

EUt+ Multilingualism Conference

Technological University Dublin

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Abstracts

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Day 1

Keynote: Anne Marie Devlin

Dr Anne Marie Devlin is a lecturer in Applied Linguistics at University College Cork where she is co-director of the MA in Applied Linguistics and co-convenor of the research cluster Language: cognition, practice, policy and ideology. Additionally, Dr Devlin serves as co-editor of the Irish Association for Applied Linguistics journal TEANGA.

Her research interests mainly centre around the interplay between study abroad as a language learning context, language engagement, learner identity and the development of pragmatic competences. She has just completed a National Forum for Teaching and Learning -funded project on the impact of study abroad on the development of plurilingual and pluricultural competences and is currently PI on the HEA-funded project MOVE (mobilising vectors for engagement) which explores accessibility barriers faced by language students who are planning to study abroad.

30 years of Study Abroad research: forging the discipline and shifting landscapes

The aim of this talk is to explore the dynamic landscape of Study Abroad research in the 30 years since the publication of the seminal work *Second language Acquisition in a Study Abroad Context*, Freed (Ed), (1995). The aforementioned edited volume, while not the first work on SA as a learning context, was the first to bring together a number of key authors who established SA as a legitimate field of study.

We will discuss the origins of the field with its initial focus on the acquisition of discrete language elements across a range of languages. Following that, we will trace how SA research developed to shed light on barriers and conduits to language acquisition. In particular, we will look at the impact of language engagement, language socialization and learner identity and how the insight gained through SA research has helped shape our understanding of the language acquisition process. Moreover, we will foreground the changing landscape of the SA context itself in light of global realities whereby it can no longer be understood from the perspective of a monolingual L1 speaker moving to a monolingual L2-land. Increasingly, the focus is directed towards plurilingual speakers interacting in a multilingual linguascape.

Finally, the talk will address disruptors to SA research. In addition to pandemics and wars, the lens will turn to the growing phenomenon of English medium instruction.

Session 1A

Associate Professor Ivaylo Peev, PhD 1, Assist. Elena Antonova 2, Lect. Radostina Veleva 3, Department of Foreign Languages and Applied linguistics, Faculty of Computer Systems and Technologies, Technical University of Sofia 1 Department of Foreign Languages and Applied linguistics, Technical University of Sofia 2 Faculty of Computer Systems and Technologies, Technical University of Sofia 3 Department of Foreign Languages and Applied linguistics, Technical University of Sofia

VR Technology as a Multilingual Tool for Overcoming Intercultural Barriers in Foreign Language Teaching

Conference theme: Technology Enhanced Language Learning Format: Academic paper presentation (20 min.)

The paper provides a brief theoretical overview on the application of VR technologies in the field of modern education for professional and academic purposes and, in particular, their use at the initial stages of language instruction in multinational and multilingual groups of learners. The study focuses on the implementation of innovative educational technologies, making reference to specific experiments conducted with participation of international students at the initial stages of their foreign language training through the utilisation of immersive technologies and the integration of certain applications illustrating culture-specific realia, key words and phrases etc. The study includes students from Europe and Asia. The linguistic material was adapted to the peculiarities of their mother tongue to achieve a smooth, gradual and sustainable acquisition, and was delivered in an attractive and entertaining way, incorporating game-based methods in a digital environment to relieve stress and break down the language barriers invariably encountered in an international environment. On the grounds of the results obtained, the authors highlight the advantages, as well as the potential limitations of using technology in this context. Students involved in the experiments also participated in a survey. They were conditionally divided into two groups: majoring in engineering and majoring in arts and humanities. The results obtained and the feedback provided by the respondents – both educators and learners, give us all reasons to believe that the use of technology for educational purposes appeals to their attitudes and expectations,

enhancing their motivation for learning both in a virtual classroom and as independent learners.

Key words: VR technologies, foreign language teaching, multilingual environment

Ivaylo Peev

Assoc. Prof. PhD. Professional background: PhD in Philology, an Associate Professor of Pedagogy at the Department of Foreign Languages and Applied Linguistics of the Technical University of Sofia. Lecturer in Bulgarian language to international students at the Technical University of Sofia and the National Academy of Art. An author of 3 monographs, 3 university coursebooks and of over 40 publications (scientific papers and studies) in the field of pedagogy, linguistics, theory of literature and theory of art. Research direction and/or research interests: innovative methods in FLT, academic communication and academic writing, body and verbal language, pedagogy and digital technologies.

Elena Antonova is a PhD student at the Technical University of Sofia, as well as an assistant at the Faculty of Computer & Software Engineering, teaching several programming languages. Her scientific work is mostly focused on various methods that could be used to enhance education, both elementary and academic. Currently, Ms. Antonova's interests lie in the fields of Artificial Intelligence, Low-Level Programming, and Computer Graphics, and her main responsibilities include designing teaching materials and incorporating contemporary approaches in the learning process of both university and high school students, while researching novel technologies and methods regarding Artificial Intelligence, especially in the field of education.

Radostina Veleva holds a Master's degree in Bulgarian and Russian Philology. She has been involved in doing research into contemporary trends of literary theory and practice, film language and visual culture. Ms. Veleva is currently a lecturer at the Department of Foreign Languages and Applied linguistics, Technical University of Sofia, where she is teaching Bulgarian to international students. Her scientific interests are related to the field of innovative trends in pedagogy, visual methods in teaching, bridging the gap between learners and educators, adaptation to new cultural environments, as well as working with multicultural and multilingual groups.

Exploring the use of Pi (an AI-based app) to enhance communicative skills in ESP.

Practicing oral skills poses a challenge for many students and is often associated with anxiety, which may become debilitating and lead to poor learning outcomes. In an effort to address this issue, the present study explores the use of *Pi* (an artificial intelligence-based application designed for friendly conversations) as a tool for practicing and training communicative skills in the context of English for Specific Purposes, specifically within a course of English for Tourism.

Pi was selected due to its free access, specific orientation toward conversational practice, ease of installation on both mobile devices and PCs, and user-friendly interface. Additionally, the application includes a speech-to-text function that allows users to download transcripts of all conversations, which may support students in the process of self-correction. Furthermore, users can adjust the chatbot's speaking speed to meet their individual learning needs and choose to interact with speakers of different accents.

Throughout the semester, students are required to complete a series of specific tasks using *Pi*, submitting both the audio and transcript of each task to the instructor for further analysis. Activities are also proposed to promote oral interaction using *Pi* and peer collaboration on topics related to the course content. Besides, students are encouraged to use the application as much as possible.

Preliminary results suggest a reduction in anxiety levels during the students' oral production, leading to an increase in fluency and greater confidence in oral performance. A follow-up step in the study will deal with the analysis of the samples produced and provided by students.

Keywords: AI-based app; English for tourism; interaction skills

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Margarita Ruíz Zaragoza is a professional technical translator and interpreter with over 20 years of experience in EN/FR/IT-ES combinations. She has held leadership roles in translation companies and managed multilingual projects in the private sector. Since 2022 she has been a part-time lecturer in English for Specific Purposes at the Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena (UPCT). She is currently pursuing her PhD and her main research line focuses on the application of AI to the development of communication skills.

Dr. Camino Rea Rizzo is currently Deputy Director for International Affairs at the Technical School of Telecommunication Engineering of the Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena (UPCT), where she has been a full-time lecturer in the Area of English since 2015 and has been delivering courses of English for Specific Purposes. Her main research interest is focused on corpus-driven description of specialized languages, with a special interest in vocabulary teaching and learning in the field of Telecommunication Engineering English, in addition to ESP and English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI).

Monica Varese (Independent Scholar)

Translating Portuguese into Portuguese (Online Presentation)

As per Law 37/2007, dated 14 August, all forms of public transport, government offices, shops, etc. are for não-fumadores (non-smokers) only. Said law promises to punish transgressing smokers with a fine of €500. This is particularly noteworthy in a language which, like Spanish and Italian, distinguishes so very clearly between ser (being) and estar (doing within the state of being). As a (light) smoker, I break the law on a regular basis, by being a (non-smoking) smoker in a taxi. No policeman has ever attempted to make enquiries, much less to fine me.

In my presentation, I hope to reach back to earlier, but not remote, slips of the lip, such as todos diferentes, todos iguais, which hoped to convey the notion of Equality; o fascismo não passará, which wished to express the conviction that Fascism was over; Um quarto que seja seu (for A Room of One's Own [Virginia Woolf]).

Dr. Stefanie Morgret (Language Center, Hochschule Darmstadt); Uta Hameister (Language Center, Hochschule Darmstadt); Sven Appel (Faculty of Computer Science, Hochschule Darmstadt); Andreas Fuchs (Faculty of Media, Hochschule Darmstadt); Prof. Dr. Paul Grimm (Faculty of Media, Hochschule Darmstadt)

DaF2L – The use of Deutsch Uni-Online (DUO) and Virtual Reality (VR) in teaching German as a foreign language - A field report about new teaching and learning approaches

This project is dedicated to demonstrating the advantages of using Virtual Reality in combination with Artificial Intelligence for language learning, particularly for German as a foreign language (DaF). Using Avatars, the VR app GuudeVR enables a more engaging and frequent approach to acquiring language skills. The app was developed as an extension of [DUO](#) (Deutsch-Uni Online) learning platform designed by the Society for Academic Study Preparation and Test Development (g.a.s.t.). The aim is to promote linguistic and intercultural skills through technology-supported, action-oriented learning scenarios.

The digital components were implemented and comprehensively evaluated in three German courses specially designed for international students at Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences (h_da). The student's feedback was clearly that it results in high engagement for the scenarios.

Within the framework of the courses, the digital learning platform served as the primary teaching tool in two different course formats (online & hybrid). It offers participants a high degree of flexibility in the online format as well as a combination of spatial self-determination and motivating impulses through interactive face-to-face phases that is conducive to learning.

The project was carried out in cooperation with departments at two German universities and, thanks to its modular structure and didactic orientation, is also suitable for use in the EUt+ environment. In January 2025, it was presented at an event on the DaCaDu project (Blended-Intensive-Programme).

It makes a valuable contribution to the further development of digitally supported teaching and learning formats and to the integration of immersive technologies in foreign language teaching.

Acknowledgement

This project is funded by the Foundation for Innovation in Higher Education (Freiraum 2024-2026) in Germany.

Keywords: Immersive foreign language learning; Virtual reality in language teaching; Digital learning platform

Dr. Stefanie Morgret is Project Manager of DaF2L, Lecturer & Coordinator for German as a Foreign Language and Representative in EUT+ Multilingualism Office. She initiated and implemented various EUT+ projects and was one of the Chair-Editors of the first EUT+ International Conference of Languages in Darmstadt (2023).

Uta Hameister is Project Staff Member in the DaF2L project and Lecturer for German as a Foreign Language. She is a co-initiator of the DACADU project (2022) within the framework of EUT+. Her main area of interest is innovative digital methods in language acquisition.

Sven Appel holds a B.Sc. and M.Sc. in Computer Science from Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences. He is currently a research associate at the same university, where he works on the fuels and DaF2L projects involving virtual and augmented reality applications in education. He also works as a part-time lecturer there.

Andreas Fuchs is a Research Associate at Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences. With a background in Digital Media and Applied Computer Science, his research focuses on the design and development of VR/AR-based learning environments within the fuels and DaF2L projects.

Prof. Dr. Paul Grimm is Professor for Extended Realities at Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences and Chief Digital Officer of h-da. The research interests of Prof. Dr. Paul Grimm include simplifying the creation process for Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality, as well as digitalization.

Session 1B

Baiba Birzniece (Liepāja Academy of Riga Technical University)

Intercultural Competence in the Educational Context: Teachers' Experiences and Attitudes

The study is a practice-based investigation of the growing importance of intercultural competence in the educational process. On the one hand, there are evident trends of globalization within society, including the education system (in this case, the Latvian education system), while on the other hand, an increasing polarization of society can be observed. The aim of the study is to analyze the significance of intercultural competence in teachers' professional practice, as well as their experiences and attitudes toward integrating intercultural competence into the teaching process. The study also seeks to identify key challenges and opportunities related to the development of intercultural competence in teachers' work. A structured survey was used, allowing for the collection of both quantitative data on teachers' experience with intercultural education and qualitative data on their attitudes toward the importance of intercultural competence in the learning process. The data analysis reveals that teachers recognize the importance of intercultural competence; however, their experience working with culturally diverse students varies greatly and is inconsistent. A lack of support and professional development in the area of intercultural competence is evident. Intercultural issues are not systematically included in teacher continuing education programs in Latvia, which hinders the sustainable development of this competence.

Keywords: *education, intercultural competence, teachers*

My name is Baiba Birzniece. I am from Latvia and currently a doctoral student at the Liepāja Academy of Riga Technical University. My research focuses on aspects of teachers' professional identity in the context of intercultural competence. My daily work is closely connected to the school environment. I am a teacher of Latvian language and literature and have worked with refugees from Ukraine, return migrants, and representatives of minority groups.

Sen. Lect. Mariya Todorova, PhD; Sen. Lect. Todor Todorov; Associate Professor Ivaylo Peev, PhD (Department of Foreign Languages and Applied Linguistics, Technical University of Sofia)

Maximising Foreign Language Acquisition Through Developing Intercultural Awareness

Conference theme: Cross-Cultural and Intercultural Awareness and Communication

Format: Academic paper presentation (20 min.)

Abstract: In an increasingly globalised world, intercultural education has emerged as a critical framework for fostering understanding and communication across diverse cultural contexts. This paper aims to explore the intricate relationship between culture and language acquisition, exemplifying how cultural background profoundly shapes the way individuals learn, use, and interpret language. It is based on an experiment carried out with students from Turkey attending an 8-month intensive English and Bulgarian language programme prior to undertaking their future undergraduate studies in various engineering specialties at the Technical University of Sofia. A survey was conducted by distributing a questionnaire. The data gathered from the survey were analysed, and conclusions drawn. Referring to sociolinguistics, second language acquisition (SLA) theories, and intercultural communication studies, the research highlights how cultural values, norms, and communication styles influence learners' motivation levels, cognitive strategies, and interaction patterns in language learning environments. By analysing case studies and empirical data from multicultural educational settings, the authors strongly advocate a more culturally responsive pedagogical and methodological approach which effectively integrates intercultural awareness and competence into language instruction. This perspective is believed to significantly enhance language learning outcomes and promote more inclusive and effective educational practices, as being positive, empathetic and inquisitive contributes to attaining the optimal conditions for language acquisition: motivated exposure to language in use. It is argued that the analysis of the results obtained leads to important pedagogical implications and shows certain priority areas to which we should pay more attention and dedicate more teaching time and practice.

Key words: intercultural competence, cultural context, foreign language acquisition

Mariya Todorova is a Senior lecturer at the Department of Foreign Languages and Applied Linguistics of TU-Sofia. She earned her Master's degree in English and American Studies, laying the foundation for her future career as a teacher and professional translator. In her pursuit of knowledge, Mariya's academic journey continued with a PhD in Ergonomics from the University of Chemical Technology and Metallurgy. Her research focused on the intricate relationship between workers, their environment, and the physical and informational aspects that influence their work. Dr. Todorova's research interests are related to e-learning, language teaching, intercultural competence, ergonomics, human resources, human factors and quality management.

Todor Todorov is a Senior lecturer at the Department of Foreign Languages and Applied Linguistics of TU-Sofia where he teaches English for General and Specific Purposes. Mr Todorov holds a Master's Degree in English and American Studies and has long and varied experience of foreign language teaching in various educational environments and professional contexts. Mr Todorov's research interests are related to the fields of FLT and applied linguistics, incorporating 21-st century skills into teaching and learning process; learning styles, learner autonomy, motivation and engagement strategies, exam preparation strategies, implementing innovative teaching practices and using ICT in education.

Ivaylo Peev

Assoc. Prof. PhD. Professional background: PhD in Philology, an Associate Professor of Pedagogy at the Department of Foreign Languages and Applied Linguistics of the Technical University of Sofia. Lecturer in Bulgarian language to international students at the Technical University of Sofia and the National Academy of Art. An author of 3 monographs, 3 university coursebooks and of over 40 publications (scientific papers and studies) in the field of pedagogy, linguistics, theory of literature and theory of art. Research direction and/or research interests: innovative methods in FLT, academic communication and academic writing, body and verbal language, pedagogy and digital technologies.

Dr Carola Maria Wide (Centre for Languages and Business Communication, Hanken School of Economics, Finland); Anna Michelotti (English Linguistics Department, University of Mannheim, Germany); Prof. Helen Engemann (Department of English, University of Mannheim, Germany); Pr Anne-Marie O'Connell (Département des Langues et Cultures, Université Toulouse Capitole, France); Dr Helen Ruiz (Teaching Additional Languages Department, Blanquerna, Ramón Llull University, Barcelona, Spain)

Plurilingual Pathways: A COIL-Based Model for Intercultural Collaboration in Higher Education

We increasingly live in societies that require engagement with people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Therefore, universities must prepare students to navigate new living environments characterised by cultural and linguistic diversity. This paper presents a transnational Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) initiative developed by educators from four European universities belonging to the ENGAGE.EU alliance to foster plurilingual and intercultural skills in higher education. The project created inclusive virtual spaces where education, business, law, and linguistics students collaborated across borders to tackle global challenges through real-world problems.

The initiative aimed to deepen understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity, build digital collaboration skills, and encourage the use of English as a common language while valuing students' multilingual backgrounds. Over one semester, participants engaged in multicultural discussions and problem-solving tasks and created digital projects like podcasts and video reflections using e-learning management platforms.

Ninety-seven students completed a pre- and post-questionnaire and attended the course to gather quantitative and qualitative information regarding, e.g., students' perceived intercultural awareness, confidence in participating in multicultural virtual meetings, and willingness to work or study abroad. We predicted three main outcomes: heightened intercultural awareness, greater confidence in multicultural communication, and improved collaborative abilities. We will complete the analysis by the time of the conference.

The paper offers a scalable COIL model to integrate intercultural learning into European higher education. It demonstrates how cross-border collaboration can enrich student competencies while addressing practical barriers to implementation.

Keywords: COIL; intercultural learning; transnational higher education

Dr Carola Maria Wide is a University Teacher in English at the Centre for Languages and Business Communication, Hanken School of Economics, in Finland. She teaches courses in intercultural communication, literature, narrative presentations, and academic and business communication. Her PhD focused on contemporary visual and written fairy tales, cultural trauma, and Kristevan theory; her research interests include the English language, intercultural learning, and visibility.

Anna Michelotti is an academic staff member at the English Linguistics Department and a doctoral candidate under Prof. Helen Engemann. Since September 2022, she has worked in the research unit SILPAC (Structuring the Input in Language Processing, Acquisition, and Change). Her main research interests are multilingualism, language acquisition, and language processing, which she investigates by applying different psycholinguistic methods.

Prof. Helen Engemann is an Assistant Professor of Multilingualism in the Department of English at the University of Mannheim in Germany. After completing her PhD in Cambridge on English-French bilingual first language acquisition, she worked as a postdoctoral researcher focusing on language, cognition, and acquisition in France, Italy and Germany. Her research interests centre around multilingual language acquisition across ages and contexts, especially language contact phenomena and language change.

Pr Anne-Marie O'Connell is a full legal English Common Law jurisprudence professor at the Department of Languages and Cultures of the University of Toulouse Capitole. She co-directs a master's degree in the didactics of specific languages at the Institute for Education (INSPE) of Toulouse. She holds two PhDs—one in semiotic analysis of Irish mythology and

another in Heidegger's philosophy. Her interests include English for legal purposes and teacher training.

Dr Helen Ruiz teaches future primary school teachers at Blanquerna–Ramon Llull University in Barcelona. She holds a Master's in Pedagogical Innovation and Educational Leadership in the 21st Century and a PhD focused on using flipped learning to teach English as an additional language. Her work centres on flipped classroom approaches, plurilingual teaching and intercultural education. She leads cross-cultural projects, including a COIL initiative with the ENGAGE.EU network and has taught on the master's program for secondary teacher education. Her research explores how flipped learning and multilingualism shape learning, aiming to create inclusive classrooms where every voice and language are valued.

Bruno Echaury-Galvan (University of Alcalá – Spain); Maria Gomez-Bedoya (University of East Anglia – UK)

From SDGs to ABCs: Service-learning for English Language Acquisition and Soft-Skill Building.

Proficiency in English is a skill actively promoted across all levels of education in Spain, from nursery schools to university programs. At the same time, service-learning (SL) is gaining ground as a cross-cutting, dynamic methodology that connects academic content with social engagement, enhancing learning in personal, professional, and community dimensions.

This paper adapts the SL approach to a specific context and describes a project centered on the development of English as a second language across different educational stages, generating diverse and multidimensional learning outcomes for university students. The initiative brought together students from two degree programs: Modern Languages and Translation, and Primary Education Teaching.

Students enrolled in the subject *Introducción a la Traducción* translated a series of short stories focused on several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into English. These stories were later narrated by Primary Education students in storytelling workshops organized in primary schools across Madrid and Guadalajara. The initiative was well received by pupils and teachers alike, who highlighted not only its linguistic benefits but, more importantly, its social impact and potential to instill values that promote more responsible citizenship.

On a different note, results show an improvement in English proficiency among both university student groups, along with the development of key soft skills like public speaking, effective communication, or critical thinking, and a heightened commitment to community engagement.

Keywords: service-learning, multilevel learning, language proficiency

Bruno Echaury-Galvan holds a B.A. in English Studies, a master's degree in European studies, a master's degree in Translation and Interpreting in Public Services, and a PhD in Modern Languages, Translation and Literature. His research interests include film

adaptations, reception studies, the analysis of literary and cinematographic paratexts, and the use of service-learning in translation teaching. He currently serves as a senior lecturer at the University of Alcalá, where he teaches translation, literature, and English modules. He is also a member of the RECEPTION research group, based at the same institution.

Maria Gomez-Bedoya is Associate Professor of Spanish and Applied Linguistics at the University of East Anglia. She holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics, a degree in English Language, and two Masters in Spanish Teaching and Hispanic Linguistics. She has an international background and has worked in a number of countries as a language teacher, language teacher trainer, and team manager. Before joining UEA she worked for the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Japan and Brazil, as a Fulbright Scholar in USA, and in the NHK Japan national public broadcasting organization, among others.

Session 2A

Dr Ailín Ní Chonchúir (Maynooth University)

Dealing with ‘*the Bad Guy*’ – Teachers in Irish-medium post-primary schools using crosslinguistic mediation as a way to deal sustainably with the role of English in the classroom.

Translanguaging has become a popular and growing practice in multilingual language education. Scholars urge caution, however, in using translanguaging pedagogical practices in immersion and minority language settings. This caution has set the scene for the development of sustainable translanguaging models which take account of local contexts and of the need for the protection of minority languages. This presentation describes research which explored whether crosslinguistic mediation as described in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2020) could function as a sustainable translanguaging practice in Irish-medium 2nd level schools. A training programme in designing cross-linguistic mediation tasks was devised and implemented with 4 subject teachers in Irish-medium education. The training aimed at enabling the teachers to bridge the gap between English-language input (a *YouTube* video in English, for example) and the students’ Irish-language output. In-depth interviews drawing on Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis were conducted with the teachers before and after the training. The interviews highlighted the teachers’ attitudes toward translanguaging practice in general and the role of English in the classroom, as well as exploring the efficacy and applicability of the training to their individual settings. The teachers were very positive about the training and the opportunity to explore their perspectives through the interviews. They expressed a change both in attitudes and in classroom practice. They described moving from an ‘ad hoc’ approach where English is perceived as ‘*the Bad Guy*’, to a more ‘conscious’, ‘nutritious’ and ‘cautious’ approach which aims to ‘protect’ Irish by bridging more effectively towards the Irish-language output. The research shows that the Council of Europe’s concept of mediation could be adapted to develop a sustainable translanguaging practice in Irish-medium 2nd level education.

Keywords: translanguaging, immersion education, cross-linguistic mediation

Ailín Ní Chonchúir works in the Centre for Irish Language, Research, Teaching, Testing in Maynooth University. She has a special interest in teacher education – both pre-service teacher training and continuous professional development. She has worked with teachers who teach Irish across all education sectors in Ireland, as well as those who teach Irish internationally.

Michael Markey (University of Lille)

From Bilingual Bias to Plurilingual Practice: Overcoming Obstacles to Language Education in Irish Schools

Main theme – Plurilingualism in Education

Educational discourse has evolved from monolingual frameworks towards embracing plurilingualism as fundamental to contemporary language education. This shift aligns with Council of Europe recommendations promoting plurilingual repertoires across educational contexts. In Ireland, educational policy has similarly transitioned from a traditional bilingual paradigm to supporting multilingual acquisition, yet significant implementation challenges persist in harnessing students' diverse linguistic experiences. This research examines obstacles to effective plurilingual education in Irish schools through mixed methods investigation across English-medium and Irish-medium educational settings. Quantitative questionnaire data reveal systemic barriers preventing students from making productive connections between their various languages, while qualitative interview analysis illuminates specific instances of cross-linguistic strategy transfer and emerging metalinguistic awareness among learners of French as an additional language. The study identifies key impediments to plurilingual pedagogy, including compartmentalized language teaching approaches, limited teacher training in plurilingual teaching methodologies, and insufficient curriculum integration supporting cross-linguistic connections. Despite policy rhetoric embracing plurilingualism, classroom practices frequently maintain traditional monolingual traditions that underutilise students' full linguistic repertoires. Findings demonstrate significant potential for enhancing plurilingual education through strategic pedagogical interventions and policy reforms. The research contributes to understanding how educational institutions can better support plurilingual development while addressing persistent challenges in translating current language policy into effective classroom practice.

Keywords: plurilingual education, learner strategies, language policy

Michael Markey is a Maître de conférences (Senior lecturer) in Language Sciences at the University of Lille (France). Currently on sabbatical, he has taught general and research English for the Social Sciences and has researched reading in second and foreign language contexts, bilingual education, multilingualism and research writing through a foreign language.

Sample reference articles:

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Markey, M. (2022). A multilingual perspective on reading--investigating strategies of Irish students learning French. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 34(1), 62-90.
<http://hdl.handle.net/10125/67413>

Markey, M. (2022). Learning a foreign language in immersion and second language acquisition contexts--students' multilingual experiences with French in Ireland. *Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Language Education*, 10(1), 33-61.
<https://doi.org/10.1075/jicb.19014.mar>

Inmaculada Gómez Soler (Dublin City University)

Heritage languages and language-in-education policies: Insights from the Irish Educational System

This study explores how language policy across Europe promotes or discourages the teaching of heritage languages (HLs). While EU institutions formally recognize and promote linguistic diversity as a defining feature of European identity, the practical implementation of language policy and planning (LPP) remains complex and uneven. Drawing on Kaplan and Baldauf's (1997) macro, meso, and micro levels of LPP, the chapter emphasizes the dynamic interaction among policy-makers, institutions, and individuals in shaping language practices. It draws on the concept of agency (Ahearn, 2001) to understand how teachers adapt or resist top-down policies based on local needs and values, challenging the binary of top-down and bottom-up approaches.

Focusing on the Irish case to illustrate national-level challenges, we report on teachers' perspectives on managing multilingualism within their classrooms. Data from semi-structured interviews with 22 educators across primary, secondary, university, and community schools were analyzed following thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Findings show that while teachers generally value HL maintenance, most lack formal training and resources, often relying on intuition and self-made materials. A significant challenge lies in mixed-ability classrooms, where heritage language learners and second-language learners are taught without adequate placement systems or curricular flexibility. Additionally, a consistent disconnect between mainstream and community-based schools suggests fragmentation in national language planning (Pedrak, 2022).

The study highlights the urgent need for coherent, context-sensitive policies and professional development to support HL teaching. It contributes to the growing field of HL education in Ireland by offering insights into teachers' lived realities across diverse educational settings.

Keywords: heritage languages, teacher agency, language-in-education policies

Inmaculada Gómez Soler is Assistant Professor of Spanish and Applied Linguistics at Dublin City University, Ireland. Her research explores three interrelated areas: heritage

speaker bilingualism, language teacher development, and language pedagogy. Her more recent studies examine the construct of teacher agency and how it interfaces with issues related to identity and ideologies to understand how teachers navigate different academic contexts and educational policies. Her research has appeared in journals such as *Foreign Language Annals*, *Urban Education*, and *Current Issues in Language Planning*.

Mireia Gómez i Martínez¹ (University College Cork)

Céad Míle Fáilte Romhat! A qualitative analysis of Ireland's approach to linguistic hospitality in school settings

Increasing awareness and recognition of (linguistic) diversity is shaping school settings around the globe, due to the way in which such settings act as a zone of encounter between host and guest communities (Ager & Strang, 2008). Since Ireland is not an exception, this paper aims to give an overview on the responses of Irish school settings to the inclusion and integration of newcomers through the lens of Linguistic Hospitality. The concept of Linguistic Hospitality (LH) —based on Derrida (2000) and developed by Barnett (2005), Davidson (2013), Holmes (2023), Inghilleri (2012), Kearney (2007 and 2019), Phipps (2012), Ricoeur (2006) etc. — accentuates the welcoming and inclusive dimensions of language learning environments. LH guiding principle is the promotion of an environment where linguistic diversity is not viewed as a challenge but as an asset. An environment where students feel empowered to embrace and celebrate their linguistic (and cultural) heritage, by assuming that it is a central part of their identity. Beginning with a discussion of the significance of linguistic hospitality as a holistic approach to comprehend multilingualism in schools, I will explore how Irish-medium and English-medium schools across Cork County are embracing this concept. Therefore, by drawing on qualitative analysis of structured observations made in eight schools, this research delves into the diverse practices and policies implemented to foster an environment that nurtures linguistic hospitality. To conclude, I will outline the practices that have proven to be effective, as well as recommendations for future actions.

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Keywords: linguistic hospitality, inclusion of newcomers, plurilingualism in education

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Session 2B

Pilar Molina (Technological University Dublin)

Multilingualism, Science, and the Postpoetic Mediation of Love in *Carne de pixel* by Agustín Fernández Mallo

This paper examines multilingualism as a poetic strategy in *Carne de pixel* (2002) by Agustín Fernández Mallo, arguing that the collection is fundamentally structured around the narration of a love affair and its dissolution. Rather than presenting intimacy through traditional lyric expression, Fernández Mallo mediates affect through scientific discourse, informational residue, and multilingual contamination. Drawing on Fernández Mallo's theoretical framework of *Postpoesía*, the paper shows how multilingualism—particularly scientific, mass media and pop culture registers—functions as a distancing yet enabling device that allows love to be articulated under conditions of media saturation, epistemological fragmentation, and altermodern temporality. Through close readings of selected poems, the study demonstrates that *Carne de pixel* anticipates postpoetic theory by transforming the love poem into a space of metaphorical experimentation.

Key words: multilingualism in poetry, post poetic poetry.

Dr Pilar Molina is a lecturer of Spanish in TU Dublin. Her principal research interests lie in the field of 20th Century Spanish Literature, specifically Spanish Civil War poetry and poetry under the Franco Dictatorship. Her other research interests are 20th Century Spanish Literary Canons, Sustainable Literacy in Language Teaching and Learning and Telecollaboration. She has contributed to several publications on 20th Century Spanish Poetry and Education for Sustainable Development.

Michael Kane (Technological University Dublin)

Multilingualism and ‘bad language’: James Joyce’s anti-authoritarian lessons for today

James Joyce’s writing, from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses* to *Finnegans Wake*, became increasingly multilingual over time. His interest in European languages is reflected in the intellectual development of his autobiographical character Stephen Dedalus. Stephen’s (and Joyce’s) multilingual interests are shown to align with a desire to escape from his position as involuntary ‘servant of two masters’ (‘the imperial British state ... and the holy Roman catholic and apostolic church’) in early twentieth-century Ireland to a ‘Europe of strange tongues’. Multilingualism as a means of escaping servitude is closely allied in Joyce’s writings with the inclusion of ‘bad language’, understood here not only as the use of words defying the conventions of ‘good’ taste’, but also as of those disrupting conventional ‘good sense’. Examples of the latter include comical mispronunciations, words being mixed up with other words in the same or other languages, a playful focus on the sounds more than the sense of words, and deliberate puns. Joyce’s turn to the diversity of a range of non-English European languages and to an increasingly ‘carnavalesque’, transgressively playful as well as disruptively translingual use of language(s) were core components of a cultural rebellion against the dominant powers of his time and fundamentally anti-authoritarian. This paper suggests that Joyce’s multilingual, playfully subversive, anti-imperialist and anti-authoritarian approach to language(s) continues to have clear relevance in contemporary times apparently characterised by a rise of neo-authoritarian, imperialist tendencies.

Keywords: James Joyce, multilingual, language play, anti-imperialist

Dr Michael Kane is a lecturer in German and English language and literature. He is the author of two books: *Modern Men: Mapping Masculinity in English and German Literature 1880 – 1930* (Cassell, 1999 <https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/modern-men-9780304703104/>) and *Postmodern Time and Space in Fiction and Theory* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020 <http://www.palgrave.com/9783030374495>). He has also written several articles and translated literary and academic texts. His research interests include cultural theory, modernism,

modernity, postmodernity, fiction, Irish literature, German literature, comparative literature, gender studies, literary translation. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7511-776X>

Stephen Lucek (University College Dublin); Marion Schulte (University of Rostock)

Multilingualism in news discourse: A metaphors of migration approach to *New to the Parish*

A great number of studies over the years have examined how metaphors link discourse about migration to other areas of human thought (see, inter alia, Charteris-Black 2006; El Refaie 2001; Hart 2011; Musolff 2015; Olza et al. 2021). In Ireland, there has been recent research that links the catalytic event of Covid-19 as providing cover for the rise in negative attitudes to migrants on social media (Author 2024). The current study looks at the *Irish Times* series *New to the Parish*, which is ostensibly a place of celebrating migrants to Ireland, as a place where metaphor can also be found in the writing. Taking a corpus approach to gathering metaphor data, following the Pragglejaz group (Steen et al. 2010), we demonstrate the metaphors used in this dataset alongside those of a general corpus of *News on the Web* to see how *New to the Parish* discusses migration and migrants.

Keywords: news discourse; metaphor; corpus methods

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Stephen Lucek is Assistant Professor in Linguistics at UCD. He has published widely on topics relating to language use in Ireland, particularly from the perspective of nonstandard language varieties and disempowered groups, including marginalised communities especially migrants.

Marion Schulte is Professor of English Linguistics at University of Rostock. Her research focuses on various contexts of language use and language variation, especially sociophonetics, multilingualism in postcolonial societies (Ireland and Namibia), as well as short-term and long-term language change.

Théophile Munyangeyo (School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies (SLLCS), Trinity College Dublin)

Intersecting cultural diplomacy and multipolarity in cultural hegemony shifts within the global south.

As global power dynamics become increasingly shifting in a multipolar world, cultural diplomacy has emerged as a strategic tool in the reconfiguration of partnerships and influence. This paper investigates the role of multipolarity in reshaping cultural hegemony within the Global South, with a central focus on Africa. The study examines how non-Western powers engage Africa not only through economic or infrastructural initiatives but increasingly through emotionally resonant forms of soft power relations. This paper unveils how a cultural diplomacy emphasising mutual respect, shared values, and solidarity over transactional service delivery underpins the shifting contours of cultural hegemony.

Using a qualitative research design, the paper draws on policy analysis and critical discourse review. It employs interdisciplinary frameworks from postcolonial theory, associationism and decoloniality frameworks, international cultural relations, and soft power studies to assess how cultural diplomacy within multipolarity is facilitating a shift away from traditional Eurocentric hegemony.

The key findings reveal that emerging powers are more effective in establishing “win-win” partnerships when they prioritise affective engagement, selling respect, identity recognition, and shared values and aspirations rather than purely services or ideological influence.

This study contributes to ongoing debates around decolonisation, decoloniality, and global governance by illustrating how cultural diplomacy is not peripheral but central to the geopolitics of a multipolar world. It calls for African-led cultural strategies that leverage multipolarity to build more balanced, emotionally intelligent, and sovereign international relationships rooted in global intersections based on effective intercultural communication frameworks.

Keywords: cultural diplomacy, decoloniality, multipolarity.

Théophile Munyangeyo is Associate Professor of Intercultural Communications and Francophone Studies at Trinity College Dublin. He is Deputy Director of the Centre for

Global Intercultural Communications, and Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning at school level. Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Linguists and Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (UK), he also serves on the Royal Irish Academy's Multidisciplinary Committee for the Study of Languages, Literature, Culture, and Communication. His research explores linguistic and cultural identities, multimodal communications, critical discourse analysis, intercultural interactions, decolonial theory, and African socio-political dynamics within the context of global shifts and emerging multipolarity.

Workshop for Staff

Neasa Ní Chiaráin and Anna Luczynski (Trinity College Dublin)

‘Speech technology for Language Learning: The Irish experience’.

Day 2

Poster Presentations

Hind Almuhawiss (Dublin City University)

Gender and Lexical choices in oral Najdi Arabic by Saudi University Students.

The poster based on my PhD aims at investigating gender lexical variation in spoken Najdi from a new perspective, taking into account the rapid interchange caused by the massive social transformation due to cultural exchange, migration, and globalisation. An extensive review of key studies on gender and language variation—including those by Deborah Tannen (1990) and Penelope Eckert (1973)—shows that men's and women's language use differs significantly. The poster will explain ways in which such variations in lexical choices are indicative of wider social norms and how they shape identity at personal level in the Najdi context. To nuance the issue of gender influence on language use and to examine the challenges facing the Najdi dialect, this study focuses on young Saudi male and female students (aged 18–25) at selected universities in Riyadh. I will also explain who is the 'gatekeeper' of this cultural heritage between the genders and what it portends in terms of personal communication and intercultural understanding. Using tools designed for this age group, the study aims to map gendered lexical variation in spoken Najdi Arabic and contribute to ongoing debates on the preservation of linguistic and cultural traditions. This poster highlights the importance of sensitivity when addressing the linguistic variation that publishers may encounter in both the social and professional world.

Keywords: Najdi dialect, gender lexical variation, identity and culture.

Hind Almuhawiss is a lecturer in PNU/ Saudi Arabia. With a Masters degree IMAMU/Saudi Arabia. Hind Almuhawiss is passionate about exploring the intersection of language and gender, aiming to contribute to cultural heritage preservation. She is currently a PhD Track

student at DCU. Hind Almuhawiss is a mother of four beautiful children, she enjoys her time spent with her family and making new experiences with her children.

Panayiota Hadjiconstantinou (p.hadjiconstantinou@cut.ac.cy) Cyprus University of Technology and Fotini Efthimiou (fotini.efthimiou@cut.ac.cy), Cyprus University of Technology

Exploring Student Engagement with AI Tools for Image Creation in ESP Contexts

This poster presents findings from a study investigating how university students engage with Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools during an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course tailored to multimedia and graphic arts. The focus was on examining how learners interact with AI-driven image generation tools and how these tools influence their language use, creativity, and collaborative dynamics. Participants, working in triads, completed a multi-step visual communication task. One student described a reference image visible only to them; the second interpreted this description to produce a hand-drawn version; finally, the third formulated a text prompt using the conveyed information, which was then input into an AI image generator. This structured task encouraged the development of descriptive precision, active listening, and interpretation skills, while also prompting reflection on the interplay between human creativity and machine assistance. After completing the activity, students filled out a questionnaire and participated in guided reflection sessions. The collected data revealed varied responses: many students were impressed by the capabilities of AI to render accurate visual representations from verbal input, seeing potential for enhancing efficiency in artistic workflows. Others, however, raised concerns about the authenticity and limitations of machine-generated images. Overall, the study provides valuable insights into the role of AI in language-supported visual tasks and highlights both enthusiasm and skepticism among learners when engaging with emerging technologies in educational settings.

Keywords: AI tools, Higher Education, Language Learning

Panayiota Hadjiconstantinou is an experienced English Language Instructor at the Cyprus University of Technology, where she has taught English for Academic and Specific Purposes since 2009. She holds two Master's degrees in Education and TEFL from UK universities and has over two decades of teaching experience across Europe and Asia. Her research interests focus on the integration of technology in language teaching, particularly how digital tools, online platforms, and Artificial Intelligence can enhance learner engagement, promote autonomous learning, and support the development of language skills in both academic and professional contexts.

Fotini Efthimiou works as a Greek Language Instructor at the Cyprus University of Technology Language Centre. She is a PhD candidate at the Department of Language, Literacy and Education of the University of Cyprus. She specialises in Critical Literacy-Ideologies, Multimodality and Social Semiotics. Her Doctoral Thesis focuses on the Academic Discourse.

Iziar Sarasola (DCU); Tatiana Qualio (ICHAS); Dr. Alicia Castillo (DCU)

International Students in Ireland: Understanding Acculturative Stress and Adaptation Through the ASSIS (POSTER PRESENTATION)

Ireland is an increasingly popular destination for international students, with 40,400 enrolled in higher education (HEA) and around 120,000 in English Language Teaching (ELT) programs in 2023/24—a 15% increase from the previous year, reflected across both sectors. This study aims to understand the experiences of international students in Ireland by examining patterns of acculturative stress across a range of groups. It considers such variables as English language proficiency levels, nationality, ethnicity, employment status, duration of residence in Ireland, and gender. The study employs the Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students (ASSIS).

Previous research has examined international students' living conditions and racism, but acculturation and employment remain underexplored. This study fills that gap and offers recommendations to better support their well-being and integration in educational settings.

Keywords: International Students; Acculturation; Integration

Iziar Sarasola holds an MA in TESOL and has experience teaching in higher education and private language institutions. Currently a research assistant at Dublin City University, she has been awarded a SALIS scholarship for a PhD on psychology, education, and gender.

Tatiana Quaglio holds a Higher Diploma in Psychology (DBS) and is completing an MA in Counselling and Psychotherapy (ICHAS). Tatiana has published research on the experiences of Brazilian migrants in Ireland and is currently working as a trainee psychotherapist.

Dr Alicia Castillo will supervise the project and ensure its academic and ethical integrity.

Session 3A

Angelina Radeva / Pavlina Zlateva, PhD (Technical University of Sofia)

Multilingual Communication in a Technical Context

This study explores comparable and related technical terminology in German, English, Russian and Bulgarian, with a focus on the formation, usage, and cross-linguistic equivalence of specialized terms in technical fields, with particular emphasis on computer science. The research aims to investigate how terminology evolve and align across these languages, examining the interplay between native term formation, loanwords, and semantic shifts. Special attention is given to the influence of English as a global lingua franca in technical discourse, as well as the role of institutional standardization. The need to promote plurilingualism among teachers and students and to support their development in the changing multilingual environment is emphasized.

Methodologically, the study adopts a comparative approach, combining qualitative analysis of term structures with corpus-based investigation of authentic technical texts. A survey is conducted among students for feedback purposes on the benefits of multilingual presentation of terminology in the field of computer science.

Preliminary findings indicate significant convergence of technical vocabulary due to globalization and digital communication, yet notable structural and semantic differences persist, especially between synthetic languages (e.g., German, Russian) and more analytic ones (e.g., English, Bulgarian). Furthermore, patterns of borrowing and translation strategies vary widely, influenced by cultural, historical, and institutional factors.

This research contributes to the field of contrastive terminology studies and offers practical insights for technical translation, multilingual documentation, and international knowledge exchange.

Keywords: Technical Terminology, Multilingual Communication, Contrastive Linguistics

Odette Gabaudan and Susanna Nocchi (TU Dublin)

Investigating Generative AI in Language Education: Student Perspectives and Institutional Policy Contexts

Abstract

As generative AI (GenAI) tools become increasingly embedded in educational settings, their impact on learners' cognitive development (Larson et al., 2024) —particularly in relation to critical and ethical thinking as well as self-efficacy — has recently sparked a wave of research and webinars in multiple disciplines, reflecting its rising significance in education. Conducted within the broader context of TU Dublin’s recently published policy on AI and the National Forum’s set of guidelines on the adoption of Gen AI in Higher Education, as well as their recent call for contributions to the national initiative “Mapping Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) in Irish Higher Education”, this study investigates current level of Gen AI literacy among language students and examines how students are integrating these technologies into their learning practices. The study also investigates to what extent students critically and ethically evaluate Gen AI and how student learner agency shapes their use in such tools. The findings will be critically positioned against the backdrop of existing policies and frameworks highlighting both strengths and limitations in current approaches to GenAI integration in education. In doing so, the study seeks to generate broader discussion and critical reflection on how best to approach GenAI in language education.

Larson et al. (2024), Critical thinking in the age of generative AI, *Academy of Management Learning & Education* 2024, Vol. 23, No. 3, 373-378. Accessible online <https://journals.aom.org/doi/full/10.5465/amle.2024.0338> National Forum (2025) Ten Considerations for Generative Artificial Intelligence Adoption in Irish Higher Education - National Resource Hub

Sonia C. Munteanu (Technical University of Cluj-Napoca)

From Use to Understanding: Student Perceptions of AI-Assisted Homework in an English for Academic Purposes Course for Engineering Students

Although relatively young, generative AI has seen a spectacular development and has already impacted education at all levels, including curriculum design, teaching, and assessment (Liang et al., 2025). Its potential to radically transform the learning experience (Imran et al., 2024) features among the most appealing aspects for both teachers and learners. AI-assisted tools can enhance learning by providing tailored, personalised experiences and can thus foster autonomy and self-paced learning routes. The present paper reports on a study carried out in a higher education institution, in the context of an English for Academic Purposes course for second-year engineering students. Traditionally, the curriculum requires students to complete graded assignments that focus on developing writing and written text comprehension as homework. With the advent of GenAI, the issue of students ethically using the technology for language learning has become prominent. The study explores how students report their use of AI tools for specific homework tasks, their reflections and perceptions on the usefulness and acceptance of openly disclosing AI use, as well as the perceived benefits of learning with AI for future careers. The dataset consists of students' declarations of AI use for homework and their responses to a post-activity reflective survey. Data analysis employed descriptive statistics for the quantitative part, and qualitative thematic analysis for the open-ended question responses. The results show that students have a positive stance on the benefits of using GenAI for language learning homework, highlighting personalised assistance—especially in error correction and feedback for improvement. The findings indicate that the requirement to submit an AI Declaration of Use fostered students' critical reflection on the process of learning with such tools. Some students rejected the use of GenAI as an unethical means of completing assignments and as a hindrance to the learning process. This paper contributes to understanding students' acceptance of AI for learning EAP in higher education—an emerging area in education with significant implications for ethically enhancing learning through AI-driven technology.

Keywords: generative AI in education, English for Academic Purposes (EAP), technology-enhanced language learning

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Sonia C. Munteanu, PhD, is Associate Professor in the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca (TUC-N), Romania, where she teaches English for specific purposes, academic English, intercultural communication, and Romanian as a foreign language. She has been involved in adult higher education for over twenty-five years and has used the expertise gained to design and develop curricula, materials and assessment in languages for specific purposes. Her main research interests are language teaching and learning, applied linguistics, English medium education, intercultural communication, and internationalization of higher education. She is also the TUC-N International Relations Senior Adviser coordinating international collaboration on education and institutional development.

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Jennifer Wood (Prifysgol Aberystwyth University)

Creative Approaches to Translation for Language Learning in the Age of AI

A spate of recent articles (e.g. Sparkes, 2025; Ramirez, 2024) have focused on the idea that learning another language is pointless in the age of AI, often countered by reports of the cognitive benefits and employability advantages of language-learning and plurilingualism (Guest, 2024). Concomitantly, the role of translation in language teaching has come under increasing scrutiny given the challenges raised by AI and perceptions of its widespread and ‘inappropriate’ usage by students. Previous discussion regarding the use of translation as a language-teaching tool has been on the need to focus on translation as a communicative and task-based activity (see Fraser, 1996; Hurtado Albir, 1999; González Davies, 2004; Balboni, 2017). That is, process- rather than product-oriented, so learners learn by doing and in so doing solve communicative problems, apply critical thinking and problem-solving strategies, while becoming aware of (inter)cultural context alongside lexical, grammatical and syntactical forms and functions.

This focus on developing communicative competence (linguistic, extra-linguistic and contextual) chimes with the reported benefits of learning a language and the continuing need for the human translator, who can navigate cultural nuances, complex contexts, polysemy, idioms and other textual intricacies – areas where machine translation can fall short, generating inaccuracies and misinterpretations. This paper will showcase approaches we in the Modern Languages Department in Aberystwyth have developed in our translation teaching and assessment practice to promote communicative competence, creative thinking and AI awareness for employability future-proofing, in addition to exploring the student viewpoint on AI, incorporating ethical and ecological concerns.

Keywords: translation; AI; language-learning

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Jennifer Wood lectures in Spanish at Prifysgol Aberystwyth University where she is the Director of Learning and Teaching for the School of Languages and Literature. She has an interest in the applications of technology to second language learning, particularly in relation to Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) and the support of neurodivergent language-learners. She has published on the use of polling software and video assessments to promote inclusivity in the language classroom. Further scholarly concerns include twentieth century Spanish poetry, visual cultures, gender and the avant-garde and the socio-cultural legacies of the Falklands/Malvinas War.

Session 3B

María Victoria Soulé (University of Cyprus Department of French and European Studies)

Perceptions of Multilingual Classroom Practices and Metalinguistic Awareness: A Case Study of Spanish Learners in Cyprus

For more than twenty years, researchers have examined the role of multilingualism in language education (Hinger et al., 2005) through sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, and language acquisition perspectives. Plurilingualism, defined as the individual ability to use multiple languages (Council of Europe, 2016), contrasts with societal multilingualism and involves dimensions such as proficiency and use (Cenoz, 2013). This study adopts Kemp's (2009) definition of multilingualism as the ability to use three or more languages. Framed as a case study (Duff, 2022), it investigates how eight first-year Spanish learners at a Cypriot university perceive multilingual classroom practices, with particular attention to the teacher's use of strategies intended to foster metalinguistic awareness. Data, gathered through questionnaires and a focus group, were analyzed using descriptive statistics and qualitative content analysis (Selvi, 2022). Results indicate that while learners recognize the potential of using their plurilingual repertoires, many rely on teacher guidance to do so. Views on multilingual classroom practices range from positive to uncertain, revealing varied perceptions of their impact on language learning.

Keywords: Students' Plurilingual Repertoires, Metalinguistic Awareness, Multilingual Classroom Practices

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Dr. María Victoria Soulé is a Lecturer in Spanish Language Studies in the Department of French and European Studies at the University of Cyprus. Her primary research areas are: (a) International student mobility, focusing on study abroad and Internationalization at Home, (b) The intersection of language learning and plurilingual identities, (c) Classroom-based research, particularly the use of Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL), and (d) Second language acquisition, with an emphasis on analyzing the morphological, syntactic, and discursive knowledge of tense and aspect (full profile can be found here: <https://www.ucy.ac.cy/directory/profile/msoule01?lang=en>).

María Belén Rabadán Vega (Idiomes UAB Barcelona)

From Theory to Practice: Navigating Cultural Differences in Teaching Spanish to Chinese Students.

In today's increasingly globalized education landscape, Spanish language instruction for Chinese learners presents unique intercultural challenges. Bridging the cultural gap between Spanish teachers and Chinese students is essential for fostering effective communication, mutual understanding, and meaningful language acquisition. This paper examines how Spanish language teachers can bridge this gap by integrating intercultural competence into their pedagogy, while also addressing the divergence between theory and classroom practice. Drawing on Intercultural Communicative Competence (Byram, 1997), Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), and Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions (Hofstede, 2001), alongside more recent perspectives on intercultural pedagogy (Dervin & Gross, 2016; Deardorff, 2020), educators are encouraged to approach language instruction as a culturally embedded process. These frameworks emphasize the development of cultural awareness, empathy, and the ability to interpret and mediate across cultural contexts. However, their application in real classrooms often faces challenges such as institutional constraints, curriculum rigidity, and students' unfamiliarity with communicative, student-centred learning approaches (Li, 2012; Jin & Cortazzi, 2006; Gu & Schweisfurth, 2015; Wang & Curdt-Christiansen, 2019). In practice, Spanish teachers may struggle to balance intercultural goals with learners' expectations for structure, grammar-focused instruction, and hierarchical classroom dynamics rooted in Confucian traditions. This paper proposes strategies such as contrastive cultural analysis, task-based learning with cultural scenarios, and the integration of authentic multimedia resources to foster intercultural sensitivity. It also emphasizes the role of teacher adaptability, reflective practice, and professional development (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013; Sercu, 2022) in narrowing the gap between theoretical ideals and practical implementation. Finally, the paper invites reflection on educators' own experiences and the effectiveness of their practice in creating a culturally responsive environment that supports both language proficiency and intercultural competence among Chinese learners of Spanish.

Key words: cultural gap; Spanish as a second language; Chinese learners of Spanish.

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American students. She has previously taught translation, Latin American Literature, and Spanish language at University College Dublin, Maynooth University, and Technological University Dublin. She holds an MA in Hispanic and Lusophone Studies and a PhD in Hispanic Studies, both from University College Dublin.

Cristiane Soares (Harvard University); Gláucia Silva (University of Massachusetts Dartmouth)

“Like a sewing kit”: Perceptions of nonbinary learners of Portuguese

Speakers of Romance languages, including Portuguese, often correlate grammatical gender and gender identity. Since gender identity reflects many individual experiences, it is important to provide ways for those whose identities are outside the grammatical binary to express themselves. The use of linguistic forms reflecting different gender identities relates to human rights and educational justice, since misgendering may exclude individuals from a learning community. Based on semi-structured interviews, this case study explores Portuguese language learning by two people who identify as nonbinary in English, their dominant language, and how these learners perceive the use of binary and nonbinary forms in Portuguese. Participants were a heritage and a foreign language learner enrolled in university-level courses in Portuguese. Discussion includes their views on the use of nonbinary pronouns in both languages, how they feel when someone addresses or refers to them or others using binary forms, and whether accepting the use of binary forms varies according to interlocutors (e.g., younger/older friends, relatives) and/or the language being used. Results suggest that, while these learners prefer nonbinary forms in English, acceptance of binary forms does depend on interlocutor and confidence in or knowledge of the target language. Furthermore, both tend to avoid confrontations due to safety concerns. Both learners also accept binary forms more readily in Portuguese, since they are still learning about such forms, like someone who has a sewing kit but doesn't know how to use it yet. We conclude with suggestions by interviewees for a more inclusive linguistic behavior in Portuguese.

Keywords: Nonbinary forms, Portuguese, gender identity

Cristiane Soares is a senior preceptor and coordinator of the Portuguese language program at Harvard University. Cristiane has dedicated her research to topics related to teaching and learning Portuguese as a foreign language and has published several articles and book chapters on these issues. In 2024, she released the book *Inclusiveness Beyond the*

(non)Binary in Romance Languages: Research and Classroom Implementations, co-edited in partnership with Dr. Gláucia Silva.

Gláucia Silva is professor of Portuguese and Education at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. She has co-authored four Portuguese language textbooks and co-edited *Inclusiveness beyond the (non)binary in Romance languages: From research to classroom implementation* (Routledge, 2024). She has published articles and book chapters on several aspects related to teaching and learning Portuguese as a heritage language, such as instructors' needs, learners' performance in different skills, and perception and production of linguistic structures, including gender in Portuguese.

Sabine Kasten, Laura Gill (Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences): From Arrival to Admission: Study Preparation for Prospective International Students

From Arrival to Admission: Study Preparation for Prospective International Students

Student numbers in Germany and at Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences have not continued to grow in recent years, despite a growing shortage of skilled professionals especially in STEM fields. In this context, prospective international students with a recognized higher education entrance qualification (HZB) who aim to complete a full degree program in German represent a key target group. They hold great potential for stabilizing student enrollment figures, but also face specific linguistic, academic, and intercultural challenges. To address these challenges, a new preparatory course format, which concludes with the DSH (German language exam for university admission) has been developed and piloted over the past year. The program combines language instruction with academic and cultural components in an integrated orientation format designed to support international students in transitioning into regular degree programs. This initiative is part of a broader institutional strategy that emphasizes the expansion of orientation and bridging programs. The objective is to support prospective international students in their study-related decision-making and to promote their long-term academic success. Especially under challenging structural conditions – such as the need for cost neutrality – the effectiveness and sustainability of such measures come into focus. This exploratory case study investigates the extent to which the program contributes to increased transition rates into degree programs, enhances academic success, and supports the successful integration of international students. Initial findings suggest that a comprehensive preparatory approach can effectively address key success factors.

Key words: Orientation and Bridging Programs; Academic Language Preparation; CrossCultural Student Integration

Sabine Kasten has over 20 years of experience teaching German as a foreign language. Since 2015, she has been a lecturer at the Language Center of h_da, teaching DSH preparation courses and serving on the examination board. She is actively involved in international projects and intercultural student support and is part of the DEI office of EUt+. Passionate about innovative learning formats, she strives to create a positive learning environment that fosters students as both language learners and global citizens.

Laura Gill holds a Master's degree from Mainz University and has experience in language instruction in both English and German. For the past decade she has served as DSH counsellor at h_da, advising international prospective students on academic language requirements.

Session 3C

Elisa Picón Curiel (PhD Candidate at Universitat Rovira i Virgili [URV], Spanish language, linguistics, and didactics lecturer at Utrecht University [UU])

Percepciones, actitudes y creencias sobre multilingüismo y plurilingüismo en las políticas educativas lingüísticas en Países Bajos / Perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs about multilingualism and plurilingualism in educational policies in The Netherlands

This doctoral research investigates how multilingualism and plurilingualism are perceived and operationalised within educational policies and practices in the Netherlands. The study has two primary objectives. First, it examines the beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of learners and teachers at both secondary and university levels toward multilingualism and how such policies are implemented—or overlooked—in classroom settings. To this end, tailored surveys will be administered to each group*. Second, the research aims to highlight the pedagogical benefits of leveraging the Netherlands' multilingual context for the teaching and learning of second (L2) and foreign (LE) languages, with a view to formulating practical recommendations for integrating a plurilingual approach into language education. The study is guided by four hypotheses: (1) that multilingualism features in the Dutch curricula at both secondary and university levels; (2) that societal perceptions of multilingualism are largely positive, reflecting its prevalence in Dutch society; (3) that learners exhibit favourable attitudes toward plurilingual practices, particularly in foreign language learning; and (4) that teachers not only share these positive views but also recognise the value of plurilingualism in L2/LE pedagogy, especially for Spanish. *The student questionnaire will be piloted in May–June 2025 to refine question formulation, with the main data collection scheduled for October–November 2025.

Keywords: multilingualism, plurilingualism, language learning and teaching

Elisa Picón Curiel is a linguist with a focus in second/foreign language acquisition (SLA) and sociolinguistics. After finishing her studies in Greek and Latin Philology and Spanish Philology in the UGR (Spain), she earned a scholarship at the WVU (US) to follow a double MA on SLA while obtaining the University Teaching Qualification. Back to Spain, she followed a second MA on SLA focused on Spanish at the UPO. She moved to The

Netherlands in 2017, where she worked first as Spanish Lecturer for the RUG. Currently, she works at the UU as a Linguistics and Spanish Lecturer. She embarked on a PhD project on Multilingualism and Plurilingualism with Dr. Javier Muñoz-Basols and Dr. Antoni Nomdedeu-Rull as co-directors in November 2024 at the URV (Spain).

Gerard Cullen, Dresden University of Technology, Germany

Promoting English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) at Armenian HEIs

EU and Armenian HEIs experience of training and piloting together with a view to introduce teaching through the Medium of English in order to improve educational yield, sustainability and internationalization and support staff, students and internationalization but also protect Armenian language and culture.

Key terms: EMI, culture, internationalization.

Gerard Cullen, Irish, MA in Educational Management, is head of advanced professional English program and a project manager for TU Dresden projects in the Erasmus capacity building in HEIs (CBHE).

Bettina Hermoso-Gómez; Sofia Martinho (University of Leeds)

Empowering Multilingual Communities Through Civic and Educational Engagement

Our paper will present Leeds Language Week 2024, a civic and educational engagement initiative, which aimed to promote the value of language learning and multiculturalism across the city of Leeds during the Autumn of 2024. Whilst there is a strong monolingual mindset in Britain, this does not reflect the multicultural reality. In Leeds there are more than 170 languages spoken across the city, however, there is no visibility of the multilingual composition of the region. The University of Leeds developed this now annual event to present a wide range of cultural and educational opportunities within schools and the community to encourage language learning and raise awareness of the rich language diversity of the city. Together with international, national and local partners (such as Instituto Cervantes, Stephen Spender Trust and Leeds Libraries), Leeds Language Week presented an impactful, meaningful and varied programme of activities delivered both in educational settings and within the community catering for a wide range of audiences of all ages. This paper will provide a successful and effective framework that creates a blueprint for higher education institutions to collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders to promote multilingualism and language learning.

Keywords: multilingualism; language learning and teaching; civic engagement

Bettina Hermoso-Gómez is a Lecturer in Spanish at the University of Leeds as well as director of Routes into Languages in Yorkshire and Humberside as well as Educational Engagement Lead for the School of Languages, Cultures and Societies. She has published several textbooks and supporting materials for teaching Spanish, French and German in primary and secondary education in the UK. She is the co-founder of the journal *The Language Scholar* and member of the Centre for Excellence in Language Teaching.

Sofia Martinho is an Associate Professor of Portuguese in the School of Languages, Cultures and Societies, and the Director of Camões Centre for Portuguese Language at Leeds. As a dedicated advocate for language learning in the UK, she frequently leads outreach and policy-related activities, as well as CPD sessions and training days for language educators. She is

also the President of TROPO UK, the Association of Researchers and Teachers of Portuguese Language in the UK.

END OF ABSTRACTS