



# Centre for Language and Communication Research

## Seminar Series

Autumn 2013-14

**ENCAP**

Any questions?

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## Introduction

All seminars take place on Wednesdays from 1pm to 2pm

All seminars will be 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 2012-13 CLCR Seminar Series!

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 35 minutes with 15 minutes for questions and discussion from the floor.

## Summary of the programme

### Autumn (Wednesdays 1pm - Room 3.58)

- October 16<sup>th</sup>      **Dr Stephanie Schnurr (Warwick University)**  
*Exploring distributed leadership: Solving disagreements and negotiating consensus in a 'leaderless' team*
- October 23<sup>rd</sup>      **Dr Tanya Tkacukova (Aston University)**  
*Communication needs of litigants in person*
- November 20<sup>th</sup>      **Prof. Maria Elena Placencia (Birkbeck College)**  
*Address forms and relational work in e-commerce: The case of an Ecuadorian online market place*
- November 27<sup>th</sup>      **Prof Alison Wray (Cardiff University)**  
*Formulaic language and pragmatics in Alzheimer's communication: The impact on carer stress*
- December 4<sup>th</sup>      **Dr June Luchenbroers (Bangor University)**  
*Measuring 'threat': What people say and do with fantasies*
- December 11<sup>th</sup>      **Dr Chris Heffer (Cardiff University)**  
*Projecting voice: The Vicky Pryce jury and judicial 'deficits in understanding'*

Wednesday 16 October (Week 3)  
Dr Stephanie Schnurr (The University of Warwick)

***Exploring distributed leadership: Solving disagreements and negotiating consensus in a 'leaderless' team***

Moving away from traditional perceptions which view leadership as a one-way top-down influence process, more recent 'critical perspectives' conceptualise leadership as a collaborative process involving several people, regardless of their formal position or hierarchical standing within their organisation. This paper explores one of these critical perspectives on leadership, namely *distributed leadership*.

Distributed leadership describes those constellations in which teams lead their work "collectively and independently of formal leaders" (Vine et al. 2008: 341). In other words, these teams do not have an assigned leader or chair. Rather, the various activities and processes typically associated with leadership (such as decision making, negotiating and reaching consensus) are conjointly performed by team members, who are often on the same hierarchical level within an organisation (see also Nielsen 2004; Day et al. 2004; Gronn 2002).

This paper explores how leadership is done in such a 'leaderless' team. Drawing on a corpus of more than 120 hours of audio-recorded meetings of different interdisciplinary research groups and using a discourse analytic framework and tools, I examine how leadership is enacted in a team that does not have an assigned leader or chair. The analysis focuses on the discursive processes through which team members conjointly solve disagreements and negotiate consensus - which are two activities that have been associated with leadership (Holmes 2000). How do team members derive at a solution and reach consensus when there is some kind of disagreement or even conflict? How are these leadership activities being performed? And who is doing 'the leading' in this 'leaderless' team?

This study contributes to leadership research in two ways: i) by exploring some of the discursive processes through which leadership is actually performed, and ii) by looking at a largely under-researched leadership constellation, namely distributed leadership. I thereby hope to illustrate some of the benefits that discourse analytical approaches offer to an understanding of the specific processes that are involved in the complexities of leadership performance.

Gronn, P. (2002) Distributed leadership as a unit of analysis. *Leadership Quarterly* 13: 423-51.

Holmes, J. (2000) Women at work: Analysing women's talk in New Zealand workplaces.

*Australian Review of Applied Linguistics* 22(2): 1-17.

Nielsen, J. (2004) *The Myth of Leadership: Creating Leaderless Organizations*. Palo Alto, Calif.: Davies-Black.

Vine, B., Holmes, J., Marra, M., Pfeifer, D., and Jackson, B. (2008) Exploring co-leadership talk through interactional sociolinguistics. *Leadership*, 4(3): 339-60.



**Stephanie Schnurr** is Associate Professor at the University of Warwick. Her main research interests are professional discourse and medical communication. She has published widely on various aspects of (im)politeness, humour, culture and workplace discourse with a particular focus on leadership performance and communication in pre-natal genetic counseling contexts. Her research papers have appeared, for example, in *Language in Society*, *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, *Journal of Pragmatics*, *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, and *Journal of Politeness Research*. Stephanie is the author of *Exploring Professional Communication. Language in Action* (2012, Routledge) and *Leadership Discourse at Work. Interactions of Humour, Gender and Workplace Culture* (2009, Palgrave Macmillan).

**Wednesday 23 October (Week 4)**  
**Dr Tanya Tkacukova (Aston University)**

### **Communication needs of litigants in person**

The talk presents communicative challenges litigants in person experience when representing themselves in court. In light of recent legislative changes and cuts in legal aid in England and Wales, the number of litigants in person has risen dramatically. Nevertheless, there has not been much research conducted on litigation in person from the legal perspective, let alone the linguistic point of view. The talk presents this under-researched topic and aims to provide an overview of communicative and linguistic problems litigants in person experience during opening and closing speeches, witness examination, interaction with judges and opposing counsels. The talk also identifies further research options that can potentially help lawyers and the judiciary in the debate on changes of legal proceedings for litigants in person. The data draws on several widely publicised cases and small claims cases from England and Wales and the USA.



**Dr Tatiana Tkačuková** is a Marie Curie Research Fellow at the Centre for Forensic Linguistics, Aston University. She has received her PhD in English Language and Linguistics from Masaryk University, Czech Republic. Her research focuses on communication challenges of litigants in person and ways in which courts can accommodate specific needs of lay people representing themselves. Her other research interests include authorship analysis, deception detection, investigative interview techniques, copyright infringement across languages and the position of disadvantaged witnesses in court. She is a public service interpreter for Czech, Ukrainian, Russian and English.

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November (Week 8)

Dr Maria Elena Placencia (Birkbeck, University of London)

### Address forms and relational work in e-commerce: The case of an Ecuadorian online market place

The role played by address forms in the management of relations has been widely recognized (cf. Clyne, Norrby and Warren 2009). They figure, for example, in Spencer-Oatey's (2008[2000]) rapport management framework as stylistic devices that can set the tone of an interaction. In relation to service encounters, studies available on face-to-face interactions in the Spanish-speaking world (cf. Placencia 2004, 2008), for example, have shown how address forms contribute to constructing the interaction as friendly and egalitarian, or perhaps hierarchical and even discriminatory. E-commerce is a context in which address usage has received little attention. However, the growth of internet retailing over recent years makes examining address usage in e-service encounters a timely and revealing exercise.

From a politeness perspective (cf. Locher and Watts 2005; Spencer-Oatey 2008[2000]), this paper examines how address forms are used in interactions between shoppers and sellers in an Ecuadorian online marketplace. The site in question provides a question-answer format that shoppers can employ to ask for further information and which they also use to make offers and arrange contact with sellers. The exchanges are carried out anonymously. The focus of this paper is on both pro-nominal and nominal address, although some attention is also given to greetings as co-occurring forms. Reference is made to results from previous studies in face-to-face service encounters in Ecuadorian Spanish (Quito) which have displayed an overall preference for formal/respectful address.

With respect to pronominal address, findings show the use of both *tú* (familiar you) and *usted* (respectful you), a mixture of the two forms, as well as  $\emptyset$  address. Among those who employ pronominal address, *usted* is the form most frequently employed. This is largely in line with results from previous studies on face-to-face service encounters in Quito. The similarities seem to end, however, when it comes to nominal forms and greetings, where, in contrast to the face-to-face context, informality seems to prevail. To sum up, the picture that emerges shows that while pronominal address in the context examined suggests an orientation among participants to constructing service encounters as respectful and distant, this is counteracted by choices made in relation to nominal forms and greetings (and possibly other features) which give the encounter a more familiar tone than the face-to-face contexts previously examined. In other words, the online environment, with its anonymity, is allowing for the development of more informal and more egalitarian service relationships.

Clyne, M., C. Norrby, and J. Warren. *Language and Human Relations: Styles of Address in Contemporary Language*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Locher, M. A., and R. J. Watts. "Politeness theory and relational work". *Journal of Politeness Research* 1 2005: 9-33.

Placencia, M.E. "Rapport-building activities in corner shop interactions". *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 8 2004: 215-245.

———. "Pragmatic variation in corner shop transactions in Ecuadorian Andean and Coastal Spanish". In *Variational Pragmatics. A Focus on Regional Varieties in Pluricentric Languages*, edited by Schneider, K. P. and A. Barron, 307-332. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2008a.

Spencer-Oatey, H. "Face, (im)politeness and rapport". In *Culturally Speaking. Culture, Communication and Politeness Theory*, edited by Spencer-Oatey, H., 11-47. London: Continuum, 2008 [2000].



**María Elena Placencia** is Reader in Spanish Linguistics at Birkbeck, University of London. Her research interests are in (Spanish) intercultural communication and discourse analysis. She has published extensively in these areas with works on a range of topics, including forms of address, small talk, discursive racism and (im)politeness in service encounters, the media, and other contexts. She is co-author of *Spanish Pragmatics* (Palgrave) and co-editor of *Research on Politeness in the Spanish-Speaking World* (Taylor & Francis) and *Pragmática y comunicacion intercultural en el mundo hispanohablante* (Rodopi).

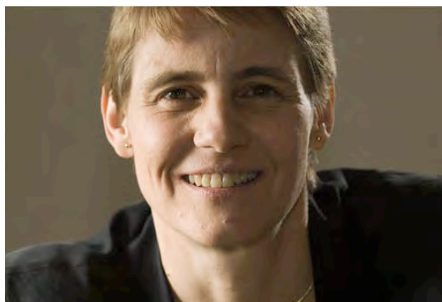
Wednesday, 27th November (Week 9)

Prof. Alison Wray (Cardiff University)

### Formulaic language and pragmatics in Alzheimer's communication: The impact on carer stress

A recent UK report revealed “the stark contrast between the reality of the care ... received and the principles and values of the [National Health Service]” (Abraham, 2011: 5). The NHS Confederation responded with ten recommendations for improvement, including: “Hospitals should recruit staff to work with older people who have the compassionate values needed to provide dignified care as well as the clinical and technical skills. Hospitals should evaluate compassion as well as technical skills in their appraisals of staff performance” (Pearson, 2012: 5). This presentation will challenge the assumption that compassion is a static personal quality, and suggest that carers can lose touch with their compassion in high-stress contexts, resulting in a sense of guilt, inadequacy and frustration.

A major trigger to mislaying one's compassion is the linguistic output of people who, whether through general ageing, institutionalisation, or dementia, engage in repetitive, formulaic linguistic behaviour (Wray 2010, 2011). In such language, the true pragmatics of communication is at odds with the surface form, yet it is extremely difficult for carers consistently to recognise that. Being told the same anecdote over and over is easily interpreted as an insult to one's intelligence or capacity to remember it, even though that is not the intention of the speech event. Severe problems around diminished communication, lack of dignity, and loss of compassion are likely to ensue from a carer's natural tendency to protect the assaulted sense of self by also adopting formulaic responses (Wray, 2011).



**Alison Wray** is a research professor in CLCR. Her BA and DPhil are from the University of York—her thesis examined the role of the right hemisphere in routine language processing. After working as lecturer at the University College of Ripon and York St John, including several years on a part time contract while she worked as a professional singer, Alison became the Assistant Director of the Wales Applied Language Research Unit at Swansea. She joined the Cardiff staff in 1999 as a Senior Research Fellow, becoming a regular senior

lecturer in 2002. Her primary research area is formulaic language, on which topic she has published many articles and two monographs (2002 and 2008). She has also co-authored two widely used text books: *Projects in Linguistics and Language Studies* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2012) and *Critical Reading and Writing for Postgraduates* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2011). She has also sustained over many years consultancy work restoring historically informed pronunciation for early music recordings, broadcasts and concerts.

Wednesday, 4th December (Week 10)

Dr June Luchenbroers (Bangor)

### Measuring 'threat': What people say and do with fantasies

A substantial obstacle for convictions in cases dealing with communications between paedophiles, is how to differentiate Plans from Fantasies. The issue is that unless enacted, graphic descriptions of illegal acts can be passed off as fantasies; but if these descriptions could be identified as plans, convictions become possible. Although much is known about the linguistic structure of plans, there is no comprehensive, linguistic study of fantasies, meaning that forensic linguists cannot offer evidence with regard to how these behaviours are typified and what linguistic features might differentiate these two speech acts; or how these speech acts are used by members of specific 'communities of practice'. The absence of linguistic research into fantasies is presumably because fantasies are essentially private in nature, which makes them very difficult to collect. In this paper we will discuss early findings from a web-based collection of fantasies, as well as the methodological problems encountered.



**June Luchjenbroers** is a senior lecturer in linguistics at Bangor University. She has a BA in Linguistics and Japanese from the University of Queensland and a Ph.D. in Linguistics from La Trobe University. Upon completion of her PhD, she took a position as Assistant Professor with the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, followed by a Postdoctoral Fellowship with the University of Queensland. She joined Bangor in October 1999. Her research, in collaboration with Michelle Aldridge-Waddon, focuses on *Forensic Linguistics / Language and the Law* (in particular: linguistic analyses of the language used to and by adult (generally women) and child victims of rape and physical assault). Current data also includes email communications between (convicted) paedophiles. She has also collaborated with John Olsson for the book, *Forensic Linguistics, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition* (available from 5 Dec 2013).



Wednesday, 11th December (Week 11)

Dr Chris Heffer (Cardiff University)

### Projecting voice: Jury ‘deficits’, judicial ‘defects’ and a critical framework for understanding voice

In the recent high profile case of *R v Vasiliki (Vicky) Pryce*, the jury supposedly shook the foundations of common law jury trial when, during deliberation, they sent the judge ten ‘stupid’ questions about the application of the law to the case. After they failed to reach a verdict, Judge Sweeney remarked that their questions had shown ‘absolutely fundamental deficits in understanding’ and his words led to media headlines about the stupidity of some jurors and the consequent inadequacy of the jury system as a whole. The standard reaction of jury researchers to such outcries is that the problem arises not from deficiencies in the jurors but in communicational defects in the judicial instruction of juries. In this talk I argue that the problem is better conceived not in terms of cognitive deficits or communicational deficiencies but in terms of the much broader critical concept of voice (Hymes 1996, Blommaert 2005, Bartlett 2012). However, whereas previous research on voice has focused on the lack or loss of voice of members of disadvantaged minority communities, here I focus on the capacity of *both* judge and jurors to *project* their voice effectively in the institutional context. I thus set out a critical, but generally applicable, understanding of the concept of voice centred around the idea of projection, or the way voice carries to an audience across space and time. Agents may actively project, as in performance and rhetoric, but projection is also dependent on the way the voice is heard (audience agency) and is structurally determined by, for example, the institutional authority of the speaker and institutional framing of the discursive event.

Bartlett, T. (2012) *Hybrid Voices and Collaborative Change*. London: Routledge.

Blommaert, J. (2005). *Discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hymes, D. (1996). *Ethnography, Linguistics, Narrative Inequality: Toward an Understanding of Voice*. London: Taylor and Francis.



**Chris Heffer** is Senior Lecturer in the Centre for Language and Communication Research at Cardiff University. He has published articles in linguistic and legal journals on theoretical and communicational aspects of the trial process and jury instruction. He is the author of *The Language of Jury Trial* (Palgrave 2005) and co-editor of *Legal-Lay Communication: Textual Travels in the Law* (OUP 2013). He is currently writing two books: *Lying in Language and Law: Truth, Trust and Technologies of Deception* (Palgrave forth.) and *Rhetoric and Rights: A Theory of Forensic Discourse* (OUP forth.). He is a member of the editorial board for the OUP book series on language and law.