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Making Research Count

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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS
The role of social agents in the translational field of Arabic literature from a Bourdieusian perspective

Linda ALKHAWAJA

Agents in translation can be text producers, translators, commissioners, editors and publishers who make changes in styles of translation and broaden the range of translations available (Milton and Bandia, 2009). In terms of the translational field of Arabic literature, some important figures have had considerable impact on the field of translation of contemporary Arabic literature into English, especially in relation to translation of the novel genre. This presentation demonstrates the contribution of agents in structuring the field of cultural production, from a Bourdieusian perspective. For Bourdieu, it is important to investigate those authorities in whose hands the symbolic capital is concentrated (Bourdieu, 1985).


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A Sociolinguistic Study of the Moroccan Community in the United Kingdom

Ihssan AZIZ

This macro-level study examines the sociolinguistic background of the Moroccan speech community (MSC) in the United Kingdom with a focus on the generational (Moroccan born and U.K born) differences found in language proficiency and language use of participants in Moroccan Arabic. Although Morocco has one of the largest diaspora communities in the world, little research exists to account for the linguistic impact such diaspora has had on Moroccans abroad, in particular, those residing in the United Kingdom. Moroccan migration to the U.K began as early as the 1800s and it has been estimated that this community now comprises 70,000 members. This study situates the MSC within a sociohistorical context and supplements my main research focus which addresses how Arabic is used as a linguistic resource by Moroccan Arabic speaking immigrants in the U.K. Data were collected from 50 informants of Moroccan origin, via a web based language history questionnaire. Results were analysed using SPSS 20. The Mann Whitney test was used to determine the significant difference between the two groups in language proficiency and language use. The findings show that there are significant generational differences in language proficiency and language use of Moroccan born and locally born participants.
**Teacher Personal Narrative Use in the EFL Classroom: A Brief Outline**

Suzanne BONN

The English teacher and author Frank McCourt declared, 'I am teaching. Storytelling is teaching' (2005, p 26). Inspired by his novel *Teacher Man* and reflecting on my own teaching practices, this presentation focuses on the use of teacher personal narrative in the EFL classroom. Teacher personal narratives can be defined as true stories told about oneself by oneself.

There is currently little research into the when, how, and what of teacher personal narrative use in the language classroom and yet anecdotal evidence suggests that such discourse is not unusual. This mini presentation will explain how the topic of teacher personal narratives was selected and will be followed by a brief overview of the field (Labov & Waletzky, 1967; Plum, 1988; Labov, 1997; de Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2006), research questions and sub-questions, the data collection process, and some initial findings. The study on which the presentation is based is an in-depth qualitative study following three university English teachers in Japan. Data collection consists of teacher audio classroom recordings, student diaries, teacher and student interviews as well as classroom observations. Based on the IPC’s theme of making research available to the wider world, my PhD research project anticipates having an effect on the field of teacher education.


**Las Novelas Negras: The relation between military dictatorships and the depiction of contemporary criminological theories in Chilean literature**

Andrea VARGAS CENCICH

The presentation provides an overview of my research on the relation between Pinochet dictatorship and the depiction of contemporary criminological theories in Chilean literature, specifically, Novelas Negras. The research will seek to determine whether contemporary criminological theories are depicted in the literature, and if so, whether they are isolated to one period as compared to another. Most importantly, the research aims to find whether there is a connection between the author’s use of key elements in the literature such as social, symbolic, testimonial, juridical, power, economical, or political and specific criminological theories. This will help to ascertain the functionality (if any) of the criminological theories in the literature in relation to the Pinochet dictatorship regardless of whether the author had knowledge of the specific theories. The initial analysis of a corpus of thirty Novelas Negras will allow for the identification of six books that contain the most frequent occurrences of contemporary criminological theories (or elements therein). From there, these six books will be divided into three sets of two books each. The first will have been written before the military dictatorship in Chile, the second set will have been written during the dictatorship, and the last set will be post-dictatorship. In-depth analysis will then turn on the process of interpretation and literary criticism. This is necessary as the presence of the criminological theories will likely be identified only through such a literary approach.
Aston LSS/IPC 2012
Mini Presentation

The Islamic Headscarf and Political Participation in Francophone Europe: Belgium, Switzerland, and France
Amina EASAT

Although there are approximately 15 million Muslims in Europe, European Muslims find themselves significantly underrepresented in European politics. In addition, it is suggested that Muslim women account for 45% of the politically active Muslim community in Europe. In those political arenas where European Muslim women are most active, notably in francophone Europe, there is an increasing political, legal and popular media-based focus on Muslim women’s dress. Muslim women political activists who wear the Islamic headscarf in France and Belgium have faced particular media attention and criticism. Muslim women’s Islamic dress - such as the headscarf or burqa - is argued to be symbolic of patriarchal control. Alternative explanations suggest that the headscarf may on the contrary reflect Muslim women’s autonomy, choice and identification with European interpretations of Islam.

In my review of the literature to date, I have found that although related academic literature often offers theoretical interpretations as to why women wear the headscarf, the personal experiences and motivations of Muslim women who wear the headscarf are rarely considered or reported. My thesis aims to address this neglected area of inquiry.

Through the use of semi-structured qualitative interviews with politically active Muslim women, under the frameworks of identity, religiosity, secularism, political representation, and political legitimacy, I propose to investigate the reasons why some politically active Muslim women wear the headscarf and how it has shaped their political activism. The project will focus on the experiences of headscarf wearing politically active Muslim women in Francophone Belgium and Switzerland, and to a lesser extent in France.


Aston LSS/IPC 2012
Oral Presentation

The Foreign Observer in the Foreign Language Classroom
Brian GAYNOR

In this paper I will consider a number of issues that must be addressed by the foreign researcher when undertaking a series of ethnographic case studies of foreign language teaching in a country other than her own. Discussion of these issues is based on my own personal experiences as a researcher undertaking a two-year longitudinal study of English language teaching in primary schools in Japan. There are three main areas I will examine. The first is the effect the presence of the observer has on the observed. This is especially an issue where, as in the present case, the observer is both a native speaker and qualified teacher of English, who is observing classes conducted by non-native teachers with no formal training in foreign language education. The second topic I will examine is the ethics involved in undertaking such research and the need for reciprocity from the observer. A related issue here is what exactly is understood by the term ‘ethics’ by all those involved in the research and similarly, what ‘ethics clearance’ means in principle and in practice. The final area I wish to highlight is the neglected area of undertaking an ethnographic study in a foreign language, in this case Japanese, and how this in turn affects research methodology, particularly in relation to conducting and analyzing interviews. This paper contends that by foregrounding such issues in ethnographic research, it enhances both our understanding of the research methodology and the validity of the results obtained.
Aston LSS/IPC 2012
Oral Presentation

New Migrants and ethnic monitoring: The case of Latin Americans in London

Lucila GRANADA

Over the past few decades, and with the arrival of heterogeneous new migrant groups from different origins, the ethnic landscape of the UK has become “super-diverse” (Vertovec, 2007). The successful integration of these migrants in all relevant areas of social life is of major importance. Because of its direct and indirect influences, language plays a key role in the integration of migrants, enabling (or hindering) people’s access to jobs, services, social contacts and information (Chiswick & Miller, 2002; Heath et al, 2000; Esser, 2006).

Based on the rapidly growing new migrant group of Latin Americans in London, my research explores migrants’ experiences and perspectives about the links between language and integration. With a large sector experiencing language barrier, this community is currently facing social exclusion and disadvantage in the labour market (McIlwaine et al, 2011). However, as it happens with other sectors of super-diverse London, ethnic monitoring fails to account for Latin Americans.

This paper draws on two years of qualitative research through the conduction of interviews and long term participant observation work in different community organisations. It focuses on the ‘invisible’ situation of Latin Americans in London and their struggles for integration through campaigning for ethnic minority status. It looks into a debate that is currently taking place about the inclusion of a ‘Latin American’ category in ethnic monitoring. A process that highlights both the importance of visibility for minority groups and the practical and methodological limitations of ethnic monitoring through ethnic categorisation (Dobbs et al., 2006).


Aston LSS/IPC 2012
Mini presentation

The Effect of Video-based Lessons on the Oral Proficiency of Japanese EFL Students

Marcus GRANDON

This research project aims to investigate the influence of classroom video on EFL speaking skills in Japan. The complexity surrounding speaking pedagogy in the Japanese context encompasses a range of influences including government policy, classroom practice, university entrance examinations; and cultural, affective and socioeducational factors. Furthered by lower costs and ease of use in hardware, software, and bandwidth; teaching materials including multimedia have increased in popularity over the past decade (Vanderplank, 2010). This increase of multimedia usage mirrors the growth of available EFL textbooks with digital video at their core. Few studies have examined how separate genres of video affect the skill of speaking, and comparison studies remain rare mostly due to the difficulty involved with controlling for variables (Herron, York, Corrie & Cole, 2006). This current study adopts qualitative inquiry to investigate classroom discourse from lessons in two textbooks employing approaches that elicit spoken output based on different genres of video content. Observations, teacher interviews, and student questionnaires gathered from the classrooms of two university campuses in Japan will comprise the data set. The results should contain implications for materials writers, teachers, and researchers working with video and speaking.


**Accounts of a crisis: how has the BP Deepwater Horizon crisis been constructed through discourses?**

Jane GRAVELLS

The BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill was one of the most talked and written about business and environmental crises of recent years, but very little has been written about it from a linguistic perspective. Taking the view that social phenomena are constructed by and through discourse, I seek to explore different accounts of the crisis by various stakeholders (employees, victims, the media, shareholders, governments, pressure groups) in order to identify the dominant and alternative discourses which have contributed to the shared understanding of these events. What can a study of BP tell us about what a business crisis is, linguistically?

I draw on the form of Discourse Analysis which derives from the work of Gilbert and Mulkay (1984) and has been extended in research by Potter and Wetherall (1987). One of the central concepts of their approach is the ‘interpretative repertoire’ – ‘terms, descriptions, common-places … and figures of speech often clustered around metaphors or vivid images and often using distinct grammatical constructions and styles’ (Potter et al., 1990:212). Identifying discursive repertoires helps us to explore how people make sense of the world around them.

My interest is also partly methodological. Despite specific mention of ‘grammatical constructions and styles’ above, research on interpretative repertoires tends to have focused on lexical features, while syntactic patterns have been somewhat neglected. Finally, textual analysis in this tradition has been frequently described as something of a tacit craft skill. Any research which contributes to the practical ‘how to’ literature on analysis will also help to challenge criticism that this form of qualitative analysis is fatally subjective and non-replicable.


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**A corpus-based Critical Discourse Analysis of Technology Enhanced Learning in UK Higher Education**

Sarah HAYES

‘In a way everything is technology’ (Braudel, 1985). It shapes our history, our knowledge and our individual lives and we shape it in multiple ways. The language we use to discuss technology can reveal the values we apply to it (Feenberg, 2003, Fairclough, 2007). UK Government policy suggests technology ‘enhances’ learning to the extent that it is *transforming* Higher Education via ‘radical, positive change in existing processes’ (HEFCE, 2010). Yet a closer look at these ‘enhanced processes’, through the grammar of language, finds technology increasingly linked, since the late 1990s, with ‘efficiency’ and the ‘marketisation’ of higher education. What are the consequences for student experience if we situate technology for learning as ‘added value’, linked to profit, rather than as a conceptual space for individual development?
This research links social theory about technology, with a corpus-based, Critical Discourse Analysis of UK policy for Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) in Higher Education since 1997. Firstly, it shares a replicable, mixed, methodological approach for linguistic analysis of texts, freely available on the Internet, with the wider world. Secondly, it draws attention to a perceived crisis for social theory, and universities, if technology, through discourse, is perceived as a ‘neutral’ vehicle. Technology and language are vehicles of thought, and drivers of it (Wittgenstein, 1953). They carry political goals, and form part of a ‘heterogeneous network’ (Law, 2008) that shape our learning and research. We need ‘heterogeneous’ methods to investigate whether policy texts construct technological learning realities in one way, but not others.


Aston LSS/IPC 2012
Oral Presentation

EU-ASEAN interregionalism: How their ideational and normative factors affect their interaction

Xuan LOC DOAN

My paper examines the region-to-region relationship between the EU and ASEAN to see whether, if so, why and how the ideational and normative elements (e.g. views and norms) of the EU and ASEAN affect their post-Cold War relations. It is often argued that the relevance of the region-to-region interaction, termed interregionalism, to international relations depends on the level of actorness, i.e. the capacity to act, of the regions involved. The actorness of a regional organisation is primarily measured in terms of its level of institutionalisation and its economic and political and military weights. While recognising that the actorness of the regions involved plays a major role in determining the performance of interregional relationships, I think that it is not the only factor that defines interregionalism. This is based on the three observations I have in looking at the EU’s foreign policy, ASEAN’s external relations and the EU-ASEAN relationship since the end of the Cold War. First, the EU and ASEAN greatly differ from each other in terms of their views and values. Second, these divergences lead them to disagree with each other over a number of political issues, e.g. human rights and democracy. Third, and consequently, these disputes hinder their cooperation. Building on these observations, I assume that the lack of shared norms and values between the EU and ASEAN also undermines their cooperation. This assumption leads me to focus on the ideational and normative factors of the EU and ASEAN to examine how and why these factor define their relations.

ASEAN Summit. (1976). Declaration of ASEAN Concord I. Available at http://www.aseansec.org/1216.htm


Exploring choice and decision making by older people in health and social care

Philippa LOCKE

The poster will set out the problem motivating my doctoral research. This concerns choice and decision making by older people in health and social care. The increase in choice in health and social care, which has arisen through changes to public policy, has led to the concept of the consumer being extended to the user of public services who controls decisions concerning their own care. Older people who do not ‘choose’ to consume public services may view their role differently. Research has shown that older people prefer fewer options when faced with choices than do younger people. Analytical models of decision making have been developed in healthcare, identifying distinct stages of information exchange, deliberation and selection of appropriate action, but there is little discussion of the process in the context of social care. An initial aim of the research is to determine whether the application of health care models to social care decisions contributes to the understanding of social care decision making. This will be explored by undertaking focus group discussions with participants who have assisted older relatives in decision making for health and social care. These discussions will then inform one to one interviews with older people. Decisions across the two sectors may be very different, however, increasing calls for the integration of service provision suggests that a comparison of the two sectors could provide a greater understanding of the information needs of, and level of involvement preferred by, older people when making decisions in health and social care.

Do you see what I see? The development of social and health care collaboration from an Actor-Network Perspective?

Steve PIPER

New Public Management (NPM) theory posits marketization and corporatization as key means of improving service efficiencies and outcomes. To help achieve these objectives, inter-organizational collaboration has been encouraged as a catch-all way of improving respective organizations' capabilities.

Collaboration has been evident over recent years whether it is a large-scale partnerships like children's trusts or a small initiatives such as school federations. Although empirical and theoretical work exists to describe frameworks for collaborative design and implementation (Thomson et al., 2006; Bryson et al., 2006), it is argued that literature is deficient in studies that provide thick descriptions about 'how actors actually develop collaborations?' What are the processes, strategies, actions and tasks which are undertaken; what and who are the actors involved?

The presentation describes how Actor-Network Theory (ANT), using Callon’s four moments of translation (Callon, 1986), has been used to analyse and describe how both, human and non-human actants, contribute to the development of inter-organizational collaboration. The research is based on the UK’s first ever Care Trust Plus organisation, which is a collaborative partnership arrangement between a local authority and a primary care trust.

Translation at Amnesty International

The international NGO Amnesty International enjoys the status of a neutral expert in human rights, works closely with the UN, and is active in more than 150 countries (Ron, Ramos, and Rodgers 2005). Maintaining a high public profile and maximising international public awareness of human rights violations is crucial for the success of the organisation. Thus, translation is of high importance to reach an audience as large as possible. However, the organisation works with a restricted budget. This is generally the case for NGOs, who often implement “user-pays” translation policies and employ voluntary translators (Pym 2004). Translation at Amnesty sections often happens by volunteers or in-house staff who were not trained as translators. Translation strategies and procedures, as well as the availability of translation tools, differ greatly between sections.

Based on data gathered during fieldwork at two Amnesty offices (Amnesty International Vlaanderen and Amnesty’s Language Resource Centre in Madrid), the presentation briefly introduces how the different sections deal with translation. The focus is on the translation of press releases, Amnesty’s main means to maintain a high public profile and to reach a large audience. Some practical examples of the translation of press releases are presented.

Finally, the case study of Amnesty International is framed in a wider discussion on translation policies and procedures at political institutions. The case study is part of subproject 4 (Transformation through translation: media representation of political discourse) of TIME, a Marie Curie actions project (Translation Research Training: An integrated and intersectoral model for Europe, FP7-PEOPLE-2010-ITN).


Metaphors and their Functions in English Specialist Presentations

Since Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) Metaphors We Live By was published, the perception of metaphor changed from a mere ornament to a central device in human thought and communication. Following this theoretical approach, a combined methodology of corpus-based discourse studies (Duguid, 2007, 2010; Baker 2006, 2010; Krishnamurthy and Grundmann 2010) will be used to identify and analyse metaphors in a corpus of English specialist presentations. The data are transcripts that stem from a European research project about spoken academic discourse (GeWiss) at Aston University. The different functions of metaphors in specialist presentations, as well as the quantitative distribution (absolute and normalised frequencies = metaphors per 1000 words) together with other variables (gender, setting of the talk, speaker’s L1) will be discussed. The quantitative findings show that metaphors appear three times more in English than in German data, which also supports the notion that different communicative practices exist in different research cultures (Clyne, 1987). These are reflected in metaphor use and distribution. Furthermore, visual metaphors, metaphors of space, anthropomorphism, and movement clearly dominated in the corpus. Qualitatively, it was found that the metaphors either appear isolated as single
utterances by speakers and disputants themselves or metaphors are repeated and extended in each turn, by both speakers and disputants (for example by mentioning spaces and concretising them). The main functions are of pedagogical nature to concretise abstract academic terms, to develop theories, or to rhetorically support arguments (Mio, 1996). Furthermore, patterns of distribution (Semino, 2008) will also be discussed in this paper.


Aston LSS/IPC 2012

Oral and Poster Presentation

**Integrating Content and Language: An alternative approach to undergraduate language teaching and learning**

Elisabeth WIELANDER

In European higher education, content and language integrated learning (CLIL) is not a new phenomenon: in many countries, English is used to teach a variety of specialized subjects (Aguilar/Rodríguez 2007; Costa/Coleman 2010). In the UK, however, few university language departments use a structured CLIL approach.

Integrating content and language teaching and learning means that students are provided with extensive exposure to the L2, structured around subject-specific content. Thus, in addition to acquiring subject knowledge, students gain language proficiency and, through negotiating meaning, acquire transferable skills such as problem-solving, team work and constructive self- and peer-assessment.

Consequently, CLIL has the potential to be an invaluable pedagogical instrument which equips graduates with the sophisticated academic, linguistic and personal skills that today’s employers seek. Indeed, a recent UCML report on UK labour market demand for modern language graduates (Mulkerne / Graham 2011) has highlighted how tertiary education will play a significant role in closing a skills gap caused by a decrease in German uptake post-GCSE.

This paper presents findings from a mixed-method case study which is part of an on-going PhD project describing and analysing the aims, main actors, pedagogical approaches, learning outcomes, and assessment structures which underpin one UK university’s CLIL approach in German. These results are set against the results of a LanQua CLIL project analysing a number of CLIL projects implemented in tertiary education across Europe (Greere / Räsänen 2008).


The Image of the Child and Childhood in the Context of Translation Process Research
Elena XENI

This paper tackles the issue of the profile of children and childhood from the point of view of translators at three levels of competence; beginners, competent and experts. This issue is seen as a beneficiary outcome of a recent translation process study that investigates the process of translating children's literature. Through this study where participants' norms, strategies and attitudes are examined via think aloud protocols (TAPS), pre- and post-experiment questionnaires and the researcher's diary, the image beginners, competent and expert translators have of childhood rises and is seen as an aspect of pedagogical, sociological, historical and philosophical significance. Following an introduction to the main terminology and literature where the significance of the issue is highlighted, the methodology is provided and the main outcomes are presented and discussed. Lastly, suggestions for future research are noted.


Exploring Think-Aloud Studies and Think-Aloud Protocols in Translation Process Research
Elena XENI

It is believed that the translators’ mind is not possible to be directly observed at work. Attempts have been made for an indirect access and think-aloud methodology has been one such attempt. According to this methodology, translators are asked to speak out their mental processes in real time while performing a translation task, revealing in such a way their translation strategies, attitudes and norms. This poster explores think-aloud studies and think-aloud protocol as a successful methodology and tool to investigate the complex process of translation.