Book of Abstracts

Minority Languages in the City

16 & 17 March 2023

Leeuwarden (Fryslân)

Table of Contents

Keynotes

Ruth Kircher (Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning)

Multilingual migrants in Montreal: A regional perspective on social identities and language attitudes

In Canada as a whole, French is a minority language. Quebec is the country's only province with an L1-French-speaking majority and an L1-English-speaking minority. Notably, Quebec is also home to a steadily growing and diversifying population of migrants who have L1s other than French and English (Statistics Canada 2016). Most of these migrants live in Quebec's urban centre Montreal; however, as a result of governmental efforts, recent decades have seen an increase in the number of newcomers settling outside the city (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2014). There are significant regional differences in how the province's population feels about these newcomers, with very positive attitudes existing in Montreal, rather negative attitudes prevailing in the city's suburbs, and quite positive attitudes established in the rest of the province (Turgeon and Bilodeau 2014).

I will present a study that examines whether there are regional differences regarding the extent to which migrants identify with their host society, comparing Montreal, the city's suburbs, and the rest of Quebec. Moreover, the study investigates whether this identification with their host society, in turn, affects migrants' language attitudes. The participant sample consists of 644 multilingual migrants. A questionnaire was used to elicit their social identities (specifically, how strongly they identify as inhabitants of their town/city, as Quebecers, and as Canadians) and their attitudes towards French compared to English (in terms of status and solidarity). The findings reveal significant regional differences regarding participants' social identities – as well as significant correlations between different social identities and participants' language attitudes. For instance, migrants in Montreal identify most strongly as inhabitants of their city, and such a local social identity is linked with positive attitudes towards French. Language attitudes matter because they influence language use. I will discuss the implications of the study's findings for (language) policy and planning in Quebec.

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Agnieszka Legutko (Columbia University)

Minority Languages in the City and at University: The Mapping Yiddish New York Project

In the early 20th century, New York was the city with the largest Jewish population in the world. Out of 2.5 million Eastern European Jewish refugees who arrived in the US between 1880-1924, nearly 2 million spoke Yiddish. In 1916, the Lower East Side was the world's most densely populated Yiddish-speaking neighborhood. One hundred years later, the situation is dramatically different. Once spoken by the majority of the prewar Jewish population (12 million), Yiddish is now a minority language. While New York remains the largest Jewish city worldwide, including the largest Yiddish-speaking population in the country, the numbers are drastically down. Out of 1.6 million Jews residing in the metropolis, only 150,000 people speak Yiddish. The global estimates range between 700,000 and 3 million, but there is a disconnect between the speakers. The Hassidic Jews who speak Yiddish in their everyday life have minimal engagement with secular culture and literature. On the other hand, new speakers, the so-called Yiddishists, who are "made not in the bedroom, but in the classroom," speak the language as the post-vernacular (Jeffrey Shandler).

The digital humanities come to the rescue of endangered minority languages in the city. The Mapping Yiddish New York project that began in 2014 is an online archive documenting Yiddish cultural history of the city. It aims to explore the Yiddish cultural legacy, to engage university students with the city's Yiddish heritage by creating the public archive, and to elicit interest in Yiddish among new generations to help them better understand the city and its history. This talk discusses the case study of Mapping Yiddish New York, focusing on challenges and advantages of "participatory mapping" and "place-based learning" (Corbett & Lagualt) in digital humanities projects as a way of a meaningful engagement with minority languages in the city and at university.

Robert Blackwood (University of Liverpool)

Minority Languages in Urban Linguistic Landscapes: Beyond documenting multilingualism in France

Linguistic Landscape research, over its relatively short lifespan, has privileged the city as its locus for research to the extent that LL researchers have clearly accelerated the process of what Green (2013) refers to as 'metronormativity'. In a setting like France, this emphasis on urban spaces points to how far the pendulum has swung away from the rural in linguistics research; the dialectology work of the first decades of the twentieth century, embodied by Gilliéron and Edmont's *Atlas linguistique de la France* (1902-1910), has more than been matched by recent scholarship which centres on France's urban centres. Whilst researchers have not deserted France's countryside – in what might be a scholarly echo of the nineteenth-century rural exodus – and recognising May's (2014: 230) criticism of the 'unnecessary bifurcation of urban-rural language and literacy practices', Linguistic Landscape studies are drawn to cities precisely because of the rich seams of data ripe for linguistic and/or semiotic analysis. In this paper, I will be discussing examples from across metropolitan French cities plus towns in overseas regions of France in order to consider how minority languages fit into the varied set of relations (social, political, economic, etc) in urban settings. Building on my earlier work that documents the presence/absence of minority languages (including Breton, Catalan, Corsican, Nissart, the Kanak languages of New Caledonia, and the Creoles of Guadeloupe and Réunion), I seek to examine the interconnectedness of languages, signs, people, and cities. Drawing inspiration from Pennycook's (2019) reconciliation of LL with semiotic assemblages, my spotlighting of France's regional languages attends to the complexity of agency and challenges assumptions regarding the relation between visibility and vitality that can underpin some Linguistic Landscape research.

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Paper presentations

Thursday, 16 March 2023

Douglas Chalmers (Glasgow Caledonian University) & Mike Danson (Herriot Watt University)

Breaking the invisible barriers - building on lessons of the rural Gàidhealtachd in urban Gaelic Scotland

By 2011, there were 87,000 individuals claiming to have 'some knowledge of Gaelic' in Scotland (approximately 1.1% of the population) with the highest concentration in the rural Gàidhealtachd. However, due to a long-term shift towards urban areas, there have been increasing numbers and proportions of speakers of Gaelic in the cities: now over 10,000 in greater Glasgow and 6,000 in the Edinburgh area.

A major 2014 study into the use of Gaelic as an economic and social asset in the Highlands and Islands (Ar Stòras Gàidhlig) found that almost two-thirds of businesses surveyed described Gaelic as moderately, very, or critically important to the success of their business or enterprise, and that robust estimates suggest that if used to its full potential Gaelic could add between £82million and £149million to the Scottish Economy overall. However, despite the evolving significance of lowland Scotland in Gaelic activities and status, this recognition, based on responses from more than 300 businesses, enterprises and organisations, is one which is still not replicated in the urban areas of Scotland, despite the substantial and growing number of Gaelic speakers.

Nevertheless, a large-scale study (December 2021) of the value, growth, and effects of Gaelic in Glasgow revealed that the Gaelic Economy created over 700 jobs adding the annual equivalent of £21m and significant wellbeing impacts, as well as nationally important education and cultural outputs. The study made a strong case for realising further positive outcomes given the potential suggested by the Ar Stòras Gàidhlig and previous Glasgow City Council research (Chalmers and Danson, 2011).

The recommendations of the 2021 Glasgow study specifically focused on interventions to generate further jobs, enterprises and economic value around the Gaelic language and culture in the city. These strategic analyses and recommendations will be reported and explored for the first time in this paper.

Emma Humphries, Janice Carruthers & Leanne Henderson (Queen's University Belfast)

Home languages in Northern Ireland: the attitudes of young people

The multilingual classroom is a relatively new phenomenon in Northern Ireland (henceforth NI). Following relative stability after a period of conflict from 1960s to 1990s, known as the 'Troubles', there has been greater and more diverse immigration in NI. Like elsewhere in the United Kingdom (UK), NI schools are increasingly multilingual and multicultural; the 2021 Language Trends report records 90+ languages spoken (Collen 2021: 4). Nonetheless, linguistic diversity in schools continues to be lower in comparison to urban areas in the other UK nations.

This study used qualitative focus groups, conducted in secondary schools and complementary schools in urban areas of NI, to elicit the views and experiences of pupils aged 15-18. All participants speak a language other than English/Irish in the home, i.e. a minority language in NI. The focus groups centred on how the pupils feel about their languages and their perceptions of the value that others, including the school, their family and their peers, place on their home language.

This paper presents qualitative data from the first tranche of our analyses, and focuses on whether and how the pupils believe their language(s) is valued in NI and the role that they think their language(s) will play in their future. Our data show that, whilst many young people hope to pass on their home language to the next generation, few see any potential economic value in their home language, particularly in comparison to English. In speaking directly to young people, rather than parents or teachers, this study enhances our understanding of what it is like to be a multilingual young person in NI and offers a valuable source of evidence which we argue should be considered in language policy and planning in NI.

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Stuart Dunmore (University of Edinburgh)

Acquisition motivations and identity orientation among Scottish Gaelic diasporas in Halifax, NS and Boston, MA

This paper will examine Scottish Gaelic revitalisation initiatives and linguistic ideologies among disparate diaspora communities in Nova Scotia and New England. Notwithstanding the advanced state of intergenerational disruption in contemporary Gaelic communities in Scotland and Canada, second language teaching has been prioritised in recent decades as part of official language policy to create new cohorts of speakers. Based on five years of ethnographic research in Scotland and Canada, this paper examines such 'new' speakers' narratives concerning their language learning motivations, identities, and prospects for language revitalisation in each country. I will also draw on data from a recent Fulbright visiting scholarship in Massachusetts, a major destination for secondary emigration from Nova Scotia since the 1870s. This research assessed the various ways in which Gaelic learners in New England construct and convey their linguistic ideologies and identities, and how these may relate to the better-known Boston Irish diaspora. I show that challenging sociodemographic circumstances in the (few) remaining Gaelic-dominant communities in Scotland and Nova Scotia contrast with current policy discourses concerning the language's future prospects. In particular, I consider the relative strength of Nova Scotian new speakers' sense of heritage identity in relation to Gaelic, compared to American and Scottish speakers' language ideologies concerning the ethnolinguistic Gaelic community.

Farah Nazir (Newcastle University), Awais Hussain (University of York), Sehrish Hussain (Mirpur University of Science and Technology) & Sam Helmuth (University of York)

What's in a name: language and identity among the British Mirpuri Community

The British Mirpuri community (BMC) is part of a larger pattern of migration from the subcontinent to Britain that occurred in the first half of the 20th Century (Abbas, 2010; Ballard, 1983). One of the perennial questions as posed within the BMC and academic research pertaining to the BMC is related to naming the language spoken by this community. There are different names used to describe the language spoken by the BMC. The reason for the miscellany of names has been attributed to inaccuracies in previous linguistic classifications; the fluidity of geo-historical boundaries; socio-political changes of provincial borders in the pahaar, Kashmir, and Punjab regions; and language politics and ideologies (Hussain, 2015; Masica, 1991; Nazir 2020; Shackle, 1979). However, beyond anecdotal evidence, the variation in self-identification of the mother tongue of British Mirpuris has not received any attention. Hence the few academic linguists who engage with the BMC employ different language names in their work. Similarly, community members use different names to describe their language.

The present paper begins to fill this void by (1) exploring the naming practices for the language(s) spoken by the BMC via a literature review to clarify the true extent of prior linguistic research, and (2) investigating the different names used for the language spoken by the BMC via a sociolinguistic questionnaire. The latter will (i) document the reported variation in language name self-reporting by community members, (ii) explore the factors that influence the observed language naming preferences, with a socially stratified participant sample, and (iii) document self-reported language attitudes within the BMC. We hypothesise that beneath the appearance of linguistic diversity as a result of the diverse naming practice, there is a unity of shared linguistic practice that likely serves as a focus of cultural and linguistic identity for the community. In sum, this paper begins to demystify the diverse naming practices of an understudied minority South Asian language as spoken in Britain with empirical data.

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Edmond Cane (The Center for Research and Publications on Arberesh)

The difficult context for the survival of Arberesh – the challenge and the narrow opportunities

The data from our recent 2022 fieldtrip in the Arberesh communes in South Italy reveal significant changes in the language trends. We observed a huge language shift in usage (domestic and community domains): from the prevalent use of Arberesh in the older generations (born in the 1950', 1960') to the balanced use of Arberesh and Italian for the second (parent) generation, to the prevalent use of Italian for youngsters, 15-25 y. old, and kids, until 14 y. old, (Cane 2022a, Derhemi 2002, 2003, Perta 2005, 2011). In addition, compared to the general rise in national demographic figures, the Arberesh communes have had a drop by almost 50 per cent in the last 60 years. This is not an absolute loss – the missing population has moved away to cities, particularly in North Italy, Germany, France, the US, Canada, etc. They continue to maintain links with their homeplace and community, but it is in downward trend (Cane 2022, Scetti 2021). Another negative factor is the opposite demographic trend in a few Arberesh towns like Spezzano Albanese, Campomarino, San Marzano, with prevalent Arberesh community a few decades ago, developing economically and demographically but also turning into sort of balanced Arberesh-Italian community, with prevalent Italian-based communication (Perta 2005, 2011, Belluscio 2018, Cane 2022).

In this context, we observe the environment and factors that affect and weaken language resilience and attitudes; the inconvenient context and the current situation for schooling in Arberesh, the present factors within the community, including the span and extent of Arberesh local organizations, the provision and support provided at regional and state levels to counter this threat (Coluzzi 2021, Sierp 2008, Cane 2022b). In the overall view, this paper adopts a gestalt and usage-based approach (Bybee 2010, Cane 2021, etc.) and argues the necessity of a sufficiently large, coherent and intensive environment. Unless the language shift is reversed, this paper predicts a scenario in a steady downward trend, towards a substantial loss of the minority language in 1-2 generations to come.

Yasemin Oral (Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa) & Murat Topçu (Okan University)

Abkhaz-Abaza and Circassian as Endangered Languages in Turkey

Abkhaz, Abaza and Circassian are closely related languages of the Northwest Caucasian (NWC) language family. Traditional homeland of the speakers of NWC languages are the areas to the north and partly to the south of the western part of the Caucasian Ridge including the northeastern coast of the Black Sea (Arkadiev and Lander, 2020). Most of the Abkhaz-Abazas and Circassians yet had to migrate to Ottoman lands, where today they form a large diaspora-community of around 4 millions, due to the exile from their homelands during and after the Russo-Circassian War. Today, however, Abkhaz and Circassian languages are vulnerable, while Abaza is a definitely endangered language in Turkey. These diaspora communities were traditionally more of a close community, mostly residing in villages, with their own languages, traditions, customs, and system of relations and norms until the second half of the 20th century which brought about rapid urbanization among them and accelarated the language shift to Turkish, the majority language. Against this backdrop, the present paper will first present a brief overview of and historical background to Abkhaz-Abaza and Circassian languages as endangered languages in the Turkish context. This paper will then exclusively focus on the post-urbanization period with a particular emphasis on the sociolinguistic situation of these languages in the current linguistic ecology of Turkey. Finally, it will introduce the policies and practices regarding the endangered languages in Turkey as well as the grassroots language initiatives that are mainly developed by the community organizations and civil society. In this regard, the ongoing work of the Endangered Languages Network, which was established in 2020 within the scope of the Laz-Circassian Civil Societies Network project, will be presented as a case study to discuss the existing problems and challenges alongside possible suggestions and directions for language maintenance in Turkey.

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Giulia Cabras (Oriental Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences)

Tibetan in commercial signs in Xining (Northwest China): economic opportunities and the visual emergence of a minority group

This paper focuses on the presence of Tibetan language and script in private commercial signs in Xining, the capital of Qinghai province in Northwest China. This city is inhabited by most Han people (the primary ethnicity in China) and by a small percentage of Tibetans, Chinese Muslims, and other ethnolinguistic groups. Although the presence of ethnic minorities, the city is not granted autonomous status, which means that the only language compulsory in the public sphere is (Standard) Mandarin. The city's recent economic, infrastructural, and touristic development has seen the growth of Tibetan commercial activities, primarily restaurants and local product shops.

Studies in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology have highlighted the rise of cultural commodities and marketisation in the study of language and identity as well as language practices (Heller 2003; Heller & Duchêne 2012; Holmes 2016; Schneider 2018). In minority languages and communities, language in the linguistic landscape is an element that is shown, emphasised, or hidden according to language ideologies and commercial opportunities (Ben Rafael et al., 2006; Salo, 2012; Baranova & Ferodova, 2018).

In this paper, I take into account economic trends, urban development, and the current sociolinguistic situation of the city to understand the different meanings of commercial bilingual or multilingual signs that display the Tibetan language. These signs are produced outside language planning since the city does not grant language rights to minority languages and recognises Standard Chinese as the only language to be used in the public sphere. Through the analysis of language use, the content of the signs, visual elements, and ethnographic observations, I argue that the emergence of Tibetan language and script in the city is related to the commodification of an exoticised Tibetan culture. However, it also contributes to the visibility and economic self-affirmation of the community.

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Sabina Zorčič (Institute for Ethnic Studies, Ljubljana)

Minority Schools in Multilingual Cities - State of Play and Implications

Lately, the various forms of minority education (and other educational opportunities offered to immigrants and new minorities) are being used by the wider community and not only by minorities and immigrants (and their descendants). Although this trend is nothing new, it has indeed gained momentum following EU enlargement and the (planned) accession of the countries of the region to the Schengen area. The present state of play is therefore a natural consequence of Europe's longstanding inclusive and non-discriminatory policies as well as globalisation, namely the free movement of people, goods and services (although the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on cross-border education due to the restriction of the free movement of people across European borders are already felt). Students' and parent's motives for the inclusion of speakers of majority languages in minority education programmes vary, ranging from tracing one's roots to taking advantage of this opportunity to increase an individual's cultural capital (with a view to a potential increase in economic capital thanks to additional (linguistic) competences). These students bring a new dynamic into the education of linguistic minorities, which has both positive and negative implications. The most obvious and far-reaching are those affecting linguistic competence in minority languages, both among members of linguistic minorities and members of linguistic majorities. The article reviews the data available for Alps-Adria region (in particular from from Slovene minority schools in Austria) and outlines, based on secondary sources (scientific articles, reports and legislation), the positive and negative implications of such trends. Based on data analysis, it proposes directions for further research which will allow for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon that is becoming increasingly widespread in minority education. In particular, the findings will benefit researchers in the field of educational and sociolinguistic sciences and serve as baselines for decision-makers designing language policy measures in (minority) education.

Niklas Wiskandt, Isabella Greisinger & Ana Krajinović & (Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf)

Teaching urban fieldwork at universities helps language documentation and preservation

Linguistic fieldwork is recognized as a crucial method of language documentation (Gippert et al., 2008) and collaboration between researchers and language communities (Krajinović et al., 2022). Recently, the focus on linguistic fieldwork in urban centers has been steadily raising, not less because of its relevance for the documentation of languages spoken by diaspora communities (Kaufman & Perlin, 2018). In this paper, we describe an urban fieldwork project with Pontic Greek, Kannada, and Telugu based on a university course in Düsseldorf, Germany, and argue that this can be a successful method of documentation and promotion of language communities around the world.

We took an integrative approach to urban fieldwork by combining teaching, research, and fieldwork. In a university seminar students of general linguistics acquired fieldwork methodology. The students then collected data on grammatical phenomena from minority language speakers resident in Düsseldorf, and performed an analysis with the support of research staff. The first benefit of involving students was the increased potential for sustainability of the collaboration between linguists and community members. The second benefit was the contribution to the collection of language recordings, which will be available for future research. Finally, the research results were presented at a public event, which promoted languages and cultures towards a non-scientific audience and brought representatives of the educational and political sector together with community representatives. The Pontic Greek community was represented by the O Kseniteas association, which collaborated with linguists on the documentation of Pontic Greek within this project and the organization of the event.

We also reflect on challenges we faced in this project, e.g. the access to speakers, and interference with German, and show that the local collaboration between the community contributing their language knowledge and the university contributing methodological expertise and infrastructure leads to overall positive outcomes for both sides.

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Friday, 17 March 2023

Olga Olina, Bruno Behling & Bastian Ilgner (Humboldt University of Berlin)

Assessing the vitality of minority languages in Berlin

This paper assesses language endangerment in Berlin, by applying existing models (AES, EGIDS, LEI & UNESCO Atlas). With over 3.5 million inhabitants, Berlin is the most populous urban center in the European Union calculated by city-proper population (SFBB). According to the Berlin-Brandenburg Statistics Office, approximately every fifth person in Berlin comes from a non-German cultural background with over 160 different countries represented (SBEE), making Berlin one of the most multicultural urban centers in the world. Presently, no comprehensive data is available about the linguistic background of these people.

Our study has a twofold aim. Firstly, we documented various languages spoken in Berlin by recording videos of under 10 minutes and subsequently publishing these on the website of 'Berlin spricht!', a joint project of the Leibniz Center for General Linguistics in Berlin, the Institute for German Language and Linguistics at the Humboldt University of Berlin, and the SOAS World Languages Institute at the University of London. Secondly, we conducted fifteen interviews with speakers of various minority languages living in Berlin with the aim to investigate whether the speakers find a way to integrate their mother tongues into their life in Berlin, or if these fall into disuse. The topics addressed include the contexts in which the language is spoken, attitudes towards the minority languages, the role of communities and institutional support in language transmission.

In our talk, we will discuss the results of the interviews, address the challenges of conducting urban field work as well as consider whether existing models for evaluation of language vitality can be applied to the situation in Berlin. The results can be used to inform policy decisions, adjusting them to the needs of the communities, and to help preserve the language diversity in the city as well as to provide additional aid in language planning and revitalization.

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Aurélie Joubert (University of Groningen) & Inès Hassen-Dakhli (Université Cergy-Pontoise/ University of Leicester)

Urban policy discourse and diversity management in the UK and France

The impact of multiculturalism on European society has attracted scholarly attention since the 1980s (Chin 2017) particularly in urban environments, since cities have become the site of diversity par excellence. Considered to be largely the consequence of successive waves of immigration from the post-war period onwards, the rise of multicultural populations led to the development of policies of integration and assimilation, as well as rising political discourses on national identity construction (Schain 2010). Although these phenomena took place on a supra-national level, each European state developed its political responses independently.

Comparing urban policies found in two medium-sized cities, one in France and one in the United Kingdom, sheds light on the place of cultural diversity in the wider urban politics of two European countries and on their contrasting treatment of multiculturalism. The aim of this paper is to show that urban policies do not simply organise urban environments, they also frame interactions between communities and individuals of different cultural backgrounds by constructing a discourse on cultural and linguistic diversity that is at the heart of macro-level ideologies of multiculturalism (Blommaert 2005).

Through critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 2010) of urban policy documents from Leicester (UK) and Reims (France) from the 1980s, the analysis of discursive elements enables us to assess the way in which multiculturalism is framed: as a series of opportunities for individuals to show entrepreneurial skills in intercultural contexts or as challenges to social cohesion. The close scrutiny of the priorities and objectives laid out in urban policy documents can be aligned with the background of British neoliberal principles and French republican nationalist values. Through an innovative comparative approach which combines urban studies and discourse analysis, it becomes clear that the management of diversity in urban spaces works as a vehicle for acting on wider beliefs and political principles.

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The School Census and thematic cartography: A tool for profiling the multilingual city and planning effective public policies and services. The case of Bremen

Language management refers to "specific actions undertaken to intervene or influence language practices" (Curd-Christiansen 2009: 353; Spolsky 2004: 5). 68% of the world population is projected to live in urban areas by 2050 (UN). Therefore, cities face the challenge of integrating migrants, refugees, and indigenous minorities into their public space so that they can equitably share their human, social and cultural assets, to develop a sense of belonging. Instead, a poor management of urban diversity brings in discrimination and marginalization at multiple levels, especially in sectors where gatekeeping figures are involved, e.g. in house and job searches (Grogger 2011, DuBois 2019), doctor-patient communication, in educational contexts and courtrooms (Cummins 2018, Rickford and King 2016). However, comprehensive data on language knowledge and use among the urban population is scarce, and poorly unavailable to urban administration officers, while effective policies need to be based on accurate data about language competence, use and language needs.

In this paper we are tackling as a specific case study the city-state of Bremen (DE), where migration-related diversity is high. The statistics tell us that one every three residents has a "migration background" (defined as anyone having a foreign citizenship or at least one parent migrated to Germany after 1955). Also, data from the School Census show that about 50% of the school population declare a mother tongue different from German, with peaks of up to 88% in certain districts (Rojas Loa et al. 2022).
After showing the elaborated data in the form of thematic maps of the Bremen school census data for the last five years, we argue that the school census is a key tool for profiling the changing multilingual city and for planning policies and services, in collaboration with multiple actors who act as gatekeepers, leaders and diversity managers in the city.

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Institutional Translation and Sardinian Language: Towards a Multilingual Model for the Municipality of Bauladu

This paper describes a collaboration between the municipality of Bauladu (Sardinia) and the Department of Translation and Interpretation and East Asian Studies of the Autonomous University of Barcelona for the translation into Sardinian of official documents and the generation of resources for the Sardinian language. Despite the fact that other Sardinian institutions have in the past decided to translate texts into Sardinian, this has been the first time – to the best of our knowledge – that the Sardinian translations have been published on a regular basis and with the same official character as the Italian texts.

In our paper, after briefly introducing the sociolinguistic characteristics of Sardinia, we will touch upon regional language and translation policies from a theoretical standpoint, in order to refer to practices that help develop institutional models of effective multilingualism.

The methodology of the actual project will then be described, focusing on the needs identified by the working group with special attention to the use of free technologies for translation (such as assisted translation, machine translation, terminology, text alignment, real-time collaboration, etc.). Because of the public nature of the project, funded by the municipality of Bauladu, our paper will also emphasize the importance of guaranteeing that the resources created are publicly accessible online. We will thus share the public websites that were designed to host the translation memories, terminological databases, academic works, and the interface that was created in order to allow for public queries of the corpora.

Our conclusions will point at how the availability of these resources online is having a positive impact for the generation of future corpus-based language technologies for Sardinian.

Zacharias Saveh van Stek & Julian Rott (Humboldt University of Berlin)

Developing an alphabet for Dazaga in Berlin

In this paper we talk about our experience collaborating with native speakers of Dazaga, to develop an alphabet and orthography for the language. The Daza used to be a nomadic people in Chad and Niger, who were forced to settle, because of changes in climate (JKW). As a minority population in both countries, they do not have an official, standardized orthography. The expat community around Berlin-Brandenburg consists of approximately 150 members. This community has approached us, to support them in their efforts to develop an alphabet for the Dazaga language. Although the language is spoken by around 300.000 speakers (JKW), it is only used for oral communication; written communication is reserved to Arabic or French. Neither the Arabic nor the Latin script seem to be fitting for the phoneme inventory of Dazaga.

Our current goal is to develop a Latin-based script with additional diacritics, as was requested by the community. To fulfil this goal, we are comparing descriptions of Dazaga and its sister languages by other researchers with the data provided to us by members of the Berlin-Brandenburg community. By developing a Dazaga-script, we aim to ensure the languages vitality. We want to enable speakers to read and write in their own language and teach Dazaga to younger generations. This is particularly important for emigrant Daza, who may otherwise struggle to learn their mother tongue.

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Poster

Anna Sofia Churchill (KU Leuven) & Caroline De Becker (Friedrich Schiller University Jena)

An army or a navy? How the impact of being labelled a dialect can influence the national and international status of a minority language

Europe is home to 60 regional and minority languages. Some of these languages benefit from official recognition and protection at home and abroad under local and national laws, as well as under charters and treaties of organisations such as UNESCO and the Council of Europe. However, this is not the case for all. Our poster aims to use two case studies, Twents and Neapolitan, to highlight the positive consequences of such protection but also the potentially negative results without it. We do this specifically by looking at the effects the classification as a 'dialect' can have on official and international recognition. This impacts accessibility to certain protective laws and charters, in particular The European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML), in addition to affecting local attitudes and ideology regarding the minority language. Despite not being recognised as a regional language itself, Twents falls under the umbrella of Low Saxon within the Netherlands, a country which has ratified the ECRML. Whilst being by no means out of danger, Twents does enjoy a level of protection that is slowly enabling it to flourish. Neapolitan, on the other hand, being labelled as a 'dialetto', a term that commonly has a negative connotation, suffers from not being recognised on a national level within Italy, which has not ratified the ECRML, and is subject to a declining status amongst speakers and non-speakers alike. We conclude that the consequences can be far reaching, accelerating the decline of intergenerational transmission, and thus contributing drastically to the endangerment of Neapolitan.