Book of abstracts
Busch, Brigitta & Purkarthofer, Judith: Linguistic repertoire and the construction of heteroglossic spaces in schools............................................................................................................................................. 5
Čekuolitė, Aurelija: Pop Girls and Tough Boys: A Sociolinguistic Study of Russian and English in Vilnius Adolescents’ speech............................................................................................................................................. 5
Creese, Angela, Blackledge, Adrian & Takhi, Jaspreet Kaur: Discourses of educational achievement in bilingual English Panjabi settings ........................................................................................................................................................................... 7
Daryai-Hansen, Petra: Plurilingual and Intercultural Competences – Descriptors and Teaching Materials ................................ 8
Daugaard, Line Møller: “Af-Soomaalii” – Somali teaching in a multilingual primary school in Denmark...... 10
Dong, Jie: When monocentric language ideology meets polycentric language practice: A case from China’s internal migrant children........................................................................................................................................................................... 11
Erdüyan, İşıl: Restructuring (in) the language classrooms: Multilingual urban Turkish youth in Berlin ...... 12
Hultgren, Anna Kristina: English as a Language of Science and the Consequences for Nordic Terminology.... 13
Jonsson, Carla & Muhonen, Anu: “Älskar dig habibi ♥”: Indexing glocal and heritage identities through polylingual language practices on Facebook ...................................................................................................................................................... 14
Juffermans, Kasper & Li, Jinling: Being Dutch and Chinese at the same time: Voicing bilingual identities in the classroom and online.............................................................................................................................................................. 15
Kirilova, Marta: Who gets the job? Interactional study of multilingual job interviews and workplace ideologies ........................................................................................................................................................................ 16
Kokkinakis, Sofie Johansson: Computer-based quantitative methods applied to first and second language student writing ........................................................................................................................................................................ 18
Kukarenko, Natalia & Lotherington, Ann Therese: Unrecognized (Linguistic) Work: Russian Mothers in Norway........................................................................................................................................................................ 21
Kulbrandstad, Lars Anders: Heldig med nye permanente minoritetsspråk? Svar fra norske lærere ........ 23
Kulbrandstad, Lise Iversen & Alstad, Gunhild Tomter: Forskningsbasert førskolelærerutdanning og flerspråklige perspektiver........................................................................................................................................................................ 25
Madsen, Lian Malai, Karrebæk, Martha, Møller, Janus Spindler, Jørgensen, J. Normann, Stæhr, Andreas, Ag, Astrid, Nørreby, Thomas & Lundqvist Ulla: Language use and language norms among and around young poly languagers - Case studies from the Amager project .............................................................................................................................. 26
Monsen, Marte: Tospråklige elever, lesetester og mangeldiskurs ...................................................................... 30
Møller, Pia Hildebrand & Nielsen, Stine Skou: Sproglige og studiemæssige udfordringer for studerende med dansk som andetsprog på Aarhus Universitet ............................................................................................................................ 31
Nevinskaitė, Laima & Vaicekauskienė, Loreta: Goodbye Russian. Welcome English? A closer look into attitudes towards english and russian in lithuania....................................................................................................................................................... 33
Olsen, Torild Marie: Flerspråklige barn i barnehage – stimulering av ordførråd i samtaler med personalet ...... 34
Pöyhönen, Sari & Holm, Lars: Literacy in adult second language teaching – the case of CEFR .................. 35
Rossi, Eleonora & Kochenov, Dmitry: Bilingualism beyond language: Policy Meets the Neurocognitive reality of Bilingualism........................................................................................................................................................................ 36
Rhys, Mirain, Thomas, Enlli Mon, Ware, Jean, Lye, Catrin Bethan: Exploring bilingual and L2 speakers’ performance on Executive Functioning tasks: issues from Wales............................................................................................................................... 37
Ruiz de Zarobe, Yolanda: Bilingual education: From policy planning to learning outcomes ...................... 38
Rydenvald, Marie: Language choice among multilingual students in an international context .................. 39
Rynkänen, Tatjana: Russian-speaking immigrant adolescents in Finnish society – characteristics of bilingualism ........................................................................................................................................................................ 40
Schøning, Signe Wedel: Poly-lingualism in the Periphery .................................................................................. 41
Shirobokova, Larisa: Modern networked media as a key factor in the globalization process to preserve endangered languages (the case og Udmurt language) ........................................................................................................................................................................ 43
Smeds, Helena: Perceptual compensation in blind second language learners .............................................. 44
Tammekänd, Liina: The Bilingualism of Southern Estonians – the Structural Analysis of Narratives in Estonian and Võru ........................................................................................................................................................................ 46
Taylor, Shelley K. & Li, Vickie Wai Kei: Opening ‘spaces’ to bridge student plurilingualism and second/foreign language teaching ...................................................................................................................................................... 47
Trebbels, Marina: Raising educational aspirations: A case in favor of bilingualism ................................................. 49
Tuzlukovka, Victoria: The Role of Bilingual Terminology Dictionaries in the Age of Globalization .................. 51
Varghese, Manka: Constraints and opportunities in language minority teacher identity and teacher education in the United States ......................................................................................................................................................................................... 52
Voipio-Huovinen, Sanna: Teenager immigrant students as participants in global interaction.......................... 53
Did you say experimental and naturalistic?! Using experiments to study real-life bilingualism

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While experimental work in laboratory settings is favoured in cognitive psychology, the terms ‘experiment’ and ‘laboratory’ to many linguists interested in bilingualism come with a strong sense of something highly artificial, ungeneralisable and irrelevant to the real – and messy – world of language use. The experimentalist will argue that the multitude of factors that affect language use have to be controlled in order to say anything meaningful about a single factor, while the sceptic will counter that nothing meaningful can be said based on a tightly controlled and therefore artificial experiment, and that the effect of isolated variables have no relevance to language processes where no variables are in fact isolated.

The aim of this presentation is to show how various technological developments provide fruitful ways of compromising between these two positions, retaining some of the control over circumstances favoured by the experimentalist while also making experiments more naturalistic and therefore more relevant to our understanding of bilingualism and language in practice. I will focus on three tools, which I will illustrate with empirical studies of L2 word and sentence comprehension and L2 vocabulary acquisition.

The first and most generally applicable tool is the use of mixed-effects regression models to analyse quantitative data. Crucially, such analyses allow us to model the differences between individual participants in an empirical investigation. Moreover, these models allow the experimenter to take a range of variables into account in the data analysis, instead of having to meticulously control them in an artificial experimental setting.

The second tool is remote eye-tracking where the eye-movements of the language user can be monitored in a set-up which almost completely resembles a standard computer work station. Combined with key-logging, this means that we can study ordinary reading and writing in one or more languages of bilinguals as well as the process of transferring from one language to another during translation.

The third tool uses models from computational linguistics to take the effect of sentential context on word comprehension into account, replacing the artificial sentences or heavy norming that is otherwise necessary for studies of word reading in context.

The three tools draw on the fields of statistics, applied computer science, and computational linguistics, which all turn out to support the study of real-life bilingualism.
Linguistic repertoire and the construction of heteroglossic spaces in schools

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In connection with processes of globalisation, migration and mobility growing attention has been paid to linguistic practices that have been designated by terms such as language crossing, translanguaging, polylingual languaging, and metrolingualism. These approaches mark a shift away from structure, system, and regularity toward approaches that acknowledge fluidity and creativity in linguistic practices. Such speaker centred approaches suggest to re-examine the notion of linguistic repertoire, originally developed in an interactional perspective by John Gumperz (1964), from a post-structuralist perspective. In our contribution we will first raise theoretical and methodological issues, and focus more precisely on a method developed within the past years at the university of Vienna, employing a visual approach that uses creative drawings for the elicitation of narratives on how speakers experience their heteroglossic and diverse linguistic repertoires and how they relate these experiences to their language biographies.

Through the example of one bilingual primary school, where a multimodal school language profile (Busch 2010) has been effectuated, we want to engage in the discussion of the links between individual repertoire and the construction of heteroglossic social spaces (Lefebvre 1991). These spaces are represented in visual and verbal data (photos, drawings and interviews) and are analysed to understand the dynamics, discourses and local practices of languages in school (Pennycook 2010, van Leeuwen 2008) as well as their translocal connections.

References

**Pop Girls and Tough Boys: A Sociolinguistic Study of Russian and English in Vilnius Adolescents’ speech**

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Two main languages which are available for Lithuanian adolescents, besides Lithuanian, are English which is nowadays lingua franca, and Russian, the language of the well-established minority in Lithuania. The aim of this study is to examine the social meanings and functions that English and Russian have in Vilnius adolescents’ speech.

I have used the stylistic practice approach in my study. Style is a clustering of various resources (cf. Eckert 2001, Quist 2005). Stylistic practice is the process through which these resources become socially meaningful.

In this study I have tried to identify style clusters that are available to Vilnius adolescents. Following Quist (2005) definition of style I place linguistic elements in the broader context together with other non-linguistic elements, i.e. I have tried to find out which linguistic elements (slang, swear-words, English and Russian or the absence of the before-mentioned elements) cluster with which non-linguistic elements (gender, clothes, attitude to school, hobbies etc.).

As the understanding of adolescents’ social life is crucial in the study, ethnographic method has been applied. Via 3 weeks of ethnographic research in a secondary school in Vilnius (2 classes were observed) and speech recordings (audiotaped recordings of three groups of pupils playing the board game and self-recordings from one pupil) I have managed to identify two style clusters: a masculine one that I call in this presentation tough boys and a feminine one that I call pop girls. Masculine body sign, little interest in class activities, interest in sport, Russian swearwords, lots of Russian, little English characterize tough boys style cluster. Feminine body sign, quite great interest in class activities, interest in pop music, dancing, Russian swearwords, lots of English characterize pop girls style cluster. From the linguistic point of view it is English that distinguishes these two style clusters.

The results of the study show that Russian features are characteristic of cool, streetwise speech and are used to demonstrate strength, power and masculinity, whereas English express the identity of a witty, creative, modern young person who shows great interest in the pop culture.

**References**


Discourses of educational achievement in bilingual English Panjabi settings

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Drawing on an ethnographic study of young people attending a Panjabi complementary school, their families, and their teachers this paper presents examples of linguistic play, creativity, stylisation, reflexive language and artful performance in the constraining context of the language classroom. The paper tracks the circulation of one salient and powerful discourse, that of educational achievement and follows this discourse across two interconnected bilingual settings, that of home and complementary school. It considers how these two institutional and social collectives (home and school) provide discursive spaces (Heller, 2011) for participants to forge trajectories across contexts which allow for the solidification and normalization of this discourse while simultaneously constraining the emergence of others.
Petra Daryai-Hansen (PD), Assistant Professor, Roskilde University, Denmark.
Team member of the FREPA project, ECML, 2012-2013.

Working languages
Plenaries in Danish with slides in English.
Group discussions in the Scandinavian languages and English.

The increasingly globalized, multicultural and multilingual world requires complex plurilingual and intercultural competences from ethnic minorities and majorities alike. The panel session, which will take place as a practical hands-on educational workshop, aims to introduce researchers, teachers, teacher trainers and decision-makers to the Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to Languages and Cultures (FREPA). The FREPA project, financed by the ECML of the Council of Europe since 2004, has developed different tools that support learners of all levels in acquiring plurilingual and intercultural competence. The panel session will present:

1. the reference document FREPA – Competences and Resources, which offers a comprehensive list of descriptors (knowledge, attitudes and skills) considered necessary within the perspective of a plurilingual and intercultural education,
2. a bank of materials, available online, which provides teaching materials of how to develop these competences in practice,
3. a training kit to enhance the effectiveness of applying the reference document and the suggested teaching materials.

FREPA is a complement to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and the European Language Portfolio, rejecting the “compartmentalised” view of an individual’s linguistic and cultural competence: This competence is not a collection of distinct and separate competences but a plurilingual and pluricultural competence encompassing the full range of languages available to him/her. Pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures are didactic approaches that use teaching activities involving several (or at least more than one) varieties of languages or cultures. These approaches take into account all the existing competences present either within or outside the educational environment, leading to the inclusion and recognition of the cultural and linguistic resources of ethnic minority pupils. Through the implementation of these approaches the educational system can be reorganised to offer greater equality in the way culturally and linguistically diverse citizens are served and represented. In Denmark, FREPA is for instance being used to analyse, develop and evaluate intercultural and plurilingual competences at Copenhagen’s International Profile School, Randersgades Skole.

The focus of the workshop:

1. Plenary: What are plurilingual and intercultural competences? Why pluralistic approaches?
Linking FREPA with the context of globalization and the principles of plurilingual and intercultural education as promoted by the Council of Europe.

2. In groups: Exploring the different pluralistic approaches (the *intercultural approach*, *awakening to languages*, *intercomprehension of related languages* and *integrated didactic approach*) through the analysis of teaching materials. Discussing which kind of knowledge, attitudes, and skills may be developed by using the teaching materials.

3. In groups: Exploring the reference document.

4. Plenary: Discussing how FREPA in future may be used by the workshop participants in their fields of practice.
“Af-Soomaali!” – Somali teaching in a multilingual primary school in Denmark

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Multilingual children – like all children – move in and through a range of different sites for language and literacy learning in their everyday lives. In this presentation, such sites are conceptualized as ‘literacy spaces’. Danish teaching in school represents a privileged example of a literacy space; foreign language teaching in English, German or French other recognized literacy spaces. However, multilingual children move in and between a range of other literacy spaces in their everyday life. These include mother tongue or community language teaching in or out of school, Qu’ranic class and informal language teaching at home by parents, siblings or others; all of which largely unresearched in a Danish context. The presentation is based on ongoing research exploring literacy spaces in a Danish multilingual primary school with an expanded language curriculum. The children in the Year 2 class in focus not only receive teaching in Danish, but also in English, and many children furthermore take Arabic, Dari, Pashto or Somali classes as part of the school curriculum. The research design is ethnographic (Blommaert & Rampton 2011, Palludan 2004), and the primary data source is participant observation, documented through field notes, video observation and collection of various artefacts, and supplemented by interviews. Drawing on de Certeau’s understanding of space as practiced place (de Certeau 1984), the presentation explores meaning making processes in one of the literacy spaces under investigation, namely the Somali literacy space. The presentation lays forward preliminary analysis of the Somali literacy space pointing to the fact that issues of language, linguistic practices and language didactics do not merely accompany the unfolding of everyday life in the literacy space; rather, they are inextricably bound to the construction of the Somali literacy spaces as a literacy space. The presentation thus illustrates how linguistic practices are placed in and must be understood in specific localities, but simultaneously create spaces.
When monocentric language ideology meets polycentric language practice: A case from China's internal migrant children

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China has long been considered as a monolingual society, and its internal language policies emphasize a monocentric ideology: we are Chinese people, and therefore what we speak is Chinese. Our fieldwork among internal rural-urban migrant children, however, shows a complex situation in which the children “languaging” in various linguistic varieties. Social reality is thus not an entirely close and finished space, but a space of maneuvering, and we observe that the increase on monocentricity creates more polycentricity and results in more complex multilingual repertoires.
Restructuring İşıl Erduyan (in) the language classrooms: Multilingual urban Turkish youth in Berlin

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In redefining the contribution of transnational immigrants to globalization, Glick-Schiller and Çağlar (2010) have criticized research for still perceiving immigrant societies as deterritorialized and ungrounded, failing to focus on the role they play in neo-liberal restructuring that extends beyond nation-state formation. In this way, they argue, methodological choices concerning immigrant research are still bound by nationalist assumptions; while more hybrid approaches are needed to better grasp the complexity of globalization today.

In this paper, I would like to analyze the repercussions of this large scale shift in societal structures in the language classrooms. I will present findings from a critical ethnographic study that I conducted at a public urban high school in Berlin, heavily populated by students of Turkish descent. My focus in this study is five 9th graders in their German, English and Turkish lessons. Ethnographic data consisting of classroom observations, audio-recordings of classroom interactions, and interviews with students and teachers were collected over one school year. I pose the following two research questions: 1) How do discourses of deterritorialization and neo-liberal restructuring play out across German, English, and Turkish classes?; 2) How do students with Turkish background receive and respond to these discourses? Findings suggest that students have a large repertoire in dealing with, reproducing, or submitting to the discourse of deterritorialization across the three language classes. The challenges they face are not limited to the difference between home language and school language; but expand towards the multi-layered, intertextual, and heteroglossic characteristics of the classroom discourse, to follow Bakhtin. In addition, the conflict between the nation-state and neo-liberal restructuring that characterize the larger societal context play out in multiple dimensions in the classroom discourse; both in interactions and in the dialogic relationship between the students and the texts. Students add different symbolic values to the languages involved, depending on what sort of a multilingual identity they would like to construct. Doing so, their reinterpretation of homeland connections within the discourse of globalization plays a major role.

Reference
The emergence of English as an international language of science has raised concerns in the Nordic countries about the status of the national Nordic languages and about the consequences for teaching and learning. A key concern relates to the idea that the national languages will fail to develop adequate scientific terminology. Little systematic knowledge exists, however, about the extent to which the national languages in the Nordic countries (Icelandic, Norwegian, Danish, Swedish and Finnish) actually lack equivalents of English scientific terms. The proposed paper contributes to filling this gap by reporting on a purpose-designed study which asks five researchers working within each of the three disciplines Chemistry, Physics and Computer Science in each of the five Nordic countries to state the local equivalents of 25 discipline-specific English terms. The English terms have been selected to reflect cutting-edge scientific developments, and have been extracted using a corpus analytic method from all abstracts published in the ten highest ranking journals within each discipline in the past two years. The overall objective is to examine whether Nordic terms exist and the degree to which they are established (operationalized as ‘intra-country agreement on local terms’). Theoretically, the study will discuss the need for - as well as the challenges involved in - devising language policies in higher education. Practically, it may provide empirical knowledge to inform the ongoing and impassionate debate about bilingual practices in higher education in the Nordic countries.
“Älskar dig habibi ♥”: Indexing glocal and heritage identities through polylingual language practices on Facebook

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In our paper we will describe and analyze polylingual language practices on Facebook. The aim of the paper is to show how Late Modern, urban adolescents of Finnish and Spanish heritage living in Sweden, have access to a varied linguistic repertoire and make use of this repertoire in a polylingual manner. Using excerpts from Facebook data we will show how the fluid use of Swedish, English, Finnish/Spanish and urban youth varieties indexes identities that exhibit majority, global, heritage and glocal aspects (i.e. linking both the local and the global; Lee and Barton, 2011), respectively. The language practices highlight the complexity of the adolescents’ identity construction in a modern, superdiverse society. Our sociolinguistic and ethnographic approach to language practices on Facebook aims to contribute to the methodological and analytical development of the research field of multilingualism in social media.

This study is part of the transnational research project “Investigating Discourses of Inheritance and Identity in four Multilingual European Settings” (IDII4MES) funded by the European Science Foundation via HERA - Humanities in the European Research Area. The project consists of case studies in four European settings; Birmingham, Copenhagen, Stockholm and Tilburg.

References

The empirical starting point for this contribution is an ongoing ethnographic project among young persons of Chinese heritage living in the Netherlands in and around the setting of a complementary Chinese language school as part of a larger, HERA-funded project on cultural dynamics of inheritance and identity in and around non-mainstream educational institutions in four European countries (see http://www.heranet.info/idi4mes/index). This paper sets out to investigates the discursive complexities of being Dutch and Chinese at the same time in two social spaces of transnational communication. The first is the regimented and normative space of a complementary Chinese language classroom; the second is the free(r) peer-to-peer online platform of Dutch-Chinese youth organisation JONC. In both spaces identity issues are explicitly discussed. In the classroom, a textbook reading of a Chinese folk story appropriated by the PRC's Communist Party’s 1950s Great Leap Forward Campaign is used by the final-year students to contest traditional/communist Chinese values and identify, somewhat recalcitrantly, with Dutch or Western cultural values instead. In the discussion forums of the online community, issues of Chinese cultural and linguistic identity are discussed in Dutch. While discussing topics such as “How often have you been to China and do you speak the language well?”, forum members find a collective identity of being Chinese in the Netherlands and of experiencing China through travelling and language learning.

Understanding globalisation as superdiversity (i.e. as a diversification of diversity instead of a homogenisation of global culture in local language and culture practices), our paper aims to entangle the complexities of being, knowing and learning Chinese in the Netherlands, with respect to the internal diversity within Chineseness, its relation to local Dutchness and its functioning within, or upscaling into, larger categories of Asianness. On the basis of the classroom discussion and the material posted online, we learn that Chinese-Dutch youth embody complex polycentric communicative and identity repertoires that cannot in any meaningful way be understood as either Chinese or Dutch, but as Chinese and Dutch, Western and Asian as well as smaller scale levels (e.g. Eindhoven or Wenzhounese) at the same time.

Overall, our paper argues that identity is essentially a matter of voice: of identifying with cultural, linguistic and geographic resources through discourse in opposition with and in collaborating with other discourses and other’s voices.

Who gets the job? Interactional study of multilingual job interviews and workplace ideologies
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When job candidates try to achieve the goal of paid labour, job interviews are regarded as one of the most significant interventions. Ideally, a job interview’s purpose is to secure the match of each candidate’s qualifications and personality with the demands of the workplace which he or she is applying at. Yet, especially when it comes to candidates with a multilingual background, the evaluation of qualifications and personality seems to be influenced by a certain public discourse of growing stereotypes and negative attitudes towards candidates with non-Western cultural and linguistic behavior. This public discourse is a huge intervention for both parts: while the employers tackle it by drawing on gate-keeping strategies, the candidates strive to present an identity that the employers appreciate of. However, if candidates try too hard on an identity that they believe leads them to the job, it will stigmatize them even more, and in the end, cost them the job.

This paper is based on a qualitative study of 40 authentic job interviews with non-native job candidates for both academic and non-academic positions in the public sector in Copenhagen, Denmark. It draws upon the theory and methods of Interactional Sociolinguistics (e.g. Gumperz 1982, Erickson and Schultz 1982, Auer 1998, Roberts & Sarangi 1999, Rampton 2006). It also includes discursive studies in attitudes and ideologies (Billig 1996 &2002, Blommaert 2005) and interactional studies of language attitudes (Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cains 2009).

The analysis demonstrates how job interviews can be successively accessed through an interactional micro perspective and an ideological macro standpoint, thus illustrating how job candidates’ struggle to be seen as both what they are and what they are not, is deeply rooted in the “outside” mindset.

References


**Computer-based quantitative methods applied to first and second language student writing**

Sofie Johansson Kokkinakis
This paper uses quantitative measures to capture differences in proficiency in written lexical and grammatical production between mono- and multilingual upper secondary students. The language in focus is Swedish, but the research questions are language independent and of general interest.

The first purpose is to investigate in which way measuring lexical and grammatical features in relation to student, linguistic and situational meta data provides indications of language proficiency.

The second purpose is to investigate whether Swedish-speaking mono- and multilingual upper secondary students’ texts differ with respect to qualities seized by several quantitative measures, for example: nominal ratio, measuring the number of nominal phrases vs. verbal phrases in a text and lexical density, measuring the number of content words and indicating information load.

The study was guided by the following research question: do texts written in Swedish by mono- and multilingual upper secondary students differ with respect to the qualities captured by the quantitative measures? If so, in what respects do they differ from each other?

Quantitative measures are generally analyzed in relation to written and nominal vs. oral and verbal style and to academic vs. everyday registers. The measures have been widely used in research on students’ texts (Biber 1992, Goodfellow et al. 2002, Granger & Rayson 1998, Hinkel 2003, Hultman & Westman 1977, Scott et al. 2003, Laufer & Nation 1995, Matsuda 2003, Nyström 2000, Östlund-Stjärnegårdh 2002). There are however few Swedish studies focusing on differences between texts written by first and second language students. Internationally, several studies compare texts written by first and second language writers. However, few investigations concern texts by linguistically diversified student populations, which are not covered by a first and second language dichotomy. However, Fraurud & Boyd (2006) has shown the heterogeneity of adolescents in multilingual settings, and found more than 80 linguistic profiles using commonly used criteria of nativeness/non-nativeness.

The corpus investigated in the present study consisted of 300 national tests in Swedish written by first- and second language students in year 9 and 11. The students attended eight schools in multilingual urban areas characterized by large immigrant populations. Corpus data was compiled, pos-tagged and lemmatized in a nationally funded and prioritized study, Language and language use among students in multilingual urban settings. The material is the same as used by Fraurud & Boyd (2006), referred to above.

The texts were characterized as either narrative or non-narrative. The quantitative measures were related to the students’ age and linguistic background, to grade and to school, and the results were compared.
The results show significant differences between student groups defined by age of onset (AO), grade and school. A particularly sensitive group seems to be children with an AO of 4–7 years, who have lower values than students with a higher AO.

The results are interpreted in the light of second language research on writing and on the development of academic skills in a second language (L2). In particular, Cummins’ (1980) proposal of transfer of academic skills between L1 and L2, i.e. the Interdependence Hypothesis, seems relevant to the present material. The findings indicate the need for pedagogical efforts.

In conclusion, the study is investigating the relation between AO and academic skills in an L2 and discussing the quantitative measures in terms of academic language and academic language development.

References


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**Unrecognized (Linguistic) Work: Russian Mothers in Norway**

Natalia Kukarenko, Northern Research Institute, Norway

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Considering increased cooperation between Norway and Russia in the High North, and the political demands about the need of increasing the knowledge on Russian language and culture among young Norwegians, we suggest that using the resources that are already available in Norwegian-Russian and Russian-Russian families residing in Norway is a good option both for the children, families and the Norwegian society in terms of efficiency and time, money and efforts investments.

Recent literature on bilingualism/ multilingualism often builds its arguments on benefits of bi/multi language competences based on two major assumptions: 1. It is good and “natural” for minority parents to teach children their native language. 2. Bilingualism comes easy and “naturally” to children in mixed families. At the same time, some researchers show that maintaining language diversity in practice is a question of political intentions and the economic limits of the welfare system as well as interpersonal, family and society attitudes and relations (Piller & Pavlenko 2001). A number of researches provide evidence that in reality maintaining immigrant minority native languages becomes individual responsibility of parents (Komeros 2009; Okita 2002).

In this presentation we would like to address the issue of unrecognized work carried out by minority mothers in raising children as active bilinguals in Russian-Norwegian intermarried families. The focus of the analysis will be on mother’s experiences and challenges in the process of raising their children active bilinguals. In particular, we will discuss how “natural” it is for Russian mothers to teach their children a native/ minority language? What problems, difficulties and challenges they come across in the process of transferring Russian as a minority language to their children? What competences and skills they use/ are expected to use in the process of their children’s mother-tongue acquisition? What is the “price” of Norwegian-Russian bilingualism these mothers pay to succeed?

The paper is based on the results from a pilot study carried out in Tromsø, Norway.

References
Heldig med nye permanente minoritetsspråk? Svar fra norske lærere

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Hypotesen om en slik etos er det behov for å undersøke nærmere, og i dette innlegget vil jeg presentere og diskutere funn fra en studie der dataene er hentet fra intervjuer med et utvalg norske lærere. I intervjuene spør jeg lærerne om det vil være greit om innvandringen fører til at vi får flere varige minoritetsspråk i Norge, og forsøker deretter å få fram nyanserte begrunnelser for svarene informantene gir. Studien vil kunne danne grunnlag for kvantitativt anlagte undersøkelser av temaet.

Referanser

I dette innlegget tar vi utgangspunkt i disse utfordringene. Gjennom en dokumentanalyse ser vi nærmere på hvordan spørsmål knyttet til flerspråklighet og flerkulturalitet er ivaretatt i førskolelærerutdanningen og i barnehagen, både i et historisk perspektiv og i et samtidsperspektiv. Vi har også et sammenliknende perspektiv til situasjonen i de øvrige skandinaviske landene. Dette er interessant fordi den skandinaviske barnehagemodellen regnes som særegen både fordi den bygger på et integrert syn på lek, omsorg og læring og fordi de uformelle læringsarenaene tillegges stor vekt. Det skandinaviske perspektivet bruker vi også for å diskutere den forskningsbasen førskolelærerutdanningen kan bygge på med hensyn til flerspråklige perspektiver.

**Referanse**

Language use and language norms among and around young poly-languagers - Case studies from the Amager project
Lian Malai Madsen, Martha Karrebæk, Janus Spindler Møller, J. Normann Jørgensen, Andreas Stæhr, Astrid Ag, Thomas Nørreby & Ulla Lundqvist
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A conservative standard language ideology has strongly influenced policies, public discourse and education in Denmark and resulted in orientations to linguistic uniformity (e.g. Kristiansen & Jørgensen 2003). Yet, the ethos of uniformity is increasingly hard to reconcile with the current migration and globalisation in Denmark as in the rest of Western Europe. Populations become increasingly ethnically and linguistically heterogeneous and individuals’ language use, expressions of identity and affiliation with socio-cultural values become less predictable. This super-diversity (Vertovec 2006, 2010) has affected urban settings in particular, and today’s everyday often poly-lingual linguistic practices and possibilities form striking contrasts to larger-scale linguistic norms and ideologies. In the panel we address language use and language norms in the everyday life of children and adolescents under current conditions of super-diversity in Copenhagen. The studies presented in the panel all from different perspectives investigate how urban children and youth navigate between contrasting linguistic and socio-cultural norms. The presentations in the panel share the assumptions that the concept of “a language” and a notion such as “bilingualism” is a matter of ideology rather than form (e.g. Madsen et al. 2010, Jørgensen et al. 2011). Therefore we approach language and languaging through speakers’ use of linguistic resources (e.g. Jørgensen 2010), and we emphasise the integration of metalinguistic activities both as an empirical method and into the investigation of how linguistic resources become associated with particular values and social typifications through enregisterment (Agha 2007; Karrebæk forthc.).

The panel draws on extensive collaborative empirical work in a culturally and linguistically diverse urban school (The Amager project e.g. Stæhr 2010, Ag 2010). We have carried out fieldwork in teams since 2009 among older students (grade 7-9) and school beginners (grade 0-1). The starting point of our studies is the local realities of these students, and their everyday encounters of course include adults in school, family life and leisure activities. Methodologically our work is inspired by the approach of Linguistic Ethnography (Rampton 2007, Blackledge & Creese 2010). The presentations in the panel include a range of data types: recorded conversations, self-recordings, group recordings, diaries from participant observation, ethnographic interviews, written texts and IT-based communication. We look into language use and language norms in everyday peer interaction, in class rooms, during family activities and in writing - with siblings, in essays and on Facebook. We discuss the role of language norms and poly-languaging in relation to identity work and constructions of socio-cultural affiliations. In many ways, this panel questions the very idea of bilingualism in an area of globalisation.
Martha Karrebæk’s presentation ‘Participating in the socialization into linguistic hegemony: Linguistic minority children in a majority classroom’ discusses the general absence of minority languages use among an ethno-linguistically complex classroom of school beginners. She draws on both interview data, ethnographic fieldwork and audio- and videorecordings to show how different participants - teachers, parents and children - co-create a norm of monolingualism with Danish as an all-dominant language in spite of the fact there is never an explicit orientation to this from teachers. The dominance of Danish is so strong that children do not even employ other linguistic resources when teasing and challenging each other, or when engaging in subversive actions and interactions. This observation differs from other studies in similar settings (Evaldsson, 2004; Evaldsson & Cekaite, 2004; Jørgensen, 1998, 2008; Slotte-Lüttge, 2004, 2007).

Ulla Lundqvist’s presentation ‘Minority children’s literacies in the family’ focuses on school starting minority children’s language and literacy practices within their families. Linguistic minority children, their family background, language and literacy practices are indeed the subject of institutional and societal attention, though often such efforts are based on simplistic notions of literacy, linguistic ability and cultural inheritance. In contrast hereto, Literacy Studies describe the family as a resourceful context of language and literacy practice (Gregory 2008, Kelly et al 2001). Lundqvist discusses how children negotiate available literacy practices in the family, and what linguistic resources the children employ in these literacies.

Astrid Ag’s presentation ‘Language use and language norms in the family’ focuses on the metalinguistic reflections and language use within the students’ families. At home, the parents often demand that their children - beside their everyday-use of Danish - must be sure to learn “their own language”. Ag discusses the way the ideologies of the parents affect the students’ metalanguage and language use. Furthermore, she considers to what extent the interactions of the families contribute to the students’ poly-lingual practices. Finally, she discusses how the students navigate between the contrasting linguistic norms of their parents and of Danish society and the educational institutions.

Janus Spindler Møller and J. Normann Jørgensen’s presentation ‘Enregisterment among adolescents in super-diverse Copenhagen’ focuses on enregisterment (Agha 2007) through written data produced by adolescent participants in essays and protocols where they specifically address language and norms of using language in everyday life. In line with Agha’s understanding of registers (2007) they address the questions of what linguistic registers the participants mention and describe, what linguistic features (if any) the participants use to exemplify registers, and how these registers are described in their associations with values, speakers, etc. In addition Møller and Jørgensen discuss the role poly-languaging (Møller 2009, Jørgensen 2010) plays in the enregisterment of "languages", and how registers are constantly involved in dynamic interplay.
Andreas Stæhr’s presentation ‘Languaging on the Facebook wall – norms of language use on Facebook’ discusses the metalinguistic reflections and the language use in Facebook interactions among the older students. He considers how the adolescents negotiate norms of language use in their Facebook interactions. In addition he discusses how their norm negotiations and linguistic practices relate to public discourses about new social media and language, as these discourses typically criticize social media for being responsible for the younger generations’ alleged poor spelling skills and linguistic decay. Finally, Stæhr addresses how Facebook activities contribute to the constructions of the linguistic registers referred to as “street language” and “integrated language”.

Lian Malai Madsen’s presentation ‘Stylisations, social categorisation and enregisterment’ focuses on the metapragmatic implications (Agha 2007) of stylisations in the older student’s interactions. In stylised performance and “other-voicing”, speakers display and locally establish degrees of affiliation with voices invoked and their associated characteristics and personae (Rampton 2006, Coupland 2007). Madsen discusses the situated voicing of stylisations of speech corresponding to what the participants refer to as an “integrated” way of speaking. She considers how this type of stylised voice is achieved by the participants and which local interactional functions these stylisations serve among the adolescents. She considers the social categorisation involved in the linguistic performances as well as the relation between the local social categorisations and larger scale social positioning. Finally she discusses how the adolescent’s interactional stylisations contribute to ongoing enregisterment (Madsen, Møller & Jørgensen 2010).

Thomas Nørreby’s presentation `superdiversity, ethnicities and language` focuses on the identity work of one of the young students with a Palestinian family background. He shows how different linguistic features are used with particular socio-cultural associations related to particular categories and values and how language use thereby contributes to the identity construction of “the local immigrant”. Nørreby discusses how ethnicity is used as an identity resource and how the identity of “an immigrant” is renegotiated locally. The participant in focus is able to construct an ethnicity which is characterized by drawing traces to a diaspora relation and at the same time constructing Amager and Denmark as home, and Nørrby’s examples demonstrate how the complexity of the immigrant category becomes a resource in itself.

Suggested organisation of the panel
Chairs: Janus Spindler Møller, Martha Karrebæk, and Lian Malai Madsen
Discussant: Anne Holmen

References


Tospråklige elever, lesetester og mangeldiskurs

Marte Monsen
Høgskolen i Hedmark, Norge

I de senere år har vi sett en økende tendens til at både pedagogiske, sosiale og politiske konsekvenser av språktesting har blitt løftet frem. Mens testdiskusjonen tidligere gjerne dreide seg om kvaliteten på testverktøyet, har vi nå i stadig større grad debatter om selve bruken av tester.


I norsk skole er det ikke bare PISA-prøvene, men også nasjonale prøver og andre standardiserte prøver som skal måle elevenes ferdigheter i lesing. Prøvene foregår på norsk, og som rapportene både fra de nasjonale prøvene og PISA-prøvene viser, har elever med minoritetsspråklig bakgrunn i gjennomsnitt en lavere skåre enn de majoritetsspråklige elevene. I undersøkelsen jeg rapporterer fra i dette innlegget, er lærere ved tre ungdomsskoler intervjuet om sine oppfatninger knyttet til de standardiserte leseprøvene. Lærerne har ulike forklaringer på prøveresultatene til de tospråklige elevene, men mange ser på elevenes resultatet som uttrykk for deres generelle språkferdigheter. Videre kan det se ut til at resultatene også blir forstått som uttrykk for elevenes faglige nivå. Spørsmålet som reises til diskusjon i innlegget er derfor om de standardiserte leseprøvene i Norge går inn i en slags mangeldiskurs, der det å være tospråklig i seg selv oppfattes som noe negativt.

Referanser
Sproglige og studiemæssige udfordringer for studerende med dansk som andetsprog på Aarhus Universitet

Pia H. Møller og Stine Skou Nielsen
Rådgivnings- og støttecentret
Aarhus Universitet


Erfaringen gennem de sidste fire år viser, at de fleste af de studerende, der har fundet vej til RSC, befinder sig i spændingsfeltet mellem på den ene side universitetskravene til den studerende om at kunne beherske en dansk universitetsdiskurs sprogligt og fagligt, og på den anden side de studerendes sproglige og kulturelle forudsætninger, som ofte ikke matcher disse krav.

Med udgangspunkt i RSC’s erfaringer fra arbejdet med de studerende vil dette paper undersøge følgende spørgsmål: 

_Hvilke sproglige og studiemæssige udfordringer har studerende med dansk som andetsprog på Aarhus Universitet?

En sådan viden er vigtig af flere grunde. Set i et samfundsoekonomisk perspektiv vil studerende med dansk som andetsprog med en universitetsuddannelse komme til at udgøre en større og større akademisk ressource, som er vigtig at udnytte. Men ovennævnte publikation viser, at studerende med dansk som andetsprog med en dansk skolebaggrund er dobbelt så lange om at fuldføre deres universitetsuddannelse og har et betydeligt større frafald end danske studerende, hvilket medfører økonomiske konsekvenser for universitetet og de studerende. Ydermere er det også centralt fra et ligestillingsperspektiv, at universitetet har særlige tilbud til studerende med dansk som andetsprog for at ligestille dem med andre. Endelig er denne viden vigtig i et universitetsdidaktisk og -pædagogisk perspektiv for bedre at kunne tilgodese de studerendes udfordringer og styrker, således at de opnår den læring og de eksamensresultater, som deres faglige evner berettiger til.

Paperet baserer sig på RSC’s erfaringer med at tilbyde individuel studiestøtte og/eller kurser i Dansk akademisk kommunikation og formidling og på resultaterne af den undersøgelse, som vil blive foretaget i foråret 2012 af data.

Det empiriske datamateriale består af:

- Interviewskemaer fra udredningen ved førstegangssamtalerne
- De studerendes egne evalueringer af kursusforløb i Dansk akademisk kommunikation og formidling og af de individuelle studiestøtteforløb
- Undervisernes evalueringer af forløbene
Paperet vil munde ud i et bud på, hvilke udfordringer universitetet står over for, hvis man vil forsøge at imødekomme de vanskeligheder, studerende med dansk som andetsprog har.
The presentation deals with values and functions attributed to English and Russian as two main foreign languages in Lithuania. The focus is on how geopolitical changes after regained independency two decades ago have influenced the sociolinguistic situation in Lithuanian cities and how it is perceived by ordinary people. It is a common belief that Russian belongs to the Soviet past and russification, while English is the language of the future and the best tool for gaining membership in the Western community. However, an big percentage of the population (more than 80 pct.), having knowledge of Russian, and quite a big number of people not being able to communicate in English leads to a suspicion that this view is too simplified. One can expect a distribution of the domains of usage between those two languages and more nuanced evaluations of them.

Empirical data for the research were obtained in 2008-2009 from 1) a quantitative survey in three biggest cities in Lithuania, and 2) over 30 qualitative interviews with ethnic Lithuanians of different ages and occupations.

A more systematic examination showed that English and Russian are evaluated differently regarding such characteristics as aesthetics, usefulness, habit and prestige. Their appropriateness in some given public and private domains of communication is perceived different, too. However, both languages are attributed both positive and negative values and perform similar functions, but in different scope, geography and symbolic orientations. Although English is perceived as a language with a more universal appeal and takes over the functions in the public sphere that were earlier performed by Russian, the Russian language in many contexts is still believed to be sufficient or even having advantages. Besides other things, Russian is claimed to possess a certain distinctiveness, which is lacked by the commonly known English. Both languages perform symbolic functions: English is associated with Western values and modernity, and Russian represents common cultural and historical background from the Soviet time.

Naturally, the attitudes depend on certain individual factors (age and level of knowledge of the languages, in the first place), but even taking into consideration young peoples preference to English we can claim that it is too early to wave good-by to Russian. In the future Russian would maintain a certain niche in Lithuania, too.
Flerspråklige barn i barnehage – stimulering av ordføråd i samtaler med personalet

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Referanser
Literacy in adult second language teaching – the case of CEFR
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Recent global changes (migration, globalization, transnationalism) have caused increasing diversification in many societies, including the Nordic countries. The societal super-diversity has generated new and different perceptions and constructions of participation, identity and societal membership. One special marker of super-diversity, is the presence of complex and stratified distribution patterns that ratifies and recognizes what counts as language and literacy in particular contexts. It is part of this development that literacy is used more and more often as a political reference, e.g. in defining qualifications for permanent stay in the host country, for citizenship or for access to education.

In this paper, we are focusing on how the CEFR concept of literacy is localized in adult second language teaching in two Nordic countries. Our analysis is based on two cases in two different types of arenas within education; an ethnographic classroom research in Denmark, and a development project in a national political arena on setting goals for integration education for immigrants in Finland. The data consist of classroom observations, national curricula, language tests, interviews with policy makers, administrators and teachers, as well as citizenship acts.

The localization of the CEFR in Denmark and Finland did not take place at the same time and the conceptual framework was not used for the same purposes and in the same way. However, our analysis show how consensus-based concepts developed by supranational agencies function as a discursive force that frames what count as legitimate conceptualizations of language and literacy, and how the tracks and levels of the CEFR have been firmly established in education as a general tool for educational planning and regulation of access to citizenship. As a result, the CEFR has become a political tool, which has consequences for adult migrants’ second language teaching. It can also lead to high stakes decisions for migrants themselves and to a situation in which different actors (migrants, teachers and policy makers) change their behaviors according to the demands of the tests.

In our view, literacy is a complex, changing and dynamic social practice of great importance in identity construction and for the understanding of knowledge, and therefore it is difficult for us to see the need for European standardization. On the contrary – it becomes important to direct attention to the multiple ways literacy is used and to relate knowledge about this to the ongoing development of literacy education.
Bilingualism beyond language: Policy Meets the Neurocognitive reality of Bilingualism

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The goal of this paper is to demonstrate the inadequacy of the current approach to bilingualism as implemented in the EU policies in the light of the latest findings which demonstrate how bilingualism confers language-independent neurocognitive advantages, and suggests how embracing this new reality might lead to long-term social and economic benefits. In the last decade there has been a recognition within the neuro-linguistic scientific community that bilingualism might contribute to positive functional and structural changes in the brain. Evidence on the behavioral and neural bases of language processing has demonstrated that bilinguals co-activate both languages even when intending to use one language alone (Kroll, Bobb and Wodniecka, 2006). This life-long experience of monitoring and controlling two (or more) language systems has been claimed to be the triggering mechanism for the pervasive observation that bilinguals exhibit a whole range of language-independent cognitive advantages, as for example better measures of inhibitory control (Martin-Rhee and Bialystok, 2008; Bialystok, Craik, Klein and Viswanathan, 2004). However, the most important advantage conferred by bilingualism is when cognitive decline occurs. In fact, bilingualism has been proven to play a key role in protecting our brains, as bilinguals show a delay by on average four years in showing deficits related to dementia (Bialystok, Craik and Freedman, 2007), and a delay of five years in showing cognitive deficits related to Alzheimer’s disease (Craik, Bialystok & Freedman, 2010). Up to date, there has been no recognition within the EU of the dramatic cognitive advantages conferred by bilingualism nor of its medium and long-term social, health-related and economic benefits. If speaking two (or more) languages can protect the cognitive system against some of the most socially and economically impactful diseases in our aging society this only should be a valid reason for EU policy-makers to embrace this reality, and gear their guidelines towards an even more dramatic implementation of bilingualism. Beyond language but as part of our cognition.
Exploring bilingual and L2 speakers’ performance on Executive Functioning tasks: issues from Wales.

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Recent research has highlighted certain differences in the cognitive systems of bilingual vs. monolingual children. The aim of this study was to explore bilinguals’ linguistic and cognitive development, focusing on the potential benefits for children coming from monolingual English-speaking homes attending Welsh-medium schools. Implications will be discussed.

Abstract:

Recent research has highlighted certain differences in the cognitive systems of bilingual vs. monolingual children. Part of this difference results from the bilinguals’ constant need to switch between their two languages and their need to inhibit one language whilst using the other (Yang & Lust, 2004; Bialystok, 1999). Such behaviour is said to lead to cognitive advantages in bilingual children’s executive functioning (EF), which are positively related to classroom success (Yoshida, 2008). Such effects have been shown for children who have equal competence in their two languages, but fewer studies have explored this effect among children who are learning their second language as an L2. The aim of this study was to explore bilinguals’ linguistic and cognitive development, focusing on the potential benefits for children coming from monolingual English-speaking homes attending Welsh-medium schools. Since English-Welsh bilinguals learning Welsh as a minority L2 at school switch regularly between Welsh and English, and work hard at inhibiting attention to English whilst using their Welsh, it was predicted that performance on EF tasks would be superior among these children as compared to monolinguals, but less so than for more balanced Welsh-English bilinguals.

A total of 326 7- to 11-year-olds from Welsh-speaking, Welsh and English, and English-speaking homes were compared with English monolingual age-, SES-, and IQ- matched peers on a series of tasks. These tasks involved a number of background measures (non verbal IQ, working memory) measures of linguistic skills (reading, vocabulary), metalinguistic skills (metalinguistic and creativity measures) and numerous measures of executive functioning skills (Stroop, ANT, Simon, etc.)

Preliminary analysis revealed a complex pattern of results, highlighting bilingual advantages on some tasks but not others. The implications of the results for language and education policies and strategies in minority language contexts are discussed.
Bilingual education: From policy planning to learning outcomes

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Within the framework of European bi/multilingualism, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is an educational approach that requires the use of a second language to practise content. CLIL seeks to increase the presence of the foreign language by teaching curricular content through the medium of that foreign language while following a unified development to attain multilingual competence. In the past years increasing attention has been given to content-based instruction and, therefore, CLIL has begun to be used extensively in a variety of language learning contexts.

The aim of this paper is to review recent research in CLIL in some bilingual communities, such as the Basque Country and Catalonia in Spain, where several educational programmes have adopted a content-based methodology in the classroom to incorporate the foreign language, in most cases English, as a third language in education. Furthermore, we will offer an analysis of how policy issues in education have an effect in content and language outcomes (see Ruiz de Zarobe and Jiménez Catalán, 2009; Ruiz de Zarobe, Sierra and Gallardo del Puerto, 2011, for an account of empirical studies of CLIL in European contexts). These results will provide an understanding of the CLIL approach in bilingual education and bilingualism.

References


Transmigrants are a creation of globalization. They are mobile and have the world as their work place. The transmigrants’ children are often called Third Culture Kids (TCK) as they neither grow up in the culture of their parents, nor in the culture of the host country, but in the globalized international society’s conglomerate of cultures. Often TCK’s have a complex language profile; they speak one language at home, have another as the language of instruction in school and with friends whereas they live in a society with yet a third language. Thus, the TCK’s live in a multicultural and plurilingual environment which becomes the site for their constructions of identities. Interesting aspects are how multilingualism influences their lives, and in which ways they use and invest their linguistic capital.

This paper draws on a study that concerns multilingual students’ choice of languages for the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program, where it is compulsory to study two languages, one of which has to be studied as a first language course. The informant group consists of eight IB-students, aged 16-18, with Swedish as the only mother tongue, English as language of instruction and living in a French speaking part of Europe. Four of them studied Swedish as one of their languages for their IB Diploma, four did not.

The results of the study show that the students chose their strongest language for the first language course, which for the majority of the students was another language than their mother tongue. So for these students the concepts mother tongue and first language are not necessarily synonymous. The discrepancy indicates the need to problematize the synonymous use of the concepts in a plurilingual international context.

The second language was chosen as an investment for the future. Furthermore, depending on their choices of languages, the students differed in their opinions about which domains the mother tongue proved to be useful and valid. Finally, the students also differed in their attitudes towards their linguistic and cultural belongings as well as in openness towards other cultures and language.

The multilingual IB-students in this study exemplify what is sometimes called dynamic bilingualism, in an international environment. The concept of dynamic bilingualism as well as the TCK’s language situation are keys to understanding the impact globalization has on multilingualism in the 21st century.
Russian-speaking immigrant adolescents in Finnish society – characteristics of bilingualism

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One of the special characteristics of migration in Finland is the great number of speakers of Russian compared to other ethnic groups. At the end of 2010, nearly 55,000 persons who declared Russian as their mother tongue lived in Finland. Persons who appear in the statistics as speakers of Russian form a fairly heterogeneous group. In addition to Old Russians, there are ethnic Russians who migrated to Finland after the country became independent, Ingrian Russian returnees, and persons from the former Soviet Union whose main language is Russian.

The paper is based on a longitudinal case-study on young Russian-speaking adolescent immigrants’ integration into Finnish society through language and education. This is a qualitative study the data of which consist of thematic interviews with Russian-speaking adolescents and their parents. Sixteen immigrant families with school-age children living in the Jyväskylä region, Central Finland, were chosen as the target group. Parents (n=18) were interviewed on two occasions, in 2002 and 2005, whereas the interviews of adolescents (n=15) took place in 2008. In addition to interviews, the data comprise official documents that steer and regulate the education, learning, and integration of immigrant adolescents. Principles of qualitative content analysis were applied to analyzing the data.

All the adolescents participating in the study were first-generation immigrants, born in Russia or in various regions of the former Soviet Union, who had moved to Finland with their parents. The majority (12) was children of returnee families, and three had moved to Finland when their mothers had married a Finn. Most adolescents regarded Russian as their mother tongue, and it was also the language used at home. The age of the interviewees ranged from fourteen to twenty-three, and most of them were students.

The main focus in the paper is on the use of Finnish and Russian, competence in these languages, and their meaning for adolescents immigrating at different points of their lives. The paper also describes how these youngsters see their linguistic situation and possibilities of maintaining and developing their mother tongue, and what kind of attitudes they have towards studying Russian in formal education. Finally, conclusions will be drawn about the possibilities of and constraints on the bilingualism of speakers of Russian in Finnish society.
Poly-lingualism in the Periphery
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Most recent studies in the tradition of interactional sociolinguistics (e.g. Ag 2010, Stæhr 2010) elucidate how late modern youth deploy linguistic practices known as poly-lingualism (Møller & Jørgensen 2009) to construct and negotiate social relations and identities in highly urban, culturally heterogeneous social settings. These practices tend to associated with ethnicity and urbanity, as labels such as metrolingualism (Pennycook 2011) and Contemporary Urban Vernacular (Rampton 2011) may illustrate. These practices, however, are not restricted to multicultural urban youth, as is supported by data in Schøning (2010).

In this presentation I show examples from an on-going project of poly-lingual practices among adolescents in peripheral, and primarily ethnic Danish, settings in the Western-most part of Denmark, known as fringe areas. Both areas were traditionally dialectal. Poly-lingual practices may also tend to be associated with linguistic features belonging to other languages than Danish (e.g. Møller 2009, Madsen 2008). However, the examples include the use of the near-extinct, local Dialect of the two areas.

The data for the project consist of both self-recordings, made by 13-17 year-olds, and recordings made by me of the same individuals. The recordings were carried out in the homes of the adolescents, at their local school and youth club, at work and with friends and family.

References
Modern networked media as a key factor in the globalization process to preserve endangered languages  
*(the case of Udmurt language)*

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Globalization can endanger small languages and dialects all over the world. But on the other hand, globalization has the potential to revitalize languages by providing information and communication resources.

The paper discusses the role of the internet which may be very useful in preserving and maintaining minority languages in Russia. The presence of a minority language on the internet gives prestige to that language and thus encourages the speaker to use it.

Good example is Russia with its painful points and the paradoxes arising in whirlpools and paradoxes of globalization. In east-central Russia, in an area which ranges from the Volga to the Urals, ten minority languages are spoken, among them the Udmurt language (belongs to the Permian branch of the Finno-Ugrian family), one of the endangered languages in Russia. The number of young speakers in Udmurt is decreasing rapidly. But as we can see from the experience of the past 4 years, one of the most important social institutions for arousing interest in language and culture at this stage of revitalization of the Udmurt language has become the internet. The possibility of using the internet in Udmurt has already produced some results. The application of Udmurt in the internet during the past years shows that the Udmurt language can be successfully adopted in the new environment. There are some official projects on the internet which consist of websites for Udmurt national literature, ethnic music of different varieties, websites providing the opportunity of studying the language, online dictionaries, national online forums and news, etc. In fact the first step in revitalisation must begin from a motivation to study and read, although another essential step in this process would be to write texts in all possible contexts in Udmurt. In the urban communities people are beginning to show a greater interest in the Udmurt culture and language.

My study focuses on an internet in the Udmurt language as modern networked media given new voice to revitalize the minority languages in Russia.
Perceptual compensation in blind second language learners

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It has been claimed that blind people develop capacities of their remaining senses that exceeds those of sighted people. Using different types of brain imaging techniques (e.g. fMRI, EEG, PET-scan) to further understand the effects of experience on the neurological development of the brain, perceptual compensation (e.g. Röder et al 2000) and compensatory plasticity in blind individuals has consistently been reported from the research area of cognitive neuroscience. Blind individuals have, for example, been shown to have a superior verbal memory performance (e.g. Amedi et al 2003; Röder mfl. 2001), higher phonological sensitivity for speech sounds (e.g. Hugdahl et al 2004) and more rapid auditory processing (e.g. Niemeyer & Starlinger 1981).

The overarching aim of this project, funded by the Swedish Research Council (project no. 2007-1679), is to get deeper insights into blind L2 learners prerequisites when learning an L2, especially focusing on speech perception, speech production and verbal/auditory memory functions. Some of the questions we try to answer are: Do blind second language learners have an advantage perceiving their L2 compared to sighted L2 learners? And, if they do, does that lead to a better speech production, i.e. to a more native like accent? Are blind L2 learners better at remembering information from a verbally presented text (episodic memory)? Are blind L2 learner’s phonetic memory and memory for foreign sound sequences more developed than in sighted L2 learners? Does an early age of onset of blindness benefit second language acquisition?

The project has 80 participants (test group: 10 early blind L2 learners (before puberty) and 10 late blind L2 learners (age>20), control groups: 20 sighted L2 learners and 40 L1 speakers (10 early blind, 10 late blind and 20 sighted). The tests that have been used are: a speech perception in noise test (on three different linguistic levels and with two different types of noise), a speech production test (the L2 learner’s accents will be judged by a panel of L1 speakers), auditory memory tests (one testing the ability to remember information, one testing the ability to remember unusual sound sequences, one testing phonetic memory, and two testing short term and working memory). A presentation of the project and interesting results from some of the tests will be presented at this paper.

References


The Bilingualism of Southern Estonians – the Structural Analysis of Narratives in Estonian and Võru
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The paper focuses on individual bilingualism of southern Estonians. Estonian is a Finno-Ugric language with approximately 1.1 million speakers. The main historical forms of Estonian are North and South Estonian. Modern Standard Estonian was formed on the basis of northern Estonian dialects; Võru South Estonian is a regional language which is used by about 50,000 people in South-East Estonia.

The present study examines individual multilingualism from the narratological perspective. It analyses the oral Estonian and Võru narratives on the same topic told by the same informant. The paper treats the narratives of five middle-aged speakers. They all have used both Standard Estonian and Võru since their early childhood. The study aims to answer the following:

1. Do the narratives in Estonian and Võru have a different thematic division and structure?
2. Do the informants use different emotional repertoires in their different languages?
3. Do the informants present their “selves” differently in their different languages?

The author asked the informants to tell an emotional story from their past, both in Estonian and Võru. There was at least a two-week pause between the narrations. The narratives were recorded, transcribed and analysed linguistically and thematically. Among other linguistic aspects, the author paid attention to the number of utterances in each thematic block, the use of grammatical tenses and 1Sg.

Having analysed and interpreted the data, the author reached the following conclusions:

1. The narratives loosely correspond to each other both structurally and thematically.
2. As the Võru narratives usually have more details, the Võru language appears to be more emotional.
3. As Estonian and Võru are linguistically close and are spoken in the same cultural room, there are no big differences between the emotional repertoires used by the informants in their different languages.
4. The informants seem to present different “selves” in their different narratives (different rate of speech, focusing, the use of the 1Sg, etc), but this appears to be connected to the thematic differences in the narratives.

The present case studies are part of a bigger research project, which will include more informants. Narratives in Finnish and Russian are being recorded.
Opening ‘spaces’ to bridge student plurilingualism and second/foreign language teaching

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Teachers may affirm or delegitimize students’ out-of-school identities, including their knowledge base or “funds of knowledge,” through the classroom ‘spaces’ they create for second or foreign language (L2/FL) learners (Cummins, 2007; Moll & González, 1997). These spaces create bridges between learner identities and the curriculum. L2/FL teachers who enforce target language (TL) ‘only’ policies constrict students’ potential to build on what they know and develop a positive sense of identity. Seen in terms of Cummins’ (2009) “transformative multiliteracies pedagogy,” teachers lose out on invaluable opportunities to seize ‘teachable moments’ if they ignore learner identities (Cummins & Early, 2011; Taylor & Cummins, 2011). This talk presents data from comparative case study research conducted in Canada and Hong Kong. The first part of the talk describes exploratory work conducted with Cantonese- and Spanish-speaking students enrolled in a Canadian French immersion program, and the second part describes a continuation study conducted with the same students in Canada and with English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) students in Hong Kong. To begin, the in- and out-of-school language use of the plurilingual Canadian students was documented to identify their domains of language use. A digital self-reporting tool was then developed to capture nuanced portraits of other students’ plurilingualism, which were subsequently provided to French immersion teachers to enable them to better ‘see’ who was in their course. The second part of the talk describes how the study was extended to go beyond informing L2/FL teachers of student plurilingualism to assisting them in developing tasks that create spaces for plurilingualism in the TL classroom—where plurilingual competence is only infrequently used as a learning resource (Coste, Moore & Zarate, 2009). Teachers are unlikely to use tasks that they view as curricular "add-ons" (Little, 2007). Therefore, the tasks wove plurilingualism into the curriculum. Students developed multilingual videos for a social justice unit in a French immersion course in Canada, and wrote multilingual texts as part of their EFL course work in Hong Kong. Data collection techniques included student, teacher and parent interviews, participant-observation, and document and artifact analysis. Preliminary results support drawing on learner identities to support L2/FL learning.

References
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Raising educational aspirations: A case in favor of bilingualism

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Adolescents with a migration background are characterized by significantly lower educational attainment rates than their peers without a migration background in most Western OECD countries. Most research explains this gap by a systematic distribution of economic, social and cultural capital across different social strata, which leads to lower academic performance and attainment among the migrant population. In addition to these influences, bilingual language practices in migrant families have been identified as a major determinant of lower achievement and attainment (e.g. Klieme et al. 2010). Focusing on contextual influences, the approaches outlined above neglect the impact of individual attainment decisions on students’ educational success. Empirical research on students’ decision making processes has found both students’ and parental aspirations to be significant mediators between socio-economic status, migration context and educational attainment. Parental expectations in particular have been consistently shown to constitute one of the most important determinants of students’ educational aspirations and attainment decisions because parents serve as role models and communicate their expectations to their children (cf. e.g. Lent and Brown 2005). The present contribution adopts a resource-oriented perspective on bilingualism by providing evidence on the positive impact bilingual language practices can have on adolescents’ educational attainment. In particular, we argue that bilingualism positively influences adolescents’ educational aspirations due to its impact on parent-child-interaction, which in turn facilitates the transmission of parents’ educational aspirations. To address this issue empirically, data were collected from 350 9th and 10th grade students in Hamburg in the end of the school term 2011, when students were at the point of transition from school into (1) further general education to get access to higher education, (2) vocational training or (3) the labor market. The study uses a detailed questionnaire focusing on student’s language practices in the family, parent-adolescent interaction, self-assessed German and heritage language skills as well as on students’ and parental educational aspirations and expectations. In addition, a text production task in German and a test for cognitive abilities were conducted. Our preliminary findings strongly suggest that the link between parental and students’ educational aspirations is moderated by parent-child interaction and bilingual language practices. The contribution will present results from multivariate binary choice analyses to assess the role of language practices in migrant families in the transmission of parental aspirations.

References

The Role of Bilingual Terminology Dictionaries in the Age of Globalization

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The main preoccupation of this paper is a presentation of a project recently started at Sultan Qaboos University in Oman aimed at developing a series of bilingual specialized glossaries containing English and Arabic terms with their definitions and contexts used in different fields of Humanities. The project aims at enhancement of academic communication and removal of language barriers in achieving academic success. This need originates from the global multi-purpose use of English that has given birth to its role as a global language of academic discourse and publishing (Mair, 2003: ix). The project also addresses the need recognized in the academic community in Oman for clear and distinct terminology use. This aim is rooted in a crucial role that is accorded to terminology in specialized information and knowledge transfer (Galinsky, 1999). Moreover, it is linked with the understanding of academic discourse as a linguistic construal of experience (Halliday, 1993) that does not remain constant and always undergoes changes due to many socio-cultural factors. These changes can be traced in meanings of terms, their nuances and use. If these changes are timely documented, translated and presented, the obstacles for information transfer and effective communication among researchers can be eliminated.

In Oman bilingual English Arabic lexicographic resources are preferred by both students and researchers to their monolingual counterparts. They are viewed as vital sources for relevant information encoding, searching, and for bridging gaps between words and their associated meanings. The success of understanding English and Arabic terminology in Humanities disciplines depends on the ability to make up clear conceptual relationships between the terms within one language and across two languages. Being developed in such a framework, bilingual glossaries will be very useful for their future readers. Concept models and clear links will also support future construction of an independent and structured knowledge base for Humanities disciplines under terminological investigation. All these roles and benefits of bilingual terminological dictionaries are exemplified in the presentation by a detailed project description and a recently piloted “Language Learning Pedagogy Terminology: English-Arabic Glossary.”

References
Constraints and opportunities in language minority teacher identity and teacher education in the United States

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In this presentation, I discuss some of the most salient issues in the research and practice in preparing language minority teachers in the United States. For each of these issues, I will bring an overall framework focusing on language teacher identity and each issue will be presented as a set of dilemmas and discussion points. The first issue I discuss is the debate around what we mean by linguistically responsive teaching, and the quest for framing this in a way that is simultaneously not reductive and not impractical. Next, I outline the complexity of preparing language minority teachers to become socially just teachers. I then present some of the various models and frameworks to prepare language minority teachers used in various teacher education programs across the country. Last, I highlight some of the current national and state language and immigrant policies that have implications for the professional roles and identities of language minority teachers. I anticipate that each of these topics and their interrelationship will generate productive conversations with the work in language minority teacher education in other countries.
**Teenager immigrant students as participants in global interaction**

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What global languages are used by teenager immigrant students’ daily? How do their languages intertwine with each other? What kind of local and global links belong to their linguistic repertoire? What is the role of media in this interplay?

My ongoing doctoral thesis in Applied Linguistics (Finnish and Education) focuses on bilingualism and the support for bilingualism and bi-literacy in Finnish schools among Russian and Somali-speaking immigrant students. The study explores how bilingualism and multilingualism are realized in students’ lives, and what kind of support school, extended family members and friends give them in achieving bilingualism (multilingualism) and bi-literacy. The goal of functional bilingualism for immigrant students in comprehensive is stated in the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (2004, 95). Teenagers who participated in my study studied Finnish as a Second Language (F2) and their mother tongues, Russian or Somali, in upper comprehensive schools in Helsinki.

In this presentation I will discuss the interviewed students’ (N=14) perceptions on their daily language use in different languages and how they interact with their relatives, friends and other important people within the global network across the globe.

**Reference**