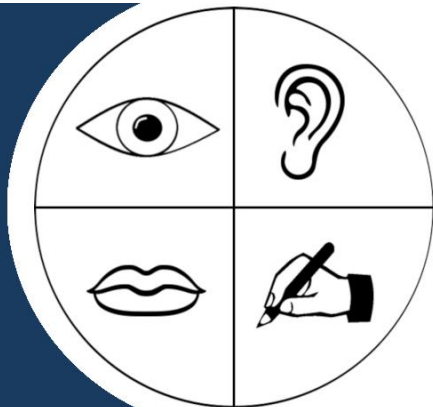**eighth bonn applied english linguistics conference**

(baelc8)

abstracts

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eighth bonn applied english linguistics conference

Eighth Bonn Applied English Linguistics Conference (BAELc8)

Friday, 28 June 2019		
13:00-14:00	Registration	
14:00	Klaus P. Schneider	Conference opening
Chair: Stefanie Pohle		
14:00-14:30	Pawel Sickinger, Katrin Renkwitz (Bonn)	*Assessing language learner pragmatic competence in schools: An argument for the necessity of triangulation via native speaker perception*
14:30-15:00	Vahid Bagherbeigi (Victoria)	*The impact of computer-mediated communication on EFL learners' oral performance*
15:00-15:30	Noor Asbahan Shahizan (Lancaster)	*Assessing spoken academic language proficiency: Interactional features in group discussions*
15:30-16:00	Coffee break	
16:00-16:45	Marja Meinl, Timo Brede, Anne Nickel	Discussion panel *Bringing pragmatics into the classroom: Prospects and problems for language teaching and testing*
16:45-17:00	Short break	
Chair: Klaus P. Schneider		
17:00-18:00	Keynote lecture by **Carsten Roever (Melbourne)** *Assessment of second language pragmatics: Past, present and future*	

19:00	Conference dinner at *Tuscolo*, Gerhard-von-Are-Str. 8, Bonn

Saturday, 29 June 2019		
Chair: Katrin Renkwitz		
Presentations by M.A. students		
09:30-10:00	Marina Martín Sánchez	*Contrastive analysis of Spanish and British English women's responses to compliments*
10:00-10:30	Iris Ferrazzo	*The speech act complaint in everyday life situations: A comparison between Italian and German*
10:30-11:30	Coffee break + Poster session	
Chair: Katrin Renkwitz		
Presentations by M.A. students		
11:30-12:00	Letizia Vecchio	*Reproach-justification-sequences during the Brexit discourse*
12:00-12:30	Merri Simonyan	*A cross-cultural study of requests in German and Russian*
12:30-13:30	Lunch break	
Chair: Pawel Sickinger		
13:30-14:00	Folajimi Oyebola (Münster)	*Attitudes towards accents of English in Nigeria*
14:00-14:30	Mohammed Ademilokun, Jacinta Edusei (Chemnitz)	*A corpus-assisted critical discourse study of social transformation advocacy in the lyrics of some Nigerian and Ghanaian hip-hop artistes*
14:30-15:00	Susanne Mohr (Bonn, Cape Town)	*Between English as multilingua franca and hakuna matata: Language choices in the tourist space of Zanzibar*
15:00-15:30	Coffee break	
15:30-16:00	Ilka Flöck (Oldenburg), Joanna Pfingsthorn (Bremen)	*Measuring pragmatic awareness applying Signal Detection Theory: Precision and recall in appropriateness judgments of advanced EFL learners and teacher trainees*
16:00-16:30	Gabriela Weht, Victor Sajoza Juric (Córdoba)	*The use of e-portfolios in assessing reading comprehension skills in ESP*
16:30	Klaus P. Schneider	Conference closing

Poster presentations (Saturday, 29 June 2019, 10:30-11:30)

Jan Paul Högemann	*Measuring Linguistic Politeness: Perception of strategies in responses to 'thanks'*
Veronika Pankova	*"Great place to work" or "dominant" and "strict"? Contrasting corporate identity claims online and public reactions*
Elena Pleshakova	*Interrogatives as means of sociocultural identity in The New Matrix 10/11 and the Spotlight 11 textbooks and their implications for EFL teaching*
Dominik Schoppa	*Resolving number ambiguities in German: Effects of feature markedness on parser behavior*
Nina Smirnova	*Promises in politics. Analysis of promising strategies of Russian- and English-speaking politicians*
Min-Hsi Yu	*Sentence final particles in Cantonese and Taiwanese Mandarin: The case of apologies*
Friederike Zahn	*I would certainly apologize if you would like me to do that. The linguistic nature of 'Nonpologies'*

Assessing language learner pragmatic competence in schools: An argument for the necessity of triangulation via native speaker perception

Pawel Sickinger (Bonn), Katrin Renkwitz (Bonn)

Pawel Sickinger originally studied translation of Japanese and English, and is currently a research assistant at the Department of English, American and Celtic Studies at Bonn University. His areas of interest include cognitive semantics, pragmatics, psycholinguistics and translation studies. He has authored papers on cognitive semantics, pragmatic competence and translation equivalence, and his monograph "Mental Models across Languages" has been published at Benjamins. Besides his academic interests, he is frequently involved in outreach activities with schools, promoting linguistics and specifically pragmatics outside the ivory tower.

Katrin Renkwitz is a research assistant at the Department of English, American, and Celtic studies at the University of Bonn. At the chair Bonn Applied English Linguistics (BAEL), she is part of the research project PRA.PRO, which attempts to establish a general definition of pragmatic competence and the development of an instrument for its assessment in L2 learners. Her research interests are phonological phenomena in pragmatics, interlanguage pragmatics and intercultural communication. She is currently writing her PhD thesis on the role that prosodic features, especially intonation, play on the production and perception of apologies.

Addressing the question how pragmatic competence can be operationalized for testing purposes in school contexts, we argue that two major formats in pragmatic research, namely multiple-choice questions (MCQs) and discourse-completion tests (DCTs), have substantial shortcomings. While MCQs suffer from their binary logic and the issue of construing incorrect alternatives to valid answers (cf. Roever 2005: 116), evaluating DCT data strongly relies on individual raters' judgment, making subjectivity an issue. This seems specifically problematic in the school context, where English teachers would have to assume the rater's role, generally without proper training or instructions.

In a more general sense, though, the practice of expert rater evaluation (as common e.g. in institutional language certification) is questionable even if the raters in question are native speakers. As a recently conducted perception study shows (Sickinger & Renkwitz in preparation), native speakers of English are not reliable in their assessment of the "nativeness" of written DCT answers. At the same time, neither formal nor functional analysis of the DCT-elicited utterances appears to be sufficient for fine-grained competence level assessment (see Sell et al. 2019).

In this talk, we discuss research findings that strongly suggest a perception-based evaluation of DCT-items is necessary to establish a valid baseline for pragmatic competence assessment. Applied to the school context, assembling an inventory of acceptable pragmatic solutions to specific DCT-situations via this method could be a first step towards providing teachers with the resources necessary to confidently evaluate student production in tests.

Roever, C. (2005). Testing ESL Pragmatics: *Development and Validation of a Web-Based Assessment Battery.* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Sell, F., Renkwitz, K., Sickinger, P., & Schneider, K. P. (2019). Measuring pragmatic competence on the functional and lexical level: The development of German high-school students' requests during a stay abroad in Canada. *Journal of Pragmatics, 146*, 106–120.

Sickinger, P., & Renkwitz, K. (in preparation). How good are native speakers at evaluating pragmatic competence? Native speaker assessments of learner status and appropriate pragmatic behaviour in English. To appear in a special issue of Languages.

Friday, 28 June 2019│ 14:30 – 15:00

The impact of computer-mediated communication on EFL learners' oral performance

Vahid Bagherbeigi (Victoria)

Vahid Bagherbeigi is a postgraduate student of applied linguistics in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Victoria, Victoria, BC. His research interests include second language acquisition, corrective feedback, form-focused instruction, and task-based teaching. He also maintains active research interests in L2 reading and writing, lexical and syntactic complexity, and the acquisition of L2 vocabulary. His current research focuses on the role of synchronous and asynchronous computer-mediated communication involving both experimental/quantitative and descriptive/qualitative research.

Since the advent of the internet as a means of communication, more and more people have been using electronic media for a variety of purposes, including interpersonal communication, sending and receiving information, and language learning purposes. Therefore, a line of research in this area seems necessary to better understand various aspects involved in this topic and identify its possible advantages. To this end, the present study was an attempt to investigate the effectiveness of an online messaging application, namely WhatsApp Messenger, which is an example of a computer-mediated communication tool where synchronous and asynchronous online communication can co-occur, on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' lexical and syntactic complexity. This research was an experimental study and had a pre-test and post-test design with a control group. The participants in the experimental group of this study, who were 20 intermediate language learners, were asked to participate in discussion tasks on WhatsApp Messenger lasting for eight weeks. The quantitative analyses were carried out by

running independent and paired sample t-tests to determine the differences in terms of lexical and syntactic complexity. The results revealed that using WhatsApp Messenger for communication practice had significant impacts for this group of learners on all measures of syntactic and lexical complexity. In addition, a survey questionnaire was administered to further delve into their perceptions and beliefs about their experience of computer-mediated communication. The results showed that participants found this messaging tool useful and were satisfied with it in terms of ease of use, quality and perceived self-efficacy.

Friday, 28 June 2019| 15:00 – 15:30

Assessing spoken academic language proficiency: Interactional features in group discussions

Noor Asbahan Shahizan (Lancaster)

Noor Asbahan Shahizan is a fourth-year PhD candidate in the field of language testing at Lancaster University. Her doctoral research concerns a validation study of group oral tasks within the higher education context. Her areas of interest include the development and assessment of speaking skills and qualitative research methods. She is an academic staff of the Universiti Utara Malaysia and currently pursuing her PhD under the scholarship of the Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia. She has worked in English language education for over 15 years as an English language teacher, teacher trainer, program administrator and materials writer.

Increasing seminar-style teaching and assessment diversification in higher education means that group assessments have become part of degree assessments in many university contexts. This presentation reports on the 'micro-interactional features' elicited during the group oral task of a university entry test and compares them to the interactional features of group oral assessments in the target domain, i.e. degree-level study. The test under investigation is an English language test which assesses pre-university students' language proficiency in order to meet the entry requirements of university study in Malaysia. Video-recordings of the test takers' simulation test and the first-year students' performance in group academic discussions were used to gain insights into the target domain. All recordings were then transcribed and analysed qualitatively. Micro-interactional features during group oral performances, in the target domain, and on the entry test, were then identified through conversational analysis. The analyses revealed some differences in the features used during the group oral performances in the target domain versus the university entry test. For example, differences were found in the participants' collaboration in completing turns and topic management. There is an indication of a more limited range of interactions during

the university entry test group's oral performances. Conclusions have been drawn on the need for further research through the analysis of test tasks through expert judgements.

Friday, 28 June 2019 | 16:00 – 16:45

Discussion panel

**Bringing pragmatics into the classroom:
Prospects and problems for language teaching and testing**

Marja Meinl, Timo Brede, Anne Nickel

Timo Brede received his Master of Education in English and Pedagogy at the University of Cologne and furthermore studied Physical Education at the Deutsche Sporthochschule. As a student, he spent a semester abroad at the University of Sydney. He teaches English, Pedagogy and Physical Education at the Gymnasium Zum Altenforst, where he has been a teacher since 2012.

Marja Meinl has a teaching degree for secondary schools in English, Biology and Pedagogy. She teaches at the Gymnasium Zum Altenforst, where she is also responsible for the English faculty SEK I/II in the regional Kompetenzteam. Furthermore, she coordinates the cooperation between Bonn Applied English Linguistics and the school. She holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics which she received at the University of Bonn for her thesis on online complaints in British English and German.

Anne Nickel is a teacher trainee at the Gymnasium am Oelberg. She completed her Master of Education in English and Philosophy at the University of Bonn in 2018. During her time at Bonn University, she has worked as a student assistant at Bonn Applied English Linguistics for several years. She worked as a teaching assistant in London in 2017/2018, where she also gathered the empirical data for her Master's thesis on the pragmatics of multicultural London.

Bringing pragmatics into the classroom: Prospects and problems for language teaching and testing

In this special format, introduced for the BAELc8, we welcome three practitioners in the field of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) who all have some special interest in linguistics. Marja Meinl, Timo Brede and Anne Nickel all work as English teachers in regional secondary schools (namely the *Gymnasium Zum Altenforst* in Troisdorf and the *Gymnasium am Oelberg* in Königswinter), and will join us to discuss the current as well as the potential future role of linguistics and pragmatics in English classes. Whereas Dr. Meinl and Mr. Brede have both been involved in cooperative outreach projects with BAEL in the past, Ms. Nickel has recently completed her Master of Education at our department and is a former

BAEL student assistant.

After a brief presentation by Dr. Meinl and Mr. Brede on the ongoing cooperation between their school and BAEL and their own attempts to find a place for linguistics in their English classes, the forum will take the form of a moderated discussion, covering a range of issues related to the subject matter. The central topics will be language testing and language competence, and how relevant insights from linguistics and pragmatics could be introduced into the school context. While linguistic matters will definitely play a role, the focus will lie on practical and institutional concerns, making this a dedicated platform for the applied perspective.

Friday, 28 June 2019│17:00 – 18:00

Keynote

Assessment of second language pragmatics: Past, present and future

Carsten Roever (Melbourne)

Carsten Roever is Associate Professor in Applied Linguistics at the University of Melbourne. He holds a degree in TESOL and psychology from the University of Duisburg, and a PhD in Second Language Acquisition from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. His research interests include second language pragmatics, language testing, Conversation Analysis, and second language acquisition. He co-authored "Second Language Pragmatics" (2017, Oxford University Press) with Naoko Taguchi, and "Quantitative Methods for Second Language Research" (2018, Routledge) with Aek Phakiti. He is currently working on a book entitled "Teaching and testing of second language pragmatics" (to appear 2020 with Routledge).

Second language pragmatics, which investigates how L2 speakers learn to use language for social purposes, has become a burgeoning research field in Applied Linguistics (Taguchi & Roever 2017). However, research on assessing learners' pragmatic abilities is still a developing area, and no major test assesses pragmatics at the moment.

This talk will give an overview of the three trends in the assessment of L2 pragmatics: the speech act based approach, which is sociopragmatically oriented and strongly influenced by politeness research (Brown & Levinson 1987); the extended approach, which builds on the speech act tradition but also includes implicature and routine formulae; and the interactional competence approach, which is rooted in work on extended interaction and Conversation Analysis. It will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of these different traditions, especially with regard to their core assessment instruments, such as Discourse Completion Task

(DCTs), multiple choice tasks, and role plays. It will also discuss research challenges for the future.

Saturday, 29 June 2019| 09:30 – 10:00

Contrastive analysis of Spanish and British English women's responses to compliments

Marina Martín Sánchez (Bonn)

Marina Martín Sánchez is an M.A. student in Applied Linguistics at the University of Bonn, Germany. She holds a B.A. in Applied Linguistics from the University Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, Spain. During her B.A. studies, she enjoyed two Erasmus stays at the University of Nottingham, United Kingdom, and University of Tübingen, Germany. The topic of her Bachelor's thesis was "Cross-linguistic influence of English (L2) and Spanish (L1) in German (L3) Language Acquisition". Currently her research interests include intercultural pragmatics, foreign language acquisition, language and gender and Critical Discourse Analysis of language used to refer to minority groups.

Compliments are a speech act used to improve or create relationships, especially amongst women (Wolfson 1984). This study partially replicates a previous study (Lorenzo-Dus 2001) by comparing compliment responses (CR) of British and Spanish women. Their responses were collected through an online Discourse Completion Task (DCT) with compliments paid by men and women in a variety of situations. Two versions of the DCT were designed in each language in order to vary the gender of the complimenter for each situation. Thus, the goal is to compare the speech act realizations from a cross-cultural perspective, but also to analyze the influence of the hearer's gender in a speech act in which this variable plays a significant role (Herbert 1990). Around 400 responses were obtained and realization strategies were classified between "acceptance", "rejection" or "solution of both constraints". The findings suggest that both groups use all three strategies and prefer to display offers of solidarity in intra-gender interaction rather than inter-gender. Nevertheless, some differences have also been found in the significantly higher use of rejection strategies in Spanish as well as more expressions of uncomfortableness in responses to compliments on appearance by men in English.

Herbert, R. K. (1990). Sex-based differences in compliment behavior. *Cambridge University Press Stable, 19*(2), 201–224.

Lorenzo-Dus, N. (2001). Compliment responses among British and Spanish university students: A contrastive study. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *33*(1), 107–127.

Wolfson, N. (1984). Pretty is as pretty does: A speech act view of sex roles. *Working Papers in Educational Linguistics, 1*(1), 1–18. Retrieved from: https://repository.upenn.edu/wpel/vol1/iss1/2/ (last accessed 30 March 2019).

The speech act complaint in everyday life situations: A comparison between Italian and German

Iris Ferrazzo (Bonn)

Iris Ferrazzo is currently a second-semester student of two M.A. programs at the University of Bonn: Applied Linguistics and Deutsch-Italienische Studien. During her B.A. in Deutsch-Italienische Studien, she spent a year at the University of Florence; she graduated in July 2018. In her Bachelor's thesis, she contrastively analyzed possible implications in Italian and German caused by the grammatical gender of a word on the semantic conceptualization level. From 2016 to 2018, she worked in the Bonner Italien-Zentrum at the University of Bonn and in its Italian branch in Florence as student assistant. Iris holds a scholarship of the Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes program.

The present research aims to establish the differences and similarities between complaint realization and modification patterns of Italian and German. The speech act complaint plays an important role in everyday and business communication (Meinl 2010) but, since it is intrinsically face-threatening (Brown & Levinson 1987), culture-inclined realization and modification strategies can cause cross-cultural misunderstandings or even harm the relationship between the interlocutors (Trosborg 1995). The present paper therefore analyses these patterns pragmatically, in order to reconsider universal versus culture-specific norms in language use. It further aims to fill the gap of missing cross-cultural research on complaints between Italian and German. The data for analysis were gathered through the combination of an oral DCT, conducted on WhatsApp, and an online evaluation questionnaire. The investigation of the oral responses, prompted through ten scenarios, led to the conclusion that even if the distribution of the realization strategies performed by the participants was similar, the differences in the use of modification devices and of additional directive acts can have an impact on the cross-culturally perceived directness level of complaint utterances. Overall, German participants tended to use more internal modification devices such as intensifiers, whereas the Italian group opted more often for external modification structures such as disarmers. The two groups of informants further differed in the answers' structure: they were more formulaic in the German corpus, and longer and more complex in the Italian repertoire.

Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Meinl, M. E. (2010). *Electronic complaints: An empirical study on British English and German complaints on eBay*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Bonn. Retrieved from: http://hss.ulb.uni-bonn.de/2010/2122/2122.htm

Trosborg, A. (1995). *Interlanguage pragmatics: Requests, complaints and apologies*. Berlin / New-York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Saturday, 29 June 2019│ 10:30 – 11:30│ Poster session

Measuring Linguistic Politeness: Perception of strategies in responses to 'thanks'

Jan Paul Högemann (Bonn)

Jan Paul Högemann holds a B.A. in English Language and Literature from the Open University and is a postgraduate student of Applied Linguistics at the University of Bonn. His current research investigates personality as a predictor of complex sentence construction in written discourse.

Politeness is assumed to be a multifaceted feature of interpersonal discourse. Linguistic Politeness has further been shown to be a matter of directness, formality and contextual appropriateness, both in performance and perception across a range of speech acts (see Kasper 1990 for discussion). What is less understood is whether specific speech acts show intrinsic arbitration of politeness independently of situational decorum, and thus enable direct measurement of informants' sensitivity to politeness along with cultural variation in specific perceptions. In this study, a five-point scale composed of isolated responses to 'thanks' is presented to measure these fundamental perceptions directly. After preliminary establishment of the measure's reliability, results were shown to provide a more complete view of perception than previously introduced DCT data, but still predict critical outcomes in ethnographically observed behavior, when compared directly to previous research introduced by Schneider (2005) and Bieswanger (2015). Once refined, the instrument's simplicity in both construction and administration should allow for future research to generate more directly comparable results across samples, cultures and individual informants.

Bieswanger, M. (2015). Variational pragmatics and responding to thanks – revisited. *Multilingua, 34*(4), 527–546.

Kasper, G. (1990). Linguistic Politeness: Current research issues. *Journal of Pragmatics, 14*, 193–218.

Schneider, K. P. (2005). 'No problem, you're welcome, anytime': Responding to thanks in Ireland, England, and the USA. In A. Barron & K. P. Schneider (Eds.), *The pragmatics of Irish English [Trends in linguistics. Studies and monographs; 164]* (pp. 101–139). Berlin / New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

"Great place to work" or "dominant" and "strict"? Contrasting corporate identity claims online and public reactions

Veronika Pankova (Bonn)

Veronika Pankova is an M.A. student in the Applied Linguistics program at the University of Bonn, currently writing her thesis on the usage and translation of linking constructions in English-German TED Talks. Veronika holds a Diploma in Linguistics and Theory and Methods of Teaching Foreign Languages and Cultures obtained in Russia. Veronika works as a research assistant for the Linguistics of English and Translation Studies team, University of Bonn (Chair Prof. Dr. Svenja Kranich), where she is involved in the project "Explicitation in Translation". Her current research interests include business communication, computer-mediated communication, English as a Business Lingua Franca, contrastive pragmatics and translation studies.

"[A] corporate website can be used to communicate a company's mission [...], and this can influence how various stakeholders perceive the organization" (Davies, Chun, da Silva and Roper 2004: 126). This statement underlines the crucial role that corporate mission statements play in stakeholders' perceptions of organization. Mission statements are meant to present a company's identity, "its values, goals, strategy, guiding principles and future perspectives" (Meex and Verplaetse 2011: 155).

The importance of systematic linguistic investigation of discursive processes through which the companies articulate their identity claims online is especially emphasized, since little attention has been paid to corporate identity exploration from a discourse analytical perspective (The PAD Research group 2016: 291). This research aims to address this gap and make a contribution regarding both the discursive processes involved in identity construction as well as stakeholders' perception of this identity, a topic which has been largely ignored so far. Thus, the present paper sets out to investigate how a company included in the DAX 30 list discursively constructs its corporate identity in the mission statement and how this company is perceived by the audience, specifically potential employees.

To examine the discursive strategies used to index corporate identity, the study takes a mixed methods approach by combining corpus analysis with discourse analytical techniques. Furthermore, an online questionnaire is used to investigate the audience's perception. 30 participants were asked to read the company's value statement in an anonymized format, to share their opinion on the company and evaluate it as a potential employer.

The results demonstrate that the company creates a set of interrelated identities, broadly labelled as professional (e.g. competent) and social (e.g. excited), and aimed at presenting a positive and successful image. Some discursive means

employed appear to support the professionally-oriented identities claimed, while at the same time contradicting the socially-oriented image. Consequently, based on the questionnaire results, the company fails to construct the intended balanced self-portrayal. This failure has a considerable impact on the participants' choice to potentially join the company and thus on the company's competitiveness.

Davies, G., Chun, R., da Silva, R. V., & Roper, S. (2004). A corporate character scale to assess employee and customer views of organization reputation. *Corporate Reputation Review*, *7*(2), 125–146.

Meex, B., & Verplaetse, H. (2011). The discursive construal of purpose by means of competence in German and English corporate mission statements. In K. Pelsmaekers, C. Rollo, T. Van Hout & P. Heynderickx (Eds.), *Displaying competence in organizations: Discourse perspectives* (pp. 150–179). London/New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

The PAD Research Group. (2016). Not so 'innocent' after all? Exploring corporate identity construction online. *Discourse & Communication*, *10*(3), 291–313.

Saturday, 29 June 2019| 10:30 – 11:30| Poster session

Interrogatives as means of sociocultural identity in The New Matrix 10/11 and the Spotlight 11 textbooks and their implications for EFL teaching

Elena Pleshakova (Bonn)

Elena Pleshakova is currently a Master's student in the Applied Linguistics program at the University of Bonn (Germany). Previously, she studied Applied English Linguistics at Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (The Netherlands) with a focus on 'Teaching English as a Foreign Language' (TEFL). Elena is also an accomplished language teacher. She has taught English and Russian as a Foreign Language from beginner to advanced level. Her scientific interests lie in the field of pragmatics, discourse (especially classroom discourse), translation and computational linguistics.

Questions/interrogatives are one of the strongest mechanisms to enable and direct communication. In Foreign Language Teaching (FLT), questions are not only an exercise material for grammar lessons but also a testing mechanism broadly used by teachers. The goal of the current study is to investigate to what extent the interrogatives occurring in scholastic English course-books sustain or hinder the training of communicative competence in FLLs, an issue which has never been studied before. For the current quantitative study, we retrieved 1988 interrogatives with the communicative function from two English mainstream Academic Methodological Complex (AMC) textbooks used in high schools in Russia: Spotlight 11 (published in Russia) and The New Matrix 10/11 (published in Oxford, Great Britain). The multimodal approach to the coding and analysis allowed us to develop a taxonomy which covered three essential aspects for the interrogatives in a textbook: external (syntactic and semantic), external (based on the macrosocial factors) and cultural embedding. The results have shown that the syntactic structure in both textbooks follows the standard grammatical patterns in

English. The content of questions from Spotlight 11 is based on the grammar topics whereas the Oxford textbook focuses on the socio-cultural contexts. The teacher-learner unilateral interaction occurs ca. 5 times more frequently than the learner-learner interaction in Spotlight 11. The function of the interrogatives in The New Matrix 10/11 is oriented to the learner-learner interaction. We could also pinpoint that interrogatives almost never occur as part of the communicative prompt exercises in the Russian textbook.

Bloom, B. S. (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objectives.* New York: Longmans Green.

Kirkgoz, Y., & Ağcam, R. (2011). Exploring culture in locally published English textbooks for primary education in Turkey. *C E P S Journal, 1*(1), 153–167.

Searle, J. (1976). A classification of illocutionary acts. *Language in Society, 5*(1), 1–23. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4166848 (last accessed 20 March 2019).

Saturday, 29 June 2019| 10:30 – 11:30| Poster session

Resolving number ambiguities in German: Effects of feature markedness on parser behavior

Dominik Schoppa (Bonn)

Dominik Schoppa is a second-year M.A. student of Applied Linguistics at Bonn University. He holds a B.A. degree in English Studies and Media Sciences and has investigated the speech event of appointment cancellations in his final thesis. While working as a student assistant at the chair of English Linguistics at Bonn University, Dominik Schoppa was involved in multiple research projects examining non-standard morphological and syntactic features of early African American English. Apart from psycholinguistics – which constitutes the framework of the study to be presented – further research interests include, but are not restricted to, pragmatics, metapragmatics, and lexical semantics.

The present study is aimed at examining how the human parser processes number ambiguous noun phrases (such as, e. g., *Lenas Lehrer*) in subject position as well as displaced disambiguations of this noun phrase's number value through a clause-final verb. A word-by-word self-paced reading procedure was used to collect data, and the focus of analysis lay on reading times for the disambiguating clause-final verb. Reading times were compared across three different independent variables with two conditions each: number (*singular/plural*), ambiguity (*ambiguous/unambiguous*), and number preference status (*pref/dispref*). A three-way ANOVA revealed marginally significant effects of ambiguity as well as the interaction of number and ambiguity. Within the interaction of number and ambiguity, simple main effects showed a significant variation of the *plural* condition across ambiguity values, but hardly any corresponding variation of the *singular* condition. In other words, *plural* delayed reading times in the *ambiguous* subset, whereas *singular* delayed reading times in the *unambiguous* subset.

Number preference status, whether in isolation or in combination with other variables, did not have any significant effects. Against the background of previous findings, this study verifies that upon encountering a number *ambiguous* noun, the parser commits itself temporarily to its preferred number value until further material leads to disambiguation (cf. Bader and Häussler 2009). Moreover, this study advocates an item-independent general preference principle (cf. Corbett 2000) as the underlying mechanism behind parser commitment, prompting the parser to commit itself to the unmarked *singular* value of the *ambiguous* noun. Finally, the fact that *plural* decreased reading times in the *unambiguous* subset is argued to reflect that a marked feature attracts the parser's attention more strongly than an unmarked feature as the former requires a larger share of non-automatic processing (cf. Dynel 2009). It is suggested that, as a consequence, feature markedness increases the parser's anticipation of a correspondingly marked verb, ultimately facilitating the processing of the latter.

Bader, M., & Häussler, H. (2009). Resolving number ambiguities during language comprehension. *Journal of Memory and Language, 61*, 352–373.

Corbett, G. G. (2000). *Number.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dynel, M. (2009). *Humorous garden-paths: A pragmatic-cognitive study*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Saturday, 29 June 2019| 10:30 – 11:30| Poster session

Promises in politics. Analysis of promising strategies of Russian- and English-speaking politicians

Nina Smirnova (Bonn)

Nina Smirnova is an M.A. student at the University of Bonn in the Applied Linguistics program. She obtained her Bachelor's degree in Applied Linguistics at the National Research University "Moscow Power Engineering Institute". Her Bachelor's thesis covers the field of corpus linguistics and focuses on analyses with corpus-based methods in linguistics. Her research interests lie in the field of corpus linguistics, pragmatics and contrastive analysis.

The present paper aims at investigating the realization of the speech act of promise in political discourse on the basis of Russian and American English. The study is based on the analysis of video recordings of speeches of Russian and American politicians. The given videos were transcribed and a sample of 32 promises of 4 politicians was gathered. As the method for a contrastive analysis of the speech act of promise, the speech behavior patterns (SBP) theory by Gladrow and Kotorova (2015) was chosen. The following research question can be distinguished in the present study: Are there some differences between promising strategies of Russian- and English-speaking politicians? The analysis of the created data sample reveals the following patterns used by both Russian and American politicians:

Explicit performative patterns with corresponding performative verbs / performative constructions and implicit performative patterns, which are realized as declarative sentences. Though there are patterns which are used only in Russian or only in English: These are declarative sentences with modal verbs in Russian and both explicit performative and implicit performative utterances with intensifiers in English.

Gladrow W., & Kotorova E. G. (2015). Contrastive study of speech behavior patterns. *Speech Genres, 2*(12), 15–19.

Saturday, 29 June 2019| 10:30 – 11:30| Poster session

Sentence final particles in Cantonese and Taiwanese Mandarin: The case of apologies

Min-Hsi Yu (Bonn)

Min-Hsi Yu, from Kaohsiung, Taiwan, is a Master's student of Applied Linguistics at the University of Bonn. She graduated from Fu-Jen Catholic University Taipei, Taiwan with a Bachelor's degree in German language and culture. She worked as an English and Chinese teacher in different language institutes. Her research interests include Chinese morphology, phonetics and phonology of Cantonese, Southern Min, Mandarin and English. She is specifically interested in cognates of Chinese origin and their phonetic features in the neighbouring East-Asian languages such as Japanese and Korean.

This is an empirical study comparing the sentence final particles (SFPs) used in Cantonese and Taiwanese Mandarin apologies. Though the rich inventory of SFPs in Chinese languages has been researched over the past decades, studies which examine their pragmatic functions in speech acts are rare. As Chor (2018) points out, SFPs are used mainly to modulate the speaker's epistemic stance, therefore, this paper provides analyses of the SFPs used in apologies, how they give extra meaning to the utterances and their respective function as speech act modifiers. Moreover, the study attempts to find out tendencies and differences in the usage of SFPs in apologies used in situations with different degrees of severity of the offence and how speakers indicate insincere attitudes in their apologies. Apologies have been elicited from native speakers using oral DCT questionnaires due to the lack of a standardised written form of SFPs in both languages and due to their predominant use in verbal communication. The result shows that *Aa3* is the most frequent particle used in Cantonese to soften the utterance while the Taiwanese Mandarin speakers used significantly less particles and the most frequent *la* exclusively appeared in insincere apologies to indicate speaker's reluctance. This paper aims at attracting research interests towards the pragmatic function of SFPs in Cantonese and many other Asian languages that share this feature.

Chor, W. (2018). Sentence final particles as epistemic modulators in Cantonese conversations: A discourse-pragmatic perspective. *Journal of Pragmatics, 129*, 34–47. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2018.03.008

Saturday, 29 June 2019| 10:30 – 11:30| Poster session

I would certainly apologize if you would like me to do that. The linguistic nature of 'Nonpologies'

Friederike Zahn (Bonn)

Friederike Zahn is a second-year M.A. student of Applied Linguistics at the University of Bonn. She previously attended the University of Sheffield and Münster University where she obtained her Bachelor's degree in German and English Philology. Her research interests include psycholinguistics, cross-cultural pragmatics, computer-mediated communication and speech act theory.

While public apologies are by no means a newly emerging phenomenon (see Tavuchis 1991; Cuypers 2013), various media uptakes suggest a change in perception of this publicly mediated speech act. Recently coined neologisms such as *non-(a)pology* aptly characterise the recipients' understandings of (nowadays) public apologies to be an "insincere apology or expression of regret" (urbandictionary.com) or a "statement that takes the form of an apology but does not constitute an acknowledgement of responsibility or regret" (oxforddictionaries.com).

Taking on a meta-pragmatic approach, this study sets out to explore and potentially provide a linguistic definition of *nonpologies.* 40 instances of infelicitous public apologies issued across different domains were analysed using well-established taxonomies of apologies (Olshtain and Cohen 1983; Kampf 2009). At first glance, the findings obtained from analyses focusing on lexical and semantic realisation strategies exhibited unexpected similarities to earlier studies on sincere (public) apologies. Only a closer analysis of structural and syntactical properties allowed to identify discrepancies to realisations of sincere apologies.

It is thus argued that the use of common linguistic patterns employed to realise nonpologies is believed to evoke an audience's impression of a felicitous speech act realisation. Only further and more in-depth analyses have shown all instances to violate at least one of the two felicity conditions relating to acknowledgment of responsibility and/or expression of regret. This is mainly achieved by modification(s) of the direct morphosyntactic environment or the use of specific lexis.

Cuypers, D. (2013). Introduction. In D. Cuypers, D. Janssen, J. Haers & B. Segaert (Eds.), *Public apology between ritual and regret: Symbolic excuses on false pretenses or true reconciliation out of sincere regret?* (pp. 3–9). New York: Rodopi.

Kampf, Z. (2009). Public (non-)apologies: The discourse of minimising responsibility. *Journal of Pragmatics, 41*(11), 2257–2270.

non-apology. (n.d.). In: *English Oxford Living Dictionaries*. Retrieved from: https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/non-apology

nonpology. (n.d.). In: *urban dictionary*. Retrieved from: https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=nonpology

Olshtain, E., & Cohen, A. (1983). Apology: a speech act set. In N. Wolfson & E. Judd (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics and language acquisition* (pp. 18–35). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Tavuchis, N. (1991). *Mea culpa: A sociology of apology and reconciliation.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Saturday, 29 June 2019│ 11:30 – 12:00

Reproach-justification-sequences during the Brexit discourse

Letizia Vecchio (Bonn)

Letizia Vecchio is a third-semester Master's student of linguistics at the University of Bonn, but started her program at the University of Siena, Italy. She studied German Studies and Political Science for her Bachelor's degree, therefore she is interested in political language, rhetoric and framing theory, and her linguistic 'role models' are George Lakoff and Elisabeth Wehling. She wrote her Bachelor's thesis on terrorism in the political discourse of German politicians (between 2015-17), focusing on the use of evaluative lexemes, metaphors, and euphemisms. In her Master's thesis, she wants to analyse language (ab-)use of nationalist parties in Germany.

The decision of the UK in 2016 to leave the European Union has led to one of the biggest crises of British Parliamentarism. As of today, no consensus has been reached. Putting the focus on the rough debates in Parliament, this paper analyses reproach/justification-sequences between the Prime Minister (PM) Theresa May and the Leader of Opposition (LO), Jeremy Corbyn. Two main questions were of central interest: (1) Which justification realisation strategies were used by the PM to defend her actions and, (2) related to the increasing disconnect of MPs towards the Government´s policy, did they change over the course of the negotiation process. Hence, six different parliamentary debates (between 2017 - 19) were analysed. The coding categories were adapted from Gordienko (2005). The analysis has revealed two main trends: (1) The Government justifies outcomes of negotiations by referring to the national interest: The given deal was in line with the Referendum 2016 and protected the national economy. (2) A more confrontational argumentation (refuting, contradicting and using counter reproaches) was used the closer the debates were held to the vote on 13.02.2019. Comparing the results with the study by Gordienko (2005), it turned out that the findings were well in line with the anticipated patterns within the genre in general.

Austin J. L. (1990). A Plea for Excuses: The Presidential Address. In R.R. Ammermann (Ed.), *Classics of Analytic Philosophy* (pp. 379–399). Retrieved from

https://books.google.de/books?id=CPKHKvge3Z4C&dq=austin+a+plea+for+excuses&hl=d
e&source=gbs_navlinks_s (Original published 1956).

Girnth, H. (2015). *Sprache und Sprachverwendung in der Politik: eine Einführung in die linguistische Analyse öffentlich-politischer Kommunikation* (2nd ed.). Germanistische Arbeitshefte: Vol. 39. Berlin a.o.: de Gruyter.

Gordienko, L. (2005). *Politische Online-Konferenzen des Deutschen Bundestages: Eine funktional-pragmatische Untersuchung am Beispiel von Rechtfertigungshandlungen.* Doctoral Dissertation, Frankfurt/Oder: Viadrina.

Saturday, 29 June 2019| 12:00 – 12:30

A cross-cultural study of requests in German and Russian

Merri Simonyan (Bonn)

Merri Simonyan is a Master's student at the University of Bonn. She studies Applied Linguistics. Her first degree is a specialist in British Studies and Intercultural Communication, which is a double degree including linguistics as well as the culture and politics of Great Britain. She has studied English, German, French and Russian. Her research interests include second and foreign language teaching and learning, translation studies and intercultural communication. She has been involved in various teaching and interpreting activities.

The present paper is a cross-cultural study of the speech act request in German and Russian. Requests are considered a significant aspect of human interaction. They are usually hearer-oriented, need some sort of effort from the hearer and are beneficial for the speaker. Syntactically, they can be expressed by the means of imperatives, interrogatives and declaratives. For foreign and second language learners it might be troublesome to employ these speech acts as the strategies and lexical and grammatical means expressing these speech acts might be various in different languages, in this case in German and Russian. The research questions of the present study are the following:

- By which language means do Germans and Russians express requests?
- What are their request strategies?

The present study is an empirical study. The data collection method is the corpus method. 60 requests have been retrieved from the LIMAs Corpus, the Russian National Corpus and the Leipzig Corpora Collection.

The request expressing strategies and modifications are similar in two languages. Differences concern some grammatical choices, for example the negation of the head act in the request or the clause type of the head act. The results of the study can be useful for second or foreign language learners of German and Russian languages.

Saturday, 29 June 2019| 13:30 – 14:00

Attitudes towards accents of English in Nigeria

Folajimi Oyebola (Münster)

Folajimi Oyebola is a PhD student and research assistant at the Department of English, University of Münster. Folajimi does research in sociolinguistics, phonology and phonetics.

There is a need to investigate which variety of English is most likely to act as a marker of linguistic identity in Nigeria. It is not always clear whether Nigerians are able to differentiate successfully between dialectal varieties of English (Olaniyi & Josiah, 2013). Also, there is a lack of empirical research on their perceptions and attitudes towards English accents. This study investigates the attitudes of Nigerians towards accents of English both from the inner circle and the non-inner circle. It examines the attitudes of Nigerian university students towards the available English accents in the country, namely: British English, American English, Ghanaian English, Jamaican English and Nigerian English. The study employs a range of direct (interviews and questionnaire) and indirect (the verbal-guise test) techniques of attitude measurement to obtain in-depth information about such perceptions. Using SPSS, the data from the accent rating test was analyzed by conducting a multivariate analysis of variance for differences and significance in the rating between the speakers and traits. A Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was performed to determine how the various traits were grouped into significant sociolinguistic dimensions. To determine the differences in the scores for these dimensions with respect to the accents, a repeated analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. The results show that Nigerians have varying preferences for English accents, depending on the territory of origin and/or use of the English varieties, in other words, whether those varieties of English come from the inner or the non-inner circle (Kachru 1982).

In my presentation, I will give an overview of the study, the methodological approach and the findings. It is expected that the research will contribute to the exploration of the future development of English in Nigeria within the context of World Englishes (Schneider 2007). It will also provide explanations for the underlying motivations for linguistic variation and change in postcolonial countries such as Nigeria, where English plays a significant role in almost every sector and where there is a recurrent issue of competing English norms among the speakers of English.

Kachru, B. B. (1982). *The other tongue: English across cultures*. Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press.

Olaniyi, O. K., & Josiah, U. E. (2013). Nigerian accents of English in the context of world Englishes. *World Journal of English Language, 3*, 38–49.

Schneider, E. W. (2007). *Postcolonial English: Varieties around the world*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Saturday, 29 June 2019| 14:00 – 14:30

A corpus-assisted critical discourse study of social transformation advocacy in the lyrics of some Nigerian and Ghanaian hip-hop artistes

Mohammed Ademilokun (Chemnitz), Jacinta Edusei (Chemnitz)

Mohammed Ademilokun is a postdoctoral researcher at Technical University, Chemnitz, Germany. He has published articles in peer-reviewed journals and has attended international conferences in South Africa, Nigeria, Czech Republic, Italy and Germany.

Jacinta Edusei is completing her doctoral research at the Technical University of Chemnitz in Germany under the sponsorship of Katholischer Akademischer Ausländer-Dienst (KAAD). She worked as a teaching assistant at the Department of Modern Languages in KNUST, Kumasi and as a part-time lecturer at Alliance Française in Kumasi, Ghana. She has attended international conferences in Albania, Cameroon, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy and Slovakia. She has also published articles in several peer-reviewed journals. Her research interests include discourse analysis, communication skills, language variation and culture, academic writing and pragmatics. Her current research focuses on academic writing in Ghana.

The subject of social transformation remains important for the neighbouring African countries of Ghana and Nigeria in view of the numerous social ills in these two nations. Hip-hop artists in both countries, as part of their social commitment, also broach the subject through their music in order to positively impact both the governments of the nations and their citizens. This paper seeks to examine the language used by the artists in addressing these issues in their music, with a focus on characterising their discourse and assessing the efficacy of the linguistic resources deployed. Data for the study comprise lyrics of five notable Ghanaian and five Nigerian hip-hop artists known for their contribution to national transformation advocacy through their music. We chose a corpus-assisted critical discourse approach as the analytical framework for the study, employing corpus linguistic methods and statistical software such as Antconc and R-Studio. The study aims to demonstrate the agency of hip-hop as a tool for social transformation in African countries through the analysis of rhetorical features, and furthermore to highlight similarities and differences in the way hip-hop artistes of both countries pursue their social transformation crusade.

Saturday, 29 June 2019| 14:30 – 15:00

Between English as multilingua franca and hakuna matata: language choices in the tourist space of Zanzibar

Susanne Mohr (Bonn, Cape Town)

Susanne Mohr obtained an M.A. degree in English and Romance linguistics from RWTH Aachen University in 2007, and a PhD for her work on mouth actions in Irish Sign Language from the University of Cologne in 2011. In Cologne, she studied for an additional degree in African Studies and has focused on the African continent in her subsequent work, e.g. in her postdoctoral dissertation (2018) on pluralization and countability in African Englishes. She is currently a research fellow at the University of Cape Town, funded by the Humboldt foundation. Her research interests are in the area of multilingualism and (cross-modal) language contact, especially related to globalization and its socio-cultural effects.

The adaptation of language to new cultural contexts as a result of globalization causes fascinating sociolinguistic effects that have only recently come to the increased attention of linguistics. One central issue in this regard is tourism, resulting in linguistically super-diverse spaces (Vertovec 2007) as language is commodified under global capitalism (Jaworski & Thurlow 2010). Manifold possible reasons for choosing languages in these complex spaces have been put forth, ranging from practicality, over economic gain to language play.

This paper analyzes language choices and their motivations in tourist-host interactions in Zanzibar. Applying a multidisciplinary approach that combines linguistic and psychological methodologies, it presents a case study of four hosts working in different professions on the archipelago. The results show important differences between indigenous Zanzibaris, who choose English and other European languages to position themselves well on the job market, and migrant workers from other parts of Africa, who choose English for practical reasons and intersperse it with Hakuna Matata Swahili (Nassenstein 2019) to convey a (commodified) sense of Africanness to tourists.

Altogether, the paper contributes to the description of the dynamics of the multilingual space of Zanzibar. Ultimately, it shows that motivations for language choices in super-diverse, commodified contexts are speaker-dependent and heterogeneous, and not reducible to one single motivational factor.

Jaworksi, A. & C. Thurlow. (2010). The globalizing habitus of tourism: Toward a sociolinguistics of fleeting relationships. In N. Coupland (Ed.), *The handbook of language and globalization* (pp. 255–286). Chichester et al.: Wiley-Blackwell.

Nassenstein, N. (2019). The Hakuna Matata Swahili: Linguistic souvenirs from the Kenyan coast. In A. Mietzner & A. Storch (Eds.) *Language and tourism in postcolonial settings* (pp. 130–156). Bristol: Channel View.

Vertovec, S. (2007). Super-diversity and its implications. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 30*(6), 1024–1054.

Saturday, 29 June 2019| 15:30 – 16:00

Measuring pragmatic awareness applying Signal Detection Theory: Precision and recall in appropriateness judgments of advanced EFL learners and teacher trainees

Ilka Flöck (Oldenburg), Joanna Pfingsthorn (Bremen)

Dr. Joanna Pfingsthorn is a researcher in TEFL with a focus on language diversity and inclusion at the Institute of Languages and Literature at the University of Bremen. She worked as a lecturer and research associate at the Institute of English and American Studies at the University of Oldenburg from 2007-2019. She holds a PhD in TEFL from the University of Oldenburg, an M.Sc. in Cognitive Science from the University of Amsterdam, and a B.A. in Psychology from Jacobs University Bremen.

Dr. Ilka Flöck has been a lecturer and research associate at the Institute of English and American Studies at the University of Oldenburg since 2009, where she teaches English linguistics. Her research focuses on (intercultural) pragmatics and sociolinguistics. She holds a PhD in English Linguistics from the University of Oldenburg and an M.A. in English Linguistics and Medieval Literature from the University of Bonn.

Pragmatic awareness has been defined to include the knowledge about "*rules and conventions underlying appropriate language use in particular communicative situations and (…) specific speech communities*" (Alcon & Jorda 2008: 1948). It has been also operationalised as the ability to evaluate the appropriateness of utterances metalinguistically (cf. Bardovi-Harlig & Doernyei 1998).

The present study measures pragmatic awareness of future EFL teachers in a metapragmatic judgement test containing fictitious communicative scenarios based on DCT-data used in previous studies (e.g. Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei 1998). The study offers an alternative approach to the analysis of metalinguistic judgment data and incorporates two parameters from Signal Detection Theory (Wickens 2002): (1) precision: the likelihood with which informants are able to precisely discriminate between pragmatically appropriate and inappropriate utterances and (2) recall: the likelihood with which inappropriate utterances are not overlooked. The synthesis of these indicators allows for a thorough examination of metalinguistic judgment processes as it explores phenomena such as over- and underidentification of inappropriateness. By focusing solely on the correctly identified instances of inappropriateness, earlier studies (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei 1998, Niezgoda & Röver 2001, Schauer 2006) underestimate the role of appropriate utterances that are incorrectly identified, correctly identified appropriate utterances as well as inappropriate utterances which are overlooked.

The results of the study indicate that pre-service EFL teachers lack a degree of precision and recall in their judgment: while they do not overcorrect appropriate utterances, they overlook inappropriate ones. This suggests that future EFL teachers do not necessarily show high levels of pragmatic awareness and calls for

a more hands-on focus on pragmatic awareness in teacher education both in terms of the development of teachers' pragmatic competence as well as their appropriateness judgment skills.

Alcon, E. & Jorda, M. (2008). Pragmatic Awareness in Second Language Acquisition. Encyclopedia of Language and Education, 1948-1959.

Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Dörnyei, Z. (1998). Do language learners recognize pragmatic violations? Pragmatic vs. grammatical awareness in instructed L2 learning. TESOL Quarterly, 32, 233-259.

Niezgoda, Kimberly, & Carsten Röver. 2001. "Pragmatic and Grammatical Awareness." In Pragmatics in Language Teaching, edited by Kenneth Rose and Gabriele Kasper, 63–79. Cambridge: CUP.

Schauer, Gila 2006. "Pragmatic Awareness in ESL and EFL Contexts: Contrast and Development." Language Learning 56 (2): 269–318.

Wickens, Thomas D. (2002). Elementary Signal Detection Theory. Oxford: OUP.

Saturday, 29 June 2019| 16:00 – 16:30

The use of e-portfolios in assessing reading comprehension skills in ESP

Gabriela Weht, Victor Sajoza Juric (Córdoba)

Gabriela Weht is a teacher and public translator of English. She graduated from the Faculty of Languages, National University of Cordoba, Argentina, and holds a Degree in Management from the Catholic University of Cordoba, Argentina. She is currently finishing her Master's in Education in Virtual Environments (dissertation in progress) and is teaching English for Academic Purposes courses at the National University of Córdoba and at the Catholic University of Córdoba. She has been oral examiner for the University of Cambridge ESOL and has prepared students for international examinations. Her main areas of research are information and communication technology (ICT) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP). She has participated as speaker in many international conferences and published textbooks and papers in different academic and scientific events.

Víctor Hugo Sajoza Juric is a teacher and a public translator of French, graduated from the National University of Córdoba (UNC), Argentina. He holds a Master's degree in Distance Education from the Metropolitan University of Technology (Chile). He is a full-time lecturer in legal translation and French at the Faculty of Languages, UNC, where he also teaches at three post-graduate programs. His main research interests include educational technology and applied linguistics, translation and interpreting methodology and he is the director of two research projects. He is the author of several book chapters and articles and he edits for the journal VESC – Virtuality, Education and Science. He supervises postgraduate dissertations in different M.A. programs related to translation and the use of technology in educational contexts. He is the head of the Languages for Academic

Purposes Department at UNC and president of the Translators Association of the Province of Córdoba, Argentina.

The present work contains a practical proposal for assessing the reading comprehension skills in English of university students who speak Spanish as their mother tongue. The proposal, which includes the use of e-portfolios as an assessment tool, has been designed within the general context of the subject Reading Comprehension of English in the different disciplines at the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba (UNC), Argentina. This subject, which is based on an ESP methodology, seeks to develop autonomous readers of the genres written in English that circulate in the disciplinary communities.

The proposal aims to explore the potential of the e-portfolio as an assessment tool in ESP classes. In this talk, I will first refer to the different stages of the proposal: discovery, production, feedback and socialization. Secondly, I will show samples of students´ e-portfolios. Thirdly, I will briefly analyze how these activities actually relate to the training of competences and skills involved in the academic literacy process. Then, I will show the results of a survey of students´ attitudes towards the approach. Finally, I will refer to the implications of this approach in the hope that these practical applications to language assessment can help undergraduate students thrive in the academic and professional fields.

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