



Centre for Language and Communication Research

Research Seminar Series

Autumn 2015-16

ENCAP

<http://blogs.cardiff.ac.uk/clcrseminars>

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Introduction

Seminars normally take place on **Wednesdays from 12.10 to 13.00** in room 0.36 of the John Percival 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 2015-16!

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. A PDF of this booklet and more information is found at <http://blogs.cardiff.ac.uk/clcrseminars/>.

Our 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, please 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

Unless otherwise indicated, seminars are Wednesdays 12.10 - 13.00
in room 0.36, John Percival Building*

***Mon**, 28 September **Janet Holmes** (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand)
***4.10-5pm** *Sex, Lies and Stereotypes*
(rm 0.36)

7 October **Elissa Asp** (Saint Mary's University, Canada)
*What network approaches to language processing may tell us
about linguistic and discourse (dys-)function in neuro-
degenerative dementias*

14 October **Sarah Atkins** (University of Nottingham, UK)
Performing professional talk in medical licensing exams

***Tue**, 3 November **Bethan Davies** (University of Leeds, UK)
12.10-1pm *Diachronic Critical Discourse Analysis: Analysing the
representations of road users in The Highway Code over time*
***rm 2.03**

11 November **Luna Filipovic** (University of East Anglia, UK)
*Witness interviews under a forensic linguistic prism:
Seeing, saying and remembering in different languages*

18 November **Peter Patrick** (University of Essex, UK)
Testing the 'native-speaker' status of asylum seekers

25 November **Kelly Benneworth-Gray** (University of York, UK)
*"There's a thing that we use called a spiral":
Psychology talk in police interviews with sex offenders*

2 December **Irina Elgort** (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand)
*Effects of two types of elaboration on contextual word
learning in English as a second language by Chinese and
Dutch speakers*

* Please note change of location, time and/or date.

Mon, 28 September Janet Holmes (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand)

Sex, Lies and Stereotypes

Myths about “women’s language” have been around for centuries but it is only in the last forty years that linguists have begun to seriously challenge them. In 1972, the feminist linguist, Robin Lakoff, published a seminal *Language in Society* article proposing a raft of socio-cultural reasons for differences between the ways that women and men speak. The resulting explosion in language and gender research produced a number of tsunamis. This seminar illustrates some of the second and third waves generated by the explosion, and considers where we have landed on the beach.



Janet Holmes is Emeritus Professor of Linguistics at Victoria University of Wellington and Associate Director of the Language in the Workplace Project (www.victoria.ac.nz/lwp/) Her most recent books are *Gendered Talk at Work, Leadership, Discourse, and Ethnicity* (co-written with Meredith Marra and Bernadette Vine), *Research Methods in Sociolinguistics* (co-edited with Kirk Hazen) and *The Handbook of Language, Gender and Sexuality* (co-edited with Susan Ehrlich and Miriam Meyerhof). With her research team, she is currently investigating the discourse of skilled migrants in New Zealand workplaces, and analysing language used on construction sites and in eldercare facilities to assist refugees seeking work.

7 October

Elissa Asp (Saint Mary's University, Canada)

What network approaches to language processing may tell us about linguistic and discourse (dys-)function in neurodegenerative dementias

This talk begins with a sketch some characteristic linguistic and discourse signs of disease in people with Alzheimer's disease (AD) and the primary progressive aphasia (PPA). Thus prepared, I then outline some results from our (Halifax, Nova Scotia based) group addressing language processing on picture naming and scene description tasks in cognitively normal people using magnetoencephalography (MEG) and reflect on how such studies might inform our understanding of linguistic and discourse effects of AD and the PPAs.

In particular, I will argue that given the complexity of brains, of language, and of the neurodegenerative dementias, we need approaches to language processing that explore relatively natural, ecologically valid tasks, against a backdrop of more conventionally constrained research paradigms, and that anticipate that (un-)successful function and adaptation to dysfunction (compensation) will be grounded not in isolated bits of neural tissue but in interacting distributed functional networks supported (or not) by both local connections and long-distance fibre tracts. Taking up anomia (word finding and naming difficulties) as a most well-documented problem in both AD and the PPA's but over which there are ongoing debates as to causes in the different conditions, I will show how the networks architectures and time courses involved in our naming and scene description tasks might account for (at least) some of the differences in accounts.



Elissa Asp is Professor of English and Linguistics, and Coordinator of Linguistics at Saint Mary's University, Halifax, NS. She was educated at Glendon College and York University in Toronto, where she specialized in linguistic description of discourse and linguistic theory. She is interested in functional and formal theories of language and developing models that elucidate language processing in context. Ongoing research addresses three main areas: (1) discourse correlates of dementias, especially

neurodegenerative diseases associated with ageing such as Alzheimer's disease; (2) MEG studies of neurocognitive networks supporting language production; (3) theoretical implications of (1) and (2) for models of language. She collaborates with colleagues at the Geriatric Medicine Research Unit and the Neurocognitive Imaging Lab at Dalhousie University on these projects.

14 October

Sarah Atkins (University of Nottingham, UK)

Performing professional talk in medical licensing exams

Most postgraduate medical assessments now involve an important and well-established focus on effective communication with patients, but how can we make sure the criteria for assessing this professional talk are fair? In this session we will look at the UK's licensing exam for General Practitioners. Through simulated consultations with role-played patients, GPs are formally assessed not only on their clinical knowledge, but crucially on how that knowledge is deployed and communicated with a patient in a spoken context. The pass rates in these types of exam, particularly higher failure rates for those who have done their initial medical training overseas, have led to concerns that linguistic and cultural factors play a role in some doctors' poorer performance. This sociolinguistic study examines these assessments with a view to better understanding why this might be happening. We'll look closely at some linguistic data of doctors performing the exam, addressing why it might be that some candidates are faring less well.

We will also tackle broader questions on the methods of linguistic ethnography. During the study, the researchers spent a large amount of time working with the exam's governing body, the Royal College of General Practitioners. Linguistic ethnographic approaches such as this usually cite a central concern with real-world language problems and extensive engagement with research participants. However, the complexities and messy realities of research relationships, particularly working in institutional settings with experts from a variety of epistemological traditions, can often be overlooked, particularly in the largely positive rhetoric that currently exists around research 'impact'. How do differences in epistemological backgrounds, political motivations and even legal complications come to play in the research at various stages of a study? And what are the gains and 'impact' to be had from working in these complex settings?

Sarah Atkins is a postdoctoral Research Fellow at the *Centre for Research in Applied Linguistics*, University of Nottingham. Her research investigates language and professional communication, primarily in healthcare settings. She has conducted research with a range of professional groups, including GPs and emergency care providers, looking in particular at the ways in which communication is assessed as part of professional gatekeeping exams. Her work has a strong emphasis on applying findings into practice and she now works within the University of Nottingham's *Linguistic Profiling for Professionals* unit, which delivers professional communication skills training based on evidence from careful linguistic research.



Tue, 3 November Bethan Davies (University of Leeds, UK)

Diachronic Critical Discourse Analysis: Analysing the representations of road users in The Highway Code over time

The Highway Code is an iconic publication in the UK; it encodes the legal requirements for all road users in a set of numbered 'Rules' alongside advice about how to use the road safely. Anyone learning to drive or ride a motorbike must pass a test on its contents. Children are inducted into its expectations via road safety training at School and (often) at home. First published in 1931, it has gone through at least 12 editions and increased in size from something resembling a pamphlet (24 pages) to 93 pages in the current 2007 edition.

This talk will present a diachronic analysis of selected features of these texts, using the synchronic analysis of the current edition as a baseline (Davies, in prep.). Through this kind of approach, we can trace how discourses of road use have changed over time and how this is indexed through textual modifications.

In particular, it will focus on the way in which pedestrians and cyclists have been progressively displaced from the road as cars have gained increasing hegemony over its use. Vehicles that are not cars and pedestrians are now *difficult to see* and require the more vulnerable road user to take responsibility for their own safety by changing what they wear and/or how they interact with the road. Because they are *difficult to see*, they have become special cases which are othered and somehow not expectable in the road environment. In addition, supposedly generic rules for all drivers and riders relating to the use of the road have increasingly shifted to constructions that imply or presuppose the implied reader is a car driver, thus further marginalizing other road users.

Other than Fairclough (1993), who offers a brief diachronic analysis of University prospectus pages over a 20 year period, such a diachronic approach is rare. However, it can offer many insights as it demonstrates how discourses now perceived as common sense have been gradually sedimented over time in successive versions of the 'same' text. In this case, it highlights a conflict between stated government policy in relation to transport - the promotion of 'active travel' - and the dominant discourses in an official text designed to both train new drivers and regulate road use.



Bethan Davies is a lecturer in linguistics in the School of Languages, Cultures and Societies at the University of Leeds. She is an alumnus of Cardiff University but defected to Edinburgh for her PhD. Her research interests include im/politeness, language ideology and metadiscourse, media discourse (particularly representations of violent crime), computer-mediated discourse, the discourse of transport, language as practice and Gricean pragmatics. She has published in the *Journal of Politeness Research*, *Journal of Pragmatics*, *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *Journal of Language and Politics* and in several edited volumes. She was co-investigator on the AHRC-funded BBC 'Whose Voices' Project and is a member of the editorial board for the *Journal of Politeness Research*.

11 November

Luna Filipovic (University of East Anglia, UK)

*Witness interviews under a forensic linguistic prism:
Seeing, saying and remembering in different languages*

This presentation will bring together a number of experimental studies in forensic linguistics that consider the impact of language contrasts on the amount and nature of information given by witnesses in legal interviews, on translations of their statements and on their memory for events. Our aim is to determine to what extent we can make use of current knowledge about language contrasts and their real-world consequences in order to improve efficient information-gathering in legal contexts. We will argue that contrasts between languages can lead to erroneous conclusions being drawn from original witness statements and their translations, as a consequence of the different ways in which languages structure and package information.

However, it is also important to determine the exact circumstances under which such effects may be expected as well as their relative strength. We will demonstrate that these difficulties are not due to the individual competencies of translators but rather they represent a more general obstacle that stems from differences between the lexical and grammatical patterns of individual languages. Furthermore, we explore the possibility that witness memories for the same events can be different for speakers of different languages. For instance, we have examined how typologically contrasting languages (including English and Spanish) differ with respect to the means that they provide for their speakers to talk about universal aspect of human experience, such as motion and causation. These two cognitive domains are of particular interest to forensic linguistics since expressions related to them feature prominently in witness interviews and witness statements about, for example, accidental vs. intentional actions, and about the speed and location of relevant event participants and their involvement in the witnessed events. We discuss the consequences of these findings for access to justice and for communicative accuracy and efficiency in multilingual environments, as well as for methodological advances in forensic linguistics.



Luna Filipović (PhD Cantab) is a Senior Lecturer at the University of East Anglia, UK. She was previously a Leverhulme Trust & Newton Trust Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Department of Linguistics, University of Cambridge and an ESRC Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Department of Psychology, University College London. She teaches Forensic Linguistics and Translation. Her areas of expertise are language contrasts and translation, forensic psycholinguistics and criminology. She has conducted experiments showing how a specific language spoken by a witness or suspect can affect the quantity and quality of information given, revealing what is easy and

what is hard to express in different languages, and explaining how, why and when this information can be distorted in translation, impacting witness memory and jury judgment.

18 November

Peter Patrick (University of Essex, UK)

Testing the ‘native-speaker’ status of asylum seekers

Language Analysis for Determination of Origin (LADO) is a recent application of linguistics to institutional, forensic and/or political contexts, used by governments in processing asylum seekers who are applying for refugee status. As part of testing their claim to come from a certain nation, region or group, some asylum applicants are interviewed by government agencies or commercial contractors seeking to ascertain whether they natively speak the language of a group they say they belong to.

Many linguists and some judges have been critical about the standard of expertise used in these cases: Can language testing be done validly and reliably? For which sorts of cases? Are governments employing a useful tool, or paying for “bad science”?

I will focus on developments in the UK, including a 2014 Supreme Court case (in which I was consulted) which promises to raise standards for the use of linguistic evidence in asylum cases.

References:

Eades, Diana. 2010. Language analysis and asylum cases. In *Routledge Handbook of Forensic Linguistics*, edited by Malcolm Coulthard and Alison Johnson. London: Routledge, 411-422.

Language and National Origin Group. 2004. *Guidelines for the use of language analysis in relation to questions of national origin in refugee cases*. In *International Journal of Speech, Language & the Law* 11(2): 261-66. [Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/>, see also <http://www.essex.ac.uk/larg/resources/guidelines.aspx>]

Language and Asylum Research Group website: <http://www.essex.ac.uk/larg/>

Patrick, Peter L. 2012. Language analysis for determination of origin: Objective evidence for refugee status determination. In Peter M. Tiersma & Lawrence M. Solan, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Language and Law*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 535-546.

Zwaan, Karin, Pieter Muysken & Maaïke Verrips, eds. 2010. *Language and Origin. The Role of Language in European Asylum Procedures: A Linguistic and Legal Survey*. Nijmegen: Wolf Legal Publishers.

Peter L. Patrick is Professor of Sociolinguistics and Member of the Human Rights Centre at the University of Essex, and affiliated with the *Observatoire International des Droits Linguistique/International Observatory on Language Rights*. He has worked on language variation and change, pidgin and creole studies, urban dialectology, sociolinguistics methods, and language rights. His recent work focuses on evaluating language testing of asylum seekers. He has deployed sociolinguistic methods in non-academic contexts in the USA, UK and Caribbean, through studies of clinical communication, testimony in criminal cases, and interventions in the asylum process. He is one of the founding members of the Language & Asylum Research Group (www.essex.ac.uk/larg).



25 November

Kelly Benneworth-Gray (University of York, UK)

“There’s a thing that we use called a spiral”: Psychology talk in police interviews with sex offenders

The application of psychology to the investigation of crime is of considerable academic interest, particularly when applied to the police interviewing of suspects, witnesses and victims of crime (see Bull *et al*, 2009, Gudjonsson, 2003, Milne and Bull, 1999). Current investigative interviewing practice in the UK has evolved from the work of psychologists such as Shepherd (1993) and empirical research in psychology is increasingly being integrated into the training of interviewers, in courses offered by specialist agencies such as CEOP (2011) and in the wealth of psychology resources being made available to police practitioners (National Police Library, 2014). Despite the increasing impact of the discipline on investigative interviewing practice, there has been no empirical study of whether police officers make reference to their psychology knowledge and/or training during real-life interviews. Three UK police interviews with individuals suspected of sexual offences were digitised and transcribed. Discursive Psychology and Conversation Analysis were used to examine the interactional import of references to psychology, in particular, how references to psychology are invoked, described, and oriented to in the interaction. The implications of this ‘psychology talk’ for the progression of the interview are also discussed.



Kelly Benneworth-Gray is a Lecturer in the Department of Sociology at the University of York, UK. She has a long-standing interest in the application of Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis to interaction in institutional settings, particularly forensic and legal contexts. Most recently she has examined how police and suspects talk about sex offences and the implications for investigative interviewing practice in the UK. She has contributed to *The Handbook of Forensic Linguistics* (Routledge) and *The Language of Sexual Crime* (Palgrave Macmillan), and has published in the *International Journal of Speech, Language and Law*.

2 December

Irina Elgort (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand)

Effects of two types of elaboration on contextual word learning in English as a second language by Chinese and Dutch speakers

Learning new L2 (English) words through reading is a slow and incremental process, which initially results in partial word knowledge. This process may be facilitated by increasing readers' engagement with the form and meaning of unfamiliar words. In this presentation I will (1) compare the effects of form-focused and meaning-focused elaboration on the quality of lexical knowledge of contextually learned words, and (2) examine the effect of correct vs. incorrect guessing of novel L2 word meanings from context. Two adult L2 populations, Chinese and Dutch speakers, learned novel English vocabulary through reading in two conditions: with word writing (copying) and with actively deriving word meaning from context. Immediate and delayed off-line and online measures of word knowledge were used to compare outcomes of the two learning conditions, and the effect of incorrect guessing in the meaning-focused elaboration condition. The data were analysed using mixed effects modeling, with participants and items treated as crossed-random effects. Participant and item characteristics were used as secondary interest predictors in the regression models. A short interview was conducted after the delayed post-test to elicit participants' views on the two approaches to word learning. The study findings are discussed from the standpoint of the Lexical Quality Hypothesis (Perfetti, 2002, 2007).

Irina Elgort is Senior Lecturer in Higher Education at Victoria University of Wellington. Her research in L2 vocabulary learning focuses on the effects of learner variables and learning/teaching approaches. She received the Christopher Brumfit PhD/Ed.D. Thesis Award for her PhD on vocabulary learning. Irina's research has been published in top international journals including in *Language Learning*, *Language Testing*, and *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*. Irina's work is interdisciplinary, combining approaches and methods from applied linguistics, psycholinguistics and neurolinguistics. Irina also researches and teaches computer-assisted language learning and the use of digital technology in higher education.

