

**Conventional and  
unconventional ways of  
transmitting and revitalizing**


**MINORITIZED  
LANGUAGES**

**in European context  
and beyond**

**Warsaw, 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

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# **KEYNOTE LECTURES**



**Justyna Olko**  
University of Warsaw  
justynao@al.uw.edu.pl

## **Challenging ‘linguistic market’ forces. Heritage language use and speakers’ well-being**

The accelerating loss of linguistic-cultural diversity and the disappearance of local languages are topics often discussed today within the scientific community, although less so, among the general public. Different forms of advocacy for counteracting this loss have been growing and it is clear that if local minority languages and multilingualism are left to the mercy of market forces and nationalistic political agendas, without efficient and knowledge-based support policies and strong social responses, their continuity will be at risk. Their precarious situation is often strengthened by academic arguments. For example, the reduction of diversity is not always considered a negative scenario, even among scholars, some of whom view it as an adaptive transition to those global languages that offer socio-economic advancement. However, a broad span of research implies that heritage language loss is by no means neutral in terms of health, social advantages and other consequences.

There seems to be a general agreement that the vitality of a language may increase or decrease depending on whether its ‘market value’ appreciates or depreciates. Speakers’ adaptations to changing environments are key forces in the

trajectories of specific languages, but determining the exact kinds of mechanisms and motivations is essential here. Such adaptations – involving the shift to a dominant language – do not always benefit speakers. Adaptive approaches to language endangerment do not account for the long-term, disastrous consequences of language loss: consequences that include historical trauma, victimization, stigma, deterioration in physical and psychological health, symptoms of post-traumatic stress, and elevated suicide rates, especially among youth, in addition to other adverse outcomes. Conversely, the retention of heritage languages seems to generate a number of health-related, cognitive and social benefits.

In this talk, besides referring to the topic's general state-of-the art, I will discuss the results of multidisciplinary research carried out in a number of minority/Indigenous communities in Europe and America, representing different stages of language endangerment and loss. Despite geographic, cultural and socioeconomic differences between these groups, the languages they traditionally speak are perceived as lacking a 'market value'. My presentation will tackle a number of closely related research results, including the relationship between minority language use, experiences of discrimination, historical trauma and various dimensions of individual and collective well-being. I will also relate these findings to the recent impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on minority language speakers who very often belong to particularly vulnerable groups in the present health crisis. Both the earlier research and the emerging new understandings make it increasingly clear that the multi-faceted implications of the reduction of linguistic-cultural diversity affect not only local communities, but also societies at large.



**Michael Hornsby**

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

hornsbyuam@gmail.com

## **Speak authentically or hold your tongue: Deconstructing ideologies in minority language settings**

The question of authenticity in language has been approached from a number of theoretical standpoints. A significant type of feature which may bestow authenticity and legitimacy is the linguistic. Performance is viewed in terms of either the unreflectingly fluent and competent use by the ideal native speaker or, in opposition, the inauthenticity of the nonnative language learner. Authentic speech is romanticised as ‘native, spoken, verbatim, unrehearsed, off-the-record, sincere, vernacular and non-standard’ (Gill 2007: 41). Such a definition is easily understandable by the wider public outside of academia. However, it begs the question: who has the authority to make this distinction and who can validate these authenticity claims? Bucholtz (2003) proposes instead the concept of authentication, or the outcome of constantly negotiated social and linguistic practices. This paper aims to move the discussion away from the purely linguistic when considering the ‘authentic’ speaker, and investigate the concept from a more speaker-centred perspective (Lass 1980) by asking what it means to be authentic in a particular setting, according to what norms, and what the authenticating processes are

by which authenticity is conferred or denied.

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Bucholtz, M. (2003). *Sociolinguistic nostalgia and the authentication of identity*. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 7, 398-416.

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Lass, R. (1980). *On Explaining Language Change*. Cambridge: CUP.



**Claudia Soria**

National Research Council of Italy

[claudia.soria@ilc.cnr.it](mailto:claudia.soria@ilc.cnr.it)

## **Language technologies and minority languages: where are we and where should we be going?**

Minority languages tend to be under-resourced in terms of technology and the data needed for Artificial Intelligence. Certain official languages of smaller countries face similar barriers, such as Latvian or Icelandic. Under-resourced languages suffer from a chronic lack of available resources (human-, financial-, time-, data- and technology-wise), and from the fragmentation of efforts in resource development. Their scarce resources are only usable for limited purposes, or are developed in isolation, without much connection with other resources and initiatives. The benefits of reusability, accessibility and data sustainability are often out of reach for such languages. Until relatively recently, most research work in Natural Language Processing has focused on just a few well-described languages each with abundant data. In fact, state-of-the-art NLP methodologies heavily rely on the availability of large amounts of data. However, the situation is rapidly evolving. Research and development are being driven both by a growing demand from communities, and by the scientific and technological challenges that this category of languages presents. In this talk I will present the current state of affairs regarding Language Technology for minority



languages, as well the most prominent initiatives that aim at closing the technological gap between less and more resourced languages.



**Mary S. Linn**  
Smithsonian Institution  
linnm@si.edu

## **It is all unconventional: Insights into language revitalisation from North America**

Native American language revitalisation in the USA started in earnest after the passage of the 1990 Native American Languages Act. Even at this time there were few speech communities that had both the human and financial resources to undertake immersive, school-based approaches to reversing language shift. For the vast majority of advocates, language revitalisation was stepping into the unknown. New, unconventional, and Indigenous methods were needed. The Mentor-Apprentice Approach and Breath of Life Approach were created as responses to the needs of small or sleeping language communities and have been replicated and studied (see overviews in Hinton et. al 2018; Baldwin et. al 2018). Going beyond these model approaches, I will look at how those working to revive small and sleeping Native American languages have impacted, and are impacting, larger discourses, practices, and theories of language revitalisation. I will look in particular at areas where differences in approaches and attitudes towards maintenance and revitalisation took me by surprise when I began working with minoritized language efforts in Europe. I will focus on timelines for reversing shift,

the centrality of community and community (re)building, and the accumulative impact of distributed efforts while paying particular attention to increased youth involvement in language use and the language reclamation (Leonard 2012) movement.

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Baldwin, D., L. Hinton, and G. Pérez-Baez. (2018) *The Breath of Life Workshops and Institutes*. In L. Hinton, L. Huss & G. Roche (eds), *The Routledge Handbook of Language Revitalization* (pp. 188–96). New York: Routledge.

Hinton, L., M. Florey, S. Gessner & J. Manatowa-Bailey. (2018). *The Master-Apprentice Learning Program*. In L. Hinton, L. Huss & G. Roche (eds), *The Routledge Handbook of Language Revitalization* (pp. 127-136). New York: Routledge.

Leonard, W.Y. (2012.) *Producing language reclamation by decolonising language*. In W.Y. Leonard and H. De Korne (eds) *Language Documentation and Description* 14, 15-36.



**PANELS**

## **PANEL 1: Transmitting local languages (...)**

**Chair: Justyna Olko**

### **Transmitting local languages: costs, benefits and opportunities**

The question of authenticity in One of the most common rationalizations for abandoning the intergenerational transmission of minoritized languages is based on the conviction that the use of a dominant language can offer essential opportunities, including economic and social advancement. Such ideologies obscure both the numerous benefits of transmitting minoritized languages and the individual and social costs of transition to a dominant or national language. In this session we discuss the positive effects and benefits of speaking heritage languages – e.g. physical and mental health, the cognitive potential of individuals and its economic implications—as well as the difficulties and challenges involved in their transmission. In addition to diagnoses, the presenters will share practical solutions and strategies addressing the above-mentioned problems. Case studies discussed will include Kashubian, Greko, Wymysiöeryś and other minority or Indigenous languages. Some of the session participants will report the results of Language as a cure: linguistic vitality as a tool for psychological well-being, health and economic sustainability, a project that examines (1) the negative effects and costs of language loss and (2) the benefits of speaking local languages, including positive external effects for individuals, minority communities and the broader society.

## PANEL 1

### Contributors:

**Justyna Majerska-Sznajder:** Covid-19 and its impact on cultural revitalization in Wilamowice

The unexpected pandemic situation affected the well-being of Wilamowice's community. Many years of language revitalization activities were suddenly interrupted, the distance caused the deterioration of contacts in the community, and the restrictions threatened the survival of traditions that were the determinant of Vilamovian identity. An additional problem was the political situation, the main topic of which was discrimination against all minorities. This phenomenon reached Wilamowice as well, although this time in a non-obvious way. As a result of the decisions of local politicians, the Vilamovians were re-stereotyped and re-traumatized by the crooked image of the matter, presented in the media.

**Maria Olimpia Squillaci:** Monetising minority languages

One of the reasons behind the abandonment of Greko is certainly the absence of economic opportunities that speakers derive from using the language. As opposed to dominant languages, in the first half of the 20th century, speaking Greko would not guarantee young people a job, in fact it was very much perceived as a threat to social progress. Today, people recognise the importance of preserving the language but this has not influenced their language choice at home, which still does not favour Greko, a "useless" language from an economic perspective. Given the level of endangerment

of Greko and the need to quickly reverse language abandonment, some activists have proposed to pay speakers and new speakers to use the language on an everyday basis. In this presentation I will discuss the potentials and the risks of such an approach in Greko contexts, based on previous projects implemented in the region and on similar projects carried out in other minority contexts.

**Artúr Jablonskji (Artur Jabłoński):** Kashubian speakers. Between discrimination in the public space and the needs of the local labor market

Situations in which Kashubs, due to their ethnic origin, nationality and different language, are treated less favorably than other people would be treated in the public space are embarrassing. Such situations reinforce a broader trauma resulting from historical experiences. Undoubtedly, they have a significant impact on linguistic awareness, are harmful and do not serve to raise the prestige of the Kashubian language. This does not have to be the rule, however. The needs on the regional labor market in the Pomeranian Voivodeship, where Kashubs constitute, according to some sources, about 10% of the population, and more than 25% of others, favor the employment of bilingual Kashubian speakers. There are at least three areas in which there is a demand for people with the potential of interest to us: Kashubian education, regional media, and tourism. This talk will draw attention to the manifestations of discrimination against Kashubs and at the same time indicate the practices that build the prestige of the minority language and the pride of its users.

**Joanna Maryniak:** Language transmission and its effects according to the LCure panel study. Analysis and interpretation

The purpose of this talk is to provide a description and an attempt at explanation of the different ways of language transmission seen in the Language as a Cure panel study. The quantitative data gathering part of the project (i.e. the longitudinal panel study) was carried out in two phases between 2018 and 2020 in Poland, Mexico and El Salvador. In total, six ethnic and/or minority groups took part: Kashubs, Lemkos, Vilamovians and Ukrainian migrants in Poland, Nahuas in Mexico and Pipils in El Salvador. Moreover, the Nahuas in Mexico lived in four different regions - thus bringing the total of participating groups to nine. The questionnaire was based on a common underlying model and adapted to each group's needs and sensibilities. One of the questions concerned language transmission and this talk will showcase detailed result data on that question and an analysis thereof. The identified patterns of transmission will also be discussed in the context of language ideologies, related attitudes and especially, the perceived economic value of specific languages. Finally, the paper will explore the possible impact of patterns of language transmission on the use of each language in different domains of life.

**Bartłomiej Chromik:** Using minority languages. Perceived economic benefits (and costs)

Nearly 100 years ago, Florian Biesik, the famous poet and polyglot from Wilamowice stated: "The dearest to me remain the Polish and Wilamowicean tongues, although with neither



of them did I earn even a piece of bread". One of the aims of the project Language as a Cure was to examine whether today various minority languages are still perceived by their users as economically worthless. The results of the study provide important insights for improving language revitalization strategies and for counteracting the negative language ideologies shared by both users of non-dominant linguistic varieties and by political and economic decision makers.

## **PANEL 2: Transmitting local languages (...)**

**Chair: Mary S. Linn**

### **Who saves threatened languages? Examining agency in the periphery**

Joshua Fishman's pivotal 1991 book *Reversing Language Shift: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages* appeared thirty years ago, and it has been twenty years since he posed the question: Can threatened languages be saved? Examples from grassroots and state-run immersion schools, immersion language nests, and reclamation efforts of formerly silent languages contribute methodologically on how to reverse language shift and provide necessary hope in the still-overwhelming task of reversing language shift. Yet, we are in an unprecedented moment in the history of the language revitalization movement. Today nearly all minoritized language practitioners and advocates are new speakers or active learners of their languages. In many areas of Europe, North America, and Australia, these language practitioners have never heard the language in daily use. On the other hand, this generation has grown up always being aware of language shift and the importance of language revitalization and maintenance, to them personally, or their families, or to groups and communities that they identify with.

This panel will reexamine Fishman's question from the position of agency: Who saves threatened languages, or at least, who is trying to? Who are the actors – language practitioners and language managers – today? What are their goals in revitalization and maintenance? How do they operationalize motives and navigate problematic issues not

only on a local level but also as players in larger social movements? The panel presents research from the Sustaining Minoritized Languages of Europe (SMiLE) project conducted through the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. SMiLE was an 18-month, multi-sited project investigating community-driven language revitalization in Europe. SMiLE research teams conducted ethnographic and sociolinguistic research to create in-depth case studies around a series of research questions on how community revitalization efforts effectively negotiate social, cultural, political, and economic factors to positively affect language vitality. Fishman (1991, 2001) used case studies to illustrate problems and potential solutions. We use case studies to investigate continuing and new problems, and how programs, efforts, or communities are working through these problems of authority, standardisation, and motivation, among others, that continue to plague all revitalization efforts. The strength of these case studies is their access to people working in language revitalization and maintenance, directly and in the peripheries. While the case studies are within European contexts, the issues and questions are universal, the strategies are replicable, and the insights are transportable to other language revitalization and maintenance efforts.

The results of SMiLE case studies presented here provide a range of answers to the question of agency, from individual motivators and sustainers, to children and youth pushing the needs and pace of revitalization efforts, to grassroots organizations that are affecting larger social issues when they place language at the core. They also provide new analyses of how efforts and programs, groups and communities, and institutions gain and lose agency in contexts of minoritisation

and conflict, from internal and from external forces.

This moment in the trajectory of language revitalization requires that these new actors use unconventional and slow approaches to language revitalization. Unlike earlier stages of language revitalization, where native speakers envisioned and worked for new generations of speakers, many efforts today concentrate on the longer-term social goal of strengthening or rebuilding 'community' to create space for language to thrive. Without the abundant human or monetary resources, new actors are enriching the linguistic landscape, or building and connecting smaller cohorts of active learners, or simply by increasing engagement with the language. Some eschew larger institutional models and encumbered histories to concentrate on single, local domains they inhabit and can have control over. The family domain and family language policy is an arena to encourage and support the socialization of language use in addition to language use. Once seen as not directly contributing to language acquisition and thus peripheral to revitalisation, actors are reimagining the periphery as central to the revitalisation and sustainability of minoritized languages.

## **PART 1**

### **Case Studies (45 min)**

Introduction: SMiLE research project and intent of questions/case study, methodologies (Mary Linn)

Case studies: short description of program/effort/community/speech community to introduce study areas: Irish (**Cassandra Smith-Christmas**), North Frisian

**(Lena Terhart & Femmigje Admiraal)**, Upper and Lower Sorbian  
**(Nicole Dołowy-Rybińska & Cordula Ratajczak)**, Grico & Greco  
**(Manuela Pellegrino)**, Occitan **(Sara Brennan)**, Galician  
**(Bernadette O'Rourke)**

**[5 min break]**

## **PART 2**

### **Agency (60 minutes)**

Introduce focus on inverting Fishman question and agency  
**(Mary Linn)**

Agency foci: **Cassandra Smith-Christmas, Lena Terhart, Nicole Dołowy-Rybińska & Cordula Ratajczak, Manuela Pellegrino, Sara Brennan.**

## **QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION**

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Fishman, J. (1991). Reversing Language Shift: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Fishman, Joshua A., ed. (2000) Can Threatened Languages Be Saved? Reversing Language Shift, Revisited: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Perspective. Multilingual Matters.

### **PANEL 3: New speakers in the city (...)**

**Chair: Michael Hornsby**

#### **New speakers in the city: Language revitalization without native speakers**

In many places in Europe, language revitalization is increasingly attributed to young, predominantly urban and highly mobile people who are not “native” speakers of the language in question and are not based in its traditional, rural “heartland”. In recognition of this, the panel New Speakers in the City: Language Revitalization Without Native Speakers brings together four members of a project looking at such “new” speakers of Breton in Rennes (Upper Brittany, France) and of Lower Sorbian in Cottbus (Lower Lusatia/Brandenburg, Germany), each from their own unique disciplinary perspective.

The sociolinguist Michael Hornsby (Centre for Celtic Studies, Faculty of English, AMU Poznań), anthropologist and sociolinguist Nicole Dołowy-Rybińska (Institute of Slavic Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw), discourse scholar Joanna Chojnicka (Centre for Celtic Studies, Faculty of English, AMU Poznań) and political scientist Jeanne Toutous (University of Rennes 1, Rennes, France) form an interdisciplinary research team currently working on the project entitled Language revitalisation without native speakers: The cases of Breton in Upper Brittany and Sorbian in Lower Lusatia, funded by the Polish National Science Centre (NCN Opus grant no. 162018/31/B/HS2/00844).

The goal of the project is to understand how language revitalization works when the members of a community undertaking it are non-native or new speakers. An important

role here is attributed to language ideologies that drive, but can also inhibit, language revitalization efforts. Thus, using a variety of qualitative and quantitative sociolinguistic methods (sociolinguistic questionnaires, focus groups with parents and children involved in minority language education/cultural activities, semi-structured interviews with key actors in the communities and participant observation in a number of educational/recreational sites in Brittany/Lower Lusatia), the project investigates how the key actors in these revitalization processes discursively construct and reflect on their choices and activities, goals, resources, obstacles and outcomes.

Looking at the initial data thus obtained from a variety of critical perspectives, the four research collaborators and contributors to this panel additionally aim at reexamining the terms and concepts used in the field of language revitalization research. It is not insignificant that the terms “heartland”, “native” and “new” speakers in the first paragraph were provided in quotation marks. Language revitalization efforts that are now taking place in Upper Brittany and Lower Lusatia are forcing researchers to reconsider the long-held assumptions about the native – non-native speaker distinction, about authenticity, language ownership and access, and related notions. Furthermore, the native-new speaker dichotomy needs to be carefully unpacked, since many speakers who engage with minority languages in Europe and beyond do not neatly fit into one of these categories. The project, then, means to unpick what we mean when we talk about a minority language speaker, and how different actors can occupy different points on a ‘continuum of speakerhood’ and how these positions can shift, mutate or otherwise be transformed at different stages of speaker trajectories.

To discuss these issues, each of the panelists will offer their own, unique, disciplinary perspective on the common, shared project, contributing not only mutually reinforcing input, but also, hopefully, illuminating insights that can inform and enrich the other disciplines' points of view. What is important is that each panelist will focus on a different aspect of the project in order to avoid redundancy. This way, the panel audience will be offered a unique opportunity to get acquainted with an interdisciplinary research project the strength of which is drawn from the diversity of its participating disciplines, rather than receiving an abridged overview that necessarily ignores or drastically flattens some of them.

### **Michael Hornsby:** The New Speaker Paradigm

The new speaker paradigm has gained a significant presence in contemporary academic literature on multilingualism and language learning (e.g. O'Rourke & Pujolar, 2013; O'Rourke, Pujolar & Ramallo, 2015), with new speaker research in minority language settings (e.g. O'Rourke et al., 2015; Ó Murchadha et al., 2018) frequently drawing on work in applied linguistics to explicate the native versus 'non-native' dichotomy. The paradigm was the focus of COST Action IS1306 in the years 2013-2017 and the resulting 'label' has been further used to refer to language users who adopt and practise languages and language varieties not typically associated with them or with 'people like them' (Ó Murchadha et al., 2018: 4). At the same time, the term has received a number of critiques based on speaker legitimacy and 'authentic language'. These critiques are considered here and evaluated, along with the need to sometimes see the broader



picture in language revitalization situations and put ‘speakers’ at the centre of our research focus, rather than particular ways of speaking. To do this, recent work by O’Rourke and Pujolar (2019) will be discussed, in particular how the new speaker label has fulfilled a particularly useful and timely sociolinguistic role in furthering our understanding of minority language revitalization dynamics at the present time.

**Nicole Dołowy-Rybińska:** Breton and Lower Sorbian: similarities and differences of the sociolinguistic situation

In my paper, I will compare the sociolinguistic situation of Breton and Lower Sorbian languages. Starting with the reasons and course of language shift in Lower Lusatia and in Brittany, I will discuss its effects on the level of language trauma, attitudes, and practices. I will reflect on the beginning and development of different activities aimed to sustain and revitalize Lower Sorbian and Breton languages. The most important from the point of view of the ‘new speakers’, educational projects, will be at the centre of my reflection. While immersion education in Brittany (‘Diwan’) is now established and different initiatives of the Breton language activists are undertaken (such as the fight for the Breton baccalaureate), Lower Sorbian ‘Witaj’ project faces many problems, of both structural and societal character. I will end with comparative conclusions concerning language revitalization in Upper Brittany and Lower Lusatia.

**Joanna Chojnicka:** Lower Sorbian in Cottbus

In my contribution to the panel, I would like to present

the results of the first fieldwork conducted within our project. The fact-finding fieldwork will take place in Cottbus, Germany, in May 2020 with the goal of establishing initial contacts with and gathering preliminary information from the main Lower Sorbian language revitalization stakeholders. This will then be used to prepare the following project fieldwork activities (questionnaires, interviews, focus groups and participant observation) planned for 2021-2022. Reflecting upon the fieldwork through the disciplinary lens of my background in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) will be particularly interesting and illuminating, as CDA has a tradition of skepticism towards sociolinguistic fieldwork methods. I am thus looking forward to conducting the fieldwork and discussing it at the panel as an opportunity to use my own experience in forming a stance towards CDA's skepticism and suggesting possible solutions to the issues signalled by the field.

### **Jeanne Toutous:** Breton in Rennes

The case of Breton “new speakers” in Rennes (the capital city of administrative Brittany, in Upper Brittany) piques our curiosity in so far as the city is not a place where Breton has been traditionally spoken. Yet the 21 500-inhabitant-city harbours quite a young Breton-speaking population (such as the Diwan immersive Breton-language school network of parents, children and teachers, Breton learners following 6- or 9-month intensive courses, evening lesson attendees...). Since the Breton cultural and political revival of the 1960s and 1970s, Rennes has been a central place for language activists who have created their own spaces for sociability there

(notably the association Skol an Emsav, which celebrated its 50th birthday in 2019). We intend to investigate these communities of practice and how they create dynamics of commitment “in the making”. Regarding the specific context of Rennes, it will also be enriching to point out potential marks of conflict between different language narratives related to the history of the city, and how Breton activists perceive and handle them. Then, we will look into the specificities of Breton “new speaker” social profiles in this urban context.



# **INDIVIDUAL PAPERS**

**Maria Antón i Álvarez de Cienfuegos**

laveudelteupoble@gmail.com

Aix-Marseille University/University of Alicante/University  
of Perpignan

## **Transmitting Catalan in Northern Catalonia: current situation and future strategies**

The autochthonous language in Northern Catalonia, Catalan, is at an advanced level of language substitution. Nowadays, families do not transmit Catalan to their offspring, and it is spoken by members of grandparents and older generations. In addition, French state-wide language policies do not promote the revitalisation of the country's minority languages and identities. Nevertheless, over the last few decades, certain private initiatives have been set in place in order to further Catalan recovery, essentially immersive schools. The aims of this paper are to explore the benefits and limits of the current ways of transmitting and to suggest new strategies to revitalize Catalan. The methodology used is the analysis of the official surveys as well as the qualitative interviews that I have carried out within the framework of my doctoral research. Moreover, on this paper, I examine successful experiences of revitalization of diverse minority languages such as Breton, Euskara, Irish and Catalan (in Southern Catalonia and Valencian Country) and I put forth new ways of recovering the native language that are based on secondary socialization of speakers.

## **Some phonetic processes in Qazakh dialect of Azerbaijani language within Georgia**

The article provides analysis of the process of affrication and sibilation of the local sub-dialects (Marneuli, Bolnisi and Dmanisi) of the western dialect of the Azerbaijani language within in Georgia. This research is based on linguistic evidence collected from 2011 to the present from individuals speaking in the Qazakh dialect of Azerbaijani.

The report provides a discussion of the affrication and sibilation process relevant to us, where the consonants č, ʒ, k and g' are replaced with sounds ts, dz, č and ʒ. In particular, processes of sibilation of č and ʒ hushing affricates and affricating of uvular consonants k and g' (e.g. č>ts, ʒ>dz, k>č and g'>ʒ). Here I should mention the fact that the affricates dz and ts, while not being the part of consonant system of the literary Azerbaijani language, are confirmed in the analyzed sub-dialects. My research also includes a discussion on the historical interrelations of phonemes in the family of Turkic languages.

**Guillem Belmar Viernes & Hauke Hayen**

gbelmarviernes@umail.ucsb.edu

University of California, Santa Barbara

hauke.heyen@uni-flensburg.de

University of Flensburg

## **Language revitalization online: North and West Frisian virtual communities as breathing spaces**

Just like the rise of print capitalism gave place to the rise of broader group identities and nationalism, the rise of computer-mediated communication seems to have given rise to a new concept of group identity, based no longer on geographical borders but on shared experiences or interests and on increasing individual agency in group membership performance. And among these interests, a common minority language has become a distinct marker of group affiliation. For minority languages, the rise of virtual communities gives a solution to the decreasing opportunities to practice the language in a geographically bound area. These 'virtual communities' are no longer restricted by traditional geographical boundaries of language, emerging into the cybersphere and allowing people to perform in such communities regardless of their physical location. In this presentation we will analyze the concept of 'virtual community' as breathing spaces for minority languages with the analysis of online communities of practice of North and West Frisian.

**Martin Benjamin**  
martin@kamusi.org  
Kamusi Project International

## **Box-o-Lex: Toward a ready-to-use field research toolkit for linguistic data collection**

Participatory processes for language preservation present a paradox for minority languages. Kamusi has a system to rapidly gather broad and accurate data across languages through online and mobile crowdsourcing methods, including games and focused storytelling. However, the system requires a critical mass of participants, a local language interface, and shared understanding of rules and goals. Reaching linguistic communities and preparing a viable elicitation program becomes increasingly challenging with smaller populations. Although they may wish to maintain their language, many, especially elders, do not have the technology, network, skills, or awareness to join.

In the pipeline is Box-o-Lex, a package of our tools for field researchers for rapid data collection. Box-o-Lex would enable a Masters student, e.g., to conduct a summer project with a minority linguistic community without having to configure their own database or figure out what items they need to elicit. Thus far, though, funding agencies have not been interested in supporting programming development. When eventually produced, linguistics students from many places will be able to fan out and reach a substantial number of minority and endangered languages. This paper explains the current state of development, and the prospects for Box-o-Lex going forward.



**Ingeborg Birnie**

ingeborg.birnie@strath.ac.uk

University of Strathclyde

## ***Thig dhan chèilidh* – community events and the use of Gaelic**

Gaelic is a minoritised language in Scotland, with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CnES) the only local authority in Scotland where a majority can speak the language (52.2% vis-à-vis less than 6% for all other authorities). Language shift in CnES is ongoing, with English being increasingly used for all domains, including the home and the family. This language shift has had a significant impact on the use of Gaelic within the community, especially in public domain interactions.

This presentation discusses the findings of a linguistic soundscape study in one of the heartland communities of Gaelic. This study found that overall spoken Gaelic language use in public spaces was very low, despite a high level of self-reported ability to speak the language in the community. The incidence of Gaelic language use was, however, very much higher during community events, such as dances and concerts. It is hypothesised that the linguistic soundscape created during the community events can be used as an indicator to provide information who in the community is able and willing to speak the language and this can be used to create new social networks using Gaelic as the linguistic norm, strengthening overall community language use.

**Giulia Cabras**

cabras@orient.cas.cz

Czech Academy of Sciences

**Possibilities for revitalization? The impact of community connections and state development in Sengge gshong (Wutun) community in Amdo (Qinghai province, PRC)**

Sengge gshong is the name of a rural area located in Rebong (Tongren) county (Huangnan prefecture, Qinghai province, Northwest China). Its inhabitants are Buddhist and identify themselves as Tibetans. The language spoken in the village, *ngandehua* ‘our language’, also known as Wutun, is considered a distinct variety of Northwest Mandarin and is strongly influenced by Tibetan at the phonological, morphological, and lexical levels. This paper addresses language choices of the *ngandehua* speakers and the possibilities for revitalization. The community is committed to assure the learning of Chinese, while guaranteeing the support to the language of cultural identification, Amdo Tibetan. As in other areas of Northwest China, the village is experiencing infrastructural development, migration to urban centres, increased access to higher education, changes in cultural influences and employment possibilities. In this context, small space is left to a proactive survival and support of the local language. However, the study shows also how the increased socio-economic vitality of the village, and social and cultural ties, play a role in maintaining the main function of *ngandehua* as the language of communication, assuring so far, the transmission to the younger generations.

**Bartłomiej Chromik**  
chromik@al.uw.edu.pl  
University of Warsaw

## **Language revitalization through documentation. Experience from Wilamowice**

Wymysorys is a severely endangered Germanic language used in the town of Wilamowice in southern Poland. Taking into account limited resources (especially human resources) and a will of the local community to revitalize the language, all linguistic enterprises concerning Wilamowice should have “revitalization in mind”, thus be highly effective and multipurpose. In the project *Documenting the linguistic and cultural heritage of Wilamowice* that I directed, we also followed this principle. Wherever possible, the new-speakers: university, high-school, or even junior-high-school students conducted documentary work (i.e. recording, transcription, translation). In some phases of the project, we managed to obtain a feedback loop between language documentation and revitalization. The participation of the project was one of the factors that helped at least six people to gain fluency in the language, what taking into account the total number of users is a significant number. Due to the fact, that benefits of inclusion of native-speakers into scientific projects are well described (although still not obvious for many scholars) I would like to present also challenges faced during that fruitful collaboration.

**Maria Ciriza-Lope**  
maria.ciriza@tcu.edu  
Texas Christian University

**Basque language planning and grassroots movements:  
New discourses on intergenerational language transmission**

Since 2012, the Basque language campaign Eman Giltza ('Give them the key') has promoted Basque language transmission by targeting the differentiated needs of families with diverse linguistic profiles from native to new Basque speakers, and speakers with low Basque language proficiency. In this article, I examine how the campaign promotes an integrative model of a Basque speech community that underscores participation, inclusivity, and coexistence. Testimonies and images of a diverse set of families in the campaign show Eman Giltza expanding notions of participation and speakerhood. By underscoring the efforts of Spanish-speaking and immigrant families to integrate their children and themselves in the Basque speech community, these testimonies model the perspective that family language transmission is an attitude and an affective disposition rather than solely based on full-fledged language use. In breaking essentialist notions of identification and belonging, the campaign models how a parental 'muda' that is, an ideological shift towards Basque language practices, can be possible even if the speaker is a low proficiency bilingual.

**Gregory Haimovich**

grhaimovich@al.uw.edu.pl

University of Warsaw

## **Introducing the Nahuatl language into public health domain: advances and challenges of the participatory-action research**

Although Nahuatl is the most widely spoken Indigenous language in Mexico, it faces endangerment problems in many regions of the country and has very scarce representation in public spaces. One of such vital spaces is health care. Health centers are presented in many rural indigenous communities across Mexico, but they are almost exclusively staffed with personnel who speak only Spanish. In the absence of interpretation services in clinics, this creates a difficult situation for elderly indigenous persons, who speak little or no Spanish at all. In view of the need to promote the Nahuatl language in health care environment, a participatory-action research has been launched in San Miguel Tenango, a village in Sierra Norte de Puebla, where Nahuatl is still spoken on a daily basis. The research project involves a number of Nahuatl-speaking residents of Tenango, members of the Spanish-speaking personnel of the local clinic and an outside researcher. The main component of the project is the development of health-related informational materials in Nahuatl, which pursues three main goals: a) raising the functionality and prestige of Nahuatl through its presence in a public domain; b) helping elderly Nahuatl speakers to deal with the problem of linguistic and cultural barriers in the clinic; c) raising awareness of the most acute health issues in the community.

## **The ethymological approach to the vocabulary of the Molise Slavic language**

In the province of Molise there has been a long presence of Slavic settlers from the Makarska coast who fled from the Turks in the 15th and 16th centuries and found refuge in the hilly regions of the Italian Apennines. Today, the presence of the descendants of Slavic settlers is evident in the language and some customs in merely three villages located about 40 km west of Termoli. These are Kroc (Acquaviva Collecroce), Stifilić or Filič (San Felice del Molise) and Mundimitar (Montemitro).

Some of the Molise Slavic phonological peculiarities can be attributed to the contacts with the Italian dialects of the area, ie. with the Molise and Abruzzo dialects. Since the Molise dialect is not fundamentally different from the Abruzzo dialect, it is often stated that it can be called the Abruzzo-Molise dialect. Molise Slavic has about 20% of borrowings and their integration is specific for this idiom. However, there are no in-depth studies of the vocabulary of the Molise Slavic idioms. To elucidate the lexical layer of the Molise Slavic language, an etymological approach to the vocabulary is required. In this paper, based on examples and insights into vocabulary and etymology, I will present the phonetic, phonological, morphological and semantic characteristics of words inherent in this idiom as well as their original form. The words recorded in the dictionaries of Mundimitar and Circulusian speech will serve as the corpus.

**Csilla Horváth**

csilla.horvath@helsinki.fi

University of Helsinki

## **Who may hold the shaman's drum? Mansi and Khanty heritage language speakers' language use in Khanty Mansiysk**

The aim of the paper is to analyse and to discuss the contradictions between an urban Ob-Ugric community's language use and language attitudes, with special attention to the recent changes in the linguistic vitality, and the new urban domains of language use. The presentation briefly introduces the Ob-Ugric community of Khanty-Mansiysk, the situation of Mansi and Khanty linguistic vitality, with special attention to the structure of education available in these indigenous minority languages. The presentation focuses on the role, strategy and prestige of Khanty and Mansi language acquisition and language use among speakers and new speakers of Khanty-Mansiysk city, the role of heritage language in expressing ethnic identity and the new urban domains of language use, especially the internet and popular music. Mansi and Khanty are endangered Uralic languages, spoken in Western-Siberia. Their vitality is problematic to describe: although the prestige of Mansi and Khanty languages and cultures is rising, the number speakers is critically low. Mansi and Khanty play limited role in its Russian-dominated, multi-ethnic and multilingual environment, their use is heavily affected by the loss of the traditional way of life and rapid urbanisation as well. The controversial situation can be observed in every domain of language use and it is extremely prominent in the case of Mansi language education. The data used in the presentation were collected during fieldwork in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug (eight times between 2006 and 2019). The data on initiatives and institutions of heritage language education were collected during participant observation carried out at governmental and alternative schools in Khanty-Mansiysk.

**Antony Hoyte-West**  
antony.hoyte.west@gmail.com  
Independent scholar

## **Spanish vs Creole? Exploring minoritised languages in Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago**

As the two largest countries in the Anglophone Caribbean, the sole official language of both Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago is English. This status, however, does not accommodate the historical and contemporary multilingualism common to both countries. Mindful of the islands' colonial past, as well as their proximity to Latin America, the governments of both countries have designated Spanish as their official foreign language. Even though it is very much a minority language in both nations, this move has associated implications for the education sectors. In addition, it has been argued that this mandate also denigrates autochthonous Creole languages, which are spoken widely in both countries but have no place in education or public life. Accordingly, this literature-based study examines relevant Jamaican and Trinidad & Tobago policies through the lens of Spolsky's (2004) language policy model, which foregrounds the interlinked concepts of national ideology, the role of English, a country's sociolinguistic structure, and minority language rights. Particular attention will be focused on current provision regarding the latter, as well as seeking to examine how governmental emphasis on Spanish – at the perceived expense of Creole – is viewed by wider society in Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago.



**Tymoteusz Król**

wymysojer@gmail.com

Polish Academy of Sciences

## ***Lost in the world and completely lonely? Language revitalization from the autoethnographic perspective***

When I realized, that the language I used to speak with my grandmother is going to die, I was still a child. I decided to document it and started to record my grandmother speaking with her friends and neighbors. I thought, that I am in that sense “Lost in the world and completely lonely”, quoting the opening verses of the most important work by the biggest Vilamovian poet Fliöera-Fliöera. Then I organized a “Circle of Vilamovian culture” in the school in Wilamowice. Some other teenagers joined this amateurish revitalization project. A couple of years later, as more and more academics started to investigate Vilamovian language and culture, several institutions, including the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” at University of Warsaw, received founding for the development of the language revitalization in my town. After that the whole process changed, as well as my role – now I am not a teenager activist anymore, but an activist with an academic background. The revitalization changed from intuitively events, to these dictated by grant projects. In my paper I will present the whole process of the development of the language revitalization in Wilamowice (Wymysoü) from my own perspective. I will use the method of autoethnography to analyze my own memories, feelings and reflections, which I have written down as field notes. My experience may help to understand the motivations of other grassroots language revitalization activists as well as the process and stages of the language revitalization.

## **Language revitalization and language change: New speakers of Louisiana Creole on Facebook**

The authenticity of ‘new speakers’ of minoritized languages is often called into question on the basis that their language usage differs from that of ‘traditional’ speakers. How and why do ‘new’ and ‘traditional’ speakers differ in their linguistic production? Language change during language revitalization has been suggested as ‘the pre-terminal phase of some dying languages in particular socio-political contexts’ (Jones, M. 1998, *Language Obsolescence and Revitalization* (...), p. 323). Nevertheless, the mechanisms underlying language change in revitalized languages remain under-investigated. This paper examines the language usage of new speakers of Louisiana Creole – a critically-endangered language – using a corpus of their ‘virtual classroom’ on Facebook. Combining eight years of participant observation and quantitative analysis of five morphosyntactic variables, this study shows the trajectory of language change amongst this influential group of learners and activists. In addition to the processes of linguistic transfer common to cases of second language acquisition, this investigation uncovers some phenomena which are potentially specific to the context of language revitalization. In particular, the analysis show that prominent activists may have a particular influence on the language of their peers. Motivated by language-ideological concerns, they may consciously promote certain linguistic forms over others.

**Maciej Mętrak**

maciej.metrak@ispan.waw.pl

Polish Academy of Sciences

**Teaching a contested language: Silesian online activism as a means of changing the status of an unrecognised minority.**

According to the 2011 census, Silesians form the largest ethnic minority in Poland, with over 500,000 people using the Silesian language. The Polish government, however, does not acknowledge their existence as anything more than a regional group within the Polish nation and their language is not officially recognised. While the issue is heavily politicised and controversial even among the Silesians themselves, the most active proponents of Silesian linguistic independence prefer to take matters into their own hands, mainly by the means of electronic media. The existence of Silesian Wikipedia, official Facebook interface and Samsung smartphone software has been used before as one of the arguments in the political debate about granting Silesian the status of a regional language. In my presentation, I will describe the up-to-date state of the Silesian online presence and activism, and try to answer the questions about its real reach and its possible influence on language status. To do so I will describe the most recent online linguistic initiatives (Facebook translation, language course and the annotated corpus) and compare them with similar projects undertaken by other minority groups in Poland.

**Dominika Michalak**  
domichalak@gmail.com  
Polish Academy of Sciences

## **The third person's way to the front in women refugee narratives**

The presentation examines the framing of women refugee testimonies which seem to have become a genre in the Western discourse over forced migration. Such narratives are often framed as giving the voice to the marginalized. Based on an examination of three collections of interviews as well as an online series of promotional materials of an NGO using refugee testimonies, I try to examine the practice of “giving the voice” to women refugees. I point to the isolation of the first person voice of the narratives which rarely anticipates, enters in a dialogue or confronts the reader as the second person. I argue that linguistic and esthetic features of the narratives mirror rather than allow to overcome social marginalization.

**Sara Mičkec**

sara.mickec@ispan.waw.pl

Polish Academy of Sciences

## **Influences on minority language maintenance in mixed-language families**

Drawing on preliminary research in the minority-majority context of Lusatia in eastern Germany I discuss everyday strategies used in mixed-language families in order to transmit the minority language. Whereas the Slavic minority of the Sorbs underwent a nearly complete disruption of inter-generational language transmission in Lower Lusatia, Sorbian is widely maintained in a part of Upper Lusatia. However, linguistic ideologies and language attitudes among other things lead to community habits of limiting the use of Sorbian to situations in which everyone speaks Sorbian. In consequence parents in mixed-language families adapt individual ways of passing on Upper Sorbian. Their strategies and the influence of language attitudes and language use on their language choices are in the center of my research. My paper focuses on research conducted in 2020 in one of the core regions of the Upper Sorbian linguistic area. Using data from participant observations on linguistic practices in Upper Sorbian-German families and linguistic biographies obtained in narrative interviews I investigate the individual ways of language maintenance in a region with traditionally rather conventional minority language transmission and discuss the role of micro and macro factors that influence it.

**James Konrad Puchowski**  
j.k.puchowski@sms.ed.ac.uk  
University of Edinburgh

***Away fae abstract academic haiverins aboot syntax an orthography: the language activism of academics within the Scots language community***

According to Scotland's 2011 Census, 26% of the Scottish population reported a speaking ability in the Scots language – the first time this question had been asked. However, the status and recognition of Scots still remains a delicate topic in public discourse due to its mutual intelligibility with English, broad dialectal diversity, and no agreed written standard. There is limited sociolinguistic research on Scots language activism. There is currently no dominant organising body which organises bottom-up Scots advocacy, as there is with some minority language organisations in the European context (cf. Catalan, Norwegian Nynorsk). Accompanied by the work of politicians and individual Scots language writers, a range of groups exist to pursue varying Scots language ideological objectives instead. Newer perspectives on language activism position it as a fluid “community of practice” (De Korne 2020), and more broadly as participative linguistic citizenship. In this talk, I draw on the contribution of academics in Scots language discourse, using a multi-modal ethnographic analysis of public events and textual data between 2019-2020. As the Scots language is “discursively constructed” in social life (Unger 2013), I argue that linguists and academics also can promote and participate in language activist discourse.

**Karolina Rosiak**

karolka@wa.amu.edu.pl

Adam Mickiewicz University Poznań

## **Migrants as agents in revitalization**

The ever increasing mobility of contemporary societies requires skills not only in English, a global lingua franca, in order to communicate and find employment, but also in other languages. These may be other big world languages, such as Russian, Chinese, Spanish or French. In many linguistically diverse or historically multilingual regions, however, migrants come across local minority languages. As often they are important for their economic values, increasing one's own social and cultural capitals, and social cohesion, some migrants decide to learn them. As such they are potential new speakers of the minority languages and should be considered in revitalization strategies. The present paper will discuss the role of Polish adult migrants to Wales as potential new speakers of Welsh. In their documents *Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers* (2017), the Welsh Government emphasises not only the role of intergenerational transmission for achieving their target number of speakers, but also that of new speakers, i.e. those who acquired the language outside home, for example in schools or as adults, and coming from different backgrounds. Drawing on data from an ethnographic study in Aberystwyth (Wales), I will discuss the motivations to learn Welsh expressed by Polish adult migrants and their attitudes and ideologies towards the language.

## **Peer-to-peer endangered language transmission among adults**

In endangered language contexts where family language links have been broken, most native speakers are now of grandparent generation or older; they may not speak the language frequently. The parent generation are usually not fluent, but without proficient adult speakers there can be no intergenerational language transmission, either in schools or in the family. Developing fluency among adults is a vital element of effective language planning, if language revitalisation is to be more than symbolic. This chapter investigates how adults wishing to develop/improve/regain fluency in a highly endangered language, Guernesiais (Guernsey, Channel Islands), attempt to move from being learners or latent speakers to becoming new speakers. On the way they navigate challenges such as work and family commitments, gender stereotypes, societal and community ideologies. The analysis is based on interviews with nearly 40 participants, as well as participant and non-participant observation of initiatives that promote language transmission among adults: both formal lessons and less formal activities. The paper challenges the common focus of language revitalisation on teaching children, and argues that adult to adult language transmission is both essential as a strategy, and a valid aim in its own right.



**Jacopo Saturno**

[jacopo.saturno@unibg.it](mailto:jacopo.saturno@unibg.it)

University of Bergamo

## **Language revitalisation through intercomprehension-based language teaching**

This paper advocates intercomprehension-based language teaching as a tool to sustain multilingualism and language revitalisation, with specific regard to the Slavic language family. Intercomprehension is defined here as the innate ability to “use” a language which was never studied explicitly, but is genetically close to a known language (the “bridge language”). These skills may be exploited to develop a rapid, relatively effortless language teaching programme, in which attention is focussed on the differences between the bridge and the target language, whereas the processing of similar features is left to the participants’ spontaneous receptive and meta-linguistic skills.

In the Italian university system, Russian is a commonly taught foreign language, whereas other Slavic languages receive significantly less attention. The paper summarises a set of experiments devoted to an intensive, short-term L3 Polish course for L1 Italian learners of L2 Russian. In addition to producing noteworthy results in comprehension and meta-linguistic analysis, the learners’ Russian skills appear to represent an adequate basis to develop speaking and writing skills in the L3. It is argued that this approach may be usefully exploited to bring learners of L2 Russian closer to other less commonly taught Slavic languages, including minority varieties.

**Fabio Scetti & Federica Salamino**

fabio.scetti@univ-montp3.fr

Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3 University – DIPRALANG

federica.salamino@gmail.com

Independent Researcher

## **The project of revitalization of Valoc' in Valtellina, Northern Italy**

This contribution provides important insight into the complex issue of producing the first official edition of the dictionary of Valoc', a dialect spoken in Val Masino, lower Valtellina, a valley populated by around 1,000 inhabitants. This new project in lexicography started in 2017 and it is named VVV (Vocabolär del Valoc' de la Val Mäßen). Our research team works on a previous dictionary based on interviews collected around 1960s and 1970s. Our approach is both on dialectology and sociolinguistic as we complete our study with observations and interviews among speakers of different ages, sexes and professions, to see how Valoc' is still used and by whom. Moreover, our methodological approach allowed us to observe the process of transmission of Valoc' from one generation to another and some discourse among speakers on its uses. In conclusion, this contribution brings us to reflect on how the new 'global' society may influence the process of transmission of this endangered dialect, which needs to be revitalized. Interventions at primary and secondary school has been offered in order to introduce Valoc' as a vehicular language and not only the «dialect of grand-parents». We may question the importance of developing a dictionary in order to promote a unique norm of reference, as a way of preservation of Valoc' for the future.

## **Facebook Kajkavian: life of a regional language on a social network**

Kajkavian was in the process of standardisation from 16<sup>th</sup> till 19<sup>th</sup> century. Then, in the name of Croatian national unification, people stopped using it as a written language. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century its written life was re-established, but only in dialectal poetry. Although there are approximately one million speakers of Kajkavian in NW Croatia and abroad, Kajkavian subjects are not widely represented in curriculum, and Kajkavian lexicon is not part of a national lexicography, it's rather dealt with separately. Non the less, Croatian linguistics consider Kajkavian as a dialect and not a regional minority language.

Massive usage of Internet and social networks enabled Kajkavians to write in their mother tongue on everyday basis. In this paper we will analyse Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/kajkavskirjecnik/> which has approximately 48 000 followers to discover strategies which are used for positive affirmation of Kajkavian (e.g., humour). Since there is no standard Kajkavian orthography, we'll examine ways of writing Kajkavian phonemes, analyse choice of lexemes and try to determine in which measure administrators use some universal Kajkavian language features instead of local ones to make the Facebook page more receptive and widespread.

**Giustina Selvelli**

ametista84@yahoo.it

University of Venice

## **The valorization of the endangered Romani language in the media of the Serbian autonomous province of Vojvodina**

In this paper, I focus on the status of the Romani language in the multiethnic Serbian autonomous region of Vojvodina, illustrating the efforts of the Romani intellectual elite to raise the status of their endangered mother tongue at the official level and to link it to struggles for democratic participation and emancipation, relating the topic to the conceptual framework of 'linguistic citizenship'. I will look in particular at the contribution of local media such as Public Broadcasting Service of Vojvodina, with programs in Romani language, and the trilingual (English/Serbian/Romani) bulletin issued by the Roma Inclusion Office, (with the title the Roma Decade in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina), both contributing to the construction of a discourse on language awareness and to the ongoing standardization process. I argue that these media embody a remarkable democratic voice in the context of Roma community participation in debates on language and citizenship in the daily multilingual urban context of Novi Sad. In my presentation, I will employ qualitative data gathered through ethnographic methods during the interviews conducted with young Romani activists and intellectuals in order reconstruct a clearer frame of the status of Romani as a non-territorial and endangered language.

## **The language practices of the Prussian-language revivalist family based on the short-term observation**

The Baltic Prussian language belongs to the group of the Western Baltic languages; until the end of the 2000's it was considered to be a dead language. However, owing to the revivalist movement, its SIL International classification has been changed from dead to dormant in 2009. One of the most common hypotheses is that the language became extinct ca. 1710. The project of the rebuilding of the language, based on relatively sparse sources has developed in the 1980's. The initiators of this undertaking were linguists V. Mažiulis, L. Palmaitis and V. Toporov. The idea of an attempt to use the Baltic and comparative linguistics turned into a revivalistic project in the following years. Surprisingly, there appeared some L2 users of the reconstructed language (sometimes referred to as New Prussian), who have the feel of the Baltic Prussian identity and wish to express this bond by language practices. The present study was conducted in June 2019 and February 2021 using the method of participant observation. As part of this study, I spent two days with one of the first Prussian-speaking families in the 21st century. My research questions were: 1) Which languages by the family? In which contexts? 2) Does code switching occur in the family's communication? 3) If so, what are the strategies of dealing with code switching? 4) Are there any differences in language use of the L2 parents and the L1 child? 5) Are there any traces of occasional or constant borrowings from the dominant Polish language in the family language of my informants?

**Paweł Tuz**

tuzpawel@wp.pl

University of Szczecin

## **“Just speak [any] Welsh” or “learn the language [properly]”? Prescriptivism in the maintenance and revitalisation of Welsh**

The aim of this paper is to analyse the benefits and drawbacks of linguistic prescriptivism for the maintenance and revitalisation of Welsh. Three aspects of prescriptivism are dealt with in this work:

- 1) standardisation, linked with Milroys' notions of “suppression of variation” and “standard language ideology”;
- 2) purism, e.g. avoidance of non-Welsh elements in any layer of the language;
- 3) insistence on a distinction between native speakers and learners of the language, scepticism towards some aspects of the neo-speaker/new speaker concept.

The paper includes both the general discussion of the 3 problems and the analysis of specific Welsh problems, for instance the incomplete standardisation of the language and the consequences thereof, the differences between the Welsh and English grammatical systems, and the increasing role of institutional education due to disruptions in traditional transmission of Welsh. Differing viewpoints are acknowledged in the analysis, which is intended to stir a discussion on the best ways of maintaining and revitalising the Welsh language.

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