source of exposure for learners to language and culture. In multicultural contexts, they become helpful tools that promote encounters between people of different cultural backgrounds. However, the reality shows that most language coursebooks are still designed from traditional perspectives that do not allow learners to develop their abilities to deal with intercultural encounters. On the contrary, they reinforce stereotypes and strengthen the belief that one nationality is superior to the others.

This talk presents the results of a descriptive case study that sought to determine how a set of principled language materials could develop the students' Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC). This study entailed three stages. The first identified some principles and a methodology for materials development. The Text Driven Approach (Tomlinson 2003) illuminated this stage. The second was related to the development of the materials. In this stage the dimensions of ICC were defined: the saviors (Byram, 2001, Corbett, 2003, Sercu et al., 2005 & Lazar I, 2007). The third stage referred to the evaluation of the materials being used. In this process the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity - DMIS (Bennett, 1998, 2001) supported the analysis. This model represents, in some stages, the way that individuals become adapted to a new culture (denial, defence, minimization, acceptance, adaptation and integration)

The main outcome of this research showed that the DMIS is not a continuum where students go progressively from one stage to another. On the contrary, it is cyclical. Students went back and forth throughout the development of the activities. Additionally, some students remained at the same stage, either ethnocentric or ethnorelative. It is possible that this behaviour is associated with a personal factor -their personality-. This suggests the idea that ICC is a psycho-socio-cultural competence that is acquired socially within groups.

12:15-12:45 10 June; MALB20

The potential of travel writing for enhancing processes of self-reflexivity and intercultural communication in the EFL classroom.

Simona Agata Giuffrida

University of Catania, Italy

Foreign language education has been recognised as a major factor in identity formation, encouraging learners to undermine and re-assess their taken-for-granted assumptions through a process known as “tertiary socialisation” (Doyé 1992, 2008; Byram 1989, 2008). Within this framework, critical cultural awareness of students’ own national or subnational culture(s) is a much needed goal.

This paper aims to investigate the unexplored potential of target-language travel narratives in which representations of students’ home culture(s) and discourses are provided. It shows how an outsider’s view on ‘familiar’ cultural practices has a role in helping students de-centre as much as develop reflexive attitudes to their own society and cultural identities.

In accordance with a transnational paradigm and a postmodernist approach to the construction of identity (Risager 2007), this paper explores how a travelogue can be a vehicle for valuable intercultural learning experiences both within and without the classroom, inasmuch as it allows for work with semantic and pragmatic languaculture – such as text reading in a critical discourse analysis mode (Kramsch 1993) – as well as with experiential and creative tasks associated with the poetic and identity-related dimensions of languaculture (i.e. ethnographic fieldwork, travel writing).

A small-scale project of ‘home ethnography’ (Roberts et al. 2001) drawing on Byram’s concept of intercultural communicative competence (Byram 1997) will be taken as a case study. Adapted for a group of Sicilian secondary school students and renamed as ‘home travelogue’, it will show evidence of self-reflexivity and defamiliarisation processes in the students’ travel accounts of their trip to a Sicilian village, which they first read about in *A Stone Boudoir: Travels Through the Hidden Villages of Sicily* (2002), by American travel writer Theresa Maggio.

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12:45-1:15 10 June, MAL B20

Transcending the Self-Other Dichotomy: Drama Pedagogy as Transcultural Education

Susanne Even

Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, USA

There are around 6,800 official languages in the world, and world population estimates range around 6.8 billion individuals for the year 2011. Monolingualism is the aberration, not the norm, particularly outside of Europe and North America. Furthermore, each region in the world sprouts its individual cultures and subcultures, national boundaries being arbitrary at best. People do not belong to one distinct, closed culture anymore, and a multitude of factors are the constituents of individual identity.

Still, it is disconcertingly easy to reduce language, identity, and intercultural communication to a set of binary opposites. In terms of language it is either the L1 or the L2 (L2 denoting any other language beyond L1). When it comes to identity, it is either “self” or “other.” And concerning intercultural communication, one’s primary culture is invariably juxtaposed to other cultures.

This paper problematizes the concept of intercultural communication in foreign language learning. It argues that the implied self-other dichotomy of interculturality should be transcended by transcultural approaches. A transcultural education involves perception and appreciation of difference. In a transcultural discourse, self and other are not opposites anymore; instead, learners operate at the border between languages and cultures, and develop transcultural identities.

The drama pedagogy approach to learning languages can be regarded as an arbiter of transcultural education. Its holistic stance invokes not only cognitive faculties, but the learner as a whole person. Learning takes place as a social activity in which the course of action and their outcomes have to be negotiated and co-constructed. Learners “try on” new perspectives, empathically trace unfamiliar behaviors and values in the course of the dramatic process, and are, even in the context of the foreign language classroom, on their way to transcultural competence.

3:00-3:30, 10 June; MALB20

Negotiating second language identities during the Year Abroad: case studies of British ERASMUS students in Italy

Sonia Gallucci

University of Birmingham

This paper focuses on the negotiation and (re)construction of second language identities. The context is the Year Abroad, and the research was conducted by means of detailed case studies of three participants: all British students spending an academic year in Italy.

My starting point in this paper is with poststructuralist perspectives on identity and on language learning as a social practice. I see individuals' identities as changeable, dynamic, multiple, contradictory and as sites of struggles. I have paid particular attention to the notions of emotional investment, language desire and power asymmetries, and having found them useful, I have applied them to my participants' language learning and emotional experience during their Year Abroad. These notions have helped me to understand my participants' stories and to explain the circumstances in which they spoke Italian or, conversely, they remained silent. They also have helped me to explain their romantic and often idealised, but not necessarily gendered, discursive construction of new linguistic identities during their stay in Italy.

My main aim in this paper is to show how the study of the construction of language identities can shed light in second language learning processes during the experience abroad and to stimulate discussions among educational practitioners (researchers, teachers and students) on the importance of more pedagogical initiatives which include an awareness of how language learners can challenge and transform social practices of marginalization.

3:30-4:00 10 June; MALB20

The Language Café: Intercultural communication in process

Loretta Qwarnström & BethAnne Yoxsimer Paulsrud

Dalarna University, Falun, Sweden

The Language Café, originally a Lingua 1 project supported by the European Union, builds on the existing café culture in Europe, with a focus on an informal, social setting, encouraging wider participation in language learning within the community. The café offers an accessible learning situation characterised by the participants' active, voluntary engagement and is based on their own experiences and needs as language learners. The transnational environment provides the potential for border-crossings between the different nationalities, religions, and languages represented by the individuals in the groups.

The café concept itself is anchored in second and foreign language learning theories, especially those with a focus on sociocultural and intercultural communicative aspects, including Kramsch, Hyland, MacIntyre, Lantolf, Byram, and Risager. The cafés provide a place for spontaneous, informal interaction, which motivates the individual to actively participate in the process of language learning. Thus, motivation has proven to be an important aspect of communication in a multilingual environment.

In our paper, we will describe the background of The Language Café project, including information about the partners involved, the planning of the cafés, the development of material, the execution of the café concept, and the assessment of the cafés developed. Feedback from café participants illuminates the many challenges that arise due to the multilingual, multigenerational, and multicultural background of the individuals. The interaction of the participants while practicing a second language will be illustrated in the presentation through audio recordings. Moreover, we will offer analyses of communicative strategies and processes in light of relevant intercultural communication research.

4:00-4:30, 10 June; MALB20

The characteristics of language teachers likely to increase their intercultural communicative competence on immersion programmes

Debbie Corder, Sharon Harvey, Annelies Roskvist & Karen Stacey

AUT University

The potential benefits of language and culture immersion programmes for language learners are well-recognised. These benefits would seem even greater since the shift in language learning and teaching from linguistic communicative competence to intercultural communicative competence (ICC). Being 'in the field' could provide the ideal opportunity to develop an understanding of the relationship between language and culture, and to develop knowledge and skills such as critical cultural awareness and identity.

In order to make the shift to intercultural language teaching, teachers themselves need to be interculturally competent. The New Zealand Ministry of Education (MoE) introduced language immersion programmes for teachers from 2005 to increase teacher effectiveness. A research project was commissioned by the MoE 2008 - 2011 to evaluate the impact of these programmes on teachers' language learning, pedagogy, cultural knowledge and intercultural communicative competence, and the subsequent impact on student learning. The Ministry also wanted to know if it were possible to determine the characteristics of teachers who were likely to increase their ICC as a result of an immersion experience.

This paper focuses on the findings of the study relating to these characteristics. Data is drawn from responses to a written questionnaire, observations and interviews, and analysed using Byram's model of ICC. Two brief case studies will also be presented in order to consider what would be necessary for an individual to be able to maximize the immersion experience for classroom practice.

4:30-5:00, 10 June; MALB20

Using social media to research student experience of study abroad

Ana Beaven
University of Warwick

Study abroad is now well embedded in the HE context. However, we live in an increasingly globalised world, and cheap air travel, social media (such as Facebook) and Computer Mediated Communication have profoundly transformed this experience, in particular in terms of the types of interactions and support networks that are made possible in this new environment.

In this paper I will explore both methodological issues concerning the use of social media in study-abroad research, and findings regarding the effects that these new technologies have on student experiences. The majority of those taking part in study abroad are no longer language majors: this means that what was once an opportunity to spend time fully immersed in the target culture and language has now been replaced by immersion in plurilingual, multicultural communities in which the “local culture” (and language) often fades into the background.

The pervasive use of technologies such as Skype and Facebook have reduced geographical distances and redefined the concepts of border crossing and immersion. During study abroad, students also inhabit a new, borderless virtual space, where real (and virtual) social interaction takes place.

The student’s “wall” becomes the context of a “multimodal” narrativisation of experience abroad, made up of written comments and conversations with friends, tagged photos, links, music and video files. Although a single post may mean very little in itself, with time it all contributes to the construction of a complex picture, an identity created for the benefit of “friends” – both new and old. Facebook, the ultimate “watercooler”, is often chastised for encouraging inane conversation; yet, this is one of its strengths in this context, as it becomes a useful way for students to practice authentic, plurilingual social chitchat.

The paper is based on a recent longitudinal qualitative study of the adaptation process of Erasmus students abroad.

10:00-10:30 10 June; MALB34

Negotiating identities: the South Asian students in Hong Kong

Linda Tsung
The University of Sydney

Alongside popular issues in ethnicity, identity and current equality of education, Hong Kong education in the post-colonial context serving a rapidly growing number of South Asian ethnic minorities has caught increasing attention. This paper documents and examines the educational experiences of a group of South Asian students in the contexts of home, community, and school in Hong Kong. Using ethnographic methods, data collection is based on interviews evoking their life stories. These stories recount how South Asian students attempt to negotiate with traditional customs, religion, language learning and mainstream stereotypes and to construct identities and deal with racialized schooling experiences. This study highlights the importance of mainstream engagement in regard to critical learning about cultural and linguistic diversity in Hong Kong.

10:30-11:00 10 June; MALB34

Developing transnational identity: The cultural adjustment of Israeli MBA students in an American business school

Ayelet Sasson

English Education Department, Levinsky College of Education, Tel Aviv

This study sets out to investigate the cultural adjustment of Israeli students in transnational settings. The data discussed is derived from narrative interviews with 15 Israeli graduate students enrolled in a highly competitive MBA program in the U.S. On the whole, the way the respondents experience the cultural interactions is a function of their own cultural framework, and their own assumptions and beliefs about the nature of human interaction. Mirroring previous empirical work, the discourse reflected by the subjects in this study shows that the study abroad experience raised the subjects' awareness to cultural differences between the Israeli and the American culture. Frustration due to gaps between the misconceptions the participants brought with them and what they actually faced has produced language that is rich in a "you versus them" discourse. As opposed to previous research that mostly focuses on the process through which Asian students adapt to the American culture, this study provides us with insights into the perspective of a different group of students with a distinct outlook and behavior, who tries to make the American adapt to their cultural conventions. This study reveals that the cultural negotiation of the study group is a means to self and group identification. It was clear that their cultural negotiations were tied to previous cross-cultural interactions and social identity construction processes. Throughout their migration narratives they demonstrated multiple and dynamic identities. While at times they adopted American communicational standards, in other occasions their Israeliness was more evident. A third manifestation was a combination of the first two. To conclude, because their literacy is deeply rooted in social context, the origin of the respondents' misconceptions is the Israeli communal context in which they grew surrounded by. To maximize the quality of the cultural experience, this has to be acknowledged by institutions.

11:00-11:30, 10 June; MALB34

Constructions of teaching, learning and identity across communities and schools in a multilingual British city

Jean Conteh

School of Education, University of Leeds

This paper presents findings from ongoing, longitudinal, qualitative research with primary-aged children, their families and their teachers in a post-industrial, multilingual city in the north of England. The children belong to minority ethnic groups sometimes identified in policy as 'underachieving' (DCSF, 2009: 4). They all participate in complementary Saturday classes in the city. These are run by two qualified bilingual primary teachers, who are themselves members of the same communities to which their pupils belong. Their work is strongly motivated by their own experiences as minority ethnic pupils in the schools in which they now teach. An essential element in their pedagogic approach in the Saturday classes is to support the children in making links in their learning across home, school and community through opening out community 'funds of knowledge' (Gonzalez et al. 2005).

The data presented in the paper were collected in a series of small-scale qualitative case studies of individual children, conducted by the two teachers in 2010. They collected photographs, video transcripts of classroom interaction and children's work from both their complementary and mainstream contexts and carried out interviews with parents and mainstream teachers, and observations in their classes. The findings reveal some of the tensions in the lives of the teachers and the families in relation to education and more broadly to the ways in which they construct their identities as members of second- and third-generation immigrant heritage British citizens. Data will be presented in relation to the mothers' perceptions of themselves, their roles in their families and their mediations with the different education settings their children inhabit, and from the teachers in the ways they construct their roles and identities as bilingual teachers in a 'monolingualising' system.

11:30-12:00, 10 June, MALB34

The Role of Metaphor in Shaping the Organisational Identity and Agenda of the United Nations: the Imagining of an International Community.

Lisa J. McEntee-Atalianis

Department of Applied Linguistics and Communication

Birkbeck, University of London

This paper examines the representation of an agency of the United Nations in eleven speeches delivered over a period of four years (2007-2010) by its Secretary General. It focuses on the role of metaphor in constructing a common 'imagining' and conceptualisation of international politics in one sphere of influence (maritime issues) and its role in constructing an image of a unified, homogenous collective, working towards common political goals. It will be argued that the identity and work of the organisation are legitimised, in part, through the delegitimisation of agents/actions/events which are threatening both to the ideology and values of the organisation and to the well-being of mankind. Polarisation and antithesis are achieved through the employment of metaphors designed to enhance positive or negative evaluations. The former constructing a positive organisational image by promoting a shared agenda and ethical/moral stance; whilst the latter is achieved via distancing, vilifying and 'othering' agents/actions/states threatening to the values of the organisation which are founded on universal principles of 'goodness'. It is a desire to combat the forces of menace or evil which are argued to motivate and determine the organisational agenda. The paper argues that it is through these representations that a universal 'imagining' of international threat is realised and international unification is practiced. This is predicated upon an 'international ideology' of humanity in which difference is silenced and 'working towards the common good' is emphasised. This is exploited to rouse emotions and loyalty and justify institutional power. The analysis further points to the constitutive, persuasive and edifying power of topic and situationally-motivated metaphors in the discourse of the SG and the similarity of metaphors used in his political language to those used in political speech-making in national contexts (e.g. see Wodak et al, 2009).

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12:15-12:45, 10 June; MALB34

Constructing Identities among Intercultural Project Partners: Insights from Psychology and Management

Helen Spencer-Oatey

Centre for Applied Linguistics, University of Warwick

Researchers in psychology (e.g. Brewer and Gardner 1996; Sedikides and Gaertner 2011; Sluss and Ashforth 2007) and in communication studies (Hecht 1993; Hecht et al. 2005) have recently argued that identity needs to be conceptualised from three perspectives: individual, relational and collective. Extensive research has focused on individual and collective identities, but little attention has been paid to relational identity. In this paper, I focus on relational identity and explore it in the context of intercultural project partnerships. I argue the following: a) in this context, the effective management of the relational identities of project members is of crucial importance, and (b) an emergence perspective on identity (cf. Bucholtz and Hall 2005) needs to be supplemented by a developmental/management perspective.

In the first part of the talk, I explore recent psychological insights into identity, paying particular attention to the notion of relational identity. I discuss the ways in which the latter has been defined and explained, and relate this to linguistic perspectives on identity (e.g. Bucholtz and Hall 2005) and relational work and rapport management within politeness theory (e.g. Locher 2008; Spencer-Oatey 2008). I then turn to a specific type of context: intercultural project partnerships. I explain the key features and characteristics of this type of context, and argue that members' relational identities are a crucial but overlooked element. Using data from a group of international collaborative projects, I illustrate the relational identity concerns that members experienced as they tried to make their intercultural project partnerships proceed smoothly and successfully, as well as the management steps that were taken to help achieve this. In the final part of the talk, I reflect briefly on the research methodology issues that are raised when identity is studied in the context of intercultural project partnerships, and consider the importance for coaching purposes of researching identity in this way.

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12:45-1:15, 10 June; MALB34

Chairing international business meetings: investigating humour and the construction of leadership identity in the multicultural workplace

Pamela Rogerson-Revell

School of Education, University of Leicester, UK

This paper reports on a study investigating the way meeting chairs use humour as a discursive resource to construct aspects of their leadership identity in a series of intercultural business meetings. It draws on a corpus of meeting data from two international organisations to illustrate how humour is used strategically as a leadership tool both to 'do solidarity' and to 'do power' (Holmes and Marra 2006). Despite obvious differences between the two data sets, patterns can be observed regarding the use of humour to fulfil relational and transactional goals. What does emerge is that meeting chairs have different approaches to constructing their leadership identity. They draw on a range of discursive strategies, including humour, to achieve their leadership objectives but their choice of strategies is stylistically-sensitive, in other words it is dependent on what they consider to be appropriate interactive behaviour, in a particular socio-cultural context.

This paper aims to contribute to the interaction-based research on workplace communication, in particular exploring the relationship between interactive style and professional identity in international workplace contexts.

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3:00-3:30, 10 June; MALB34

Observing Intercultural Communication in Brussels Hospitals

Nick Resmann

Erasmushogeschool Brussel / Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Efficient communication is needed everywhere but it is even more essential in the medical field. In multilingual and multicultural health care settings lack of understanding or misunderstanding may even be life-threatening (Stewart 1995). Hospitals in the Brussels region are familiar with the issues of multilingual reception of patients from all over the world. They have developed certain policies, methods and tools to facilitate the intake of foreign patients and to facilitate the interactions between foreign patients and the hospital staff.

Despite their valuable efforts, interactions between medical staff and foreign patients remain highly problematic. Very often patients do not understand frequently used medical terms (Hadlow & Pitts, 1991 ; Berry, 2007). Nierkens (2002) found that in Belgium migrants only understand one third of the information that is communicated by the medical staff.

Embedded in the larger frame of a PhD-project on intercultural communication financed by Innoviris – Prospective Research for Brussels, this paper makes a micro-analysis of the interactions between foreign patients and hospital staff at the emergency of the two biggest Brussels public hospitals (Sint-Pieters/Saint-Pierre and Brugmann). As an exploratory micro-ethnographic empirical study, the researchers spent one week at the emergency service of the hospitals to make participant observations of the intake of foreign patients. Taking the theoretical framework of Goffman (1959) as a starting point, the interactions of patients with medical staff - with or without the mediation of intercultural workers - are analysed. The research aims to contribute to the academic and field knowledge about intercultural communication in medical contexts.

3:30-4:00, 10 June MALB34

Accounting for the cultural in international professional interactions: A corpus-informed case study of Japanese engineers' Discourses

Michael Handford

University of Tokyo

When analysing professional intercultural interactions, pinpointing evidence of culture within such interactions between individuals is very difficult. Furthermore, in analyzing international professional contexts the analysis becomes more complex because culture can refer to national, professional and/or institutional levels. For instance, when a Japanese engineer, employed by company X and working in a project in Hong Kong communicates with the Hong Kong foreman in English, is he communicating primarily as a Japanese, as an engineer or as an employee of company X, or indeed as another socially recognizable identity?

This paper will outline a methodology which addresses this complex issue. Drawing on Gee's notion of Discourses ('distinctive ways of acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, dressing, feeling, thinking, believing, with other people and with various objects, tools, and technologies, so as to enact specific socially recognizable identities engaged in specifically socially recognized activities' Gee, 2006: 155), the relationship between Discourses (such as being an engineer) and the discourse recorded on an international construction project in Hong Kong will be explored. The approach, which combines techniques and insights from corpus linguistics, discourse analysis and management studies (see Handford, 2010), is primarily concerned with showing how statistically significant lexicogrammatical items constitute certain Discourses and related social, professional and discursive practices. The paper also discusses how other actions, such as dining or socializing with only fellow Japanese colleagues, can also be interpreted from a Discourses perspective.

This research is part of an ongoing project into professional international communication (Project no. 22520390, The Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science)

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4:00-4:30, 10 June MALB34

Identities and identification at multicultural workplaces

Kirsi-Marja Toivanen-Sevrjukova

North Karelia University of Applied Sciences & University of Jyväskylä

The present paper deliberates on the concepts of cultural and relational identities and their enactment and salience in workplace talk (Collier & Thomas 1988, Collier 2005, Jameson 2007). The construction and negotiation of work-related identities during employee appraisals are studied in multicultural organizations. Furthermore, the paper discusses identification and the sense of “we” and belonging that are created in interpersonal workplace communication and relationships (Imahori & Cupach 2005). In the globalised world of work, individuals are challenged to reflect upon their multiple roles and identities against the diversity of the society and of organizations. Through qualitative study three Finland-based organisations are explored to find out how individuals identify themselves as employees and members of a diverse work community. Identity work and identification are analysed on the basis of video-taped employee appraisals and stimulated recall interviews taking place after the appraisals. In the researched organisations, workplace communication, including employee appraisals, is conducted through lingua franca English (ELF). Thus, this research is also interested in the interplay of identity negotiation, identification, intercultural and interpersonal communication, and language.

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4:30-5:00 10 June; MALB34

Teamwork perspectives and self-promotion in the graduate recruitment interview

Sophie Reissner-Roubicek

The University of Warwick

Migrant and overseas students have been categorised by university careers services as high-volume, core-business clients in countries such as New Zealand and, similarly, as disproportionately regular users in the UK. Considered in other contexts to be expert users of English, they are quick to recognise that the institutional practice that is the behavioural, or competency-based, job interview demands a specific kind of “discursive skill” (Iedema 2003). Described by Campbell and Roberts (2007:244) as “the synthesizing of personal and institutional discourses to produce an acceptable identity”, this skill entails an understanding of the interview’s competency framework and the implicit requirement, in line with values underpinning “the new work order” (Gee et al. 1996), to promote oneself as an individual while simultaneously fitting into “broad, homogenising institutional categories – such as being a good team worker” (Roberts & Campbell 2006:38).

The presentation discusses linguistic features common to success or failure in intercultural and intracultural interviews used to recruit new graduates to the NZ workplace, drawing on examples from the activity-type analysis of three types of interview: practice interviews with careers consultants, mock interviews with employers, and real interviews with a national engineering company, supplemented by participants’ point-by-point judgments recorded in post-interviews. Candidates’ ability to discuss roles played in teams contributed significantly to interviewers’ main goal of establishing “person-job fit”. The analysis highlights the way questions relating to teamwork polarised candidates in a number of ways, and makes a link between perspectives taken on team-related topics and self-promotion. Notably, candidates’ success in selling themselves was associated with their indirect demonstration of key competencies, and not with extraversion or native-speaker background. The study contributes new knowledge about institutional practices in corporate recruitment with significant implications for careers advisory services in the multicultural tertiary education context.