

Multilingualism in Urban and Suburban Settings

**THE INAUGURAL
LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY CENTRE
ANNUAL ROUNDTABLE**

February 19th - 20th 2009

Monash University, Clayton

Welcome to the inaugural Language and Society Centre Annual Roundtable

The theme of the Roundtable, “Multilingualism in Urban and Suburban Settings”, was inspired by the fact that more of the world's population now live in urban settings than outside of them (and Australia is one of the most urbanized countries in the world), and more than half of the world's population is also bi- or multilingual. Processes of urbanization, migration and globalization will continue as the 21st century progresses and the trends to urban living and multilingualism are unlikely to be reversed.

There are many important questions which can be raised about the intersection of these two trends, and the research presented in this roundtable investigates the issues surrounding these, including:

- **Multilingualism in the context of globalization:** Are new types of multilingualism arising due to processes of urbanization and globalization?
- **The impact of multiple networks on bilingual competence:** Living in urban settings means that individuals are members of multiple networks, each of which may have different linguistic norms. What is the effect of involvement in these complex networks on the competence of multilingual individuals in their various languages? How do language-based networks interact with other networks, for example those which are professional, religious, education-related and age-related?
- **Different valuations of bilingualism:** In many urban settings, there seems to be a distinction between linguistic repertoires which include the dominant language and other highly-valued languages (for example, English in many non-Anglophone communities), and those which include the dominant language and languages from ‘outside’. What are the differences in linguistic practices associated with these two types of multilingualism? Do people and policies distinguish between bilingualism which is valued for its importance in the community and bilingualism which is valued for reasons of prestige or economic advantage?
- **Local differences and common themes:** The nature of urban living is different in different places and urban communities in Australia are the result of different processes from urban communities in Europe or in Asia. What impact do these differences have on multilingualism in these different environments? To what extent are there commonalities which can be seen alongside the differences?

It is hoped that this roundtable can further the exploration of issues surrounding the intersection of multilingualism, globalization, and urbanization. By examining the topic from a range of perspectives – historical, cross-cultural, geographical, and, of course, linguistic – and with an emphasis on practical aspects, a comprehensive analysis of key issues can be achieved.

We thank you for participating in this event and hope that you find it both beneficial and enriching.

Associate Professor Farzad Sharifian
Director, Language and Society Centre

Thursday 19th February 2009

- 9.30am** **Acknowledgement of the traditional owners of the land**
Welcome by LASC Director
Farzad Sharifian, Monash University
- 9.35am** **Welcome from Dean of Arts, Monash University**
Rae Frances
- Morning Session: Chaired by Farzad Sharifian*
- 9.40am** **Overview of multilingualism among Indigenous Victorians**
Bryan Fricker, Monash University
- 9.50am** **Melbourne – The porous city?**
Graeme Davison, Monash University
- 10.35am** *Morning tea*
- 11am** **Urban and suburban multilingualism: The European perspective**
Claudia Maria Riehl, University of Cologne
- 11.45am** **What is urban or suburban about multilingualism in Australia?**
Michael Clyne, Monash University/University of Melbourne
- 12.15pm** *LUNCH**
- Afternoon Session: Chaired by Kate Burridge*
- 1.15pm** **The ecology of minority languages in Melbourne**
Julie Bradshaw, Monash University
- 1.45pm** **The multilingual high school – Insights from a school ethnography**
Louisa Willoughby, Monash University
- 2.15pm** **Trilinguals and their networks: Some observations on language use amongst three vintages of migrants in Melbourne**
Jim Hlavac, Monash University
- 2.45pm** *Afternoon tea*
- 3.15pm** **Minority language speakers as migrants: Some preliminary observations on the Sudanese community in Melbourne**
Simon Musgrave, Monash University
John Hajek, University of Melbourne
- 3.45pm** *End of day one*

***NOTE: Participants are welcome to gather for lunch (at their own expense) at the Monash University Club (building 50, next to the Religious Centre, opposite the Short Courses Centre).**

Friday 20th February 2009

Morning Session: Chaired by Julie Bradshaw

9.30am **Exploring attitudes to Australia, immigration and multicultural issues by first language and English language competence**
Andrew Markus, Monash University

10am **Dreamscapes and the language-focused lifestyle**
Brigitte Lambert, University of Melbourne

10.30am ***Morning tea***

11am **Younger L2 and older L1 speakers – Intergenerational, intercultural encounters in urban/suburban settings**
Michael Clyne, Marisa Cordella, Brigid Maher, Doris Schüpbach (Monash University)

11.30am **Bridging the linguistic and cultural gap between international and local postgraduates**
Christiane Momberg, Nira Rahman (Monash University)

12pm **Languages in contact: The case of an Australian urban university**
Helen Marriott, Monash University

12.30pm ***LUNCH****

Afternoon Session: Chaired by Simon Musgrave

1.30pm **Urban newcomers and the construction of identity amidst language shift**
Howard Manns, Monash University

2pm **Biel-Bienne – A bilingual city in a multilingual country? A multilingual city with two dominant languages?**
Doris Schüpbach, Monash University

2.30pm ***Afternoon Tea***

3pm **Roundtable discussion: Outcomes and future perspectives**
Chaired by Claudia Riehl and Farzad Sharifian

5pm **Melbourne Linguistics Picnic**
Carlton Gardens (Melbourne Museum, Exhibition Building, between Rathdowne Street and Nicholson Street, meeting at the playground just north of the Melbourne Museum, near the corner of Rathdowne and Grattan Street)

***NOTE: Participants are welcome to gather for lunch (at their own expense) at the Monash University Club (building 50, next to the Religious Centre, opposite the Short Courses Centre).**

Melbourne Linguistics Picnic

From 5pm, 20th February 2009

The first Melbourne Linguistics Picnic is a joint event by the linguistics departments of Monash, Melbourne, and La Trobe Universities.

This event is for the linguistics community and their families in the interests of fostering and strengthening relationships between departments.

The picnic will be held at the Carlton Gardens (Melbourne Museum, Exhibition Building, between Rathdowne Street and Nicholson Street, meeting at the playground just north of the Melbourne Museum, near the corner of Rathdowne and Grattan Street)

Bring your own food and drink, or visit nearby Lygon Street for take away food.

The Inaugural Language and Society Centre Annual Roundtable: Multilingualism in Urban and Suburban Settings

Thursday 19th February 2009

Overview of multilingualism among Indigenous Victorians

Bryan Fricker, Monash University

This presentation argues that Victoria has always been multilingual, even before white settlement. There were about 39 distinct languages, with seven of those having around 19 sub-dialects. Although there are some 86 people in Victoria who claim to speak an Australian language (2006 census), not one of those is a Victorian language, all of which are now extinct.

Bryan Fricker is a Dja Dja Wurrung man whose mob comes from around Bendigo. He is undertaking a PhD dealing with media and political representation/construction of Aboriginality. This research looks at the slant put on reportage and rhetoric surrounding large events like the Bicentenary, the Olympics and the N.T. intervention to see if there is stereotypical representation of Indigenous people and issues. Bryan is also the current President of the Monash Postgraduate Association.

Melbourne – The porous city?

Graeme Davison, Monash University

Over the past half century Melbourne has absorbed as many as a million newcomers from many lands of origin, becoming in turn one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse cities in the world. It has done so, we often say, with success, or at least without an appearance of marked social upheaval or day-to-day ethnic strife. Is this because Melbourne is a tolerant city or just a porous one? Do our vast suburbs ease friction and enhance the sense of freedom and opportunity for which migrants came? Or do they create a vast emptiness that discourages sociability, hides economic and personal distress and dulls the spirit? In this talk I outline the important changes that have occurred, and are still occurring, in the social and physical structure of the metropolis. How and why did Melbourne become a city of suburbs? How has the city's suburban form influenced class and ethnic divisions, access to resources and power? Now as the rich head for the centre, the poor, and the newest migrants are often isolated in distant suburbs with poor transport and social facilities. In a time economic and environmental stress how are these changes likely to impact on the prospects of social integration and material advancement?

*Graeme Davison is a Sir John Monash Distinguished Professor in the School of Historical Studies at Monash University. His main interest is in the history of Australian cities where his publications include *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne* (1978, 2004) and *Car Wars: How the Car Won Our Hearts and Conquered our Cities* (2004). He is also active as a public historian, an interest reflected in *The Use and Abuse of Australian History* (2000) and his co-editorship of the *Oxford Companion to Australian History* (1998).*

Urban and suburban multilingualism: The European perspective

Claudia Maria Riehl, University of Cologne

In comparison to America and Australia, urban and suburban multilingualism is a more recent phenomenon in Europe, starting mainly in the 1960s. While in Germany so-called guest-workers from Southern Europe and Turkey were recruited to support the national industry, in other countries such as France, the Netherlands and Great Britain the bulk of migrants settling in an urban or suburban environment consists of people from former colonies. So Europe is now confronted with a new type of multilingual and multicultural society.

Until recently, however, the main research focus was on European autochthonous minorities. These are either linguistic communities which became minorities as new boarder lines were drawn after the Wars (South Tyrol, Alsace etc.) or which never had a status as a nation (Basques, Ladinians, Bretons etc.). In contrast to the new allochthonous groups, the old bilingual communities lived in rural contexts, mainly in relatively closed networks where they could use the minority language almost exclusively. Many of these old settlements are now going to be disbanded, due to overall mobility, migration from the countryside into towns, and lack of institutional support of the minority language. When looking on bilingual settings in Europe we now have to concentrate on the major cities and on allochthonous minorities: The consequences being different sets of networks and multilingual constellations where new ethnolectal codes emerge.

In the first part of my paper I will give an overview of the different types of bilingual communities in Europe and of the current situation in urban and suburban settings. I will consider differences and communalities that are due to different migration backgrounds and different types of settlements. In the second part I will discuss how different types of settlement influence the building-up of networks among same and other language groups and how these networks interact with each other. Against this background, I will also look on the language codes used among the different groups, particularly on ethnolectal varieties of the majority language. Furthermore, I will draw attention on the different prestige of the languages involved and its impact on language maintenance and multilingualism within the networks under consideration.

Claudia Maria Riehl has a long career in linguistics and the German language at several universities throughout Germany. She has undertaken research in various fields such as multilingualism, intercultural communication, minority and regional languages. Currently she is a professor at the Department of German Language and Literature and director of the Centre of Language Diversity and Multilingualism at the University of Cologne.

What is urban or suburban about multilingualism in Australia?

Michael Clyne, Monash University/University of Melbourne

With very few exceptions, it has generally been assumed that contemporary multilingualism in Australia is an urban phenomenon. Thus urban multilingualism has been regarded as the unmarked category. This is not surprising considering that while 23.37% of residents of capital cities speak a LOTE, this holds for only 5.37% of those living outside metropolitan areas. This is an overestimate since the 5.37% includes urban centres with large migrant populations, such as Newcastle, Wollongong, Geelong, Shepparton, and the large concentration of indigenous languages in non-metropolitan areas of the Northern Territory. All community languages are far more strongly urbanized than the general population.

This paper will attempt to identify what is characteristically urban about studies of multilingualism in Australia. On the one hand, there is an assumption that all of Australia is like the capital cities. On the other, most research on bi- and multilingualism takes a capital city to be a single unit though studies of language demography have identified different kinds of local government areas according to concentration patterns (with major differences between Sydney and Melbourne) and varying concentration patterns of different language communities. These studies themselves have limitations in that boundaries between LGAs are vague and LGAs are sometimes too large to capture real concentrations.

Some language maintenance institutions (e.g. radio) can serve whole metropolitan areas; others need to be available at the local level (e.g. complementary language schools). One of the messy features of studies of urban multilingualism is the questions that have not been asked of multilinguals such as their contrastive tolerance of distance in the development of language-specific social networks and the sharing of language maintenance institutions.

Recently, linguistic landscaping has become a popular method to describe the presence of particular languages. But the signs need to be supplemented by the public sounds of the street and an analysis on where and when they can be heard.

Some suggestions will be made as to further research focusing more on the predominantly urban and suburban nature of multilingualism in Australia, going beyond multiple bilingualisms to examine language contact interactions.

Michael Clyne is Emeritus Professor at Monash University and an Honorary Professorial Fellow at Melbourne University, having held professorial appointments in Linguistics at both. His main fields of research and publication are multilingualism/ language contact, sociolinguistics, inter-cultural communication, and language policy.

The ecology of minority languages in Melbourne

Julie Bradshaw, Monash University

Melbourne's linguistic and cultural diversity has continually changed in response to global economic forces and shifting patterns of war and conflict. Immigrant and refugee communities have arrived with different skills, educational and professional profiles, and cultural and religious values. The ecological niches of a number of linguistic communities in Melbourne are explored to reveal the diversity of the immigrant experience. Demographic changes over the ten years of the 1996, 2001 and 2006 censuses are outlined, in relation to groups which differ in migration vintage, size, socio-economic factors, migration type, and linguistic and cultural distance from the mainstream. The study will focus on speakers of Arabic, Bosnian, Chinese, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Sudanese languages and Vietnamese, will also reflect on the lived experiences of members of these groups, as revealed in focus group interviews. The analysis will attempt to tease out the commonalities of the urban migrant experience, and also identify ways in which ecological factors make each group unique. The focus will be on elements of what Mufwene (2001) has called the *external ecology* of the varieties (i.e. socioeconomic and ethnographic environments, contact setting and power relations), with some brief reflections on the *internal ecology* (the relations between elements in changing linguistic systems). One aim is to test the applicability of the ecology model to the study of language maintenance and loss in urban multilingual settings.

Julie Bradshaw is a member of the Linguistics Program at Monash University. Her research interests include multilingualism, language maintenance and sociolinguistic aspects of second language learning and teaching. Recent work includes a commissioned research report (with Ana Deumert, Kate Burridge, Louisa Willoughby and Meredith Izon) on Victoria's linguistic diversity

The multilingual high school – Insights from a school ethnography

Louisa Willoughby, Monash University

Australian schools are increasingly enrolling multilingual students from a wide variety of language backgrounds, yet little research has been conducted on how this is affecting linguistic practices in the hallways, school grounds and other areas where students congregate outside the classroom. This paper draws on data from a three year ethnography (2004-2006 academic years) centred on students in years 10-12 at a highly multiethnic Melbourne high school to explore these questions and gain deeper understanding of the social meaning of multilingualism in our schools. In this paper, I will focus on the linguistic practices of students who have lived in Australia for at least 4 years and had English-based peer groups at school. While English was undoubtedly the main language these students used to communicate with their peers, this paper will outline the four areas of crossing, gossiping and helping where students made use of their own and other students' heritage languages in informal peer-based interaction. These examples show the important social function heritage languages continue to fulfil in this school long after they have stopped being the major language of communication. Furthermore, they show a strong interest among students in teaching and learning snippets of each other's languages as a form of social exchange and means of building intimacy between friends.

Louisa Willoughby undertook her PhD through LASC, looking at issues of language maintenance and identity affiliations for migrant background students at a Melbourne high school. Her more recent research has focussed on language issues and service provision for LOTE speakers with disabilities and profiling linguistic communities using census data. She teaches at Monash and Deakin and also holds a part-time research position at the Victorian Deaf Society.

Trilinguals and their networks: Some observations on language use amongst three vintages of migrants in Melbourne

Jim Hlavac, Monash University

Bi- and tri-linguals typically have specific contexts and networks, and even periods in their life, in which a particular language is the dominant variety, with or without 'deactivation' of the other language/s. These contexts and networks can change markedly after arrival in Australia and the addition of English as a contributing language in their communicative repertoires. This paper looks at three vintages of bi-or tri-lingual migrants to Australia who arrived with little or no knowledge of English. While migrants may share some universal experiences, changes in employment, housing and lifestyle over the last 50 years are likely to be reflected in varied networking patterns for different vintages of migrants.

This paper provides observations of the networks of tri- and multilinguals known to the author. They include relatives, neighbours, parents of friends or former students. Observations presented are based on information gained through longitudinal contact with informants. Data collection is unsystematic and dependent on the network dynamics that pertain to me as the collector, ie. personal, familial, professional. Other information known to me, anecdotal and environmental, adds to this picture.

The three vintages include speakers of central and southern European languages who migrated from the immediate post-World War II years to 1960 (Croatian, Hungarian, German, Macedonian, Greek and Italian) speakers of south-east Asian languages who migrated in the late 1970s (Cantonese and Vietnamese speakers) and those who have more recently migrated from the

Middle East (Assyrian, Kurdish and Arabic speakers) and south-eastern via central Europe (Bosnian, Croatian and German speakers).

The following general networks with relevant features and one domain are distinguished:

- family (nuclear / extended)
- friends (intimate / acquaintance; proximate / distant; exclusive / open; mode of communication)
- neighbours (immediate / proximate)
- work- or class-mates (current / former; exclusive / open).
- leisure activities / media (music; radio; tv; videos/DVDs; newspaper; other printed material; internet)

Examination of these networks reveals variation amongst speakers with similar linguistic profiles. Further, despite the informants' multi-lingual capabilities, mono-cultural or mono-ethnic self-perceptions account for a narrower language distribution in the family and friends networks. With neighbours, work- or classmates, there is a greater variety of languages employed. Exclusive use of one language with the same interlocutor in the same communicative situation is not axiomatic: use of two languages, either lexical embeddings or code-switching is also reported.

These observations offer a longitudinal insight into language use amongst young, middle-aged, old and recently deceased tri- and multilinguals in Melbourne. Discussion of these observations is welcomed.

Jim Hlavac is a lecturer in the Arts Academic Language and Learning Unit, Faculty of Arts, Monash University. His research interests are contact linguistics (code-switching and morphosyntactic change), language maintenance and shift, language attitudes and interpreting and translating studies.

Minority language speakers as migrants: Some preliminary observations on the Sudanese community in Melbourne

Simon Musgrave, Monash University

John Hajek, University of Melbourne

Migrants who are not first-language speakers of the dominant language of the community into which they move can experience language problems. Such problems can be more complex when the migrants also come from a minority language group in their country of origin. In such cases, the new arrivals may find that there are no speakers of their language in the community, or only a very small group of them. Then decisions have to be made as to whether to attempt to maintain the native language. There will also be decisions to make about whether to join in larger groupings of people from the country of origin, groups which may use dominant languages of the home country or languages of wider communication. Migrants in this situation are likely to be involved in several networks which are based on different languages and to have complex allegiances and identities involving the various networks and languages.

We explore some of these issues by considering the case of speakers of minority languages from Sudan who have settled in Melbourne. More than twenty languages are represented in the Sudanese community in Melbourne. Two of these (Dinka and Juba Arabic) are the majority languages of Sudan but the remaining languages are, to greater or lesser extents, minority

languages in Sudan. We suggest that various factors influence the language use and language choices of the people from these groups, including:

- place of origin in Sudan - some areas have a regional identity which embraces various language groups and this larger grouping may be recognised in the migrant setting also;
- migration history – most Sudanese migrants spend a period in some other country before travelling to Australia and the language used in that setting may effect later language choices;
- location within the Melbourne (sub)urban setting – there are two centres of Sudanese settlement within Greater Melbourne, around Dandenong and around Footscray, but their geographic separation is a possible restriction on the formation of networks;
- family situation – in particular, the presence of school-age children in a family tends to increase the use of English in the household.

Simon Musgrave holds a PhD in linguistics from the University of Melbourne, Australia and is a Lecturer in Linguistics in the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics at Monash University. His research and publications cover areas including Austronesian languages, language endangerment, computational tools for linguists, and communication in medical settings.

John Hajek is director of the Research Unit for Multilingualism and Cross-Cultural Communication (RUMACCC) in the School of Languages and Linguistics at the University of Melbourne. He has been actively involved in sociolinguistic research, including language in urban settings, for many years.

Friday 20th February 2009

Exploring attitudes to Australia, immigration and multicultural issues by first language and English language competence

Andrew Markus, Monash University

This paper will draw on data collected in 2007 by the Scanlon Foundation social cohesion surveys and earlier studies conducted in the Springvale region of Melbourne. It will explore issues related to sense of belonging, immigration policy and cultural maintenance through analysis by variables of first language and English language competence.

Andrew Markus holds the Pratt Foundation research chair of Jewish Civilisation in the Faculty of Arts, Monash University, and is a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia. Andrew is currently involved in an attitudinal study of the Jewish communities of Australia and New Zealand and ongoing survey research in the field of social cohesion. His co-authored Australia's Immigration Revolution which will be published in 2009.

Dreamscapes and the language-focused lifestyle

Brigitte Lambert, University of Melbourne

There are many adjectives and nouns to describe and categorize the people who have come to live in Australia since convicts and other sorts were first off-loaded onto these shores in 1788. One term that has gained currency since the post-war migration period is 'lifestyle' migrant (e.g. in Clyne 1992, Sato 2001), which tends to be associated with individuals who have moved here from a position of free choice, that is, the 'voluntary' migrants who had jobs, homes and prospects in their country of origin but decided to leave for personal reasons. Needless to say, whatever the circumstances of relocation, there will be a lifestyle attached in the country of relocation – the reality of what 'is' on arrival, and, importantly, the vision of what 'can be' in the future, and the goals that are set for family and self.

Many of the German participants in my research on family language transmission (Lambert 2008) have commented that Australia is a good place to raise a family, and that this was one reason for settling here. Australia is perceived as a 'dreamland', a place of 'sun, sand and beaches', where children can run around free and unencumbered, presumably in stark contrast to life in Germany. On the other hand, this country symbolizes personal and cultural origins that cannot be separated from the mother tongue. It also becomes a dreamland – 'the German forest', 'the flower meadows', 'snow' – memories that may either sustain emotional and mental well-being in the Australian context or turn to debilitating homesickness.

Here the question arises to what extent and how such dreamscapes connect to and complement a language-focussed lifestyle. This paper addresses this issue with reference to the reasons for migration, and the subsequent experiences and achievements of a group of 'voluntary' ethnic German migrants who arrived in Australia from the 1950s to 2000.

Following her studies in Linguistics and German at Monash University, Brigitte Lambert completed her PhD on family language planning and transmission at the University of Melbourne. This thesis was published in 2008 by published by Peter Lang. Her research interests cover issues of multilingualism and multiculturalism in Australia.

Younger L2 and older L1 speakers – Intergenerational, intercultural encounters in urban/suburban settings

Michael Clyne, Marisa Cordella, Brigid Maher, Doris Schüpbach (Monash University)

Australia has been described as a multilingual society with a pervasive monolingual mindset. This paper reports on a pilot project which attempts to utilize Australia's multilingual resources to raise the proficiency levels of second language acquirers and conversational management skills of young people in a way that also enhances the self-esteem and interconnectedness of elderly Australians of migrant background.

The project, involving linguists and gerontologists at Monash University, connects advanced and intermediate students of German, Italian or Spanish with healthy older volunteer German, Italian or Spanish speakers who have been meeting for at least an hour per fortnight. The paper presents data from the project, especially from focus groups with the students and phone interviews with the older participants. These indicate the impact of the project on the two groups and also perceptions of the effects on the target language proficiency of the students.

Michael Clyne is Emeritus Professor at Monash University and an Honorary Professorial Fellow at Melbourne University, having held professorial appointments in Linguistics at both. His main fields of research and publication are multilingualism/ language contact, sociolinguistics, intercultural communication, and language policy.

Marisa Cordella is a Senior Lecturer in Spanish linguistics in the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics at Monash University, Australia. She obtained a diploma in Translation Studies in Chile and subsequently obtained a Graduate Diploma in TESOL and MA in TESOL from the University of Canberra, and a PhD in linguistics from Monash University. She has published and conducted research in the areas of cross-cultural pragmatics (looking at speech act and politeness theories), interactional sociolinguistics, critical discourse analysis, teaching methodologies and translation studies. Her joint-research projects involve collaboration with colleagues from the Arts Faculty and Faculty of Medicine in Australia and Chile. Her teaching commitments include units in the areas of pragmatics, discourse analysis, translation studies and Spanish language for advanced learners. She is the author of The dynamic consultation: A discourse analytical study of doctor-patient communication (2004, Benjamins).

Doris Schüpbach lectures in the German program at Monash University and is a research fellow at the University of Melbourne. Originally from Switzerland, she moved to Australia in 1998 where she completed an MA and a PhD. Her main research interests are in sociolinguistics and language contact, including societal and individual plurilingualism and language and identity in an immigrant context.

Bridging the linguistic and cultural gap between international and local postgraduates

Christiane Momberg, Nira Rahman (Monash University)

A significant number of staff and students at Monash University see language learning as a key to improved communication with the academic community in their own institutions and in a global context. Drawing on the results of a 2008 Monash University LOTE Taskforce survey, this paper examines the postgraduate responses to the survey and interprets them within a socio-linguistic framework.

While 48.2% of postgraduate respondents use English as their first language, more than 50% are from a LOTE background, including 40% international students. This response distribution is

representative of postgraduate enrolments at Monash and can be seen as an underlying reason for recurring themes in the open-ended section of the questionnaire: difficulties in participating in an academic environment dominated by English; requests for improved ESL support for international students, and increased opportunities of LOTE learning as a first step to better understanding the culture of international students.

The paper analyses the data and their potential impact on classroom discourse in the Australian academic context. The discussion incorporates aspects such as identity, participation and power relations in a linguistically and culturally diverse community of learners. It then makes recommendations on how institutional policies and programs can help to bridge linguistic and cultural gaps from both sides of the divide.

Christiane Momberg completed a Masters of Applied Linguistics in Germany and recently a Dip Ed at Monash. She has taught English and German in adult education and at universities in Europe, Asia and Australia for nearly thirty years. She is currently working in a student support role at the Monash Postgraduate Association and is passionate about building bridges between cultures and speakers of different languages.

Nira Rahman is working as a Learning Skills Adviser at the Learning Skills Unit, Monash University. She has postgraduate qualifications in Applied Linguistics and ELT and TESOL. She has recently submitted her PhD thesis (on 'Transition and Identity: Linguistic Minority International Students at an Australian University') at the Dept of Language, Literacy and Arts Education, University of Melbourne. For her outstanding academic performance, she received Sir John Monash Deans Award in 2003. Nira's extensive teaching experience in dealing with students from different cultural, educational and professional backgrounds has helped her to develop a good understanding of cross-cultural teaching and learning styles; and acceptance of the varying language and learning needs and goals of diverse students.

Languages in contact: The case of an Australian urban university

Helen Marriott, Monash University

This paper draws upon data from a large survey undertaken in 2008 by the LOTE Task Force of Monash University which investigated the use of LOTE by students (undergraduate and postgraduate coursework and higher degree by research) and staff (academic and administrative). Despite the assumption that the university is a strongly monolingual university with English as the written and spoken language of communication, this survey reveals that a surprisingly high proportion of staff and students use a large variety of LOTE for professional, social or other purposes.

I will summarise some of the main findings in relation to uses of LOTE by members of the university community and then, drawing upon some of the responses to open-ended questions, will consider a few issues in relation to LOTE and ESL within the university. This will include examination of participants' discourses about language learning and intercultural contact, and the socialization of L2 users into the Australian academic community, topics which are highly pertinent to micro language planning at a multilingual, urban university.

Helen Marriott is a member of the Japanese program in the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, Monash University. Her research interests include intercultural communication and academic literacy. She is currently involved in the university's LOTE survey of staff and students.

Urban newcomers and the construction of identity amidst language shift

Howard Manns, Monash University

There is a shift underway in Indonesian urban areas from local languages to the national language, Indonesian. Furthermore, the prestige of the English language in these areas continues to grow. This presentation examines language choice and identity construction among young urban newcomers at one university in Malang, Indonesia. It also weighs in on the role of English in this city. I focus on the language and identities of six Javanese university students who have come to this urban environment from smaller nearby towns. I use interviews and an analysis of naturally occurring conversations to explore these students' linguistic identity construction in light of their past (linguistic and social backgrounds), present (social networks) and future (aspirations). The results are as varied as the participants. One affluent student refuses to speak his L1, Javanese, instead choosing Indonesian and frequently employing slang idioms associated with the capital city of Jakarta to assert a modern, sophisticated identity. Another affluent Javanese-speaking student wishes to assert a similar identity yet shows reticence in using Indonesian because of her strong village accent. A third student frequently borrows English from MTV to make his language sound "cooler" while a fourth so dedicates himself to mastering English that he claims difficulties in completing university assignments in Indonesian. This presentation addresses the impact of geographic mobility and the mass media on multilingual identity construction. Furthermore, it contributes to discussions of the role of English in non-native environments.

Howard Manns is a PhD candidate at Monash University. He is studying language change in Java, Indonesia. His main interests are style, intra-speaker variation and stance. Previously, he worked as a U.S. military linguist specialising in Middle Eastern languages and cultures.

Biel-Bienne – A bilingual city in a multilingual country? A multilingual city with two dominant languages?

Doris Schüpbach, Monash University

Switzerland is a multilingual country with four national languages and many immigrant languages. However, the four national languages are used in different regions of the country, a fact that restricts territorial bilingualism to relatively few areas, notably those along the "language borders". Even though these borders often run along geographic boundaries or between localities, in some instances towns are actually located on a language border. The most emblematic of these localities is the "bilingual city" of Biel-Bienne with its Germanophone majority and Francophone minority.

Drawing on legislation, official documents, previous research and on my own observations I will summarize the language situation in Biel-Bienne in terms of its institutional bilingualism and report on some aspects of individual bi-/multilingualism. I will give an overview of the demographic development of Biel-Bienne and the relevant language policies and legislation. I will then outline actual language practices in some areas of use (e.g. naming, the local media, the local authorities, education and everyday interaction) and discuss the complicating fact that two varieties of German – Swiss Standard German and a local dialect – are used concurrently but for clearly separated functions. Finally, I will consider language attitudes and valuations of multilingualism and the status and roles of the "other" languages spoken in Biel-Bienne.

Doris Schüpbach lectures in the German program at Monash University and is a research fellow at the University of Melbourne. Originally from Switzerland, she moved to Australia in 1998

where she completed an MA and a PhD. Her main research interests are in sociolinguistics and language contact, including societal and individual plurilingualism and language and identity in an immigrant context.

Roundtable discussion: Outcomes and future perspectives

Chaired by Claudia Riehl and Farzad Sharifian

This is opportunity for all attendees to discuss and debates the issues raised by the Roundtable presentations.

Claudia Maria Riehl has a long career in linguistics and the German language at several universities throughout Germany. She has undertaken research in various fields such as multilingualism, intercultural communication, minority and regional languages. Currently she is a professor at the Department of German Language and Literature and director of the Centre of Language Diversity and Multilingualism at the University of Cologne.

Farzad Sharifian is the Director of the Language and Society Centre and the Convener of the program of English as an International Language at Monash University. He has a wide range of research interests including cultural linguistics, pragmatics, English as an International Language, World Englishes, language and politics, and intercultural communication. He has widely published on these topics in international journals and edited volumes. He is also the editor (with Gary B. Palmer) of Applied Cultural Linguistics (2007, John Benjamins) and the editor (with René Dirven, Ning Yu and Susanne Niemeier) of Culture, Body and Language (2008, Mouton de Gruyter).

About the Language and Society Centre

Establishment of the Centre

In 1989, the Australian Research Council (ARC) called for tenders from Australian tertiary institutions for the establishment of a centre for applied linguistics. When the Commonwealth government increased the funding available for the project, with the aim of promoting research to implement the national policy on language, the five institutions shortlisted joined together as part of the National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia.

The institutions, Monash University, University of Melbourne, University of Sydney/University of Western Sydney, University of Queensland, and Griffith University, all developed their own research centres. Monash University's centre, the Language and Society Centre, was launched in 1990 by then-Victorian governor Davis McCaughey.

Activities of the Centre

The main focus of the centre is sociolinguistic research and the dissemination of that research. Initially, the centre focussed on researching aspects of multilingualism, and later incorporated the study of Australian English and indigenous languages. Today, primary areas of research include:

- multilingualism in Australia
- language contact
- language shift
- language policy
- intercultural communication
- sociolinguistic aspects of second language acquisition and bilingual education in schools
- Australian English

The centre is active in community-based research, working with schools, school systems, and industry. This research has been funded by the ARC, government, and other grants.

The centre has had many visiting academics, published widely, and held numerous seminars and workshops, covering topics such as:

- Raising children in more than one language
- The value of satellite programs in primary schools
- The use of English as a lingua franca in Melbourne industry

In 1999, the centre produced a video on bilingualism, "Growing Up with English Plus", highlighting the benefits of bilingualism in childhood. The production was launched by then-Victorian Governor James Gobbo

The Future of the Centre

The Language and Society has continued with the aims of the early years and has continued to enhance Monash University's reputation as a leader in linguistic research. Collaboration with other areas of study and other institutions is a key feature of the centre, making the research of the centre relevant to a wide variety of areas.

The location of the centre offers unique possibilities in the study of multilingualism – the cultural diverse area around Monash University and the university demography itself provides an

opportunity to explore multilingualism and language contact and develop programs to aid cross-cultural communication. Other areas of current and future research include:

- Multilingualism in Australia
- Intergenerational effects in second language acquisition
- Dimensions of Australian English
- Indigenous languages of Victoria

The community profile of the centre has allowed its research findings to be available not only to government, policy-makers, and institutions, but also to individual communities and the wider public.

Language and Society Centre

School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics

Faculty of Arts, Monash University

<http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/language-and-society/>

Director: Associate Professor Farzad Sharifian (Farzad.Sharifian@arts.monash.edu.au)

Foundation Director: Emeritus Professor Michael Clyne (Michael.Clyne@arts.monash.edu.au)

Upcoming Lecture

Why bilingualism makes a difference

Wednesday 18 March, 7:30pm

H3 (Bld 11) Monash University, Clayton

A special lecture by Professor Claudia Maria Riehl (University of Cologne, Germany), sponsored by The Language and Society Centre of the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, Monash University.

Professor Riehl is currently visiting the Language and Society Centre as a visiting scholar. Her research interests cover sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic aspects of multilingualism (including bilingual education), intercultural communication, minority and regional languages. She is a professor at the Department of German Language and Literature at the University of Cologne and is director of the Centre of Language Diversity and Multilingualism

Abstract

Many discussions are going on about the benefits of second language learning and of using more than one language on a regular basis. There is still a common opinion that learning languages early in life might confuse children or at least overtax them. Thanks to new technologies such as neuroimaging techniques we are now able to prove that bilinguals, especially bilingual children, do have neuronal and cognitive advantages over monolingual speakers. This talk will provide an overview of what happens in the brain, when we communicate, and how our linguistic knowledge is organized. It will be demonstrated how different languages are represented and activated in the brain. Using neuroimages of brain activities in early bilinguals and late bilinguals it will be illustrated why people who have learned both languages early in life have an advantage over those who have learned one of their languages after puberty. Furthermore, experimental evidence will be provided to demonstrate cognitive advantages of bilinguals. The talk will conclude with a discussion of the impact that neurolinguistic and psycholinguistic findings might have on second language teaching and on language policy.