

Bilinguals bimonthly

a RUEG bulletin board

RUEG Conference 2021 – Twitter diary

21.02



RUEG // @LanguageDivers1



HAPPY INTERNATIONAL MOTHER
LANGUAGE DAY Joins us at 5 pm (CET)



for #RUEG2021 opening session with Janet Fuller! A Live
Talk via zoom, open to the general public. To get in the
mood for the conference, visit our website
hu-berlin.de/ruegconference and watch our welcome
videos!

International Mother Language Day



RUEG Conference Opening Session

Multilingual Societies, Multilingual Schools:
Critical Perspectives on Language Ideologies in
Educational Contexts | Janet Fuller, Groningen



Sunday, 21-02-2021, 5 p.m. (CET) | via Zoom
Live Talk and discussion, open to the general public
hu-berlin.de/ruegconference

Heike Wiese // @WieseHeike

5:10 PM

Janet Fuller's talk at #RUEG2021 is drawing a huge
crowd. Over 150 participants already, and more people
keep joining. #MotherLanguageDay

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7:30 PM

What a lovely discussion and talk at #RUEG2021 opening session on #MotherLanguageDay ! Our thanks go to @jupurkarthofer for the wonderful moderation and especially to Janet Fuller for her insightful talk. 😊

- Come home safely! (Oh no, wrong year. You're all already home.)



Judith Purkarthofer // @jupurkarthofer

- My pleasure! Thanks to all the colleagues and friends who even thought about languaging/es on Sunday - and to Janet for inspiring our next moves!

Heike Wiese // @WieseHeike

7:53 PM

Great start to the conference #RUEG2021, with Janet Fuller discussing multilingualism in education, followed by a lively discussion moderated by @jupurkarthofer. Looking forward to the next two days of the conference!

Jamie Hunt // @jaime_w_hunt

- I'll try to follow from a very different time zone. Best of luck with it! 😊

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- Sorry Jamie, planning was complicated with talks from almost all time zones. ;) I'm afraid Australia has remained somewhat disadvantaged...

Jamie Hunt // @jaime_w_hunt

- No worries!



22.02

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9:00 AM

@HumboldtUni First session ,Attrition vs. Innovation', 12– 3p.m. (CET) Keynote by Tanja Kupisch (@KonstanzLing), calling them "Two sides of the same coin". Maria Polinsky (@UofMaryland) will comment her talk, followed by a discussion and 4 talks. More on that later!

12:55 AM

Terje Lohndal @lohte @NTNU and Michael T. Putnam (Pennsylvania State University) follow Tanja Kupisch on the digital #RUEG2021 stage. They talk about 'Dynamic complexity in heritage morphosyntax: A case study of grammatical gender'.

12:32 AM



Next talk at #RUEG2021 is by Sally Dixon, "Untangling Structural Patterns in Multilingual Repertoires: A Novel Application of the Variationist Framework to Grammars in Contact".

1:25 PM

While we're still discussing @lohte and @syntaxpunk... Coming up: Serkan Uygun & Claudia Felser from @Uni_Potsdam and Aylin Coskun Kunduz & Silvina Montrul from @Illinois_Alma #Turkish



2:31 PM

Session 1 closes with Andrea Listani (University for Foreigners of Siena) & Jacopo Torregrossa (@jactorregrossa @goetheuni) with "The Acquisition of Postverbal Subjects in Heritage #Italian"



George Waldken // @gwaldken

2:33 PM

Talk before the coffee break is by Listanti & Torregrossa, "The Acquisition of Postverbal Subjects in Heritage Italian: How Timing of L1-Acquisition Modulates the Acquisition of Syntax-Discourse Interface Structures".

- Alternation between preverbal and postverbal subjects of unaccusatives in Italian is information-structural: VS with focused subjects, SV with given subjects.
- With transitives and unergatives, SV is unmarked, and VS is used for new or contrastive focus on the subject. L1 kids get most of this early, but VS with transitives/unergatives is late-acquired.
- Results: heritage children are sensitive to verb type, information status and DP complexity.
- In unaccusatives, effect of subject information status is substantial: very high probability of VS with focused subjects. Also, the higher the dominance of Italian, the greater the probability of VS.
- But with transitives/unergatives, there is no effect of information status OR of dominance! VS is rare across the board and occurs also in pragmatically inappropriate contexts.
- Conclusion: this difference suggests that L1 timing of acquisition modulates acquisition of interface phenomena among heritage children. Emergent pattern (transfer of V2 from German) also identified.

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3:56 PM

And now, looking forward to starting session 2: Ad Backus' (@TilburgU) keynote "Contact induced change in the usage-based era", followed by a comment from Shana Poplack.



George Waldken // @gwaldken

4:03 PM

The second keynote at #RUEG2021 is by Ad Backus, "Contact-induced change in the usage-based era".

- Topic 1: hard and porous boundaries between languages. Claim: virtually all of linguistics (including even "translanguaging"!) takes hard boundaries for granted.
- Linguistic phenomena that challenge hard boundaries all involve absence of normative pressure.
- Even in One-Parent-One-Language families, children mix languages and code-switch, regardless of pressure not to. Developmental path tends to be towards more monolingual use.
- Why? Because they a) start recognizing languages when becoming sociolinguistically aware and b) associate particular chunks with particular interlocutors.
- Derya Demirçay's Turkish-Dutch code-switching data also shows that speakers can maintain separation between "languages", but may not if they don't have to. Less normative settings give rise to more multilingual speech.
- Topic 2: lexical and grammatical change. Empirical studies on immigrant Turkish show

little change in core syntax but lots of change in other things, e.g. subordination.

- For instance, work with Pelin Onar Valk shows that Dutch-like subordinate structures are used much more in Dutch Turkish than in Turkey.
- The core-periphery distinction in syntax reduces to high frequency vs. low frequency. High frequency structures are less susceptible to change.
- Conclusion: Explanation for change needs to be linguistic, sociolinguistic (sociality), and psycholinguistic (cognition); usage-based view enables a unification of these. Linguistics = psycholinguistics + sociolinguistics.
- Commentary now by Shana Poplack from a variationist sociolinguistic perspective. Important point: rate increase and productivity do not always go hand in hand.
- We need to be careful when evaluating contact-based stories for the origin of change: Canadian French preposition stranding, for instance, isn't induced by contact with English (according to Poplack & Levey), despite speakers' preconceptions.
- In responses to discussions, Backus emphasizes the complementarity of methods (corpora, experimental, qualitative, quantitative).

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5:00 PM

Next up is Christian Zimmer (@FU_Berlin) talking about grammatical innovation in NamDeutsch. #Namdeutsch is a local Variety of #German spoken by around 20.000 bilingual and trilingual speakers in #Namibia and #SouthAfrica

5:01 PM

Next talk is by Christian Zimmer, "The Interdependence of Internal and External Factors inducing Grammatical Innovations in Namdeutsch" (Namibian German).

- German is spoken in Namibia by ca. 20,000 speakers, and was brought there as part of German colonialism. The corpus "Deutsch in Namibia" (DNam) is freely available as part of the DGD. https://dgd.ids-mannheim.de/dgd/pragdb.dgd_extern.welcome
- Dominant type of explanation for distinctive Namdeutsch features has mostly been direct transfer, e.g. increased use of "um" to introduce non-finite clauses (on the model of Afrikaans).
- But not everything can be explained in this way: linking elements, e.g. Miet*s*wagen "rental car" instead of Mietwagen, can't be direct transfer (work by Zimmer and @DrSheenaShah). We need to appeal to internal dynamics.
- Innovation that resembles a feature in a language in contact is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for a direct transfer explanation. It's worth looking at similar developments in other (monolingual or contact) situations.
- Another type of change: from minor to major use patterns (based on Heine & Kuteva 2005), building on an existing feature of the grammar. This may be what is going on with the extension of "have" as perfect auxiliary in Namdeutsch, also perhaps with um in non-finites.

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5:31 PM

And now from [#Namdeutsch](#) to [#Hasidic #Yiddish](#) on the virtual [#RUEG2021](#) stage with a talk titled "The Emergence of Grammatical Animacy in Israeli Heritage Hasidic Yiddish" by Dalit Assouline ([@UofHaifa](#)).

George Waldken // @gwaldken

5:31

Next talk at [#RUEG2021](#) is by Dalit Assouline, "The Emergence of Grammatical Animacy in Israeli Heritage Hasidic Yiddish".

- Emerging patterns that are animacy-based: a) Verbal agreement: "people fall" but "stones falls". b) Gender marking is disappearing except for human men. c) Animacy-based DOM is also emerging.
- Israeli Hasidic Yiddish, a heritage variety, exhibits more loss of inflectional morphology than other varieties. Here, Yiddish is usually a non-dominant variety, in families where it tends to be the father who speaks Yiddish (and the mother who speaks Hebrew).
- Heritage Yiddish sometimes shows violations of V2, Hebrew-like constituent orders (e.g. "numer telefon"), and copula omission.
- Conclusion: what are the factors that turn animacy into a salient grammatical feature? In this case, the sociolinguistic situation (heritage context) seems to be crucial.
- Q from [@WieseHeike](#): could this type of situation (without too much normative pressure)

actually be more representative of most linguistic situations in human history? A from Assouline: yes, possibly!

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5:58 PM

Starting soon: Grazia Di Pisa @gracie10683 & @TheoMarinis (@KonstanzLing) on "Gender Agreement in #Italian Heritage Speakers: Effects of Markedness, Proficiency and Language History".

6:29 PM

Melanie Uth (@CCLS_unicologne) completes the second Session of #RUEG2021 with her talk "Emerging Grammar in Language Contact: Evidence from Word-Final Nasals in Yucatecan #Spanish and Yucatec #Maya".



George Waldken // @gwalkden

6:32 PM

For the final talk of the day at #RUEG2021 we get some #phonology: Melanie Uth (Cologne), "Emerging

Grammar in Language Contact: Evidence from Word-Final Nasals in Yucatecan Spanish and Yucatec Maya".

- The change in question is /N/ > [m] / _ #, which is widespread in the Yucatán Peninsula. In the state of Mérida, the feature has stereotype status, and is found more among monolinguals.
- Can it be traced back to Yucatec Maya? Several questions arise. Data for this paper is taken from fieldwork in Quintana Roo.
- Results for Spanish: more labialization among Spanish-dominant speakers than among balanced bilinguals. Labialization increases in line with the length of the subsequent pause.
- Yucatec Maya data, by contrast, shows labialization more rarely, and no effect of the length of the subsequent pause. Default realization of nasals in final position was near-zero due to consonant weakening.
- Conclusion: word-final [m] is a marker of right prosodic boundary (strength), which functions as a marker of identity, in Yucatecan Spanish but not Yucatec Maya. Language contact only involved at the very first stage of emergence of [m] - one determinant among others.

23.02.

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8:29 AM

#RUEG2021Session 3: How can we best capture linguistic patterns that fall outside formal standard language? What methods in corpus and experimental linguistics are suitable to detect and capture possible heritage language

grammars or other types of non-standard grammars?

12.00 Uhr CET

11:16 AM

Arriving at Hausvogteiplatz for last day of conference!

The first talk of session 3 asks: "Can two unrelated languages be mixed?"

- Jeanine Treffers-Daller, Zehra Ongun, Christiana Themistocleous, Michal Korenar, from @UniofReading, Cise Cavusoglu (Near East University, Northern Cyprus), Valentina Christodoulou (@UCYOfficial), Theodosia Demetriou (@Uni_of_Nicosia), Julia Hofweber from @ucl

George Waldken // @gwalkden

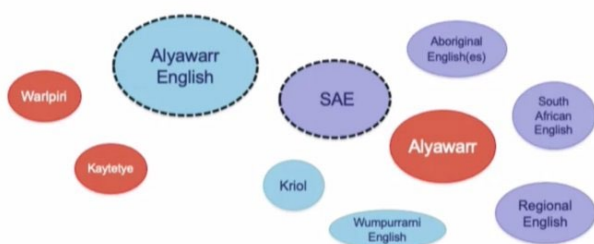
12:03 AM

Second and final day of #RUEG2021. First talk today is by Jeanine Treffers-Daller and co-authors, "Can Two Unrelated Languages Be Mixed? Evidence from a new Method to Investigate Codemixing".

- The paper looks at Turkish-English code-switching. Corpora, questionnaires and experimental approaches all have their advantages and drawbacks. Here, the Code-Switching Frequency Task developed by Onar Valk is put to the test.
- Results: monolingual code-switching perceived to be more frequent, then intersentential code-switching, then intrasentential code-switching.
- More results: code-switching perceived to be more frequent in UK than in Cyprus. Congruent lexicalization across unrelated langs (English-

Turkish) exists, but is the least frequent type. Effect sizes are small.

- The task is highly reliable and makes it possible to investigate non-standard varieties, even for highly infrequent types of code-switching.
- (Personally, I wonder whether the key notion here is "unrelated" in the usual historical-familial sense or rather "very typologically dissimilar". The phrase "typologically unrelated" is essentially a tautology: relatedness is not a typological notion.)



- Looking at children whose first language is an Australian language and whose second language is Standard Australian English (SAE). Busy language ecology.
- Compared maximally contrastive "Home" and "School" datasets. Looked at present reference, 1sg subject expression, transitive marking.
- Present verb form results: -ing form used more at school, -bat used more at home. Non-stative habitual contexts favour -bat suffix. School context favours SAE.
- Different linguistic variables show complex reorganization, rates-only change, or just "doing less of the same thing". Boundaries are porous.

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12:32 PM

Now at #RUEG2021 Sally Dixon @sallybgally from @unetweets "Untangling Structural Patterns in Multilingual Repertoires: A Novel Application of the Variationist Framework to Grammars in Contact".

1:01 PM

#RUEG2021. 2nd talk by Serkan Uygun & Harald Clahsen (@UniPotsdam). Morphological Generalization in Heritage #Turkish.

George Waldken // @gwalkden

1:02 PM

Now speaking at #RUEG2021 is Serkan Uygun presenting joint work with Harald Clahsen, "Morphological Generalization in Heritage Turkish".

- Background: dual-route vs. associationist approaches to generalization. According to Polinsky & Scontras, heritage speakers tend to resist irregularities. Phenomenon under investigation in this talk: Turkish aorist.
- Results: Regular aorist is dominant response for all speakers. In Irregular condition, the heritage group relies more on regular responses. In No Similarity condition, the heritage group has more inter-individual variation.
- Dual-route models provide a straightforward account for the findings in both groups of speakers - but heritage speakers are more variable and have a stronger preference for regularization.

Jamie Hunt // @jaime_w_hunt

1:20 PM

I never thought that I would find myself in a situation where I would be staying up late to see a college present at a conference on the other side of the planet, while actually being located only 335km apart from each other
[#rueg2021](#) [#academiclife](#) [#zoomer](#)

- It was great to see @sallybgally present her paper Untangling Structural Patterns in Multilingual Repertoires: A Novel Application of the Variationist Framework to Grammars in Contact. - It was quite enlightening to see what happens to Alyawarr English in contact with SAE.
[Sally Dixon // @sallybgally](#)
- Ha! Yes, heading to bed soon! Major FOMO!
[Jamie Hunt // @jaime_w_hunt](#)
- I know! But sleep beckons...

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1:33 PM

#RUEG2021 Kari Kinn (@UiB) & @gwalkden (@KonstanzLing) are the last speakers of today with a talk about "Investigating Historical Heritage Languages: Possesives in Norn".

- Thank you @gwalkden for having been tweeting for #RUEG2021 so far! Now we see how difficult it is, paying attention AND tweeting. Maybe you might be so kind to add something from your most interesting talk from today here on twitter? ;)

Judith Purkarthofer // @jupurkarthofer

2:09 PM

#RUEG2021 Ongoing round table on Methods in research on patterns outside standard language. Insights from @stefanowitsch and Maria Piñango, facilitated by @WieseHeike

George Waldken // @gwalkden

2:03 PM

We now have a round table on methods in research on patterns outside standard language, featuring Maria Piñango and Anatol @stefanowitsch.. Moderator is @WieseHeike.

- Maria Piñango introduces her approach: in any field of inquiry, one important task is to understand the means by which one inquires. For instance, what one calls "standard" is in part a methodological decision. Maria Piñango ling.yale.edu
- Standards are constructs, not things that are out there in the world. Same for labels like "Mexican Spanish".
- Anatol Stefanowitsch takes a corpus-based approach and focuses on epistemological problems in corpus linguistics, as discussed for instance in his textbook with @LangSciPress. <https://langsci-press.org/catalog/book/148>
- A problem in corpus construction is a focus on "typical" "native" "speakers". This is in part an artefact of the tools we use to build them, which usually presuppose regularity.
- @WieseHeike asks: who is the "typical" "native" "speaker"? Maria Piñango: "either nobody or everybody".

- Piñango: Communities and adults aren't homogeneous - change may occur later in life. Stefanowitsch: agreed - but there's a tacit assumption that language of children and young adults shouldn't be represented in (most) corpora, and so they usually aren't.
- Stefanowitsch: Same is true for e.g. old people, non-native speakers etc. In order to answer Chomskyan criticisms about non-homogeneity, we've probably made corpora *too* homogeneous.
- Discussion turns to ecological validity. @WieseHeike asks: how do we fruitfully combine experimental and corpus methods?
- Piñango: match different experimental methods, use them to complement each other. Stefanowitsch: selection bias in experimental methods is probably worse than in corpora (young WEIRD psychology students). Corpora can capture natural behaviour.
- Piñango: homogeneity isn't necessarily bad - it depends on the research question you're asking. Not true that she only tests psychology students! Lots of travel involved.
- Now we have to round off, which is a shame, as it seems like the discussion is just kicking off. Final statements: what would each discussant suggest that young researchers focus on in their careers?
- Stefanowitsch: do corpus linguistics! Lots of methodological problems, but trying to overcome them makes it an exciting/promising field.
- Piñango: think about your research questions! Work with people who use other methods. No

need to restrict oneself to just one method - let it be driven by the question you're asking.

- Q from Treffers-Daller: what about rare phenomena, hard to find in corpora?
Stefanowitsch: we shouldn't make rare phenomena the focus of our research (at least in corpus linguistics). Piñango: different methods are good for different questions.

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2:24 PM

#RUEG2021 Virtual round table with Maria Piñango and Anatol Stefanowitsch @astefanowitsch. Moderator is RUEG speaker @WieseHeike.

2:47 PM

#RUEG2021 Last words in round table: @stefanowitsch
If you have to choose, go for #corpuslinguistics! Maria Pinango: You need to know your method, and meet other people with other methodologies...

Jamie Hunt // @jaime_w_hunt

- Wise words!

24.02.

RUEG // @Languagedivers1

10:58 AM

- After a very exciting poster session in Gather, some yoga under the virtual yoga tree, and a closing session, #RUEG2021 is now over. #RUEG2021 was the final conference of RUEG1,


but not the end of the RUEG project. The research continues, thanks to the support of [#dfg_public](#)

[Jamie Hunt](#) // [@jamie_w_hunt](#)

- Well done everyone! And best of luck for the next stage of the project



11:14 AM

- #RUEG2021 We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the success of RUEG2021: the speakers, the moderators and commentators, those  who presented posters, and those who simply listened attentively. Very special thanks to [@gwalkden](#) for his most knowledgeable tweeting.
- Thanks everyone for the high turnout, and for embarking on this mix of two virtual formats zoom and <http://gather.town>. Our conference website <http://linguistik.hu-berlin.de/en/rueg/conference2021> will continue to be updated. Have a look every now and then. And keep following us!



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