International Linguistic Society

Linguistics 2026 Paris

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

International Conference of Linguistic Research and Applications

28-30 October 2026

Paris, France

Université Sorbonne Nouvelle

Maison de la Recherche

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Keynote Lecture

Applications of Linguistic and Psychometric Methods in AI-driven Language Assessments

Authors: Geoffrey T. LaFlair
Affiliation: Duolingo English Test

Outline

Recent advances in AI have transformed digital-first language assessment development and administration (LADA). However, the development process of modern, large-scale, high-stakes language assessments requires more than "just AI". The development process should be rooted in an interdisciplinary, human-centered approach that leverages AI as a tool, the outputs of which are evaluated. In this presentation, I will discuss applications of empirical linguistic and psychometric methods to three key challenges in large-scale language assessment: content generation, item parameter estimation, and automated scoring.

Content generation (stimuli and items) is often a bottleneck for large-scale LADA systems, which require very large item banks. Large item banks are especially important for assessments that adapt the difficulty of questions to test taker ability in order to ensure no two tests are the same and that the test can measure a wide range of abilities. Artificial intelligence can generate content en masse. The challenge for parameter estimation (e.g., item difficulty) is that traditional methods require extensive pilot testing, which is time-consuming, costly, and poses security risks. Artificial intelligence coupled with psychometric methods, or computational psychometrics (von Davier, 2022), offers solutions for incorporating features of the stimuli in addition to response data to create high-quality and stable "synthetic" parameter estimates. Automated scoring systems have a long history of operational use in language assessment (e.g., e-rater, Attali & Burstein, 2006). However, some subconstructs of writing and speaking have been difficult to capture using traditional approaches to feature engineering. Artificial intelligence now offers opportunities to better measure these subconstructs, such as cohesion (Naismith et al., 2023) and intelligibility (Cai et al., 2025).

However, with these opportunities comes the responsibility to ensure the systems are working as intended. One of the primary assumptions of AI-generated content is the ability to automatically generate text that is linguistically appropriate for the purposes of measurement. I will discuss how register-based corpus linguistics (Biber & Conrad, 2019) offers approaches for shaping prompts, or test specifications, and for evaluating the linguistic features of the generated content. An assumption of synthetic parameter estimates is that they are stable, accurate, and capture difficulty in a way that is construct-relevant. I will show how synthetic parameter estimates can be evaluated empirically through natural language processing, corpus-linguistic and psychometric methods, such as examining feature importance as well as their effects on the reliability of test scores. Additionally, I will demonstrate how salient quantifiable aspects of spoken language, such as intelligibility, can be included as features in automated scoring systems in order to improve construct coverage. Through the lens of responsible AI (Burstein, 2026), I will present systems and methods (built on linguistics and psychometrics) for ensuring that test scores from digital-first assessments remain valid, reliable, and fair.

Keynote Lecture

From First Words to Fluency: Understanding and Influencing Language Development

Authors: Monica Melby-Lervåg
Affiliation: University of York

Outline

Language is one of the most remarkable things a human being ever does, and understanding why some trajectories diverge and whether they can be redirected is the core of this talk.

This keynote draws on research into how language develops in young children. The first part tackles a deceptively fundamental question: what is language, developmentally speaking? In our longitudinal studies, we examine its dimensionality throughout development: how components such as vocabulary, grammar, and phonological awareness relate to each other, and whether that structure shifts as children grow. We then look at what drives variation in developmental trajectories, drawing on data that separates the contributions of genetic and environmental factors and how these interact over time.

These questions set the stage for the talk's central challenge: malleability. Our intervention studies involving intensive, targeted training programs suggest that some aspects of language are more responsive to intervention than others. Specific skills can be moved; broader language competence is harder to shift. The distinction matters enormously for how we design.

The talk closes by outlining what this body of work leaves open and the directions future research needs to take — from longer follow-up windows and stronger causal designs to a sharper framework for what it means to support language development that genuinely lasts.

Keynote Lecture

Modern Language Education in School Classrooms in England

Authors: Emma Marsden
Affiliation: University of York

Outline

In a world where English(es) constitute global lingua franca, what is happening to language education in countries where most of the population already speak English as their first—and often their only functioning—language? I focus on England, where every year about ¼ million 16-year-olds take a high-stakes national exam in French, German, or Spanish, equating to about 45% of the cohort. Despite these numbers, there is a shortage of language students at more advanced levels and, therefore, of language expertise among teachers and other professions where language is needed. In this talk, I will consider a small but powerful cluster of factors involved in the complex picture underlying this situation: I focus on the curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment that are experienced by learners in the first 450 hours of their exposure to the language. These are tangible factors, over which educators, policymakers, and materials developers have control.

First, I trace foreign language education over the last fifty years in England. I start at a time where foreign language study was undertaken by an elite in selective schools, with pedagogies and assessments drawing largely on methods inspired by the teaching of ancient languages. I then trace the rise of 'Communicative' approaches as they have been interpreted and operationalised in classrooms, textbooks, and governments' assessment regimes—all with an ambition to open up languages to (almost) the whole population. I argue that largely due to the nature of the high-stakes assessments, which have needed to cater for a wide-range of student aptitudes and motivations, a 'washback' effect has led to narrow interpretations of Communicative Language Teaching, foregrounding memorisation of (often) unanalysed phrases of language through heavily topic-constrained curricula.

Next, I review four dominant applied linguistics research agendas in this context, spanning the 1990s to early 2020s, which had to, by necessity, focus on the learning and pedagogy occurring in the educational status-quo—in which the government-defined curriculum only very loosely identified the linguistic content (vocabulary, grammar, and sound-writing relations). In such a context, researchers could: (1) document the development of learner language, including the potential role of formulaic chunks of language; (2) observe the motivational forces at play among students and teachers; (3) evaluate interventions that boosted learners' confidence and equipped them with strategies to deal with unpredictable and complex language; and (4) advocate alternative visions, such as Content and Language Integrated Learning or greater emphasis on inter-cultural competencies, running somewhat in tension with the assessment regimes. In a world where the linguistic content was not mapped out, these were appropriate, useful, and theoretically and practically insightful research agendas.

In the third part of my talk, I describe policy-changes (2022-2026) that identified the linguistic content for teachers and students, and I draw parallels with some other jurisdictions. I present research that we conducted during and just after these policy-changes that showed concerning misalignment between curriculum and assessment, likely adversely affecting student and teacher motivation. Despite controversy surrounding these policy changes, I will argue that 'the baby has not been thrown out with the bathwater'; that the high-level educational rationales—of promoting communication and nurturing an appreciation of other cultures—do not have to be forsaken by the existence of a defined linguistic content.

However, these policy-changes were relatively minor. I end with alternative and potentially 'disruptive' visions of assessments and of language education that may provide more of the population in majority-Anglophone countries with an appreciation of languages and language learning. I also advocate for robust, open scholarship to facilitate a collaborative ethos between researchers, policymakers, and educators.

A Corpus-Based Multimodal Appraisal Analysis of Social Media Discourse on Chinese and Italian Operas

Authors: Lei Liang, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia
Abstract ID: 440
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 15. Corpus linguistics
Presenter Name: Lei Liang

Abstract

This study investigates how Chinese and Italian operas are evaluated and emotionally constructed in English-language social media discourse, addressing the broader question of how intangible cultural heritage is recontextualized in global digital environments. Drawing on Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005), the research examines evaluative language, affective positioning, and intercultural meaning-making across platforms.

Three research questions guide the study: (1) What linguistic and multimodal features characterize English-language posts about Chinese and Italian operas? (2) What evaluative patterns emerge in audience comments? (3) What similarities and differences can be identified in the appraisal of these two operatic traditions?

The dataset consists of 50 purposively sampled posts from YouTube and TikTok, each accompanied by 20 first-level English comments. The study integrates quantitative and qualitative methods. Corpus linguistic tools (AntConc, Voyant, Wordsmith) are used to identify keyword patterns and collocations, while Appraisal resources (Attitude, Engagement, Graduation) are annotated using UAM Corpus Tool. The analysis is complemented by discourse analysis and multimodal examination of emojis as evaluative resources.

Findings reveal that both Chinese and Italian operas are predominantly evaluated positively, reflecting shared appreciation of artistic and cultural value. However, significant differences emerge in evaluative intensity and discourse elaboration. Italian opera discourse is characterized by frequent and explicit expressions of Affect, often articulated through narrative and metaphor, indicating deeper emotional immersion and cultural familiarity. In contrast, Chinese opera is primarily evaluated through Appreciation, focusing on visual aesthetics, performance techniques, and cultural uniqueness, with comparatively less elaborated emotional expression. Engagement resources in comments on Chinese opera often signal curiosity and cultural distance.

Platform affordances also shape evaluative practices. TikTok comments tend to be shorter, more emoji-dense, and affectively immediate, whereas YouTube comments allow for more extended and reflective evaluation. Emojis function as key multimodal resources, reinforcing or substituting verbal appraisal and intensifying evaluative meaning.

This study contributes theoretically by extending Appraisal Theory to multimodal digital discourse, particularly through the integration of emoji analysis. Methodologically, it demonstrates the value of combining corpus linguistics with qualitative discourse analysis in examining online cultural reception. Empirically, it provides comparative insights into how different operatic traditions are interpreted within global digital publics. Overall, the findings highlight how social media platforms mediate intercultural evaluation and reshape the perception of traditional performing arts in transnational communication.

A Protocol for Acoustic Voice Analysis in Young Adults

Authors: Paris Binos, CIRCLE Lab, Cyprus University of Technology
Elina Nirgianaki, Keele University
Loukia Taxitari, Neapolis University Pafos
Abstract ID: 402
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 4. Phonetics
Presenter Name: Paris Binos

Objectives

Acoustic voice analysis is widely used to quantify phonatory function in phonetic research and clinical voice assessment. However, the validity and interpretability of acoustic measures depend on methodological decisions involving participant selection, recording conditions, elicitation, signal quality, segment definition, and analysis procedures. Variation at these stages may introduce measurement error and reduce cross-study comparability. This study aimed to develop a rigorously specified protocol for acoustic voice analysis in vocally healthy young adults aged 18–30 years, emphasizing methodological transparency, repeatability, and applicability to research and clinical contexts.

Methods

Voice recordings were obtained in a sound-controlled audiology facility, with background noise maintained below 35 dB. High-quality digital recordings were acquired using a Sony PCM-D50 recorder at a sampling rate of 44.1 kHz. Participants produced a sustained /a/ at habitual pitch and comfortable loudness in a standardized recording position. Acoustic analysis was performed in Praat.

A central component of the protocol was the systematic identification of a continuous 3-second period of stable phonation. Each recording underwent combined auditory and visual inspection using the waveform, spectrogram, pitch contour, intensity contour, detected vocal pulses, and formant trajectories. The selected segment was required to demonstrate stable fundamental frequency, regular vocal-cycle periodicity, stable waveform amplitude and intensity, and stable F1 and F2 trajectories. Transitional onset and offset regions were excluded, and segment selection began only after pitch, intensity, periodicity, and formant structure had stabilised. Pitch tracking and vocal pulses were additionally inspected for potential tracking errors or irregular periodicity. The selected 3-second segment was used to extract fundamental frequency (f0), local jitter, local shimmer, harmonics-to-noise ratio (HNR), and CPPS, ensuring that all measures were derived from the same inspected period of stable phonation.

Results

The development process produced an operational protocol covering participant eligibility, controlled voice acquisition, signal-quality assessment, stable-segment identification, acoustic measurement, and quality control. Predefined acoustic criteria guided segment selection before parameter extraction, reducing dependence on arbitrary temporal selection and making the analytical decision process explicit and reproducible.

Discussion

The proposed protocol conceptualizes acoustic voice analysis as a controlled measurement framework rather than a software-driven extraction procedure. Its principal contribution is the systematic specification of methodological decisions that can affect acoustic outcomes. By integrating controlled recording conditions, a defined 3-second phonatory sample, multimodal signal inspection, criterion-based segment selection, and complementary perturbation, harmonicity, and cepstral measures, the protocol provides a rigorous framework for acoustic characterization of young-adult voice. It may also support future validation in clinical populations and improve methodological comparability across phonetic and voice research.

Agency and Statelessness: The Representation of Bidoon in Twitter Discourse

Authors: Reem Salman, Language Instructor
Abstract ID: 455
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 14. Discourse analysis
Presenter Name: Reem Salman

Abstract:

The Bidoon in Kuwait are a stateless community whose social and legal position continues to be a sensitive and controversial issue. While statelessness has been examined from legal, political and human-rights perspectives, there is still limited research that looks at the Bidoon from a linguistic point of view. This study therefore examines how the Bidoon are represented through public discussions on Twitter, with particular attention to the way language constructs agency, responsibility and reaction.

The study draws on a corpus of 2,810 Arabic tweets collected from twelve public Twitter accounts: six Kuwaiti users and six Bidoon users. The tweets were collected and filtered using FireAnt and were qualitatively analyzed using van Leeuwen's (2008) framework for the representation of social actors and social actions. The analysis addresses three main questions: what is being discussed in relation to the Bidoon, who is represented as responsible for actions affecting them, and how the Bidoon are represented as reacting to their social conditions.

The findings show that discussions are largely centred around the everyday struggles experienced by the Bidoon, including access to official documentation, education, employment and healthcare. More importantly, the analysis reveals a recurring pattern in the allocation of agency. Within the examined discourse, the Bidoon are frequently represented as passive recipients of actions, while governmental authorities are represented as the actors responsible for actions affecting the Bidoon community. The analysis also considers the distinction between actions and reactions, examining how feelings of anger, resentment and exclusion are represented in Bidoon-related discourse. In particular, references to suicide are approached not as evidence of a direct causal relationship, but as instances in which extreme reactions are discursively connected to experiences of denial and exclusion.

The study argues that examining statelessness through language provides another way of understanding how social inequalities are constructed, reproduced and resisted in everyday discourse. By focusing on a relatively under-researched community and Arabic social-media discourse, the study contributes to Critical Discourse Analysis of statelessness and highlights the importance of examining not only what is said about marginalized social groups, but also **who is represented as acting, who is acted upon, and how these roles are linguistically constructed.**

An Investigation into The Use of Endangered Languages in Different Domains in The Southern Society of Oman

Authors: Muna Al-Amri, Independent researcher
Abstract ID: 449
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 3. Application linguistics
Presenter Name: Muna Al-Amri

Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the languages used in various domains (different settings) in the southern society of Oman and explores the possibility to what extent these languages will be preserved in the future. A number of 40 people from different age groups from the southern Omani society were involved in this study who speak Arabic, Jibbali, and Mehri. Through using a questionnaire and following a thematic analysis, the findings revealed that found both Jibbali and Mehri are used in informal domains within most age groups. Some younger participants were found to already be shifting their language use towards Arabic, even with their family and friends, which is an indication of a gradual shift from these minority languages to Arabic in the southern community which are unlikely to be maintained. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the Omani government take proactive actions to protect minority languages in Oman as encouraging and enabling their use in classrooms, as well as by creating linguistic corpora of these languages that can be used as learning resources.

Artificial Intelligence & Communication Disorders: Enhancing Access to Language Assessment for Multilingual Children

Authors: Insiya Bhalloo, University of Alberta
Andrea MacLeod, University of Alberta
Abstract ID: 343
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 23. Language technology
Presenter Name: Insiya Bhalloo

Abstract

Purpose: For multilinguals, who comprise 41% of Canadians,1 language development occurs across two or more languages. Multilingual children are disproportionately under-identified for communication disorders compared to monolingual peers. This is due to monolingual-centric assessment practices and limited tools in the home-language(s).2,3 A shift has begun to identify more inclusive strategies, including use of narratives and non-word repetition tasks.4,5 However, a barrier to their use is the limited number of bilingual speech-language pathologists (SLPs).6,7 Artificial Intelligence (AI) translation is emerging as a powerful tool. However, AI speech and text translation is based on English-centric adult models, thereby influencing their relevance to multilingual children.8,9,10

Research questions: We will examine the extent to which AI-based translation can be used to facilitate home-language assessment scoring, and identify multilinguals at risk for communication disorders.

Methods: Caregivers will complete the Canadian Questionnaire of Language Use and Exposure in Bilingual Preschool-Aged children (C-QUEB) and Alberta Language and Development Questionnaire (ALDeQ). We will use Zoom to assess 50 multilingual children on their home-language narrative storytelling (Edmonton Narrative Norms Instrument [ENNI] and Global Tales Story Task) and non-word repetition (Quasi Universal Non-Word Repetition Task) skills. We will score children on the assessed narrative and non-word repetition measures, based on three home-English language translation conditions: (condition i) AI speech and text translation (via DeepL and Google Translate), (condition ii) translation by a team member, and (condition iii) direct scoring by a bilingual team member in the home-language.

Preliminary findings: We conducted an ANOVA to compare score differences across conditions. Our findings indicate significant differences between direct scoring by a bilingual team member (condition iii), in comparison to AI (condition i; $F = 3.4$; $p < 0.01$). There were no significant differences between human translation scoring (condition ii) and direct scoring (condition iii), as well as between the type of AI translation tool (i.e., whether DeepL or Google Translate; condition i). Our preliminary exploration suggests potential scoring differences based on the type of AI translation used (particularly between Translate GPT and Gemini Translate), the degree of language distance (i.e., whether related to English or an under-resourced language) and the type of linguistic content (i.e., whether abstract or concrete reference).

Significance: The findings will support the majority of English monolingual SLPs in conducting home-language assessment scoring. Our project will promote diversity in developmental and AI research by generating data from under-represented languages.

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Artificial Intelligence, Language Change, and National Identity among Saudi Youth: A Sociolinguistic Study

Authors: Awadh Alotaibi, Assistant Professor, Department of Social Studies, King Saud University, Saudi Arabia
Abstract ID: 392
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 24. AI linguistics
Presenter Name: Awadh Alotaibi

Abstract

Objectives: The rapid adoption of generative artificial intelligence (AI) has transformed everyday communication by influencing how people write, interact, and express themselves. While previous research has primarily examined the technological and educational applications of AI, little is known about its impact on language use and its implications for identity construction in non-Western societies, like Saudi Society. This study aims to investigate how AI-assisted communication is influencing the linguistic practices of Saudi youth and to explore how these emerging linguistic practices shape the expression and negotiation of Saudi national identity. Specifically, the study addresses the following questions: (1) How do Saudi youth use generative AI tools in everyday communication? (2) How does AI influence vocabulary choice, writing style, and patterns of linguistic expression? (3) How do these linguistic changes affect the ways young people express and negotiate their national identity?

Methodology: The study adopts a qualitative sociolinguistic approach. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with Saudi youth aged 18–30 who regularly use generative AI applications such as ChatGPT. Participants will be purposively selected to capture a range of educational backgrounds and digital experiences. The interview data will be analysed using thematic analysis to identify recurring linguistic patterns, perceptions of language change, and the role of AI-mediated communication in shaping identity-related discourse.

Results: The study is expected to show that generative AI functions as a new linguistic resource that influences vocabulary selection, writing style, and modes of self-expression. Rather than transforming national identity itself, AI is expected to reshape the linguistic resources through which Saudi youth communicate, construct, and negotiate their sense of belonging and national identity in digital environments.

Discussion: This study contributes to the emerging field of digital sociolinguistics by providing evidence from Saudi Arabia, a context that remains underrepresented in current linguistic and identity research. It argues that AI should be understood not only as a technological innovation but also as a sociolinguistic agent influencing language practices and identity expression. The findings are expected to enrich discussions on language change, digital communication, and identity in societies experiencing rapid technological transformation, while offering new insights into the relationship between artificial intelligence and linguistic change in the Arabic-speaking world.

Assessment of Language Vitality of Mathura Labhan

Authors: Guguloth Arjun Naik, IIT Kharagpur
Bornini Lahiri, IIT Kharagpur
Abstract ID: 454
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 3. Application linguistics
Presenter Name: Guguloth Arjun Naik

Abstract

Mathura Labhan is an indigenous lesser known language of Indo-Aryan group spoken in northern and north-western Telangana, India, by a community whose population is around 80,000 to 1,00,000. It has no script, and its speakers live alongside Telugu, Marathi, Kannada and Banjara (Lambadi). Because earlier literature treats it as a dialect of Banjara and the Census of India gives no separate figure for it, nobody has assessed its vitality. We grade the language on UNESCO's nine vitality factors, compare younger and older speakers, and ask whether a single endangerment label can describe such a language.

We followed UNESCO's (2003) Language Vitality and Endangerment framework. A 22-item questionnaire in English and Telugu was developed and obtained responses from 107 community members, those below 35 were classed as younger speakers and the rest as elders. The items covered intergenerational transmission, language choice at home, in religious practice and at school or work, digital media, and mother-tongue education. Some factors, policy and documentation among them, were beyond the reach of a questionnaire, so we graded these from field observation and informal interviews with elders, many of whom cannot read. Each factor received its own grade from 0 to 5. Men make up 85% of the sample and most respondents are literate, which limits how far the results generalise.

The grades are divided into two sets. Where a factor depends on the community, the grade is high: 5 for transmission, 5 for proportion of speakers, 4 for domains of use and 4 for community attitudes. Every respondent speaks the language, and 94.4% use it with friends from the community at school or work. Where a factor depends on institutions, the grade is low: new media and official policy are at 1, educational materials and documentation at 0. Signs of shift appear among younger speakers who have moved to towns and they report using Telugu with siblings and in religious practice. Of the 73 respondents who answered the social-media question, 58.9% chat in Mathura Labhan despite its lack of a script, and 39.7% chat in Telugu. Most would choose films and songs in Mathura Labhan, but none exist, and 90.6% want the language taught at primary level.

The authors names this a split vitality profile. Inside the community the language is safe and outside it the language is almost invisible, so one label cannot describe it. The transmission would say "safe" and documentation would say "undocumented". We suggest reporting the nine factors in two tiers, community-internal and institutional, and reading the gap between them as a sign of risk. Here the risk lies with the young people who leave for towns. They are the next generation of parents, and they find no schooling, books or media in their language. The study also shows that a language can go unassessed when it is counted under a larger neighbour. Since younger speakers already use Mathura Labhan online, a community-agreed orthography and recordings of oral literature would be sensible first steps, and the recordings could later support speech technology.

Keywords: Mathura Labhan, language vitality, UNESCO vitality factors, language endangerment, language attitude survey.

Balancing ease and interactivity: Learner perceptions of textual and AI-enhanced support in L2 television viewing

Authors: Margarita Popova, University of Barcelona
Abstract ID: 412
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 20. Language acquisition
Presenter Name: Margarita Popova

Abstract

Television viewing has become an increasingly important source of second language (L2) input, with streaming platforms providing widespread access to authentic audiovisual content. Research has consistently shown that static on-screen text, including captions or subtitles (traditional textual support) and dual subtitles (enhanced textual support), can facilitate comprehension and language learning (e.g., Reynolds et al., 2022), although different forms of static support involve distinct cognitive trade-offs (e.g., Montero Perez, 2022). More recently, advances in AI-enhanced technologies have shifted attention from the effects of technology to the effects *with* technology (Vanderplank, 2016), highlighting learners' interactions with digital tools such as Language Reactor, which combines interactive subtitles, instant translations, transcript navigation, and personalised vocabulary support. Despite growing interest in these technologies, empirical evidence comparing interactive AI-enhanced and static forms of support remains scarce (e.g., Alm & Watanabe, 2025), particularly in longitudinal studies involving adolescent learners.

This longitudinal study addresses this gap by examining how different types of textual and AI-enhanced support influence learners' perceptions of cognitive load, engagement, and usefulness during extended L2 television viewing. A total of 141 intermediate EFL learners (mean age = 14.8 years, SD = 0.73; mean vocabulary size = 3,482.39 word families, SD = 1,328.22) from a Spanish secondary school were assigned to three viewing conditions: captions (Captions, N = 46), dual subtitles (L1+L2) (DualSubs, N = 51), and captions with an interactive GenAI-enhanced tool (Language Reactor) (Caps+LR, N = 44). Learners watched one 25-minute episode per week for eight weeks. Their viewing comprehension was assessed after each episode, and their vocabulary gains were measured before and after the intervention. Learner perceptions were evaluated using a post-viewing questionnaire. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study analysed perceptions of cognitive load, engagement, and usefulness based on 22 Likert-scale items and one open-ended question.

Composite score analyses showed that dual subtitles significantly reduced perceived cognitive load, particularly with regard to viewing comprehension, compared with both the captions-only and interactive conditions. Differences in engagement were more nuanced, with the dual subtitles condition exhibiting only marginally higher engagement than the captions condition. Both dual subtitles and the interactive tool were rated as significantly more useful than captions alone, particularly for vocabulary and grammar learning, with no significant differences between DualSubs and Caps+LR. Qualitative findings further explained these patterns and highlighted learners' preferences and suggestions for more personalised and effective viewing practices.

Overall, the results reveal a trade-off between ease and interactivity, with different types of enhanced support serving complementary pedagogical functions. Both enhanced static and interactive forms of support can boost perceived usefulness without increasing cognitive load or reducing learner engagement. These findings have important implications for the design of L2 curricula for both classroom instruction and independent learning, as well as for promoting extensive out-of-class television viewing in ways that effectively balance cognitive load, perceived learning outcomes, and learner engagement.

Barriers and Facilitators to the Identification and Support of Children with Developmental Language Disorder

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Abstract ID: 360
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 22. Language disorders
Presenter Name: Maia Gabunia

Abstract

Objectives: Approximately 7,6 % of children have Developmental Language Disorder (DLD), one of the most common neurodevelopmental conditions, negatively affecting understanding and use of language, and, consequently, academic achievement, social relationships, mental health and employment in adulthood. However, children with DLD are rarely identified due to a "hidden" and complex nature of DLD. Guided by implementation science, our study investigated, for the first time, barriers and facilitators to the identification and support of children with DLD in Georgia, a resource-constrained country with limited research and practice infrastructure related to language development and disorders.

Methodology: We conducted focus group interviews with doctors and Speech and Language Therapists (SLTS) (n=20). Using the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR), we developed a list of topics that guided focus group discussions.

Results: Findings showed that key obstacles related to timely identification and support of DLD include limited awareness and knowledge of DLD, negative local attitudes, an absence of national strategy, a shortage of SLTs, and the lack of adapted resources and funding. Key facilitators include the master's program through which Georgian SLTs receive training, recent trends in early intervention, and professionals' desire to change the situation. Based on the findings, we developed a DLD context assessment checklist, DLD-CAT, to quickly identify barriers and facilitators in systems. Researchers in other countries can use the checklist when they plan to conduct a similar study.

Discussion: Overall, our study contributes to the understanding of language difficulties and how children with language difficulties are served in resource-constrained and underrepresented languages and settings. Our findings revealed the pressing need of work to improve the DLD field in Georgia. First of all, linguistic research on typical and atypical acquisition of the Georgian language is pressingly needed. There is also a need for updated national policy and guidelines, enhancing professional collaboration, involving parents in facilitating communication between professionals (e.g., teachers and SLTs), need for better public awareness and better training, access to international expertise and the pressing need for culturally and linguistically adapted language assessment tools. Other countries can also benefit from the knowledge generated from this study, because many of the identified factors influencing service delivery are universal.

British Post-Colonial Legacies, Toponymy, and Cultural Continuity in Selangor State, Malaysia

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Abstract ID: 395
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 12. Historical linguistics
Presenter Name: Abd Ganing

Abstract

This study examines the village toponymic system in Selangor, a state in Malaysia, from the perspective of critical toponymy, with particular attention to the relationship between British colonial legacy, national identity and cultural memory. Place naming has become an important discourse in understanding how colonial powers shaped spatial identity, political authority, and cultural hegemony through geographical naming practices. Unlike many former colonies where indigenous place names were extensively replaced by colonial names, Selangor demonstrates a more complex process of cultural negotiation under British indirect rule between 1874 and 1957. This research aims to analyse the categories and concepts of village names in five major districts of Selangor and to evaluate the extent to which these naming systems reflect colonial influence, cultural continuity, and societal development. The study employed a qualitative research design grounded in the framework of critical toponymy. Data were collected from Malaysia's Official Open Data Portal involving 282 village names across the districts of Sabak Bernam, Kuala Selangor, Gombak, Klang, and Petaling Jaya. The data were analysed through qualitative content analysis, thematic classification, and comparative interpretation. The findings reveal that traditional village names remain highly dominant and continue to preserve Malay linguistic elements, geographical references, agricultural activities, ethnic identity, and local cultural memory. Only a minimal number of village names contain English loanwords despite prolonged British colonial administration. The study concludes that the British indirect rule system contributed to the continuity of local cultural identity rather than the total replacement of indigenous toponymic structures. These findings contribute to global discussions on colonialism, decolonization, spatial identity, and the preservation of linguistic heritage within multicultural societies.

Keyword: toponymy, village name, national identity, British postcolonial, Selangor, Malaysia.

Challenges and Ethical Considerations in AI for Language Assessment

Authors: Mashael Al-Hamly, Kuwait University
Abstract ID: 220
Event: Linguistics 2026 Athens
Subject: 22. AI linguistics
Presenter Name: Mashael Al-Hamly

Abstract:

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in language assessment and feedback has transformed educational practices, offering scalable, efficient, and personalized solutions for learners and educators. AI-powered tools such as automated writing evaluators and speech analysis systems promise to reduce workloads, provide instant feedback, and accommodate diverse learning needs. However, this innovation is accompanied by a complex set of challenges and ethical considerations that require critical examination.

One significant issue is algorithmic bias, where AI systems may inadvertently disadvantage specific linguistic or cultural groups due to biased training data or inadequate representation. Such biases risk perpetuating inequities in learning opportunities and outcomes, particularly in high-stakes assessments. Additionally, the opacity of AI decision- making—often referred to as the "black box" problem—raises concerns about fairness, as users may struggle to understand or challenge the reasoning behind an AI-generated score or feedback.

Privacy is another critical concern, as these systems rely on extensive data collection, often including sensitive personal and linguistic information. Ensuring robust data protection measures while maintaining the functionality of these systems presents a delicate balance. Moreover, there is a risk of over-reliance on AI tools, potentially diminishing the role of human judgment, intuition, and cultural sensitivity in teaching and assessment.

This presentation delves into these challenges, offering a comprehensive analysis of the ethical dilemmas posed by AI in language assessment and feedback. Drawing on recent case studies and research, it highlights the need for transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in the design and deployment of AI systems. The session will propose practical recommendations, such as embedding ethical frameworks into AI development, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, and advocating for regulatory standards to protect learners and educators.

Ultimately, this presentation aims to spark a dialogue on how AI can be responsibly integrated into language education, ensuring that its transformative potential is realized without compromising equity, fairness, or human dignity. By addressing these challenges head-on, we can pave the way for more ethical and effective applications of AI in language learning.

Comparative Diagnostics of The Suggestive Potential of a Poetic Text

Authors: Palina Khanchyna, Gymnasium №8 of Vitebsk
Abstract ID: 472
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 25. Translation
Presenter Name: Palina Khanchyna

Abstract

This study addresses the challenge of preserving the "suggestive potential" – the subconscious emotional and aesthetic impact – of a poetic text during translation. The primary objective is to measure the congruence between an original poem *and* its translated equivalents to determine how specific phonetic and prosodic shifts affect the reader's emotional perception. The research analyzes Robert Burns's poem "My Heart's in the Highlands" alongside three Russian translations by S. Marshak, T. Shchepkina-Kupernik, and A. Troshina.

The research applies an integrated methodology that combines A. P. Zhuravlev's phonosemantic analysis (mapping sound-colour synesthesia at the segmental level) with W. Kandinsky's theory of geometric expression (correlating prosodic features with visual form and movement at the suprasegmental level). The analytical process uses a multi-stage algorithm: phonetic transcription, phonosemantic analysis via the VAAL-mini system, automated prosodic analysis using a custom Python script, and the generation of visual-emotional profiles through AI technologies.

The findings indicate that while phonosemantic colour palettes remain largely consistent across languages due to shared phonetic inventories, significant variations emerge at the prosodic level. The comparative diagnostics, summarized in an eight-point congruence coefficient, reveal that Marshak and Shchepkina-Kupernik achieve a high degree of suggestive equivalence (87.5%). However, they achieve this through different means: Marshak alters the rhyme type but preserves the original meter, whereas Shchepkina-Kupernik expands the meter but maintains the feminine rhymes. A. Troshina's translation scores lower (75%) due to broader structural deviations.

The study concludes that while exact reproduction of all prosodic features is unattainable in poetry translation, it is still possible to preserve the emotional-aesthetic core of the original. The developed integrated methodology provides a practical framework for translation studies. The results show that changes in specific phonosemantic and prosodic indicators directly affect how a reader experiences a text's suggestive impact. This approach can be used to evaluate and refine poetic translations in the future.

Convers 2: A Multimodal Corpus of Natural Human–Robot and Human–Human Conversations During fMRI

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Abstract ID: 419
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 15. Corpus linguistics
Presenter Name: Camilla Di Pasquasio

Abstract

Conversational corpora are essential for studying natural spoken interaction and developing models of human dialogue, providing valuable resources for investigating conversational structure and interactional dynamics. More recently, this approach has been extended to interactions with robotic agents. However, existing corpora have primarily focused on teleoperated robotic agents, whereas recent advances in large language models now make it possible to study conversations with autonomous embodied AI.

Convers 2 is a multimodal corpus of naturalistic conversations collected during real-time interactions between a human participant lying in an MRI scanner and a humanoid robotic head (Furhat). It extends the Convers 1 corpus, which documented interactions between human participants and a teleoperated humanoid robot.

While the robot's appearance and voice remain constant across interactions, its responses are generated either by a hidden human interlocutor or by a large language model, enabling the comparison of human–human and human–AI autonomous conversational behavior under controlled conditions. To minimize potential gender-related biases, the robotic interlocutor was designed with a gender-neutral appearance and voice.

A sample of twenty-five participants discussed six images across three fMRI sessions (four with a human interlocutor and four with the AI).

The corpus comprises 8 hours of multimodal raw data, including audio and video recordings, neurophysiological signals and eye-tracking data. Derived resources include speech transcriptions, conversational turn annotations, and behavioural questionnaires assessing individual differences in personality (Big Five) and attitudes toward robots (NARS).

Speech recordings from both participants and interlocutors were segmented into Inter-Pausal Units (IPUs), defined as speech segments separated by pauses of at least 200 ms. The corpus includes manually verified IPU annotations, automatic speech transcriptions generated with Whisper, and time-aligned TextGrid files containing conversational turn annotations. All linguistic annotations are synchronized with the corresponding multimodal recordings, including eye-tracking, physiological signals, and structural and functional MRI data.

The corpus enables investigations of conversational phenomena such as turn-taking, interactional timing, lexical alignment, and multimodal communication in both human–human and human–AI dialogue.

To enable autonomous interaction, a real-time perception–action loop compatible with the MRI environment was developed. The system integrates online audio acquisition, automatic speech transcription, LLM-based response generation, and speech synthesis through the robotic head.

Convers 2 provides a unique resource for investigating natural human–AI conversations and their neural, linguistic, and behavioral correlates, supporting future research in linguistics, cognitive neuroscience, and human–robot interaction.

Deficit Language Ideologies of Pre-Service Bilingual Education Teachers

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Abstract ID: 397
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 21. Language education
Presenter Name: Amanda Montes | Miguel Fernández-Álvarez

Objectives

Research grounded in raciolinguistic perspectives has demonstrated that deficit ideologies surrounding bilingualism are not simply beliefs about language proficiency, but are closely tied to broader systems that racialize bilingual speakers and position their language practices as deficient. Although this body of scholarship has documented how these ideologies operate within schools and classrooms, less attention has been paid to the experiences of individuals who have themselves navigated these systems and are now preparing to become bilingual educators. This study seeks to better understand how Spanish-speaking pre-service teachers make sense of their own linguistic experiences and how these experiences shape their understandings of language, identity, and teaching.

Specifically, it asks: (1) How have Spanish-speaking pre-service teachers maintained their Spanish over time? and (2) How do they make sense of their language practices in relation to dominant language ideologies?

Methodology

Guided by a raciolinguistic perspective, this qualitative study explores the experiences of Spanish-speaking pre-service teachers enrolled in a bilingual teacher preparation program at a midsize university located in a large metropolitan area in the Midwestern United States. Through in-depth interviews, participants reflect on their language histories, the ways they have maintained Spanish over time, and their experiences with dominant language ideologies throughout their schooling. Particular attention is given to how participants describe moments of linguistic policing, language maintenance, and the ways they have negotiated, resisted, or internalized deficit perspectives.

Results

Preliminary findings suggest that participants experienced persistent pressures to conform to monolingual norms while simultaneously drawing on family, community, and cultural resources to sustain their Spanish. Participants describe developing increasingly critical understandings of bilingualism as they reflect on their own educational experiences and prepare to become teachers. Their narratives illustrate the complex ways raciolinguistic ideologies continue to shape both linguistic identity and professional development.

Discussion

By centering the voices of Spanish-speaking pre-service teachers, this study extends current discussions of raciolinguistic ideologies beyond K–12 students and classroom practice to consider the experiences of future bilingual educators. Ultimately, the study argues that understanding how pre-service teachers have navigated deficit ideologies provides important insight into bilingual teacher preparation and highlights the need for programs that create opportunities for future educators to critically examine language, identity, and equity.

Differential Pattern of Longitudinal Reading Comprehension Predictors in Children with German as First or Second Language

Authors: Martina Röthlisberger, Bern University of Teacher Education
Abstract ID: 289
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 21. Language education
Presenter Name: Martina Röthlisberger

Abstract

Objectives: Children who are literate in a second language often have a performance disadvantage in reading compared to their monolingual peers, a pattern consistently reported in large-scale assessments such as PISA and PIRLS in German-speaking countries. The reasons are manifold, including reduced exposure to the language of schooling and limited home literacy resources. The promotion of reading is thus largely the responsibility of educational institutions. This study aims to identify which aspects of vocabulary knowledge are most strongly associated with reading development and might therefore be promising targets for educational intervention.

Methodology: The study followed 382 children from Grade 2 to Grade 4, 199 of whom had German as a second language. Reading comprehension at the word, sentence, and text level, as well as vocabulary breadth and relational, formal, and semantic word knowledge (vocabulary depth), were assessed at three time points. Latent growth curve models were used to examine developmental trajectories and to compare the pattern of predictors for children with German as a first versus a second language.

Results: Second-language learners did not show the same pattern of predictors as first-language learners across the three years. At all measurement points and across development, vocabulary variables—especially vocabulary depth—had a predominantly negative and generally stronger association with reading outcomes in bilingual children than in their monolingual peers. This differential effect increased with task complexity, from word to sentence to text reading, over the measurement period.

Discussion: The findings indicate that vocabulary depth is a particularly sensitive bottleneck for the development of reading comprehension in children with German as a second language, especially when tasks place higher demands on integrating semantic relations in context. For language education, this suggests that expanding vocabulary breadth may be insufficient. Instead, instruction needs to emphasize explicit work on semantic networks, relational word knowledge, and morpho-semantic structure within meaningful reading activities. In classes – particularly in those with a high proportion of bilingual learners – school materials and assessment tools must systematically incorporate tasks that promote a deeper understanding of words (e.g., word families) alongside decoding and general comprehension strategies. The differential pattern of predictors also underscores the importance of early, sustained language support, rather than short-term add-on programs, to reduce the reading disadvantages documented for bilingual students in German-speaking systems. Taken together, the results argue for targeted language education policies and teacher training that integrate vocabulary depth as a core component of reading instruction for linguistically diverse classrooms.

Difficult words in the communication of family businesses

Authors: Agnieszka Grażul-Luft, The Mazovian University in Płock/ Poland
Abstract ID: 370
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 9. Pragmatics
Presenter Name: Agnieszka Grażul-Luft

Abstract

This study of family business communication was conducted using a excerpts of texts taken from the websites of the five companies ranked highest in "Forbes" magazine's list of the most valuable Polish family businesses.

The ranking of the most valuable family-owned businesses was compiled by Dun & Bradstreet in collaboration with "Forbes Polska". The list includes companies that have been in existence for at least eight years, in which at least two shareholders are related by family ties and which hold a minimum of 50% plus one share. The companies have diverse business profiles, but they share the fact that in 2021 they had net revenue of no less than PLN 10 million and have consistently reported positive financial results in recent years.

This study forms part of a wider project analysing the communication strategies of family businesses in the context of the concept known as *familiness*. This represents a unique opportunity that family businesses can capitalise on in their communications, conveying the positive associations resulting from the meaning of the lexeme: *family*. Does a company's "family-oriented" nature translate into a more approachable and familiar style of communication?

The research material included excerpts of five types of text: (1) company information, company history; (2) work, career – a general, introductory text; (3) frequently asked questions (FAQ) – three questions and their accompanying answers; (4) news, advice – three texts; (5) slogans – 10 texts.

The study was conducted with regard to the plain language methodology used in the Logios IT tool (logios.dev). 'Difficult words' is one of the parameters of the plain language strategy, relating to the level of text readability. The aim of this presentation is to discuss the occurrence of vocabulary defined in this method as 'difficult': terminology, long words (more than 3 syllables) or superlative forms. An accumulation of this type of vocabulary reduces the text's readability.

Family businesses featured at the top of the "Forbes" magazine rankings do not always build their corporate identity around their status as a family business. Research into the identification of family brand identity, conducted for 48 companies from the Forbes ranking, shows that despite fairly broad criteria regarding the manifestations of this identity, only 66% of them demonstrate an identity associated with their status as a family business. The presented study has allowed us to broaden the scope of reflection to include the company's communication style.

Do Automatic Metrics Capture What Humans See in Machine Translation Evaluation?

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Abstract ID: 457
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 19. Computational linguistics
Presenter Name: Venna Mounika

Abstract

Machine Translation (MT) systems and Large Language Models (LLMs) now produce fluent texts and improve rapidly. However, this rapid growth creates an important question: Can Automatic evaluation tools be trusted or do we still need Human judges? This study examines whether Automatic evaluation methods can accurately find translation errors in English-Telugu translation. Telugu is an agglutinative language in which words are formed by joining multiple suffixes to the root, marking case, number, person, gender, tense, and modality, and in which a modifying clause comes before the noun it describes. One wrong suffix can change who does what to whom or turn "must" into "need not" (a shift in deontic modality). This raises two important questions: (1) Does smooth and natural-looking machine output hide serious grammatical and meaning errors? (2) Can Automatic evaluation methods find complex word-structure errors without help from Human judges? We hypothesise that single-score metrics miss them and that error-based metrics need human judgments to set how serious each error type is in each domain.

In the study, two models are compared: IndicTrans2 (designed for Indian languages) and GPT-4o (a decoder-only LLM). A total of 19,000 English sentences is considered for translation from four formal domains: Agriculture, Health care, Governance, and Sports. A two-tier quality assessment is performed on the translated output. The Automatic evaluation tier used COMET-QE, a neural model that provides a single overall score and DELTA, an LLM-based tool adapted from GEMBA-MQM that labels each error by type and severity. DELTA sorts errors into six dimensions: Accuracy, Lexical, Morphological, Sentence structure, Fluency and Style and Orthography. In the Human evaluation tier, expert native Telugu annotators evaluated a stratified sample, with separate sets for fitting domain-specific weights and for validation. Agreement between each metric and human judgments was measured using rank and linear correlations, with significance testing.

Our findings show that natural-looking translations often hide major errors. GPT-4o writes fluent sentences but it often drops or mixes up Telugu case markers and verb endings and broken pre-nominal participial clauses. In Healthcare and Governance texts, it sometimes reverses crucial rules or adds false details. IndicTrans2 handles word endings better because its tokenizer was built specifically for Indian Languages. The Automatic metrics COMET-QE provides general scores but fails to flag severe grammatical errors. In contrast, DELTA successfully identified the errors and the weights fitted to Human judgments agreed more closely with the annotators than domain-agnostic scoring did. The annotators agreed substantially on the severity of structural errors.

The results show that automatic metrics alone are not enough for typologically distinct language pairs like English and Telugu. When Automatic metrics give only a single score, they miss hidden grammatical mistakes that can cause serious real-world problems in domains like healthcare. LLM-based evaluators make error analysis scalable but they rely on Human judgments to decide how much each error matters in each domain. We therefore suggest using Human experts for calibration and audit but not for every new system.

Evaluative Meanings of Diminutives in Croatian

Authors: Ana Mikić-Čolić, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Osijek, Croatia
Abstract ID: 279
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 6. Morphology

Objectives

This study investigates the evaluative meanings conveyed by diminutives in Croatian, focusing on their pragmatic functions beyond size reduction. Diminutives often express affection, irony, or intensification. The primary aim is to delineate their semantic and attitudinal spectrum, addressing gaps in Croatian linguistics where diminutives are underexplored compared to Slavic counterparts like Russian or Polish.

Methodology

A mixed-methods approach combines corpus analysis with experimental elicitation. We analyzed 500 instances of diminutives from contemporary media texts (2020–2025), categorizing forms via morphological tagging. Additionally, 50 native speakers from Osijek completed forced-choice rating tasks and open-ended interpretations of 40 stimuli sentences, assessing connotations on scales of affection, derogation, and intensity.

Results

Diminutives exhibit multifaceted evaluations: 62% convey endearment (e.g., mamica for 'mommy'), 28% irony/derogation (e.g., glupić for 'little fool'), and 10% intensification without affect (e.g., vrućica for 'hot stuff'). Gender and context modulate meanings; feminine forms favor positivity, while informal speech amplifies pejoration. Speaker ratings confirm pragmatic ambiguity, with 45% variance tied to relational dynamics.

Discussion

Findings reveal diminutives as versatile attitudinal markers in Croatian interpersonal communication, aligning with appraisal theory (Martin & White, 2005). Croatian variants thrive on contextual inference, influencing language pedagogy and translation. Limitations include regional biases; future work could incorporate dialectal data. This contributes to Slavic pragmatics by highlighting diminutives' role in constructing social rapport.

French Cued Speech Difficulties in Deaf Adults and Hearing Adults

Authors: Magali Norré, LPL, Aix Marseille Univ, France
Abstract ID: 418
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 22. Language disorders
Presenter Name: Magali Norré

Abstract

Objectives

This preliminary study investigates the French Cued Speech (CS) difficulties among deaf adults and hearing adults. CS is a communication system designed for people with hearing impairment to complement speech reading by conveying phonetic information using hands. This multimodal system combines specific handshapes in different positions near the face and the mouthshape (called 'keys') to visually distinguish the phonemes of spoken language. Although many studies have demonstrated the benefits of CS for communication and reading, CS learning resources remain scarce, and there are no studies on CS learning difficulties, particularly in French for the *Langue française Parlée Complétée* (LfPC or LPC). Our VizLector project aims to provide a learning platform with videos in French CS (texts, sentences, and words), automatically categorized by learning complexity level using a clustering model. Therefore, we evaluate linguistic features that we assume are more complex in French CS, and whether there are any differences between coding and decoding in CS, using questionnaires administered directly to the target audience.

Methodology

In total, 10 variables are tested in coding and decoding: the number of CS keys, of consonant/vowels clusters, of double consonants, of transitions between distant positions around the face, of three glides, of obligatory liaisons, and of letter 'x'. We distributed our quantitative and qualitative survey during the summer 2026 training course organized by the French ALPC association (*Association nationale pour la promotion et le développement de la Langue française Parlée Complétée)*. Three different questionnaires on coding and decoding difficulties in French CS were used, and 50 responses were collected: 47 coders and 16 decoders (among them, there are 13 people who both code and decode), all adults living in France whose mother language is French. Several profiles are represented: the Deafs, their parents, grands-parents, relatives (family or friends), the CS trainers, and the hearing professionals.

Results

The quantitative results revealed that words containing some of our variables are perceived as much more complex (e.g., 48.93% for words with the letter 'x' in coding, and 21.87% in decoding ; the words with the most CS keys, etc.) than others (e.g., 4.25% for consonant-vowel clusters in coding, and 0% in decoding). The variables are perceived as more complex in coding than in decoding. The qualitative results also showed that the difficulties in French CS coding and decoding vary, that some sounds or keys are more difficult to code (e.g., double consonants, key sequences), and that decoding is highly dependent on the coder. Several participants mentioned fluency and a lack of practice or support as coding difficulties.

Discussion

This study, conducted with the target people, is the first to show what the difficulties are in French CS coding and decoding. The results of this study contribute to improving the learning methods of LfPC trainers, as well as the open source learning platform that we will offer within the VizLector project, addressing the lack of available educational resources.

Hate speech: characteristics and determinants. A study of the Polish population.

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Abstract ID: 352
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 16. Psycholinguistics
Presenter Name: Monika Obrębska

Abstract

Hate speech, an extreme form of derogatory language, is increasingly prevalent in contemporary social discourse, particularly online. This study examined the emotional characteristics of hate speech and its psychological determinants in a sample of 200 Polish adults (98 women, 102 men; age range 18-78 years). Participants described emotional reactions to seven photographs depicting various social groups and completed measures of personality traits. Hate speech use was operationalized as utterances on minority groups expressing anger combined with at least one additional negative emotion (fear, contempt or disgust). Our study confirmed that anger and contempt are key emotions that constitute hate speech. The anger expressed by the participants correlated positively with dogmatism, as did contempt, which was also correlated with intolerance, political views, authoritarianism, an orientation to social dominance, anxiety as a trait, the need for cognitive closure, and an external locus of control. These findings are consistent with the literature on the determinants of hate speech, although our attempts to profile hate speech users through intergroup comparisons did not yield satisfactory results. The social groups particularly affected by hateful comments in Poland were Catholic clergy (anger + contempt), opponents of abortion (anger + contempt) and people with obesity (contempt + disgust). In future research, it would be useful to pay particular attention to these social groups in the context of their negative evaluation and its psychological determinants.

Language Contact and the Emergence of the X Meng Construction in Contemporary Chinese

Authors: Xuan Zhao, Graduate School of Humanities, The University of Osaka
Abstract ID: 414
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 10. Typology
Presenter Name: Xuan Zhao

Abstract

This study investigates the emergence of the X meng ("X 萌") construction in contemporary Chinese, focusing on the case of choumeng ("ugly-cute"). Although choumeng has generally been treated as a loan translation of the Japanese expression kimokawa(i) ("gross-cute"), the mechanisms that enabled its successful integration into Chinese remain underexplored. The study argues that the emergence of choumeng can only be fully understood by considering the interaction between language contact, morphological productivity, and changing sociocultural practices.

The analysis draws on the 2026 version of the BCC Corpus. Tokens instantiating the *X meng* construction were retrieved through corpus searches and supplemented with the established form *daimeng* ("adorably clumsy"), yielding a dataset of 983 tokens. The study examines both the productivity of the construction and the linguistic and social conditions that facilitated the diffusion of *choumeng*.

The findings show that *choumeng* did not emerge in isolation but was licensed by an already productive *X meng* construction in Chinese. High-frequency forms such as *daimeng* ("adorably clumsy") and *ruanmeng* ("soft-cute") indicate that the construction had become entrenched before *choumeng* gained widespread currency, providing a productive morphological schema into which new lexical items could be incorporated. Meanwhile, the growing popularity among China's Generation Z of aesthetically unconventional yet emotionally appealing characters, such as Labubu and "ugly dolls", created a demand for new evaluative expressions. For speakers familiar with Japanese popular culture, adapting an existing Japanese expression into Chinese was therefore more accessible than coining an entirely new lexical item.

From the perspective of morphological extravagance, *choumeng* combines semantically incompatible elements to produce a novel evaluative meaning, thereby departing from conventional patterns of word formation. Its apparent violation of semantic expectations enhances its expressive force while resonating with the preference for linguistic novelty characteristic of youth culture. The study argues that the successful conventionalization of loan translations depends not only on language contact but also on the existence of productive morphological constructions and the communicative needs of the recipient speech community. More broadly, it demonstrates how lexical borrowing, constructional productivity, and sociocultural change jointly shape the emergence of new evaluative expressions in contemporary Chinese.

Language practices, agency and identity in mother tongue education: National minority languages in Sweden

Authors: Carla Jonsson, Umeå University
Abstract ID: 437
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 21. Language education
Presenter Name: Carla Jonsson

Abstract

In mother tongue education in Sweden, students are expected to learn, use and develop their mother tongues (cf. heritage languages). The aim of the paper is to analyze how mother tongue teachers talk about language practices (including translanguaging), as well as express agency and identity construction/negotiation in relation to their teaching. The particular focus is on a group of teachers working with the three national minority languages Sami, Meänkieli and Finnish in one municipality in Sweden. The research questions are:

- How do teachers express that different languages and other semiotic resources are used in mother tongue education?
    - How do they express that translanguaging is used?
- How do teachers express agency in their everyday work life?
- How is mother tongue education linked to identity construction?

Theoretically the article builds on the notions of translanguaging (García & Li Wei 2014), agency (Biesta, Priestley & Robinson 2017) and identity construction/negotiation (Pavlenko & Blackledge 2004).

The data were collected by linguistic ethnographic methods among a group of mother tongue teachers, e.g. observations at meetings, lessons and events, informal conversations, reflection discussions, semi-structured interviews, field notes, and documentation of written and other artifacts. The data of relevance for this particular study are field notes from teacher meetings, and an organized event for students (a mother tongue day).

Preliminary results indicate that the heterogeneity that characterizes mother tongue education leads to specific challenges for the teachers especially in relation to language use. The views expressed by the teachers reveal both individual agency and structural constraints that are not easily altered, highlighting the complex interplay among agency, values, and perceptions. In relation to the construction/negotiation of identities, the teachers work with questions about identities in intricate ways, moving between the demands of the syllabus and their own reality as well as their students'.

This presentation highlights the importance of challenging monolingual norms in education and recognizing linguistic diversity as an epistemic, social, and pedagogical resource. Translingual orientations can contribute to educational equity by expanding whose knowledge, experiences, and voices are valued in education. Such a shift has implications not only for learning outcomes but also for identity formation, agency, and social justice.

The data comes from the 3-year research project 'Mother tongues, minorities and linguistic heterogeneity: Teaching methods and teaching practices in preschools and schools with a focus on literacies' (The Swedish Institute for Educational Research, 2022-2024).

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Lifelong Language Learning in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Reimagining Adult Education through AI Supported Applied Linguistics

Authors: Mousa Alfaifi, dr
Abstract ID: 390
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 10. Typology
Presenter Name: Mousa Alfaifi

Abstract

The rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into educational contexts has transformed language learning opportunities for adults, offering personalized, flexible, and lifelong learning experiences. Within the framework of applied linguistics, AI-powered language technologies have become increasingly significant in supporting adult learners with diverse educational backgrounds, professional needs, and learning goals. This conceptual paper explores how AI-driven language learning environments contribute to adult education and continuing education by promoting learner autonomy, adaptive instruction, and sustained engagement across formal and informal learning contexts.

Drawing on the principles of lifelong learning and adult learning theory, the paper examines the intersection between applied linguistics and continuing education through the lens of intelligent language learning systems. It discusses how AI applications—including adaptive learning platforms, conversational agents, automated feedback systems, and generative AI tools—can enhance language acquisition while addressing the unique characteristics of adult learners. Particular attention is given to issues of learner motivation, digital literacy, self-directed learning, and equitable access to AI-supported language education.

The paper further identifies pedagogical opportunities and ethical challenges associated with integrating AI into adult language education, including concerns related to assessment validity, academic integrity, data privacy, and algorithmic bias. It argues that successful implementation requires not only technological innovation but also linguistically informed instructional design and adult-centered pedagogical strategies.

The paper concludes by proposing a conceptual framework that integrates applied linguistics, adult education, and AI-enabled lifelong learning. This framework offers practical implications for educators, researchers, and policymakers seeking to develop inclusive, sustainable, and evidence-informed language education initiatives that respond to the evolving needs of adult learners in the digital era.

Linguistic Analysis of LLM-Generated Alsatian

Authors: Carine Graff, Colorado State University
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Abstract ID: 471
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 11. Dialectology
Presenter Name: Carine Graff

Abstract

With about 7,000 languages in the world and approximately 43% of them endangered, researchers are looking for different methods to preserve them. Large language models (LLMs) could be a solution, but as of 2026, modern LLMs are not able to correctly recognize a low-resource dialect or generate it. To investigate if fine-tuning can address these limitations, we examined whether a small multilingual causal model (Qwen2-1.5B), fine-tuned on Alsatian theater data could reproduce dialect-specific linguistic features across different generation tasks and scenarios.

We compared generations from the base and fine-tuned (FT) models against Alsatian linguistic features using twenty prompts across five tasks and four prompt conditions (English, German, Alsatian, and Alsatian continuation). We examined eight lexical and morphological categories and seven grammatical constructions from the DIVITAL project using word pairs extracted from its Alsatian treebank. For each generation, we calculated the proportion of Alsatian versus German diagnostic words overall and by category, excluding shared forms but including contracted articles (e.g. *d'Fràu*). Constructions were classified as Alsatian, German, or absent. Finally, a dependency parser trained on DIVITAL and related German dialect treebanks evaluated verb-second order in main clauses and verb-final order in subordinate clauses.

The FT model's generations moved toward Alsatian, whereas the base model remained largely German, averaging fewer than one Alsatian function word per text. The mean diagnostic-lexicon share increased from 0.265 to 0.603, with shifts toward Alsatian in definite articles (0.054 → 0.708), negation (0 → 1.0), subject pronouns (0 → 0.45), subordinating conjunctions (0 → 0.231), and infinitive endings (0 → 1.0). However, personal pronouns remained equally divided between German and Alsatian forms, and apostrophe use exceeded Orthal conventions. Some base outputs were entirely in English. Verb-second word order was similar for both models (76.6% base; 74.8% FT), approaching the parser ceiling (81.1%). Five of seven DIVITAL constructions were unattested in either model. Possessives occurred at comparable rates, but the base model favored German and the FT model Alsatian forms. Null second-person subjects appeared only in FT (0 vs. 2).

The FT model shifted the measured categories towards Alsatian. Its gains were concentrated in lexis and morphological features including articles, negation, subject pronouns, subordinating conjunctions, and infinitive endings. For the same grammatical constructions, compared to the base, the fine-tuned model was more likely to use the Alsatian form rather than the German

equivalent. Improvements were less evident at the level of grammatical constructions, suggesting a need for more targeted data to improve grammatical coverage. The base model produced possessive constructions mainly by repeating instructions, whereas the FT model generated them independently. In conclusion, fine-tuning improves lexical and morphological accuracy, while more complex grammatical constructions remain a challenge.

The results show the importance of evaluating low-resource language models beyond fluency, as fluent output does not necessarily reflect the grammatical characteristics of the target variety.

Linguistic Markers of Developmental Language Disorder in Georgian-Speaking Children

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Abstract ID: 359
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 22. Language disorders
Presenter Name: Tamara Kalandadze

Abstract

Objectives: Approximately 7.6% of children worldwide have Developmental Language Disorder (DLD), a neurodevelopmental condition, characterised by significant challenges in learning, understanding, and using language, without any obvious biomedical reason. Children with DLD face significant risks such as poor academic outcomes, mental health problems, difficulties with social relationships, and a lack of independent life as adults. Despite being a common disability, many children with DLD remain unidentified and underserved, especially in resource-constrained countries. One main reason for this is the lack of knowledge about linguistic markers of DLD in languages other than English. We conducted the first study that aimed to investigate linguistic markers of DLD in Georgian-speaking children, as documented by Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs).

Methodology: We used two approaches to collect the data. First, 10 SLTs from both private practice and public service settings in Tbilisi participated in individual semi-structured interviews. Second, we collected additional data on linguistic markers via a workshop involving 33 SLTs. We developed tailored questions in advance that concerned language profiles and linguistic markers of children the SLTs have worked with, information about assessment and progress monitoring tools, and existing resources that SLTs use to support children and families.

Results: The analysis is still ongoing and will be completed in June 2026. Preliminary findings revealed both universal and language-specific linguistic markers of DLD in the Georgian language. We also found that Georgian SLTs lack appropriate tools and resources to work effectively with children with DLD. Based on the findings, we will develop both an inventory of linguistic markers of DLD in the Georgian language, as well as a DLD screening tool.

Discussion: Overall, our study contributes to understanding of how language difficulties manifest in underrepresented and under-researched languages such as Georgian and adds to the still limited knowledge of linguistic markers of DLD across languages. This is the first evidence of linguistic markers in the Georgian language, and more research, systematically investigating linguistic markers of both typical and atypical development of the Georgian language is pressingly needed.

Mapping The Dialect: Exploring The Lexical Variation of The Orang Rimba Dialect and Its Challenges

Authors: Dian Mukhlisa, University of Aberdeen
Abstract ID: 439
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 11. Dialectology

Abstract

Endangered languages and dialect documentation is not merely about collecting ancient words but also preserving cultural heritage. When a language dies, people will lose how its speaker views the world. According to UNESCO reports, there are over 40% of the estimated 7,000 languages spoken globally are endangered, with an average of one language vanishing every two weeks. In addition to thousands of languages, Ethnologue (2026) classifies around 527 of 718 languages in Indonesia as endangered. One of them is Kubu, said as indigenous language spoken by Kubu or the Orang Rimba people, an ethnic community who spread on the island of Sumatra. This community lives nomadically, and the population is estimated to be fewer than 10.000 people. Therefore, considering the importance of documenting it as a means of preventing its extinction and as an initial step towards its revitalization, this research conducts the distribution of the Orang Rimba dialect based on its lexical variation in Jambi Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia. It also elaborates on the challenges faced throughout the dialect mapping process.

This study uses mixed methods, employing several data collection techniques including are questionnaires, interviews, recording, and note-taking. 829 vocabularies items, organized into 20 categories by Bernd Nothofer, modified by Kisyani, are utilized as reference material for a questionnaire. Meanwhile, interviews are conducted with the local Orang Rimba participants from seven regency in Jambi Province.

The findings show there are 429 lexical variations, 291 phonological variations, and 89 zero (ø)/ no differences. There are two main dialects: the Orang Rimba dialect group in eastern Jambi and the Orang Rimba dialect group in central, southern, eastern and northern Jambi in Sarolangun Regency, but outside the TNBD (Southern Jambi), which borders the Orang Rimba dialect in Batanghari (Central Jambi) and the Orang Rimba dialect in Muaro Jambi (Eastern Jambi). Furthermore, the Orang Rimba dialect found in Muaro Jambi (Eastern Jambi) borders the Orang Rimba dialect in Renah Mendaluh, West Tanjung Jabung (Northern Jambi) and the Orang Rimba dialect in Batanghari. These five Orang Rimba dialect groups are in different regencies and are at a considerable distance from one another. In addition, several loanwords from Indonesian are also found in the 'house and its part' category as well as 'tools' category. It is an understandable result of their tradition and culture; they do not have permanent house due to nomadic lifestyle. The same applies to the tools they use in their daily lives. Moreover, the finding also reveals the existence of lexical diffusion in the Orang Rimba dialect in Muaro Jambi. Lastly, during the research conducting, there are several obstacles and challenges encountered. Location access difficulties cultural barriers (local norms) and resistance from the informants toward foreign researcher posed obstacles, whilst a massive volume of data, and building rapport with the community to persuade them to be interviewed proved to be significant challenges.

Keywords: Lexical Variation, Mapping, Challenges, The Orang Rimba

Null objects in L2 English: Referentiality, proficiency, and discourse-based inference

Authors: Elena Gavruseva, University of Iowa
Abstract ID: 461
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 9. Pragmatics
Presenter Name: Elena Gavruseva

Abstract

English is generally characterized as a non-object-drop language, yet object omission is possible in restricted discourse-pragmatic environments (e.g., Fillmore, 1986; Goldberg, 2005). Generic null objects are licensed with certain lexical verbs (e.g., *They build _ for a living [= They build homes for a living*]), while referential nulls are more constrained and depend on discourse salience and conversational implicature (e.g., Do, 2024). This pattern contrasts with Slavic languages, where discourse-linked referential object drop is substantially more productive (e.g., Ruda, 2017). Previous L2/L3 studies largely focused on the syntactic/semantic restrictions of object omission in English (e.g., García Mayo & Slabakova, 2015; Guijarro-Fuentes, 2024; Yuan, 1997). The present study examines whether L1-Slavic/L2-English learners acquire semantic/pragmatic constraints on object omission in L2 English and whether sensitivity to them develops with proficiency.

Participants were 98 adults: 52 native speakers of American English and 46 L1-Slavic learners of English divided by proficiency into Native-like (n = 20), Advanced (n = 18), and Intermediate (n = 8) groups. The learners had mixed instructed and immersion learning histories and substantial experience using English in the United States (≈ 20 years). All participants completed an online acceptability-judgment task consisting of short dialogue exchanges. Experimental items manipulated object realization (null vs. overt) across three discourse conditions (6 items per condition): Generic (no antecedent, non-referential), Specific Indefinite (+antecedent, referential), and Definite (+antecedent, referential). For example, in a generic context participants evaluated response alternatives such as *We could start cooking _ at home* versus *We could start cooking meals at home* to the question 'How can we save more money?'; in a referential context, they compared *When are we going to play _?* with *When are we going to play it?* to the question 'I love this card game!'. Responses were rated on a 7-point scale. Mixed-effects analyses examined effects of object type, discourse condition, proficiency, and experiential variables. The task also included 18 distractor dialogues.

The results reveal a statistically significant generic>referential asymmetry. Across proficiency groups, learners rated null objects more highly in Generic than in referential contexts, demonstrating sensitivity to the pragmatic licensing of object omission. Native speakers preferred overt objects in Definite and Indefinite contexts but did not categorically reject referential nulls. Native-like learners most closely approximated this pattern. Advanced and Intermediate learners were more conservative: they under-accepted referential nulls relative to native speakers. Importantly, this pattern runs counter to a straightforward L1-transfer prediction. Age of onset, age of arrival, and years of residence in the United States did not reliably predict object ratings; only proficiency level did.

These findings show that the developmental challenge is not simply learning that English requires overt objects, but learning when omission is pragmatically natural. More broadly, null objects provide a useful testing ground for the development of syntax–discourse interface knowledge, showing that the structure of pragmatic intuitions varies by proficiency. From an applied perspective, the findings suggest that instruction can profitably draw learners' attention to contrasts among overt, naturally implicit, and discourse-supported object interpretations, thereby promoting more context-sensitive pragmatic competence.

Parenthetical Inserts in Spoken Mandarin Chinese

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Abstract ID: 411
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 9. Pragmatics
Presenter Name: Shuai Luo | Emanuela Cresti | Massimo Moneglia

Abstract

The study investigates how parenthetical inserts are realized in spontaneous Spoken Mandarin Chinese (SMC) within the framework of Language into Act Theory in comparison with previous findings on Italian.

From a prosodic and information-structural perspective, previous research on Italian has mainly examined the semantic functions of parenthetical inserts, showing that canonical Parenthetical Units (PAR) frequently convey informative and narrative content. By contrast, previous research on Chinese parenthetical expressions has focused primarily on structural properties, particularly the way such expressions interrupt otherwise compositional syntactic structures.

The analysis is based on spontaneous SMC data from the C-ORAL-ZHONG corpus, comprising approximately 70 minutes of speech with diaphasic and diastratic variation and annotated according to L-AcT principles. Parenthetical units were identified through perceptual and instrumental analyses conducted with WinPitch and Praat, based on prosodic isolation and characteristic cues such as local pitch-range lowering, reduced prosodic prominence, and temporal compression. The analysis identified 35 parenthetical cases, including 29 canonical PAR units and six higher-level discourse structures classified as COB-p.

The results reveal an asymmetrical distribution of parenthetical inserts from a semantic perspective (15 modal, 8 metalinguistic reformulation, 5 connective, only 1 informative/narrative). Canonical PAR units are therefore predominantly associated with discourse-management functions such as modality and speech planning, as in:

zhǐshì /DCT zěnme shuō ne /PAR cháoshàn guō /TOP hǎoxiàng yǐjīng xíngchéng le yì zhǒng /SCA móshì //COM

"Well —let's say— chaoshan hotpot seems to have already developed into a kind of pattern."

By contrast, informative and narrative parentheticals occur only in complex structures (COB-p) as in: wǒmen chī nàge /COB jiùshì /SCA nǐ [/] /EMP wǒ bù zhīdào nǐmen chī bu chī /COB-p jiùshì nàge fàn //COM

"We eat that — well, I don't know whether you eat it or not — that rice dish."

This contrasts with Italian data, where informative and narrative parentheticals constitute the prevailing functional domain of canonical PAR. These preliminary results suggest that SMC constrains the realization of informative content within canonical PAR, while primarily using such units for discourse-management functions. Informative parenthetical content, by contrast, tends to be organized through higher-level discourse structures.

Phonation as a Cue to Tone Splits in Central Mashan Hmong

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Abstract ID: 413
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 2. Experimental linguistics
Presenter Name: Man Fong LAM

Abstract

Mashan Hmong belongs to the Chuan–Qian–Dian branch of the Hmong–Mien language family and is spoken mainly in southern Guizhou and northwestern Guangxi. The Central variety spoken in Zongdi town, Ziyun County, is notable for its exceptionally complex tonal system, with previous studies reporting between nine and thirteen tones across different villages. Most existing work, however, remains at the level of traditional phonetic description, and the acoustic cues that distinguish these numerous tones – particularly the role of phonation type – are not yet well understood. This study investigates how phonation-type cues underpin complex tone splits in Central Mashan Miao, asking which acoustic parameters systematically distinguish tonal categories across multiple field sites.

Controlled speech production data were collected from four male speakers representing three field sites: Shanjiao village (11 tones), Zongdi village (13 tones, including the Jiaotuo group), and Hongyan village (13 tones). Acoustic parameters, including fundamental frequency, spectral tilt measures (H1−H2, H1−A1), and cepstral peak prominence (CPP), were extracted using VoiceSauce at three temporal points within each vowel. One-way ANOVAs were used to assess whether these phonation measures differentiate tonal categories within and across speakers.

Results show that all three phonation measures significantly distinguish tonal categories for all four speakers, confirming that phonation is an integral dimension of tonal contrast in this variety. A key finding is a two-way dissociation in the Shanjiao data: the tone split pair T13/T24 is differentiated primarily by breathiness (elevated H1−H2 and H1−A1 on T13), while the pair T23/T34 is differentiated primarily by phonation periodicity (lower CPP on T34). Cross-speaker comparison further reveals that CPP is the most consistent phonatory differentiator across all three sites, whereas the contribution of H1−A1 and the temporal locus of phonatory contrasts vary by location.

These findings demonstrate that phonation is a systematic and phonologically active cue to tone splits in Central Mashan Miao, rather than a mere phonetic correlate. More broadly, they position this variety as a typologically significant case for understanding how diachronic tone splits give rise to stable synchronic phonatory contrasts in Hmong–Mien languages and tone systems with large inventories. The study thus contributes empirical evidence to ongoing discussions of the interface between phonation, tone, and tonogenesis in languages of southern China.

Keywords: Mashan Homong, Hmong–Mien, tone production, phonation type, acoustic analysis, tone split

Phonological Acquisition in Young African American English Children: The Case of Final Consonant Deletion

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Abstract ID: 470
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 4. Phonetics
Presenter Name: Ewa Jacewicz

Abstract

African American English (AAE) is a socioethnic variety of American English spoken by many African Americans in the United States, commonly known as the dialect of the Black population. Currently, there are approximately 40 million speakers of AAE, with the largest concentrations in major cities across the country and in the rural South. Syntactic and morphological features of AAE have been studied by linguists for over 50 years, but systematic investigations into phonology and phonetic markers of AAE speech are still rare. There is a consensus that AAE is not a monolithic variety spoken by all African Americans but represents a spectrum of pronunciation features that vary in strength with geographic location of the speakers, social networks, occupation, and the local regional dialects.

This study focuses on the acquisition of AAE speech by typically developing Black children as compared to White children who speak mainstream American English (WAE). The children in both groups were of the same age ranging from 3 to 5 years and grew up in the same geographic region in the South.

Developmental literature has mostly focused on the acquisition of mainstream American English, and other varieties such as regional dialects and AAE have not been considered in defining developmental milestones or studied systematically using experimental methods. This study addresses this gap and investigates the acquisition of word-final consonants by both AAE- and WAE-speaking children. While variability in the pronunciation of final consonants is expected by all children of that age because those consonants are acquired later than word-initial consonants, our research interests are in finding systematic differences between AAE and WAE. It is the case that African Americans often do not produce final consonants, and this common AAE feature is termed "final consonant deletion." To compensate for the consonant drop, AAE speakers prolong the preceding vowel. We seek to determine whether AAE children acquire vowel lengthening as a part of phonological organization of AAE, or whether they do not differ from WAE children, being influenced by the mainstream variety.

In our acoustic phonetic study, we investigated the temporal relationship between the final consonants and vowels preceding those consonants in a common set of words recorded by the children in a laboratory setting. The acoustic variables included vowel duration, stop consonant closure duration, closure-to-vowel ratio, and stop burst characteristics. We found that AAE children, particularly boys, produced longer vowels than WAE children, which is consistent with patterns reported in the literature for adults. This indicates that AAE children acquire vowel lengthening as a part of phonological organization of their ethnic variety, even if they may not always drop the final consonant. This finding has clinical implications for assessment of speech disorders in children. It indicates that final consonant deletion, if preceded by a longer vowel, is not a developmental disorder but a typical feature of AAE that does not require therapeutic treatment.

Pronoun Resolution in L2 English: The Role of Topicality, Verb Semantics, and Coherence Relations in Vietnamese Learners

Authors: Le Vo Gia Nghi, Vrije Universiteit Brussel
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Abstract ID: 474
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 16. Psycholinguistics
Presenter Name: Le Vo Gia Nghi

Abstract

The resolution of pronouns, which often function as anaphors, is essential to successful communication. Various discourse-pragmatic factors have been suggested to influence native speakers' interpretation of anaphoric ties, based on the correlation between pronoun preference and discourse prominence. In research involving language learners, however, it remains debated whether (a) learners can integrate different cues in their pronoun resolution similarly to native speakers, and (b) cross-linguistic influence plays a role in this process. The present study addressed this ongoing debate with the population of Vietnamese learners of English as a foreign language (EFL). As a pro-drop language, Vietnamese differs from non-pro-drop languages such as English in how pronoun preference relates to discourse prominence. Moreover, while English uses two different forms for subject and object pronouns (e.g., *he* and *him),* Vietnamese lacks case marking and uses the same form for both (e.g., *anh ấy* means both *he* and *him).* This morphosyntactic difference may have potential cross-linguistic influence on Vietnamese-speaking English learners' second language (L2) pronoun resolution.

We crossed three discourse-pragmatic factors (topicality, verb semantics, and coherence relations) in a series of sentence completion tasks in English and Vietnamese. We investigated the effect of various referring expressions with different levels of topicality (i.e., indefinite noun phrases (NPs) and pronouns) on their likelihood of being mentioned again. We also scrutinized the implicit causality effect denoted by two classes of psychological verbs (i.e., experiencer-stimulus and stimulus-experiencer verbs) and two coherence relations (i.e., explanation and narration). The experiments, which followed a within-subject design, featured thirty-one Vietnamese EFL learners of various levels of proficiency and twenty-three L1 speakers of English. Participants completed sentence fragments such as Tom appreciated him because he…., resolving the ambiguous pronouns using the available cues in the preceding discourse.

Results suggested significant interactions between participant groups and the discourse-pragmatic predictors. We found a positive correlation between referring expressions' levels of topicality and their likelihood of being re-mentioned. When the object was a pronoun, a highly topical referring expression, the probability of subject reference was low. Also in these conditions, L1 Vietnamese group showed an almost categorical object preference, which may be attributed to the Vietnamese language's lack of distinction between two forms of pronouns. The effect of the interaction between verb semantics and coherence relations on groups' pronoun resolution also reached significance, with a crossover pattern: while the explanation relation facilitated the implicit causality promoted by verb semantics, the narration relation inhibited this.

Nevertheless, we observed similar performance between L1 English speakers and Vietnamese EFL learners across levels of proficiency, providing no evidence for cross-linguistic influence on the learners' L2 pronoun resolution. Results also suggest learners' ability to implement multiple discourse-pragmatic cues in a native-like manner, providing counter-evidence to the Interface Hypothesis (Sorace, 2011), which predicts that non-native speakers struggle to fully acquire linguistic features involving multiple interfaces.

Quechua in Peru: Divergent Trends in Language Transmission and Identity

Authors: Daria Mengert, Leibniz Universität Hannover
Abstract ID: 363
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 3. Application linguistics
Presenter Name: Daria Mengert

Abstract

Objective

With the United Nations' proclamation of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022–2032), the sociolinguistic and demographic trajectories of Indigenous languages worldwide warrant sustained attention. For assessing the vitality of South America's major indigenous language family Quechua, two factors are especially salient: intergenerational transmission and ethnocultural self-identification. This study compares trends in Quechua language transmission and self-identification in Peru.

Methodology

We analyze representative data from the 2017 National Population Census conducted by Peru's National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI). From the census, we extracted age-specific counts for (a) individuals who reported Quechua as the language with which they learned to speak and (b) individuals who self-identified as Quechua. We compared these two measures numerically and graphically at the national level and for Lima Department and the first seven Andean departments with large Quechua-speaking populations: Ayacucho, Apurímac, Cusco, Huancavelica, Puno, Ancash and Huánuco. For Lima, we further distinguished between individuals born and/or raised in the department ("Mother lived in the same district") and residents who were born and raised elsewhere ("Mother did not live in this district").

Results

We find two clear and opposing trends. Across successively younger cohorts, the number of native (L1) Quechua speakers declines, whereas the number of individuals who self-identify as Quechua increases. Nationally, in the youngest observed cohort (age 12), approximately twice as many children self-identified as Quechua as reported Quechua as their first language. This pattern appears in the Andean departments as well but is most pronounced in Lima. Among those born and dwelling in Lima, rising Quechua self-identification is especially marked and most decoupled from native-speaker prevalence.

Conclusions

These findings have important implications for understanding the current vitality of Quechua. While ethnocultural self-identification is strong among younger generations—likely fueled by activism and empowerment—native-speaker prevalence is declining, because parents have not transmitted the language to their children. Consequently, a growing cohort of young descendants of Quechua speakers—heritage learners in particular—value the language but probably lack fluency. Language revitalization and maintenance initiatives should therefore target not only current speakers but also heritage learners and descendants: first, by supporting their development of fluent Quechua proficiency, and second, by providing guidance and resources for effective intergenerational transmission to their (future) children.

Reading Competence and Reading Self-Concept in Primary School: The Roles of Language Background and Gender

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Abstract ID: 364
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 16. Psycholinguistics
Presenter Name: Dilan Cümen

Abstract

Objectives: One of the key skills that predicts academic achievement is reading competence, with its development beginning in primary school. At this early stage, disparities have been observed between children whose first language is the language of instruction (L1) and children who acquire it as an additional language (L2). Several cognitive, educational, environmental, social, and behavioral factors, have been identified as influential on reading performance, among these, the reading self-concept, defined as the subjective perception of one's own reading abilities. The present study is based on data collected as part of a larger research project (Lesen in der Zweitsprache Deutsch (LiZD) funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), project number 212832) and examines the relationship between reading competence and reading self-concept in third-grade children, focusing in particular on the influence of first language and gender.

Methodology: The sample is composed of N = 156 girls, of whom N = 77 have German as their first language (L1), and N = 79 have German as their second language (L2), and N = 157 boys, of whom N = 72 have German as their first language (L1), and N = 85 have German as their second language (L2). Reading self-concept was assessed using a standardized self-concept scale, and reading competence was operationalized through reading comprehension. Additionally, reading fluency and vocabulary measures were conducted. Analyses included group comparisons, correlation analyses, regression models, and longitudinal analyses.

Results: Analyses of variance (ANOVA) demonstrated that L1 children reported higher reading self-concept than L2 children, and scored significantly higher in the reading comprehension test, while no significant overall gender difference was identified. However, correlation analyses revealed that the correlation strength between reading self-concept and reading comprehension was stronger in L1 children in comparison to L2 children, thus demonstrating a significantly higher level of accuracy in their reading self-concept assessment. By contrast, L2 children exhibited lower levels of accuracy, with the lowest levels observed among L2 girls, suggesting that they may be a particularly vulnerable group. Reading comprehension was found to be a significant predictor of reading self-concept, whereas the socioeconomic status, gender, and their interaction with language background did not explain additional variance once reading performance was considered. Longitudinal analyses further suggest that there is a reciprocal relationship between reading performance and reading self-concept.

Discussion: These findings highlight the importance of incorporating reading self-concept into the development of reading competence, particularly in relation to language background and gender. It is hypothesized that lower reading competence and lower reading self-concept scores, particularly if one's reading self-concept is incongruent, may mutually reinforce each other over time. This phenomenon may be especially relevant for L2 children, and, more specifically, for L2 girls. The necessity for early, targeted support that addresses both reading skills and the reading self-concept is thus emphasized.

Recovering the Vowel Behind Schwa: Orthography-Guided /ə/ Resolution in English-to-Georgian Transliteration through Grapheme–Phoneme Alignment

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Abstract ID: 462
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 19. Computational linguistics
Presenter Name: Giorgi Lekiashvili

Abstract

English schwa creates a specific transliteration problem for Georgian. English can neutralize several vowel qualities in unstressed position as /ə/, whereas Standard Georgian has a five-vowel system /a, e, i, o, u/ and no phonemic schwa category to receive that reduction directly. A phoneme-only converter must therefore choose a full Georgian vowel after the English pronunciation has already discarded part of the contrast that would help make that choice. This study proposes an orthography-guided solution in which pronunciation first identifies a schwa token and a customized global sequence-alignment procedure then recovers the grapheme or graphemic chunk associated with that token. The implementation adapts Needleman–Wunsch dynamic programming to grapheme–phoneme alignment through longest-match grapheme tokenization, linguistic compatibility scores, context-sensitive gap costs, and one-grapheme-to-multiple-phoneme macro transitions. The recovered spelling feature conditions the Georgian output: in the evaluated core classes, <a>, <e>, <i>, <o>, and <u> aligned with unstressed schwa lead respectively to ა, ე, ი, ო, and უ, while <ou> is handled as a multigraph class. Structural rules may override vowel restoration where an English schwa is better suppressed in Georgian. A controlled 30-item diagnostic test, balanced across six spelling classes, recovered the pre-specified schwa source in all 30 target tokens. In a second ablation, removing spelling-alignment information changed 20 of 30 complete outputs, specifically the <e>, <i>, <o>, and <u> classes; <a> and <ou> converged with the system's generic AH/AX → ა fallback. These results are functional validation rather than an estimate of unrestricted accuracy. The contribution is a transparent computational treatment of schwa as an information-recovery problem at the interface of phonetics, phonology, orthography, and transliteration, not a claim that English spelling reveals a speaker's underlying phonological vowel.

Reflexive Practice as an Answer to the "One/Many Question" in Literacy Education

Authors: Rick Evans, Cornell University (Emeritus)
Abstract ID: 290
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 21. Language education
Presenter Name: Rick Evans

Abstract

Literacy educators routinely find themselves forced to choose between two ideological framings of literacy. Do they choose to teach literacy understood as an important and shared competency that society, mainly through schooling, provides to its citizens. Or do they choose literacies understood as social practices always contextually situated and associated with individually meaningful and everyday life-worlds. Gee refers to this as the "one/many question" (Gee, 2015).

I offer educators a third choice, an alternative ideological framing. The alternative posits both literacy and literacies as open and emergent semiotic systems, soft-assembled through the actions of individual agents, supported and facilitated within certain contexts through the available resources and relational interactions with others. The systems, contexts, agents and actions, their resources and relationships all serve projects.

Literacy and literacies are both understood as social interactions, context-bound, purposeful, developmental and emergent. This understanding of literacy is not new, although it has not been fully developed. It is anticipated by Barton (1994 / 2007) when he proposes an "ecological approach." It is anticipated by Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008) and by "The 'Five Graces Group"' (2009) when they propose that language be understood as a "*complex adaptive system*" (CAS). However, what this alternative ideological framing does is collapse literacy and literacies together (hereafter literacy/ies).

If literacy/ies are as I describe, then all must have affordances and constraints associated with local contexts, actors, available resources and interactions within those contexts, a range of possible trajectories for development, and the potential for new literacy/ies to emerge. The goal then for literacy educators is to teach literacy/ies as open semiotic systems attending to all the above. They can do this by teaching reflexive practice.

Reflexive practice is the ability to use language and/or literacy/ies to reflect on language and/or literacy/ies use. Reflexive practice occurs "naturally." We witness it every time someone uses language or literacy/ies, for example, to report on or to evaluate, praise or criticize, someone else's or their own language or literacy/ies use. However, the real significance of reflexive practice is that those practices can be transformative. How?

Reflexive practice is what makes language and/or literacy/ies powerful instruments for doing work by helping us to understand context, act as agents, use resources and relationships, all in service of projects.

In my paper/presentation, I develop the alternative framing of literacy/ies as open and emergent semiotic systems. I offer a process whereby teachers and students together can become reconstructive researchers of literacy/ies. That process involves three stages: 1) a description of literacy/ies cases with a focus on difference; 2) a description of the resources and relationships within and across cases with a focus on generative mechanisms; and 3) a description of agency or literacy/ies as socially meaningful and organized ways for doing work. I conclude by dismissing the debate between literacy and literacies as unproductive and offer a way for teachers and students to develop an appreciation for the efficacy of reflexive practice.

Request Strategies in the Najdi Dialect: Human Interaction vs. AI-Generated Language

Authors:Sawsan Alfaleh, King Saud University
Abstract ID: 335
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 9. Pragmatics
Presenter Name: Sawsan Alfaleh

Abstract

This study aims to investigate how the request speech act is constructed and interactionally managed in Najdi Arabic, and to compare these patterns with those generated by artificial intelligence systems. It focuses on conversational interactions among 32 first-year Saudi female students at King Saud University who are speakers of the Najdi dialect. Data are elicited through recorded role-play tasks designed to simulate semi-natural communicative situations, in addition to naturally occurring conversations among students in comparable contexts in two specific request situations, rhe first one is: requesting help for the exam, and the second one is: requesting to borrow lecture notes. The data consists of two comparable corpora: AI-generated dialogues simulating the two situations and naturally occurring conversations among students in equivalent contexts. The recordings are transcribed following the conventions of Heritage (1980), allowing for a fine-grained representation of interactional details. The study adopts a conversation-analytic approach based on Schegloff (2009), integrating two analytical levels: the sequential organization of requests (initiation, main request, and response), and the diffrent use of Najdi dialect features within interaction between the AI-generated dialogues and naturally occurring conversations. In addition, the naturally occurring and elicited interactional data are compared with dialogues generated by generative artificial intelligence systems. This comparison focuses on identifying similarities and differences in interactional patterns, as well as the differential use of Najdi dialect features within interaction between AI-generated dialogues and naturally occurring conversations. The study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interactional analysis with systematic comparison to AI-generated data in order to interpret convergences and divergences within a conversation-analytic and pragmatic framework. The findings reveal systematic differences between naturally occurring data and AI-generated. AI language tends to produce explicit, structurally complete, and standardized requests, with limited sensitivity to interactional sequencing and sociocultural constraints, particularly in ethically sensitive contexts such as exam-related requests. In addition, Najdi dialect features are inconsistently represented. In contrast, naturally occurring interactions display greater pragmatic flexibility and richer dialectal realization, where request strategies are dynamically shaped by context. These results indicate a dual gap—interactional and dialectal—between computationally generated and human language. The study highlights the importance of incorporating sequential, sociopragmatic, and dialect-sensitive dimensions into AI language modeling, and contributes to expanding empirical research on Arabic dialects within interactional linguistics.

Rhetorical Punctuation in Flemish Political Communication

Authors: Lívia Melicherová, Palacky University in Olomouc, Czech Republic
Abstract ID: 416
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 14. Discourse analysis
Presenter Name: Lívia Melicherová

Abstract

Social media has become a central platform for political communication, enabling politicians to communicate directly with citizens through concise and highly personalized messages. While previous research has extensively examined political discourse, the rhetorical role of punctuation in online political communication remains relatively underexplored. This study investigates how Flemish politicians use punctuation as a communicative resource in their social media posts and explores whether these strategies differ across political parties. It is expected that politicians employ punctuation strategically to enhance their messages and that the functions of punctuation vary across parties, reflecting different communication styles and persuasive strategies.

The study adopts a qualitative content analysis approach informed by Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis (CMDA), which examines how linguistic features operate within digitally mediated communication. A purposive sample of publicly available social media posts published by Flemish politicians representing different political parties will be collected and analysed using ATLAS.ti. The analysis conceptualizes punctuation not merely as a grammatical feature, but as a rhetorical resource contributing to meaning-making in digital political discourse. Particular attention will be paid to expressive punctuation, including exclamation marks, question marks, ellipses, repeated punctuation, and other non-standard punctuation practices. Through inductive qualitative coding, these features will be examined in relation to their communicative functions, including emphasis, emotional expression, urgency, certainty, irony, audience engagement, and persuasion. The coded data will then be compared across political parties to identify recurring patterns and differences in rhetorical communication strategies.

By examining punctuation as a meaningful linguistic resource in digital political discourse, this research contributes to the fields of discourse analysis and political communication by expanding the study of online rhetoric beyond lexical and syntactic features. Furthermore, it demonstrates the value of qualitative coding in ATLAS.ti for investigating subtle linguistic phenomena that are often overlooked in quantitative analyses of social media communication. By focusing on punctuation as an integral component of digital rhetoric, the study aims to provide a framework for analysing rhetorical features in social media discourse and to offer new insights into how politicians construct persuasive messages and engage with audiences in contemporary digital environments.

Screen reader users and multimodal algospeak communication on TikTok

Authors: Erynn young, University of Amsterdam/Amsterdam Center for Language & Communication
Abstract ID: 298
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 3. Application linguistics
Presenter Name: Erynn young

Abstract:

Multimodal(ity) on a digital platform like TikTok refers to the visual/video, written/textual, speech/audio modalities through which TikTok users can establish, transmit, and decode meaning thanks to the platform's architecture. On TikTok, algospeak is the multimodal communicative phenomenon whereby users manipulate their communication to evade algorithmic content moderation and censorship (e.g. 'kill' becomes unalive) and it is one defensive tool against the manufactured digital precarity (i.e. deplatforming) resulting from content moderation practices. I present a turn towards critical disability scholarship as a necessary framework to assess how issues of limited or mediated modality access impact communication on platforms for screen reader users. Screen readers (SR) are a type of assistive technology/software that mediate digital media engagement through text-to-speech processing that synthesizes digital text into audible language. I examine the interplay between algospeak practices and SR users with the following research questions:

1. How do SR users of TikTok engage with multimodal English algospeak amid heightened digital precarity?
2. What are SR users' processes of meaning-making with algospeak, including processes of algospeak meaning disambiguation and algospeak production given their possible modality limitations?
3. How algospeak use and/or necessity potentially re-make SR users as digitally vulnerable/marginalized?

I conducted scroll-along sessions with a total of 14 recruited SR users, during which participants scrolled through pre-selected TikTok content containing algospeak. After each video, the participant reflected on the content, its algospeak communication, and detailed their processes of algospeak meaning-making; these reflections were subsequently coded open and axial coding, following a grounded theory approach. The codes were then analyzed and thematically organized. Findings show that SR users exploit a repertoire of algospeak disambiguation strategies to supplement that which is not directly understood through the surrounding content and/or that which is not sufficiently mediated by their SRs. Moreover, factors including (but not limited to) reliance on SRs, sighted capabilities, existing and intertextual familiarity with algospeak as a phenomenon and particularly popular algospeak tokens, and interactive goals like audience intelligibility and information processing load reduction are considered by SR users when it comes to algospeak production. SR users also reconcile this mediated access to strategically multimodal communication as contributing to increased digital precarity. These findings demonstrate how SR users engage with multimodal algospeak on TikTok to maintain (some) access to interactive environments under surveillance and content moderation, while navigating modality constraints that can render their algospeak comprehension and production less effective or impossible and as a result, their (digital) precarity and marginalization further heightened.

Semantic Features of Prepositional Temporal Expressions with the Prepositions u and na in Croatian

Authors: Maja Glušac, Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies in Osijek
Abstract ID: 273
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 8. Semantics
Presenter Name: Maja Glušac

Abstract

The system of prepositional temporal expressions in Croatian is exceptionally rich. This paper focuses on temporal expressions involving the prepositions u and na. The aim is to investigate the syntactic features and semantic extensions of Croatian prepositional expressions with these prepositions, with particular emphasis on the transition from the spatial to the temporal domain and the constraints of semantic selection that influence the combinability of prepositions and dependent words. The theoretical framework is based on locative assumptions positing that the core meanings of prepositions and cases are spatial, while temporal and other abstract meanings develop through metaphorical and metonymic transfer from the spatial domain, in accordance with conceptual metaphor and metonymy theory (Lakoff C Johnson 1980), e.g., u grad 'into the city' : u ponedjeljak 'on Monday', na koncert 'to a concert' : na proljeće 'in spring'. The study draws on a corpus collected as part of the project Croatian Prepositions in Use – Semantic and Syntactic Analysis. Examples with u and na are extracted, and in the first analytical step, the semantic features of the dependent word are described with respect to whether the noun has temporal (u ponedjeljak 'on Monday', na proljeće 'in spring') or non-temporal meaning (u ratu 'during the war', na predavanju 'at the lecture'). Building on the theoretical foundations of conceptual semantics (Jackendoff 1990), according to which linguistic meaning can be modeled via conceptual structures reflecting cognitive phenomena, it is demonstrated that a temporal reading requires a specific conceptual structure. This explains why certain combinations are neutral, while others are unacceptable or marked (e.g., *u ponedjeljku, *na proljeću). Semantic constraints on noun selection arise from conflicts between the noun's conceptual structure and the preposition's schematic meaning, with the case's categorial meaning playing a crucial role: the accusative marks the endpoint of an action, while the locative delineates the frame of the action, extended metaphorically to temporal meaning. Differences in case selection are also determined relative to the semantic and syntactic features of the governing word, which proves relevant for temporal expressions with na, where future actions are more frequently denoted, and boundary aspects and orientation toward the onset of a time period are emphasized (doći ću na proljeće 'I will come in spring'). In contrast, accusative expressions with u typically profile the internal structure of a time period as the locus of the action (trava je zelenija u proljeće 'the grass is greener in spring'). The resulting insights are thematized within the broader context of figurative language and potential computational linguistic applications.

Keywords: **preposition u, preposition na, semantic extensions, time, Croatian**

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Standardisation of languages and loss of vernacular scripts: A case study on Indian languages

Authors: Shivangi Tiwari, Independent researcher
Abstract ID: 342
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 12. Historical linguistics
Presenter Name: Shivangi Tiwari

Abstract

The paper examines the tension between state-led language standardisation and the survival of vernacular scripts, exploring how the drive for administrative and educational efficiency often marginalises indigenous and regional writing systems. Standardisation makes nationwide or centralized communication easier, but picking up one single language as "formal" and "official" often kills the local languages of the masses, eventually sidelining their cultural history and identity.

The research explores three primary areas: first, how and why certain languages come to hold greater institutional importance than others; second, the challenges faced by communities whose languages are marginalized for being perceived as insufficient to be considered as "formal"; and third, how more inclusive forms of communication can be developed in the modern world without further endangering linguistic diversity.

This paper argues that although language standardisation facilitates administrative efficiency and wider communication, it often contributes to the marginalisation of vernacular languages and scripts, threatening cultural identity and historical continuity. By examining the social and institutional hierarchies that elevate certain languages as "formal" or "official," the study highlights the challenges faced by communities whose linguistic traditions are excluded from dominant systems of communication. Ultimately, the paper advocates for more inclusive and multilingual approaches that enable effective communication while preserving linguistic and cultural diversity.

The AI-Driven Language Course Syllabus: The New Age of Instruction

Authors: Rabih Nabhan, Holy Spirit University of Kaslik - USEK
Abstract ID: 315
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 23. Language technology
Presenter Name: Rabih Nabhan

Abstract

The advance of technology, specifically with the introduction and domination of Artificial Intelligence (AI), has impacted education and has altered teaching and learning models in unprecedented ways. Language instruction should cope with this new technological era otherwise teaching methods will be considered obsolete, primitive, and outdated. This study is both theoretical and empirical in nature as the first part serves as a main pillar for the practical research study that will be conducted in the Fall Semester of 2025-2026 academic year. The study aims to build a language model that utilizes solely AI platforms to achieve the learning outcomes, as introduced in an academic syllabus, of an entire course. The instructor's job is to guide the learners through the process by applying the model. The prototype with all its key instructional components (topics, assessment activities, and learning activities) is founded on the ChatGPT AI platform. The prototype is the base of the action research that will entail entire learning classrooms in a university semester. It will be implemented in two sections of a course (30 students each) in the Fall Semester. The significance of the project is that it will establish a model that language instructors can adopt in their teaching process confirming that course learning outcomes can be realized through the sole use of AI. In short, this theoretical and empirical study is a two-part project with part one focusing on the model and another on the application of this model to test its validity.

Keywords: AI, new age, instruction, syllabus, prototype, theoretical, empirical

The Evolution of Syntactic Priming Research: A Dual-Nature Perspective

Authors: Zhengyue Wang, School of Foreign Languages, Shandong Normal University, Jinan, China
Abstract ID: 441
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 16. Psycholinguistics
Presenter Name: Zhengyue Wang

Abstract

Objectives: Syntactic priming refers to the phenomenon of producing the subsequent utterance in the related form after processing the previous utterance. Syntactic priming has been extensively studied as a psycholinguistic phenomenon and widely adopted as an experimental paradigm in interdisciplinary research. This dual nature of syntactic priming was discussed by Pickering and Ferreira in 2008 as an important future research direction. Although existing reviews have examined the evolution of syntactic priming research, the dual nature has rarely been adopted as a theoretical framework for understanding the development of this field. This study aims to systematically review the evolution of syntactic priming research from the perspective of its dual nature with bibliometric evidence.

Methodology: This study retrieved relevant literature on syntactic priming from SSCI and SCI Expanded indexes, covering the period from 1998 to 2026. CiteSpace 6.4.R2 was employed to conduct bibliometric analysis through four dimensions: keyword co-occurrence, keyword clustering, keyword timeline and keyword burstness.

Results: The bibliometric analysis reveals two clustering categories, supported by high Modularity Q and Silhouette S values and a strong spillover effect. These findings support the dual-nature framework of syntactic priming. Moreover, the analysis suggests two marked turning points in the evolution of syntactic priming research, around 2008 and 2017. Based on these temporal patterns, the evolution of syntactic priming research can be divided into three stages: 1998-2007; 2008-2016 and 2017-2026, with the research focus transitioning from the investigation of syntactic priming phenomenon within psycholinguistics to the establishment of syntactic priming as an experimental paradigm and to the extensive interdisciplinary application in recent years. The two turning points may correspond to the seminal critical review by Pickering and Ferreira in 2008 and the advent of the Transformer model in 2017.

Discussion: This study reconstructs the three stages in the evolution of syntactic priming research from a dual-nature perspective. The analysis of the current stage reveals an emerging trend towards interdisciplinary applications of syntactic priming in NLP research and a gap in multilingual syntactic priming research regarding the investigation of shared syntactic representations. Overall, this study contributes to the understanding of the evolution of syntactic priming research and its dual nature, and points to several directions for further linguistic investigations.

The History of Languages: Their Origins, Development, and Impact on the Formation of Human Civilizations

Authors: Mutaib Fahad AlSubaie, Faculty Member at the Technical College, TVTC
Abstract ID: 422
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 24. AI linguistics
Presenter Name: Mutaib Fahad AlSubaie

Introduction: Languages are among the most significant manifestations of human civilization, serving as the primary means of communication and the transmission of knowledge, culture, and values across generations. Throughout history, languages have undergone continuous development and transformation due to human migration, cultural interaction, trade, conquests, and scientific and technological progress. These processes have contributed to the emergence of various language families, the extinction of some languages, and the survival and evolution of others into the modern era. Understanding the history of languages provides an essential perspective for examining the development of civilizations, the relationships among peoples, and the mutual influence between languages and cultures.

Research Problem: The study addresses the lack of a comprehensive historical perspective on the origins and evolution of languages and the factors that have contributed to their spread or decline. It also highlights the limited number of Arabic studies that examine the history of languages from a comparative historical and civilizational perspective. The study seeks to answer the following main question: How have languages evolved throughout history, and what are the principal factors that have shaped the contemporary linguistic landscape?

Methodology: the study adopts a historical-analytical approach, complemented by the comparative method to examine the development of major languages and language families. It relies on an extensive review of scholarly literature, historical records, and linguistic sources, as well as the analysis of evidence related to the origins, dissemination, and evolution of languages across different historical periods.

Expected Results: the study is expected to demonstrate that the evolution of languages has not been merely a linguistic process but also a reflection of broader civilizational, political, economic, and cultural transformations throughout history. The findings are also expected to confirm the significant roles of migration, trade, colonization, and scientific and technological advancement in the spread or decline of languages. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of preserving linguistic diversity as an integral part of humanity's cultural heritage and promoting comparative linguistic research to deepen our understanding of the historical relationships among languages and civilizations.

The influence of the British academic environment on the English pronunciation of Saudi PhD students with an American English education background

Authors: Wejdan Alsharif, The University of York, UK
Abstract ID: 425
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 4. Phonetics
Presenter Name: Wejdan Alsharif

Abstract

This study examines variation in the production of English /r/ among Saudi PhD students studying in a British academic environment. It investigates whether the participants' pronunciation reflects variation associated with speech task and word position, and considers the extent to which British, American, and Saudi patterns occur in their speech. The study also examines whether the participants' current exposure to British English is reflected in their use of /r/ alongside patterns associated with their previous English-learning experience.

The study adopts a sociophonetic approach, combining auditory and acoustic analysis of /r/ productions across different speech tasks and word positions. The analysis considers individual speaker variation and examines selected acoustic characteristics of overt /r/ realizations, particularly formant structure and segment duration.

The findings show that the American realization remains the dominant pattern, while British and Saudi realizations occur alongside it. Variation was observed across speech tasks, with the British realization occurring more frequently in the more controlled speaking conditions. However, word position did not show a systematic relationship with the choice of /r/ variant. The analysis also revealed considerable variation between individual participants, indicating that the overall pattern does not represent a uniform pronunciation behaviour.

The findings suggest that exposure to a British academic environment may contribute to the availability and use of British-like /r/ realizations without necessarily resulting in a complete shift towards British pronunciation. The study therefore highlights the dynamic and variable nature of second-language pronunciation and demonstrates the importance of considering speaking context and individual speaker behaviour when examining phonetic variation in L2 English.

The Pragmatics of Negotiating the Language Used in Social Interaction

Authors: Gina-Aurora Necula, Romanian Language Institute, Bucharest
Abstract ID: 399
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 9. Pragmatics
Presenter Name: Gina-Aurora Necula

Abstract

As a former Soviet republic, Moldova has been reclaiming its ethnic and linguistic identity since it gained statehood (1991). The latest census (2024) in the Republic of Moldova shows that, by ethnicity, Moldovans rank first (77.2%), Romanians second (7.9%), Ukrainians third (4.9%), Gagauz fourth (4.2%), and Russians fifth (3.2%). However, a characteristic feature of the linguistic area in the Republic of Moldova is the discrepancy between the percentages representing the respondents' self-identified ethnicity and their declared native language: "Moldovan"—49.2%, Romanian—31.3%, Russian—11.1%, Gagauz—3.8%, and Ukrainian—2.9%. It is easy to observe a reversal in the rankings because many of the speakers confuse the concepts of "native language" and "L1," since Russian is the only language they know or the language they use most easily, even though they cannot provide genealogical evidence of their belonging to the Russian ethnic group or the Russian linguistic descent. What's even more surprising is that, when it comes to the language of social interaction, Russian is the clear winner, even though more than 35 years have passed since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, which led to the abandonment of the Cyrillic alphabet and the declaration of Romanian as the official language; consequently, Russian has lost its status as a lingua franca, and one would have expected it to lose its hegemony among speakers as well.

Our main objective in this study is to identify the causes and contexts in which speakers of all ethnic groups still rely on Russian as a language of interethnic communication at the expense of the official state language (i.e., Romanian) or their native languages, in the case of representatives of linguistic minorities, as long as it has already become a national pattern and a subject of self-deprecating humor that Romanian speakers embrace and spread: Whenever, no matter private or public context, several speakers initiate and maintain a conversation in Romanian and a single Russian-speaking person interjects, then by tacit convention, all speakers switch to Russian. The subsequent objective is to help speakers identify the linguistic resources they can draw upon to develop their communication skills in Romanian. To collect data, we relied on a questionnaire administered to students at Comrat State University, UTA Gagauzia in the Republic of Moldova, to demonstrate how politeness is negotiated and how social interaction is established among multilingual speakers, in an effort to debunk one of the myths that speakers use to justify their limited proficiency in Romanian and their preference for Russian—namely, that they lack contexts for communication in Romanian, hence their need to resort to Russian. All of this is set against the backdrop that many of these students demonstrate superior communication skills in English or German (although their exposure to these languages is, of course, much more limited than their exposure to Romanian).

The Psycho-Physical Embodiment of Language

Authors: Bill Connington, Yale University
Abstract ID: 420
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 8. Semantics
Presenter Name: Bill Connington

Abstract

Objectives: To study the effect of language on the physical body. The three populations that are a part of my ongoing research at Yale University are classical actors, classical singers, and People Living With Parkinson's Disease. My research is conducted at Yale School of Drama, the Yale School for Sacred Music, and Yale Hospital. To effect positive change that can be retained and repeated, the use of language is of utmost importance. My research explores the most successful ways to use language to encourage the embodiment of psycho-physical change.

Methodology: I use the Alexander Technique in order to work with participants. The method is a 130 year old technique commonly used in performing arts institutions for many decades. It has been increasingly used in medical settings. The technique uses touch and verbal instruction to point out tensions and stresses in the body, teaches how to stop unproductive physical habits, and then develop new, improved ways of functioning including improved posture and balance, easier breathing, and more easeful movement. In October 2026 I am conducting a medical study at Yale Hospital with Dr. Veronica Santini, the head of the Parkinson's department. We are studying how the Alexander Technique can help People Living With Parkinson's.

Results: With mored poised physical alignment and efficient breathing, an actor or singer's relationship to language and text improves markedly. As the body releases and balances, the verbal instruction from the teacher helps the performer make concrete, positive changes within their physical selves to enable them to perform more effectively and with more ease. For the Person Living With Parkinson's, posture, balance, and movement are critical - falling is a real possibility. The teacher uses verbal instruction to help the PLWP embody the linguistic instructions, and develop new constructive ways of moving and functioning. The method also aids the PLWP in formulating their thoughts and speaking more effectively.

Discussion: While performers and persons living with a neurodegenerative disorder may seem like diverse populations, the training of these groups share many similarities. For both groups, clearly defining verbal instructions that bring about positive physical changes is vital. With repetition and practice, the participants can organically embody the language, so that mental/verbal instructions and the physical self can become aligned for the improvement of daily functioning.

Under Challenge: Claim Trajectories in EFL Classroom Interaction

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Abstract ID: 460
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 14. Discourse analysis
Presenter Name: Sabria Jawhar

Abstract

Reason-giving, justification, and disagreement are widely recognized as important features of reasoning in second and foreign language classroom interaction. They have been associated with collaborative sense-making and developing interactional competence.

The literature shows that although disagreement and justification are face-threatening, they create structured communicative opportunities that allow students to defend stances, negotiate understanding, and co-construct disciplinary knowledge. Studies have shown that in EFL classroom interaction, when a participant's knowledge claim is challenged, the subsequent sequence follows distinct trajectory paths: participants either defend and upgrade their stance, deploy pragmatic mitigation to renegotiate claims, or retract and abandon them (Solem, 2016; Toluei & Tahririan, 2022; Sherman & Tůma, 2023).

This study adds to the body of research that examines what happens to learners' positions after they are held accountable or challenged in interaction. In other words, it looks at accountability and challenging within a bigger context. It addresses this issue through a secondary discourse analysis of 12 whole-class EFL classroom discussions originally generated in the context of critical-thinking pedagogy (Alnofaie, 2013). The original data were collected in a Saudi EFL higher-education context. The participants were 18 Saudi high-school graduates enrolled in a compulsory English-language program before beginning their undergraduate degrees. The students and their EFL teacher are native Arabic speakers. The data were collected in the same classroom over 4 months. Rather than evaluating learners' critical-thinking skills or identifying individual reasoning moves, the study examines the sequential trajectories of publicly expressed positions following requests for justification, disagreement, counterclaims, counterexamples, and other forms of challenge.

The analysis identifies four broad trajectories. Learner positions may be transformed through qualification, reformulation, reclassification, or reversal; they may be maintained while their justificatory grounds are defended or reconstructed; they may remain unresolved as competing positions continue to coexist; or they may be closed. The findings further show that challenge does not necessarily lead to convergence or changes in learners' stance. The data show that in some cases, the position remains stable while the reasons supporting it change substantially, whereas in others, disagreement results in qualification, hybrid solutions, or sustained epistemic uncertainty. These findings suggest that the interactional significance of classroom reasoning lies not only in learners' production of claims and reasons but also in the subsequent interactional work performed on those positions and their grounds. The study therefore proposes claim trajectories under challenge as a useful analytic perspective for examining reasoning in EFL classroom discourse and argues for greater pedagogical attention to sustaining the development of learner positions beyond their initial justification.

Using Generative AI to Develop Croatian Language Scenarios for XR-based Migrant Integration

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Abstract ID: 403
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 24. AI linguistics
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Abstract

The growing use of extended reality (XR) technologies in educational settings has created new opportunities for supporting the linguistic and social integration of migrants. At the same time, recent advances in generative artificial intelligence (AI) enable the rapid creation of authentic learning materials that can be adapted to different communicative contexts and proficiency levels. Despite this potential, there is still limited research on systematic approaches to designing AI-generated language scenarios for less widely taught languages such as Croatian.

This paper proposes a methodological framework for developing Croatian language scenarios intended for XR-based integration environments using generative AI. Rather than evaluating language learners, the study focuses on the process of creating pedagogically appropriate and linguistically authentic dialogue scenarios. A set of everyday communicative situations relevant to migrant integration (e.g., healthcare, public administration, education, employment, banking, and everyday interactions) will be used to generate dialogues through carefully designed prompting strategies. Different prompt structures will be compared according to predefined linguistic and pedagogical criteria, including grammatical accuracy, lexical appropriateness, communicative naturalness, CEFR-level suitability, cultural relevance, and applicability within immersive XR environments.

The study aims to identify prompt design principles that consistently produce high-quality Croatian language materials suitable for integration-oriented XR applications. The proposed framework offers practical guidance for educators, instructional designers, and developers of AI-assisted language learning systems, while contributing to the growing intersection of applied linguistics, language technology, and immersive learning environments. Furthermore, the paper demonstrates how generative AI can support the development of language resources for less-resourced languages without relying on empirical data collection from participants, providing a scalable methodology for future research and educational practice.

Keywords: Generative Artificial Intelligence, Extended Reality, Croatian as a Second Language, Migrant Integration, Prompt Engineering, AI-Assisted Language Learning

Van Manen's Morph Type in Fingerspelling: A Multinomial Logistic Regression Study

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Abstract

Fingerspelling is a fundamental component of American Sign Language (ASL), serving both lexical and semantic functions. Although previous studies have documented phonological processes in fingerspelling, including assimilation, movement epenthesis, reduction, and elision, most research has remained descriptive and has focused primarily on handshape sequences. Consequently, relatively little is known about how biomechanical and phonological factors contribute to the fingerspelling production at macrostructural and microstructural levels.

This study investigates whether biomechanical and phonological factors predict Van Manen's (2018) morph types through multinomial logistic regression. Specifically, this study examines the extent to which articulatory features of the fingers, thumb, and wrist predict classification as unimorph, bimorph, trimorph, quadmorph, and synomorph.

Data were drawn from a corpus of 550 fingerspelled tokens collected from approximately eight hours of publicly available ASL video data. Tokens were coded according to a structured codebook informed by Van Manen's framework, including phonological processes, Hold-Movement-Hold (HMH), thumb movement, wrist rotation, finger spreading, palm orientation, distal interphalangeal (DIP), proximal interphalangeal (PIP), and metacarpophalangeal (MCP) joint configurations.

Results demonstrated that multiple phonological and biomechanical variables significantly predicted Van Manen's morph types. Movement epenthesis, reduction, and elision significantly predicted morph type classification. Thumb movement variables, including flexion, retroposition, opposition, and radial movement, also significantly predicted morph type classification. At the microstructural level, DIP, PIP, and MCP joint configurations emerged as significant predictors, with recurrent patterns involving the index, middle, and little fingers. Across models, biomechanical and phonological variables produced some of the strongest predictive effects, suggesting that Van Manen's morph types are closely linked to underlying articulatory organization.

Therefore, these findings provide quantitative support for Van Manen's morph type framework and demonstrate that ASL fingerspelling is not simply an arbitrary sequence of fingerspelled letters. Rather, ASL fingerspelling reflects systematic interactions among phonological processes, articulatory features, and biomechanical constraints. The findings have implications for fingerspelling instruction, interpreter education, and sign language pedagogy.

Additionally, this study extends the use of predictive statistical approaches for modeling fingerspelling structure and highlights the importance of biomechanical and phonological processes in linguistic organization.

Keywords: ASL phonology, fingerspelling, biomechanics, sign language linguistics, Van Manen's morph type.

When Vowels Change Meaning: Morphological Ambiguity and AI Interpretation of Unvowelled Arabic

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Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 6. Morphology
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Abstract

In Arabic, there are no short-vowel marks, so that the same sequence of consonants can be used for different morphological analyses. This creates an issue for generative artificial intelligence (AI): a fluent translation of an unvowelled expression can mask unexposed grammatical alternatives. The present study investigates the impact of vowel omission on the identification of grammatical categories, verbal voice and participant roles in Arabic and how these ambiguities can be addressed in AI-generated English interpretations. It queries whether AI systems identify plausible alternative readings, what evidence in the context is used to make their choices, and how their answers express uncertainty. The investigation relates Arabic root-and-pattern morphology to the disambiguation of context and linguistic approaches to interpretability.

Methodology

The study is descriptive and comparative in nature, but no statistical scoring or frequency-based inferences are made. A set of 8 Arabic expressions will be created to represent different types of vowel-dependent ambiguity, and this set will be purposive. Every expression will be linguistically analysed, and alternative fully vowelled readings will be provided as well as grammatical explanations and contextually appropriate English renderings. For instance, فتح الباب can be read as an active statement (He opened the door) or a passive statement (The door was opened) depending on how it is vocalised and which case it is marked with. The expressions will then be fed to the generative AI system in two scenarios: without context and with disambiguating contexts. Responses will be analysed in detail with regard to morphosyntactic and semantic aspects, with emphasis on interpretation, contextual justification and acknowledgement of alternatives. Prompts and outputs will be recorded to ensure transparency and replicability of the analysis.

Results

A preliminary analysis of Arabic forms reveals three successive zones of ambiguity: alternative verbal voices, conflicting word-class assignments and varying assignments of grammatical agency. These are not just differences in pronunciation, but they can alter the subject of an action, the active or passive voice of a reported event and the lexical meaning that is available. The paired-context design allows for the study of whether the AI response provides a single unqualified English translation, or multiple readings or revises its interpretation when the contextual evidence changes. The actual choices of the system will be determined from the outputs recorded, not assumed beforehand.

Conclusions

The study considers Arabic vowel omission as an interpretative problem in the intersection of morphology, semantics and AI language processing. It suggests a repeatable procedure to evaluate the grammatical justification and uncertainty calibration of AI-generated interpretations. The analysis can be used to facilitate more transparent translation practices and better educational explanations of ambiguity and context-sensitive evaluation of AI-assisted reading in Arabic linguistics and language technology. These issues are illustrated through annotated contrasts and explanations in the poster.

Keywords: Arabic morphology; Morphological ambiguity; Unvowelled Arabic; Generative artificial intelligence; Contextual disambiguation.