

Research Day

Summer Term 2024

Abstracts

Wednesday, 15 May 2024 | 10:40-11:20

Terms of endearment as in-group markers. Zooming in on variation in the English-speaking Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community.

Dr. Phil. Anke Lensch

After a 30-year-long civil war, the Sri Lankan Tamil community finds itself dispersed over the entire globe and an entire generation of Sri Lankan Tamils has reached adulthood outside of Sri Lanka. Online data suggests that English is playing an increasingly dominant role in this community. For most individuals who were raised in predominantly English-speaking countries, English is their dominant language (cf. Canagarajah 2008, 2009). In addition, individuals who learnt English at school often choose English over Tamil when interacting with their relatives abroad. Thus, in many settings, English is replacing Tamil as a lingua franca. By zooming in on endearment terms, this presentation illustrates how nevertheless, some Tamil features surface in English interactions of individuals with a Sri Lankan Tamil background.

References

- Canagarajah, Suresh. 2008. "Language shift and the family: Questions from the Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora." *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 12/2. 143–176.
- Canagarajah, Suresh. 2019. "Changing orientations to heritage language: The practice-based ideology of Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora families." *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*. 2019/255. 9-44.

Wednesday, 15 May 2024 | 11:20-12:00

A multifactorial prediction and deviation analysis of South Asian Englishes

Asim Khan, M.Phil.

Exploring English language varieties in contemporary times is essential for fostering intercultural understanding, promoting social inclusion, informing language policy, enhancing language education, empowering linguistic communities, and advancing linguistic scholarship. South Asia's linguistic diversity underscores the need for comparison between South Asian Englishes and global varieties to enrich our understanding of linguistic diversity, cultural identity, globalization, and social change in one of the world's most populous and dynamic regions. This study focuses on the comparison of South Asian Englishes to gain an insight into the multiple dimensions of English language use in South Asia and contribute to broader discussions on language variation and multilingualism in the region. Utilizing Multifactorial Prediction and Deviation Analysis (MuPDAR(F)), the study aims to evaluate the claim about IndE as a linguistic epicenter of the region by identifying deviations from predicted frequencies and determine regions or contexts of linguistic innovation.

Wednesday, 15 May 2024 | 12:10-12:50

Lexicalization and gender ideologies in the computer-mediated political discourse of select Nigerian female politicians: A preliminary study

Dr. Oluwayemisi Olusola Adebomi

This study examines lexicalization and gender ideologies in the computer-mediated political discourse of one of Nigeria's leading female politicians, Oby Ezekwesili. Data were culled from <https://saharareportersnewyork>. Excerpts from her speeches were purposively sampled and subjected to both qualitative and quantitative analyses. They were analysed from the perspectives of Fairclough's (1992) concept of wording, with insights from van Dijk's (2000) critical discourse analysis. LancsBox X version 6.0 was used for the quantitative analysis. The study reveals that the female presidential candidate uses words for positive self-representation and to ideologically position herself as better than her male contemporaries.

Wednesday, 15 May 2024 | 12:50-13:30

'The men also cry': Exploring the inter(intra)textual construction of men's victimhood in newspaper reports on domestic violence in Africa

Dr. Tolulope A. Akinseye

Despite prevalent discourses surrounding violence against women, the reality of the victimization of men remains underexplored, particularly within African contexts. Therefore, this research delves into the portrayal of men's victimhood in newspaper reports on domestic violence in Africa. The selected newspaper reports are from selected countries in Southern, Western, and Eastern Africa. A total of 100 news reports were gathered across popular newspapers in the regions to provide a comprehensive understanding of media representations of the discourse during the period from 2019 to 2023, sourced from NexisLexis. This timeframe encompasses both the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the post-pandemic period. The newspaper reports are subjected to Bazerman (2004)'s model of Intertextuality, coupled with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Through nuanced analysis, the study unveils the textual references inherent in newspaper narratives as well as uncovers the underlying linguistic representations and strategies that shape the narratives and the discourse surrounding violence against men as depicted in media narratives.

Wednesday, 15 May 2024 | 13:30-14:10

Developing a linguistic framework for analyzing populist discourse

Julia Schilling, M.A.

Chapter 3 of my dissertation presents a detailed linguistic framework for analyzing populist discourse, building on a previously established definition of populism as a multi-layered phenomenon that employs direct appeals to "the people," anti-establishment rhetoric, and a crisis narrative. This chapter examines key linguistic research on populism to identify patterns and methods that enrich understanding and analysis. It then presents a novel framework that integrates ideational, stylistic and organizational dimensions of populism and provides a comprehensive set of tools to examine the linguistic features of populist language in social media. This framework aims to unravel the complex ways in which populists construct meaning and mobilize support, offering insights into their communication strategies and their impact on public perception.

Wednesday, 15 May 2024 | 15:00-15:40

**Attitudes toward English accents of English in Poland,
Germany and Iran**

Reihaneh Barani Toroghi, M.A.

The present study seeks to investigate how German, Iranian and Polish adult-level English teachers students, as non-native but European English speakers, rank English accent and construct both the language related and gender-related identities and negotiate the legitimacy of the varieties of English spoken by both European and non-European advanced adult learners. In particular, we shall be concerned with pondering upon how German, Iranian and Polish adult-level English students English teacher rank the English accent of the other non-native English speakers, such as Iranian, Indian, Indonesian, African, Arabic, Chinese, British, American, and Scottish speakers, how they construct and negotiate the language-related and gender-related identities and legitimacy of the English accent of the non-natives, and whether or not the unequal Englishes and the dichotomy of centre-periphery are reproduced by a group of non-native European English speakers, enjoying common European/ and/or Western identity with the native speaking countries, regarding the non-native English speakers.

Wednesday, 15 May 2024 | 15:40-16:20

Effectiveness of cognitive linguistic approaches in language teaching

Xiaofang Duan, M.A.

This study primarily aims to apply cognitive linguistic insights within a task-supported instructional setting in a Chinese EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom context. Though, assessing the effectiveness of pedagogical approaches in a classroom context remains a challenging endeavor. Cognitive linguistics (CL) has a multitude of conceptual tools at its disposal that can make grammatical categories relatively transparent to foreign language learners. Nevertheless, in the Chinese EFL context, the application of Cognitive linguistics in language teaching is still at its pioneering phase, thus leaving a great potential for future research. In light of this, empirical research is done to present a clear illustration of how respective linguistic approaches can be translated into effective teaching practices in the instructional context. Therefore, while testing the applicability of cognitive linguistics to language teaching, this project demonstrates how cognitive linguistic theories can contribute to language teaching practice. In concrete terms, one specific grammatical category is addressed, namely, phrasal verbs (PV), on the ground that it poses a huge challenge to second and foreign language learners due to their internal flexibility and constructional variability. The statistical results indicate that overall there is a positive effect of cognitive linguistic insights and task-based approaches in language teaching as well as

learners' language learning and perception. Therefore, by providing empirical evidence in the Chinese EFL context, it offers additional empirical evidence to the international research community in this field, by exhibiting how linguistic theory can contribute to pedagogical practice in a classroom context.

Wednesday, 15 May 2024 | 16:30-17:10

Grammatical variation in young German learner English

Bethany Stoddard, M.A.

Multifactorial analyses of the dative alternation in EFL suggest that advanced learners are sensitive to many of the same factors as native speakers in their production of the dative alternation, however, research on beginner/intermediate learners is lacking.

For German EFL learners, ease of processing might predict a preference for the prepositional construction, while transfer effects might predict a double object construction preference. Thus, in my doctoral dissertation I aim to investigate the production of the dative and benefactive alternations in young German learner English, to gain insight into the early stages of acquisition of probabilistic constraints.

Wednesday, 15 May 2024 | 17:10-17:50

Frequency vs. accuracy in learner Englishes: A study on tense and aspect

Prof. Robert Fuchs

This study expands on previous work in the area of morphosyntactic tense-aspect (TA) expression (see, e.g., Deshors, 2021; Fuchs & Werner, 2020) with a view to testing and refining established SLA principles on the acquisition of TA markers. Specifically, we consider (i) the order of acquisition of tense and aspect (OATA) and (ii) the Default Past Tense Hypothesis (DPTH; Salaberry, 2008). To date, these hypotheses have been put to the test only in smaller learner groups, mainly applying experimental SLA approaches (see, e.g., Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Svalberg, 2018).

Data is drawn from the *International Corpus of Crosslinguistic Interlanguage* (Tono & Díez-Bedmar, 2014) and the *International Corpus of Learner English* (Granger et al., 2009) to assess TA acquisition in (tutored) learner writing from the beginning to the advanced level in four typologically different L1 backgrounds (German, Chinese, Polish, Spanish). Error ratings of more than 4,000 data points (verb tokens) were obtained from two raters. Overall, our results confirm the predictions of the OATA and the DPTH.

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