

Programme InCoLaS meeting KULeuven 2-3 November 2017

Thursday 02/11

12:30 Meeting at Hotel La Royal (<http://lodge-hotels.be/nl/hotels/b/la-royale-leuven>) for a walk to the Social Science Campus (map enclosed)

Business meeting (Agora, room: Agra)

13:00 Opening of the InCoLaS business meeting

13:15 Reports on the activities of the different Internationalisations of the Humanities, Special interest groups.

14:15 A second Internationalisations of the Humanities network application?

14:45 break

15:00 Towards a Marie Curie Joint Doctoral Programme ?

15:30 Funding and publications round, plus conference announcement(s)

16:00 One of two research reports from afar (Concise skyped-in work-in-progress presentations): **Beating a retreat: French-Muslim young women conduct Hijrah migrations from Marseille to the Muslim world** by **Cécile Evers** (University of California, Riverside & KU Leuven) from Pennsylvania.

16:30 Après-blabla at the Pangaea International Student Centre

17:00

Mobile ideologies in urban contexts: the case of gestures and sign languages

(Raadzaal, SW 00.113)

- Sign language ideologies in practice: An introduction (15 mins)
by Annelies Kusters & Erin Moriarty Harrelson (Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh)
- Local and academic language ideologies on the difference between gesture and sign (45 mins)
by Annelies Kusters
- “Natural” sign languages as an ideological construct: The Cambodian case (30 mins)
(Erin Moriarty Harrelson)

Discussants: Jan Blommaert (Tilburg University) and Patrick Devlieger (Leuven University)

19:30 Time for some decent food

Friday 03/11

9:00 Meeting at Hotel La Royal for a (different) walk to the Social Science Campus

Paper presentations (Agora, room: Agra)

09:30 - 10:00

Does context really collapse in social media interaction?

Jan Blommaert & Malgorzata Szabla (Tilburg University)

10:00 - 10:30

English language teaching in madrasas in a rural area of Bangladesh

Qumrul Chowdhury (King's College)

10:30 - 11:00

Daily survival strategies amongst Muslim women: Voices of the silenced

Eva Vergalen (Motief) & **Jenny-Louise Van der Aa** (Tilburg University)

Break

11:30 - 12:00

The proxied capitalization of feminine beauty in China's mobile livestreaming "carnival"

Kunming Li (Tilburg University)

12:00 - 13:00

One of two research reports from afar (Concise skyped-in work-in-progress presentations):

Reading valued difference in bodies and the city. Developing repertoires of hierarchy, inequality and desire in Rio de Janeiro by **Tilmann Heil** (KU Leuven) from Rio

Abstracts

Local and academic ideologies on the difference between gesture and sign

Annelies Kusters (Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh)

This presentation investigates academic and local perspectives on the difference between gesture and sign. As for academic perspectives; linguists and linguistic anthropologists have for example suggested that gesture is not language (while sign language is); and that different types of gesturing and signing could be classified on a developmental cline. These perspectives are compared and contrasted with local perspectives on the difference between gesture and sign.

The local perspectives discussed are those of deaf Mumbaikars. The practice of gesturing in India in both hearing-hearing and hearing-deaf interactions is widespread, but the concept of gesture is less well-known. Accordingly, hearing people's gesturing is called "signing" by many deaf Indians. The participants' perspectives expose tensions between socially constructing gesture and sign language as different and as belonging to the same linguistic category. The presentation also considers whether the analytical collapse or distinction between sign and gesture applies equally in every communicative context (such as shopping, education, families).

Ideologies on signs and gestures will be presented addressing complexity of the discourse, discourse range, adaptability to individual interlocutors, rate of standardisation, and ease vs difficulty of communication. By foregrounding these local ideologies, the presentation complements and in some ways challenge scientific linguistic theories about sign language and gesture.

Natural vs. artificial: signed language standardization in Cambodia

Erin Moriarty Harrelson (Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh)

Linguistic prescriptions and communication technologies have had a long, contested history in deaf education. Certain linguistic attitudes have perpetuated the production of linguistic inequalities for deaf people as dominant ideologies naturalize particular interventions, such as the invention of visual communication systems based on spoken languages. Sign language work, the basic sign language research and documentation and the publication of this research in a dictionary or other teaching materials, is considered to be an important part of the development of a national, politicalized deaf community in the global South. In NGO and media discourses about the global South, the documentation of national signed languages is often linked to notions of development and modernity.

A sign language that does not have traceable history is rendered invisible and denied the status of "real" language until it is recognized through processes of documentation. Through processes of development and documentation, Cambodian Sign Language came to be a

recognized and respectable “natural” entity. I examine the historical circumstances of sign language in Cambodia to address larger questions about sign languages as natural and bounded entities as well as ideologies that drive signed language documentation projects in the global South.

Linguistic descriptions of Cambodian Sign Language designate it as the “natural” sign language of deaf people in Cambodia but it could be argued that Cambodian Sign Language in its contemporary inception was never a truly “natural” sign language because of the circumstances surrounding its development and documentation. In this presentation, I examine efforts to document and “classify” signed languages as an ideologically-driven project. I trace the various ideologies that shaped the Cambodian Sign Language “development” project in the late 1990s and the ideologies that continue to shape its work today.

Does context really collapse in social media interaction?

Jan Blommaert & Malgorzata Szabla (Tilburg University)

Context collapse (CC) refers to the phenomenon widely debated in social media research, where various audiences convene around single communicative acts in new networked publics, causing confusion and anxiety among social media users. The notion of CC is a key one in the reimagination of social life as a consequence of the mediation technologies we associate with the Web 2.0.

CC is undertheorized, and in this paper we intend not to rebuke it but to explore its limits. We do so by shifting the analytical focus from "online communication" in general to specific forms of social action performed, not by predefined "group" members, but by actors engaging in emerging kinds of sharedness based on existing norms of interaction. This approach is a radical choice for action rather than actor, reaching back to symbolic interactionism and beyond to Mead, Strauss and other interactionist sociologists, and enriched by contemporary linguistic ethnography and interactional sociolinguistics, notably the work of Rampton and the Goodwins.

We apply this approach to an extraordinarily complex Facebook discussion among Polish people residing in The Netherlands - a set of data that could instantly be selected as a likely site for context collapse. We shall analyze fragments in detail, showing how, in spite of the complications intrinsic to such online, profoundly mediated and oddly 'placed' interaction events, participants appear capable of extraordinarily 'normal' modes of interaction and participant selection. In fact, the 'networked publics' rarely seem to occur in practice, and contexts do not collapse but expand continuously without causing major issues for contextualization. The analysis will offer a vocabulary and methodology for addressing the complexities of the largest new social space on earth: the virtual space of online culture.

The proxied capitalization of feminine beauty in China's mobile livestreaming "carnival"

Kunming Li (Tilburg University)

China has recently witnessed an Internet "carnival" that advocates people staging up their everyday life, especially young women's, via mobile livestreaming. Joined by millions of Chinese women and hundreds of livestreaming platforms, the carnival favours hostesses' capitalization of their feminine beauty in front of an audience that are dominated by men. Through an ethnographic observation, the study reveals that the capitalization process is heavily mediated by Chinese gift-giving culture, which "backstages" involved mercantile transactions and silences moral condemnations.

Daily survival strategies amongst Muslim women: Voices of the silenced

Eva Vergalen (Motief) & Jenny-Louise Van der Aa (Tilburg University)

In superdiverse times, meta-narratives about Muslim women permeate the media, creating an image that is often homogeneous, hateful and misogynous. In this presentation, we analyse interaction among a group of lower educated Belgian Muslim women as they speak on their own terms. We dissect their intricate performances of multi-layered subjectivities, being a religious affiliate, a mother, a wife, a political being and so on. In doing so, we focus not just on what is being said, but also how superdiverse subjectivity is performed, evaluated, contested and recast. There's a double outcome to this: on the one hand we gain an insight in a group that is often only talked about instead of talked with, on the other hand we are able to identify viewpoints, good practices, problems and issues in this group which may allow for better policy recommendations as institutions often seriously lag behind when dealing with superdiversity.

Reading valued difference in bodies and the city. Developing repertoires of hierarchy, inequality and desire in Rio de Janeiro

Tilmann Heil (KU Leuven)

Based on ethnographic fieldwork with Senegalese and Spanish recently arrived urban dwellers in Rio de Janeiro, I ask how they engage with the (not so) visual cues available in the urban landscape of Rio de Janeiro and in/on the bodies of the circulating population. This reading is followed by processes of ordering from which more or less complex repertoires emerge that help to get by and engage with the various hierarchical orders in place. These repertoires have multiple layers of meaning attached to them, seemingly more objective ones, like inequality, as well as more subjective ones, like desire.