**HPSL Day 2024**

Book of Abstracts

**Kebrina Bailey (Freiburg, English Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, Creole Languages):**
**"Why you think they always picking on the way we speak?": English in Anguilla and the Eastern Caribbean**

The geo-linguistic diversity of the Eastern Caribbean is an indicator of previous settlers and their impact on languages within the region.  By virtue of colonisation of these Eastern Caribbean islands, Anguilla's English-based creole resembles the varieties spoken in many of these Anglophone, Anglo-Francophone and Anglo-Dutchophone islands. Research done on more popular islands have mainly focused on the syntax of these varieties (Meade 2001 (Jamaica); Winford and Youssef 2008 (Trinidad); Wassink 1999 (Jamaica); Devonish & Thompson 2010 (Guyana)). However, very little scientific investigatory research has been done in areas of phonology, prosody and lexicology on smaller and less popular islands. Hence there is a gap in research about the salient phonological and grammatical features of 'lesser-known' varieties of the Eastern Caribbean.  This study seeks to answer two questions: 1) How does Anguillian English-based creole converge towards and/or diverge from other Eastern Caribbean varieties? 2) What are some salient linguistic typological features of Anguillian English-based variety?  The empirical core of the study is a collection of spoken data from 45 semi-structured interviews by informants from a wide cross section of the Anguillian population. The data reveal that Anguillian English has unique phonological features, and shares mainly grammatical features with other Eastern Caribbean varieties. Also, variations along the mesolectal points of the post-creole speech continuum are so granular that they are not readily discernable. Finally, matters of language contact, globalisation, media expansion, feature retention and travel seem to be responsible for the existence of some features in Anguillian English that are generally noticeable in more popular varieties.

Keywords: *Anguilla, Creole, World Englishes, Lesser-known Varieties, Sociolinguistics*

**Patricia Bautista (Universidade Federal de Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), Sociolinguistics):**
**Who are we today? A sociolinguistic study of a very Bolivian Spanish**

The objective of the project is to analyze and study *Andean* Spanish, spoken in La Paz, Bolivia: description and analysis of the use of the simple and compound past perfect (PPS and PPC respectively), from a sociolinguistic point of view. Looking at a linguistic variety, taking into account its social relations, can provide answers to specific questions about the use of linguistic forms in variation. Advances in sociolinguistic studies based on concepts such as speech communities, communities of practice, and social networks provide other perspectives to view the relationship between language and its users.

In the case of Spanish spoken in La Paz (Bolivia), the question that is intended to be investigated is the linguistic and/or social contexts in which one or another form of the past perfect arises, based on concepts such as social networks.

Bolivian *Andean* Spanish (spoken in La Paz and in El Alto) is one of four dialect varieties spoken throughout the country. There are studies at all levels of language analysis; In addition, there are also texts that describe in detail the properties, nuances and peculiarities of this Bolivian dialect. Despite the great extent of the literature that deals with this variation, a sociolinguistic interpretation has not yet been made in light of concepts such as social networks.

The basis of the work is to study the PPS and the PPC in both the cities of La Paz and El Alto, following the sociolinguistic perspective of social networks.

**Isolde Bonnet (Freiburg, English Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, Creoles Languages):**
**"Je suis content de voir des blacks qui réussissent": Multilingualism and identity construction among Cameroonian immigrants in Europe**

Representing more than five percent of the total European population, non-European immigrants often face difficulties when trying to integrate in their new country. While many immigrate to a country whose official language they already master, others must learn a completely new language. Both situations can be complex: in the first case, the variety spoken by immigrants is often considered not good enough; in the other, mastering a new language can be challenging. Such a situation, alongside the highly multilingual status of Cameroonians, gives rise to complex interactions, in which the languages available to the speakers' repertoire fulfil specific functions (Wamba & Noumssi 2003).

In a comparative study of three countries of destination, France, Germany, and the UK, I focus on how the multilingual repertoires of Cameroonian immigrants are adapted and expanded in new contexts. The languages/varieties central to my study are English, French, German, West African English-based pidgins, and hybrid multilingual practices.

My working assumption is that language choice is driven by two primary factors: the need to communicate and the desire to express speaker identity in the new host environment.

In my talk, I will present the first findings of the following two research questions:

(1) How do Cameroonian immigrants use language to construct and perform different identities in specific contexts?

(2) Are there group-specific terminologies that speakers develop in response to their racialization as African immigrants? And if so: to what extent are the similar or different in the three countries?

So far, ca. 10 hours of group interviews involving Cameroonian immigrants in Germany have been analyzed, as well as online forum interactions containing data from the three countries of investigation. Numerous strategies of (often paradoxical) identity performance through language use have been observed, such as codeswitching, *whitisage* (i.e., speaking like a white person), lexical innovation, or the creation of new hybrid varieties.

This project considers the observed strategies in a broader post-colonial picture, seeking to show the impact of the former colonial policies implemented by the three western powers under investigation on the immigrants' linguistic practice. It discusses the aforementioned strategies in relation to varied sociological, historical, philosophical, and psychological concepts and theories. This includes the notions of *ideology* (Guillaumin 1995; Roediger 1994), *neocolonialism* (Mwaura 2005), *cultural*, *social*, and *national identity(ies)* (Hall 1990, Laclau 1990, Michelman 1995, Friedrichsmeyer et al. 1998), or *mental colonization* (Fanon 1952; Memmi 1979), among others.

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**Wendy Diepgrond (Basel, Italian Linguistics, Textual Linguistics, Sociolinguistics):**
**The voices of the homeless in Italian street papers**

Street papers from around the world, such as the well-known *The Big Issue*, aim to give a voice to homeless people and to highlight housing problems. They are usually sold by homeless

people on the streets of a big city, and sometimes the homeless people form part of the editorial staff. But in what way do these street papers give voice to the homeless? And how much space do the homeless people get with respect to other 'voices' – such as volunteers, experts, children, etc. – in articles that talk about issues related to homelessness? In this research, I investigate the linguistic tools that are used in the Italian street papers to reflect speech, thoughts and points of view. In particular, the four main types of reported speech are analyzed: direct speech, indirect speech, free direct speech and free indirect speech. The corpus for this research consists of 10 issues of each existing Italian street paper, between 2013 and 2023 (if available), from which the articles related to homelessness are investigated. From these articles, five different types of texts are differentiated: experiences from homeless people, articles about societal issues, letters written by the readers/responses to questions from the readers, articles that speak directly to the reader and articles on social initiatives. Interviews and articles in which a homeless person speaks/writes in the first person are treated separately. So, it is interesting to discover if, for the different types of texts, different linguistic strategies are being used by the writers.

**Fiona Gehring (Freiburg, Romance Linguistics, Sociolinguistics):**
**The New Speakers of Basque, Catalan and Occitan**

The aim of this poster is to present the first results of my study on the so-termed new speakers of three regional and minority languages. Basque, Catalan and Occitan are present in both France and Spain, but are in very different situations in terms of their status. Over 1,300 people who are learning one of the three languages took part in the study: they are not learning the language as a first language, but on their own initiative in courses, which makes them so-called new speakers (cf. O'Rourke et al. 2015: 1). The fact that people today learn and use languages that have not been passed on to them by their family and which may be threatened with extinction brings with it new dynamics: the new speakers could possibly slow down or even halt the decline in the number of speakers (cf. Morris & Williams 2000: 127). It is now a matter of analysing and comparing the characteristics that make up the new speakers and the circumstances in which they learn and use the languages. The target persons not only provide information about their language biography and their attitudes towards the regional language, but also reveal perceptions of their environment with regard to how present the language appears to them and how their own speaking is received. By categorising and comparing the reports, typical recurring profiles are created and the way in which the new speakers differ from one region to another is worked out.

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**Huihui Jiang (Basel, Pragmatics, Stylistics, Discourse Analysis, Conversation Analysis):**
**The Communication *off* the Stage: the writer-reader relationship in the drama**

The writer–reader relationship in drama is much more complicated than that in other types of literature and has not been explored much from the pragmastylistic perspective. The complication mainly comes from the fact that 'the author' and 'the reader' are kind of collective terms covering various types of individuals with different pragmatic roles, including the director, the stage producer, the setting designer, actors/actresses, the audience outside the theatre and ordinary readers, etc. Thus, instead of a one-to-one process of communication between the writer and the reader, there are multiple parallel processes between various types of writers and readers, with the same play text conveying different pragmatic meanings to different addressees.

Mock politeness, a linguistic phenomenon that involves the discrepancy between polite stance and impolite motivation, has so far received little critical attention. The pragmastylistic exploration of whether im/politeness or mock politeness primarily focused on the intradiegetic level in the depicted fictional world of characterization and plot development, with the extradiegetic level of author-reader communication calling for further attention (Kizelbach, 2023; Locher & Jucker, 2021; Messerli, 2016; Sorlin, 2019, 2022). This study adopts a pragmastylistic perspective, with particular reference to Bernard Shaw's *The Apple Cart* and Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*, to examine how mock politeness as a discourse strategy works in literary communication to produce different effects on different types of authors and readers.

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**Irene Inoue (Basel, General Linguistics, positioning theory, Critical Discourse Analysis):**
**The resistance of cultural stereotyping in retellings of interaction: a study of current and former Japanese students' resistance strategies in Switzerland**

My PhD project aims to explore how microaggressions rooted in cultural stereotyping take shape, are made relevant, and subsequently resisted in interaction. Moreover, it aims to

investigate 1.) the role that linguistic proficiency plays in this process, and 2.) the effects that prolonged experience in a foreign context have on the awareness of discriminatory experiences, and strategies used to resist/respond to such experiences. My project investigates these issues with the help of two groups of participants. The first group consists of Japanese students currently enrolled in Swiss tertiary education in order to complete an exchange year. The second group consists of long-time Japanese residents of Switzerland who previously studied in Switzerland, and thereafter settled in the country for several years. As observing cultural stereotyping, microaggressions, and potential resistance to such instances in naturally occurring environments is difficult, a mixed method approach was used, drawing on elicited and reflective data. The participants took part in interviews, and provided written recollections of memorable interactions they have had in Switzerland, in which they felt uneasy, unfairly treated, or subtly discriminated. The data was collected in Japanese. The poster presentation will share some preliminary results which have been found thus far, through the lenses of Positioning Theory, identity construction, and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

**Julia Müller (Freiburg, English Linguistics, Psycholinguistics):**
**Gender systems as a cause of interference in second-language processing**

While role nouns that end in "-er"/"-or" identify the referent as male in German (e.g., *der Gärtner* – 'the [male] gardener' vs. *die Gärtnerin* – 'the [female] gardener'), they are not marked for gender in English. But do these morphological cues cause transfer effects in German speakers' L2 systems? This experiment investigates whether German speakers are more likely to perceive English role nouns ending in "-er"/"-or" as referring to males than native speakers of English due to transfer effects from the grammatical gender system of their L1 (Hellinger & Bußmann, 2003).

This project uses self-paced reading and eyetracking to capture transfer effects as they unfold during processing. The stimuli introduce an occupational noun (from Misersky et al., 2014) which varies in its stereotypical association (stereotypically "male", e.g. *judge*, or "female", e.g. *nurse*) and then refer back to this role noun with a gendered noun or pronoun (such as "men"/"women" or "he"/"she"). The occupational nouns either have an ending that is attested in both German and English (such as "-er" and "-or") or rare in German to serve as a control group, since transfer cannot be expected to occur for these. See (1) below for an example:

(1) Being in a nostalgic mood, the <u>nurse/judge</u> sat down, pulled out a thick photo album, and reflected on <u>her/his</u> childhood in the idyllic countryside.

German native speakers show difficulties processing "-er" nouns as referring to women, even if, stereotypically, these nouns have a feminine gender. This implies that the meaning of "-er" as masculine may transfer and that the influence of the morphological variable, the noun ending, supersedes the effect of the gender stereotype, which was visible in the reading times for nouns with other endings. More generally, the results support models of bilingual cognition that propose overlapping or unified systems such as Word Grammar (e.g., Hudson, 2008) or thinking for speaking (e.g., Slobin, 2003).

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**Laura Patrizzi (Basel, General Linguistics, Language Acquisition, Construction Grammar):**
**Constructions as networks: A bottom-up approach to the German ditransitive construction and the question 'what is a construction?'**

In recent years various approaches in Construction Grammar have described our knowledge of grammar as a network of connected constructions (Diessel 2019; Ungerer 2023). At the same time, conceptualizing grammatical constructions as nodes in a network is problematic since constructions do not consist of clear-cut categories but rather of exemplars clustered together based on similarities in form and function (Ambridge 2019; Schmid 2020).

By comparing constructs (exemplars of constructions) with a shared surface structure I aim to describe the German ditransitive construction from a bottom-up perspective in order to determine whether this construction is best understood as a network of closely related exemplars or rather an amalgamation of several unrelated constructional clusters.

For this purpose, I will a) compile a corpus of constructs from everyday language use which share a common surface structure; b) compare each of these constructs to every other construct with regard to predefined criteria and define their similarity as a numeric value; and c) describe the emerging constructional clusters as a constructional network.

My poster will give an overview of my project idea and serve as a basis for the discussion of open questions, such as:

- Which criteria should be taken into consideration for analyzing the similarity between constructs?
- Which tools can be used to analyze the emerging clusters?
- How can this constructional network be visualized?

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**Haykanush Sazhumyan (Freiburg, English Linguistics, Cognitive Linguistics, Construction Grammar, Modality):**
**Interpreting modals – A multi-method approach**

The study adopts an experimental approach to examine the degree of schematicity and complexity of modal constructions on the example of the three necessity verbs must, should, and have to. More particularly, it explores to what extent the interactions between syntactic structure (i.e., progressive or simple) and semantic-pragmatic meaning (i.e., deontic or epistemic) influence both the schematicity degree and the node structure of modal constructions. This overarching question is addressed through a three-fold analysis of a psycholinguistic experiment, involving the examination of reaction times in a self-paced reading study (online processing), along with the reading times and forced choices in follow-up judgment questions (offline processing). According to the results, while the modals show a preference for epistemic modality in the progressive, they vary in their inclination to express this subjective meaning, thereby demonstrating different degrees of subjectification and grammaticalization. From the construction point of view, this suggests that not all modals constitute one mental category, potentially due to their non-compositionality or high frequency. The study illustrates that research on modal auxiliaries should consider the lexical and syntactic context for a more comprehensive understanding of modal meaning.

**Laura Schleicher (Freiburg, General Linguistics, Conversation Analysis):**
**Navigating space in conversation: Holding gestures and Common Ground in Andean Spanish and Quechua**

What are we doing here? What are we talking about? Who are we to each other? In conversation, Common Ground is continuously established, negotiated, and referred to as participants co-construct shared understanding. This study focuses on how interlocutors collaboratively imagine spaces and depict spatial relations through gestures, with special attention to the role of holding gestures across turns in (re)establishing Common Ground. Using a corpus of videorecorded conversations in Andean Spanish and Quechua in Bolivia, I identify parallel linguistic and sequential structures, comparing interactional practices across communities. By examining these practices through the lens of Multimodal Conversation Analysis, I explore how gestures, as part of a broader multimodal system, are employed to sustain and repair shared understanding in interaction. In particular, I investigate the use of gestures to spatially map conversational topics and the ways participants hold gestures across turns to maintain continuity. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of how

speakers use embodied resources to manage conversational flow, offering insights into the interaction between language, body, and shared understanding.

**Shuang Song (Freiburg, English Linguistics):**
**Anger in English and Chinese**

Anger, as a ubiquitous emotion throughout our lifetime (Ekman & Friesen 2003), has long been a popular research topic in several academic disciplines, particularly in psychological research. However, there has been little attempt to find semantic information and cultural indication of anger items from daily languages.

This research aims to explore the general concepts of anger in English and Chinese when establishing corpus-based semantic profiles of English and Chinese nominal anger terms and providing comprehensive descriptions of them. The investigation is conducted by employing corpus-linguistic theories on semantic exploration and analysis (Teubert 2005, 2010), and applying Sinclair's corpus-linguistic lexical model (Sinclair, 1996, 2004). The second objective of this study is to explore similarities and individualities of these seemingly similar items by comparisons within and between English and Chinese. Comparisons of semantic features of anger terms within a language will further reveal their emotive content, while cross-linguistic comparisons will highlight cultural differences. The third objective is to study the observed contrasts against the background of linguistic typology and human psychology, in order to identify the possible impact of cultural factors on lexicalization. The exploration is conducted under the guidance of Ekman (1999) on basic emotions from the psychological perspective and Wierzbicka (1999) on emotions across languages and cultures.