Centre for Language and Communication Research

Research Seminar Series

Autumn 2016-17

ENCAP

Introduction

Seminars normally take place on Wednesdays from 12.10pm to 1pm in Room 3.58 in the John Percival (Humanities) Building of Cardiff University – Building no 16 on the map at: http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/locations/maps/index.html

Welcome to the CLCR Research Seminar Series – Autumn 2016-17!

This abstract booklet is intended to enable you to pre-plan your attendance at seminars. You're welcome to attend every one and we hope that you will, though each is independent.

These seminars are open to all and **everyone is welcome** – undergraduate, postgraduate students and staff from anywhere in the University, visitors, guests from other universities, people who've never been into a university before… If the talk sounds interesting, just come along!

We have a rich programme this semester covering a wide range of topics that link into a variety of research interests in the Centre for Language and Communication Research at Cardiff University.

Each session typically consists of a presentation from the speaker of around 40 minutes with 10 minutes for questions and discussion from the floor.

SUMMARY OF THE PROGRAMME

Wednesdays 12.10 – 13.00 in room 3.58

October 5th   **Svenja Adolphs** (University of Nottingham)
                     Talking with technology in everyday contexts

October 19th   **Enlli Thomas** (Bangor University)
                     Acquiring vocabulary and morphology under conditions of minority- and majority-language input sources: the case of Welsh and English

November 9th   **Sara Pons-Sanz** (Cardiff University)
                     The identification of Norse-derived terms in English: OE brēad, a case study

November 16th   **Anthony Grant** (Edge Hill University)
                     The boundaries of borrowing

November 30th   **Fiona Jordan** (University of Bristol)
                     Evolutionary approaches to cultural and linguistic diversity

October 5th   **Svenja Adolphs** (University of Nottingham)

Talking with technology in everyday contexts

During the course of a normal day, we all come into contact with technology that is not just responsive to instruction but increasingly able to engage in communication with us. This ranges from educational software used in schools to automated voice agents taking orders for fast food or triaging customers to the right person when calling customer helplines. The widespread nature of our interaction with voice agents on a day to day basis has repercussions for Applied Linguistics in a number of different ways, ranging from understanding new notions of 'rapport', 'politeness' and 'trust' in these contexts to the development of discourse frameworks that help us account for the emerging interactions. In this talk I will discuss a number of current projects within the Centre for Research in Applied Linguistics (CRAL) at the University of Nottingham that focus on how we might develop new discourse models and approaches to describe our interactions with voice agents. This will include a discussion of multi-modal corpus linguistics and emerging discourse communities that result from talking with technology in everyday contexts.

Svenja Adolphs is Professor of English Language and Linguistics at the University of Nottingham, UK. She has published widely on corpus linguistics, language and gesture, multimodality, pragmatics and discourse analysis. Key publications include 'Spoken corpus linguistics: from monomodal to multimodal' (with Ronald Carter, Routledge 2013) and 'Corpus and context: investigating pragmatic functions in spoken discourse' (John Benjamins Publishing Company 2008).

October 19th   **Enlli Thomas** (Bangor University)

Acquiring vocabulary and morphology under conditions of minority- and majority-language input sources: The case of Welsh and English

This paper presents data from two studies exploring the effects of linguistic dominance on bilingual children's acquisition of certain aspects of Welsh and English. Study 1 presented eighty-eight 7–11-year-old children, across three bilingual language groups (L1 Welsh, 2L1 Welsh-English, and L2 Welsh), with a noun plural production task. Results revealed performance approaching L1 adult norms among L1 Welsh-speaking bilinguals, but delayed progression among 2L1 and L2 Welsh bilinguals. Forms requiring the addition of a plural suffix were less difficult to acquire than those involving alterations to the root, with each type acquired with greater levels of accuracy with increasing levels of exposure to the language. Study 2 presented eighty-three 7–11-year-old and ninety-two 10-11-year-old children, across the same three bilingual language groups (L1 Welsh, 2L1, and L2 Welsh), and English monolingual controls, with receptive vocabulary and reading tasks in Welsh and in English. Performance on the Welsh measures mirrored those of previous studies, on both tasks, demonstrating higher levels of performance relative to increasing amounts of exposure to Welsh, as expected. Contrary to expectation, however, the results revealed differential performance among the bilinguals in relation to the English tasks, with the L2 Welsh bilinguals and monolinguals performing closer to age norms than L1Welsh and simultaneous bilinguals, and with L1 Welsh and 2L1 bilinguals performing below 1SD below the mean for English vocabulary. The implications of these findings for our understanding of bilingual acquisition and for effective bilingual education strategies under the proposed move towards a single Welsh Language curriculum in Wales, are discussed.

Enlli Thomas is Professor and Head of the School of Education. Her main research interests and expertise span psycholinguistic approaches to the study of bilingual language acquisition, including children's acquisition of complex structures under conditions of minimal language input, bilingual assessment, and education approaches to language transmission, acquisition and use. She has conducted research and published widely in many areas of language study, including papers on aspects of bilingual acquisition, including impact factors influencing successful L1-L2 acquisition; bilingual transfer; bilingual assessment; bilingual literacy; Executive Function and bilingualism; socio-economic status and language abilities; and factors influencing language use. She gives regular invited lectures to practitioners and child-care workers both in the education and in the mental health sector on topics relating to language development and bilingualism, and had made regular appearances on tv and radio as an expert informant. She author and co-author of a number of articles and book chapters, and co-author of a standardized tool for measuring children's receptive vocabulary in Welsh. She recently co-edited a volume entitled "Advances in the Study of Bilingualism".

November 9th   **Sara Pons-Sanz** (Cardiff University)

The identification of Norse-derived terms in English:
OE brēad, a case study

The presence and significance of Norse-derived terms in English has long been acknowledged and studied. The genetic proximity of Old English and Old Norse is likely to have facilitated mutual intelligibility between speakers of the two languages and the transfer of lexical and, to less extent, morphosyntactic material from one language to the other. However, the closeness between the two languages makes the identification of Norse loans in English rather problematic, particularly in those cases where there is no clear phonological or morphological evidence in favour of their Scandinavian past.

This paper will explore some of the challenges facing historical linguists interested in the lexical effects of the Anglo-Scandinavian linguistic contact in English. It will focus to start with on OE *brēad*, a term which is often presented as a Norse-derived semantic loan on the basis that it is said to have originally meant 'piece, morsel of bread' and to have acquired the meaning 'bread, food prepared by moistening, kneading, and baking meal or flour, generally with the addition of yeast or leaven' *(OED* 1989: s.v. *bread*, n., senses 1 and 2a) because of the influence of its Viking Age Norse cognate, represented by OIc *brauð 'bread'*.

The discussion on the role of tradition and ideology in the study of the etymology of OE *brēad* will lead to the introduction of The Gersum Project, a three-year AHRC-funded project which takes its name from the loanword *gersum* (cp. OIc *gørsemi* 'treasure'). This project aims at producing an objective and systematic typology to classify Norse-derived loans in English on the basis of the extant linguistic evidence.

Sara Pons-Sanz is a member of the Centre for Language and Communication Research. Her research focuses on the make-up of medieval English vocabulary from different perspectives (etymology, sociolinguistics and stylistics). After completing two BAs (BA in English Philology and BA in Spanish Philology) and the equivalent of an MA in English Philology at the University of Valencia (Spain), she pursued an MPhil and a PhD at the University of Cambridge, in the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic. She was then granted a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship, which she took at the University of Nottingham (School of English). Having spent six years in Nottingham (2004-2010), she joined the Department of English, Linguistics and Cultural Studies at the University of Westminster, where she taught over five years (2010-2016).

November 16th   **Anthony Grant** (Edge Hill University)

The Boundaries of Borrowing

This study addresses the extent to which languages which have replaced sizeable amounts of their basic lexicon through transfer or borrowing adopt other features (especially those with overt phonological manifestations) from other languages. The study focuses largely on a sample of 14 languages taken from most continents, all of which have adopted at least 10% of the items of their Swadesh list contents from other languages (a condition which was taken as a baseline for the study). It also makes use of findings from the Loanword Typology Project (LWT) led by Martin Haspelmath and Uri Tadmor, for which I was honoured to provide British English entries for the comparative database, and draws on work for some other languages to expand the range of items borrowed. The evidence gathered shows that there appears to be no feature, including elements of inflectional morphology and any element on the Swadesh list, which cannot be taken up by speakers of another language.

Anthony Grant (BA Hons York, MPhil, PHD Bradford 1995) is Professor of Historical Linguistics and Language Contact at Edge Hill University, Ormskirk, Lancashire. He has worked on Romani, Native American languages, pidgins, creoles, mixed languages, intimate language contact, Austronesian languages and English. He is currently editing The Oxford Handbook of Language Contact.

November 30th   **Fiona Jordan** (University of Bristol)

Evolutionary approaches to cultural and linguistic diversity

How can we infer features of social life in the past when there are no material remains? What can language relationships tell us about the prehistoric movements of people? To what degree do semantic categories expressed in language, like colours and kinship, share commonalities across cultures? Does language relatedness or culture contact have a greater influence on semantic variation across languages? And does language "disparity" (difference in form) map on to language diversity? In this talk I will showcase work that draws on methodology from evolutionary biology to answer these big questions about cultural and linguistic diversity.

Fiona Jordan is a cultural evolutionary anthropologist with a background in biology, psychology, and language. She runs the multidisciplinary EXCD research group at Bristol (Exploring Cultural Diversity) where we investigate cultural transmission and evolution using phylogenetic, elicitation, corpus linguistic, and field methods. Her main focus is on kinship and social norms and her regional focus on the Austronesian-speaking societies of the Pacific, but she has published widely across a number of other topics including semantic change, land tenure, and sex-ratios.