

# RISLUS Research Forum 2024

Book of Abstracts



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# Session I: Issues in Bilingual Literacy and Education - Part 1

## Pathways to Bilingual Mastery: Impact of Translation and Interpreting Training on Spanish-English Proficiency

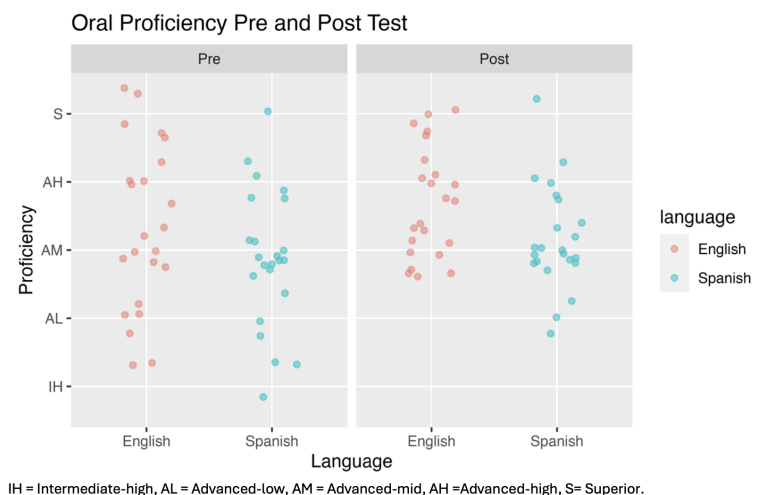
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Proficiency is a fundamental criterion for high-stakes language decisions, including course placement and professional competency assessment. In the field of translation and interpreting particularly, demonstrating high bilingual proficiency is crucial for translation competence (Hurtado Albir, 2017). While considerable research has delved into the integration (or lack thereof) of translation tasks in second language (L2) pedagogies, scant attention has been directed toward elucidating how translation and interpreting training can improve proficiency levels, especially at intermediate and advanced stages. This alternative is particularly relevant given that traditional L2 pedagogies often fail to promote proficiency development among heritage language learners (Zyzik, 2016). Moreover, there is growing support for the integration of translation activities into heritage courses, aligning with the lived experiences of heritage learners and offering meaningful contexts for language acquisition (Gasca Jiménez, 2022).

Our study investigates the impact of translation and interpreting training on the oral proficiency of Spanish-English bilingual college students enrolled in a Certificate in Legal Translation and Interpreting at a Hispanic Serving Institution. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, we examined the oral proficiency of 25 students at the onset and conclusion of their first semester in the program. Assessment tools encompassed a language acquisition questionnaire, a perception of interpreting narrative, interpreting performance, and oral proficiency tests in English and Spanish (ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview by Computer, OPIc).

Analysis of questionnaire responses revealed that 65% of students were early Spanish-English bilinguals (heritage learners), while 35% were late bilinguals (L2 learners of English). Initial assessments using the OPIc indicated that 47.82% of students had higher proficiency in English, 34.78% in Spanish, and 17.39% had equal proficiency scores in both languages. A paired-sample t-test showed the prevalent use of English across various contexts (friends, work, school), except within the home environment where Spanish usage was more pronounced. Importantly, a

linear mixed-effects regression showed an effect of language, with English proficiency being overall significantly higher than Spanish proficiency ( $t(67) = -2.533, p = .0137$ ). While training results did not reach conventional significance levels ( $\alpha = .05$ ), they approached significance, suggesting a notable trend toward improvement of bilingual proficiency ( $t(67) = 1.842, p = .069$ ).



Our study underscores the potential of translation and interpreting as tools for enhancing bilingual proficiency across diverse learner profiles, encompassing both heritage and L2 learners. Bialystok's cognitive framework (1994) could shed light on our results. Central to this framework are two cognitive mechanisms: the analysis process and the control process. Translation and interpreting, as complex linguistic activities, intricately engage with these mechanisms, with translation predominantly activating analytical processes, while interpreting relying on heightened levels of cognitive control. Finally, further research on the analysis and control processes elucidated by Bialystok's framework could be a fruitful path to inform theories of language proficiency development among minority bilinguals. Integrating perspectives from cognitive science, education, and translation studies will deepen our understanding of the intricate mechanisms underlying bilingual proficiency acquisition.

Keywords: heritage learner; minority bilinguals; bilingual proficiency; translation; interpreting

## **Mapping the Writing Proficiency of Bilingual Young Adult Learners Enrolled at Minority-Serving Institutions**

Alberta Gatti, Syelle Graves and Daniela Castillo  
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**Acronyms:** (a) HL | heritage language (b) HLL | heritage speaker enrolled in a home-language course (c) HS | heritage speaker (d) ILETC | the Institute for Language Education in Transcultural Context (e) MSI | Minority Serving Institution

This presentation gives an overview of 10 years of research at ILETC, an institute housed at the CUNY Graduate Center, on an understudied population: HSs enrolled at urban MSI colleges. These sequential studies combine to form a narrative on how the concept of functional language proficiency can inform HL pedagogy.

These studies were motivated by a complex background. To begin with, it is well known that HLs show more variation than their baseline languages; this results from the speakers' varied sociolinguistic circumstances, such as age of arrival, education, and language use (Polinski & Kagan, 2007; Polinski, 2008). As pointed out by Laleko and Scontras (2021), this lack of uniformity has led researchers to wonder whose grammar is being measured in these languages and how data gathered from such diverse output should be aggregated (p. 4; p. 8); they accordingly propose using multiple measures, such as complexity and proficiency.

Secondly, functional proficiency, defined by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages as the ability to use language spontaneously in real-world situations in a way monolingual speakers can understand (ACTFL, 2012, p. 4), has been a key construct in L2 education in the U.S. for the past 40 years, and has been used for research on development and for pedagogical purposes such as assessment and curricular designs. The newer field of HL education began exploring the proficiency of HLLs more recently (Swender et al., 2014).

Finally, developing writing at high levels of proficiency is a known objective at the university level, especially for MSI students, many of whom are first-generation college students from low-income backgrounds. Furthermore, writing is the modality that HSs report as their weakest (Carreira & Kagan, 2011, p. 45; Gatti & O'Neill, 2017; Jensen & Llosa, 2007, p. 104).

With these motivations in mind, the ILETC team embarked on a series of studies to investigate multiple aspects of the writing proficiency of HLLs enrolled at CUNY MSIs. This presentation summarizes existing and in-progress studies whose findings:

- show that some Intermediate-level HLLs show precocious abilities that Advanced-level HLLs do not;
- show that those less advanced HLLs are somewhat more likely to make gains in proficiency sublevels than their Advanced classmates;
- challenge the widely-held assumptions that HSs necessarily have higher proficiency in speaking than writing;
- challenge the assumption that self-assessments are a reliable measure of ability;
- challenge the assumption that HLLs necessarily have higher writing proficiency in their societal language than their home language;
- show the remarkable way that the syntactic and lexical complexity of heritage writing correlates to proficiency, and also changes in each writer depending on how the writing is elicited.

This talk will close with implications for instruction, which connect research to practice and reach toward the institute's mission to develop models for facilitating the development of home-language literacy in HLL MSI students.

**Keywords:** Functional Proficiency; Writing; Multilingual learners; Literacy

## **Effective Pedagogies for Heritage Language Development in Minority-Serving Institution Contexts**

Alberta Gatti, Maria Julia Rossi, and Syelle Graves  
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Across the U.S., post-secondary courses in languages other than English typically include a mix of second language learners (L2) and heritage language learners (HLL, heritage speakers enrolled in a home-language course). However, for a growing number of programs with high enough numbers of HLLs who enroll in courses in their home language, as electives or in the pursuit of majors, minors, and translation certifications, it is common to offer separate courses designated specifically for them, in order to address their language-learning needs, which differ significantly from the needs of L2 learners (Polinski & Kagan, 2007).

The research on how HLLs develop their heritage language in instructional settings was initially conducted on students at four-year colleges that enroll relatively small numbers of heritage speakers. That research design and goals initially looked similar to the research on the development of language in L2 learners: It focused on the acquisition of discrete grammatical features such as differential object marking or grammatical gender, and on how traditional, bottom-up pedagogical interventions can facilitate development of these features (e.g., Potowski, et al., 2009; Montrul & Bowles, 2010). More recent research started focusing instead on how HLLs develop literacy and on the top-down pedagogies that facilitate this development (Carreira, 2016). However, this welcomed shift has taken place primarily in research conducted on heritage language learners at highly-selective colleges (i.e., Parra, Bravo, & Polinski, 2018).

This presentation introduces findings of a study on a different subject population: heritage language learners enrolled at one two-year and two four-year MSI campuses of the City University of New York, a

demographic that largely consists of low-income, first-generation college students. The study compared Spanish HLLs writing proficiency development after one semester of instruction under two types of pedagogy: bottom-up and top-down. Results suggest a notable difference in rate of writing proficiency increases, with 21% of learners making a gain when instructed with bottom-up curricula, and 75% when instructed with the top-down approach.

In addition to presenting the results, we will also outline the top-down approach, and share qualitative data from the learners and instructors, which we collected in order to find out how learners experience the curriculum.

**Keywords:** Heritage Language Learners; Writing; Literacy development; Minority Serving Institutions

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## Session I: Issues in Bilingual Literacy and Education - Part 2

### Setting up SLIFE and Newcomer Learners for Success in Secondary Classroom

#### Mathematics invited

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Presenters will share characteristics of a Math program designed to support SIFE and newcomer students in improving their content knowledge, language proficiency and social-emotional skills. Additionally, presenters will share the results of a recent program evaluation, including strategies that have been identified as successful by participating teachers as part of a SIFE/newcomer program in mathematics. The study results showcase student progress in content, language, and social-emotional learning competencies. Participants will learn about instructional and progress monitoring strategies to support student growth in SIFE/newcomer Math classrooms.

## School District Leaders as Key Language Policy Arbiters in New York City invited

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Language education policy research has emphasized the individual agency of school principals and teachers by focusing on how they interpret, implement, and/or contest top-down policies (DelaCruz Albizu, 2020; Henderson, 2017; Menken & García, 2010). However, less attention has been paid to school district leaders in policy processes (Johnson and Johnson, 2015; Morita-Mullaney, 2019) even though they have been identified as “key arbiters” (Johnson & Johnson, 2015) in language policy making.

Our study addresses this gap in research in New York City (NYC), which is divided into 32 school districts. Our research questions are:

- 1) What is the availability of bilingual education for multilingual learners (MLLs) in NYC by district?
- 2) What factors do NYC school district leaders consider and prioritize when determining whether and where to provide bilingual education?

To answer these questions, our research involves:

- a) Geographic information system (GIS) analysis to map the location of bilingual education programs by student demographics in each NYC district; and,
- b) Semi-structured interviews of NYC school district leaders.

## The Gentrification of Dual Language Education in Chicago

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Research has shown that bilingual education plays a significant role in developing and maintaining the heritage language for children and adolescents (Garcia, 2013). The gold standard of bilingual educational programs is Dual Language Immersion (DLI), in which students are taught in both the heritage language and the societal language; these DLI programs were historically established to provide heritage speakers the opportunity to continue their education in their home language—thus supporting the maintenance and growth of the first language (L1)—as well as to develop the societal language. In the US, these programs are thus typically designed to serve areas with a high population of speakers of a language other than English, where half the students are native English speakers and the other half are native speakers of another language, such as Spanish. Spanish-English Dual Language programs are increasing at a rapid pace in major cities due to rising popularity. Paradoxically, however, the neighborhoods where many of these new programs have emerged are not those where heritage language speakers reside. These new programs also pull funding from existing Dual Language programs that are in areas of need.

In this paper, we examine the gentrification of dual language education for heritage speakers by exploring the longitudinal relationship between the locations of the new dual language programs and population changes between 2010 and 2020 in a large Midwestern US city. Pulling data from the 2020 US Census, public data from school district in question, and the Census Bureau's American Community

Survey (ACS), we superimposed the change in the Latino population within the city from 2010 to 2020 with the locations of the dual language schools that have opened during that same time frame. Results indicate that out of the 27 new DLI schools that opened between 2010 and 2020, 17 (63.0%) of the schools opened in places or neighborhoods with decreasing population of Latino households. Furthermore, of the 17 new DLI schools that opened in these neighborhoods, 7 were in neighborhoods with 21-30% decrease of Latino households and 9 were in neighborhoods where the Latino population decreased 1-20%.

This begs the question of whom the districts are prioritizing when opening so many of these new programs in such little time. Based on our results we make several recommendations to better address equity and access issues in a district where 82.5% of the children identify as Black or Latino.

## **Session II: Multilingualism in Urban Contexts: Part 1**

### **Feeling Home: Multilingual Social Worlds of Undocumented Bhutanese Women Living in Queens, NY**

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The linguistic landscape of the Bhutanese community in New York is complex and varied, reflective of the linguistic diversity in Bhutan. Most people in the community speak Dzongkha, Sharshop, and Nepali with a smaller group of Kurtöp, Bumthang Kha, and Chocha-Ngacha speakers. New York, as a multilingual metropolis, has been credited as the most linguistically diverse urban center in the world with speakers of approximately 10 percent of the world's 6000-7000 languages. The language map of NYC (Perlin et al., n.d.) reveals a clustering of Asian languages in Queens, a place with a high density of immigrants both legal and undocumented. This makes Queens of particular interest in understanding multilingual practice at the local and transnational level where we can locate social worlds that transgress logics of national borders. In this project, I investigate the various ways undocumented Bhutanese in Queens construct new configurations of intimacies, notions of home, and belonging as they navigate multilingual public spaces in their daily lives. I argue that they assert claims of affective belonging that extend beyond traditional citizenship models which appeal for recognition from the nation-state. This project adds to the newly emerging analytic framework of linguistic citizenship which approaches linguistic and semiotic space as a fluid space of contestation where claims of social and political belonging are asserted. It also adds to urban multilingualism studies by taking a qualitative approach to explore the socio-political consequences of multilingualism as practiced by precarious citizens in urban metropolises like NYC.

**Keywords:** Urban Sociolinguistics; Multilingualism; Linguistic Citizenship; Linguistic Agency



## Language Contact and Codeswitching in Cameroon

Abdoulaye Laziz Nchare  
St. John's University

The purpose of this study is to describe the concepts of: Camfrangalais, Cameroon French varieties, Codeswitching and urban language varieties, based on Nchare's (2010) seminal paper and de Feral's (2010) description of French varieties spoken in Africa. Based on the analysis of videos interactions on youtube and online data collected on facebook and other social media platforms, we will discuss how Cameroon's official bilingualism policy where French and English are used as the languages of the administration since its independence significantly erode the use of Cameroon local identity languages. One of the consequences of such a language policy was the ban of more than 289 identity languages in schools and public administration's facilities. The new sociolinguistic landscape of Cameroon has significantly impacted, not only on the operation of state institutions, but also on the cultural and linguistic make-up of the Cameroonian society. Camfranglais has emerged as a linguistic hybrid language made of French, the matrix language, and English as well of other Cameroonian identity languages (e.g., Duala, Ewondo, Cameroon Pidgin English, Fulfude, Hausa, etc.), described as the embedded codes. The official bilingualism, a policy adopted by the Cameroonian government to achieve national unity and integration has often been criticized because of some of its shortcomings. This analysis seeks to prove that despite such shortcomings, cultural hybridity and bilingualism have positively impacted the political, historical, economic, social and cultural factors of development in Cameroon that can be observed in the form of codeswitching that is now characterized as a marker of Cameroon national identity. It is shown that Camfranglais exhibits linguistic practices that indicate Cameroonian identity via the variability of socially situated meanings. The notions of style and language registers, conceived as a process of meaning making through language, will be discussed based how the social context that dictates the use of Camfranglais affects literacy by influencing who reads and writes in what language for what purpose. We adopt a sociocultural perspective of literacy while examining the impact of Camfranglais on the way standard French is used and the kinds of cognitive skills that are developed by language users in Cameroon.

**Keywords:** Official Bilingualism, Camfranglais, Codeswitching, Language Policy, Official Languages, Culture, Linguistic Hybridity, Multiculturalism.

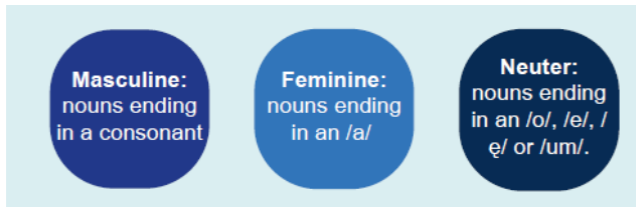
## Session II: Multilingualism in Urban Contexts: Part 2

### The Acquisition of Polish Gender Morphology in Bilingual English-Polish Speaking Children

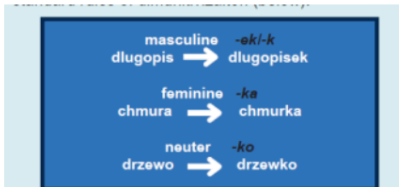
Marta Musugu Yenge<sup>1</sup> and Isabelle Barrière<sup>2</sup>

1. Queens College, CUNY 2. Molloy University

For linguistic features that do not overlap across their two languages, bilinguals may take longer than their monolingual age peers to use these feature productively and that their mastery depends on amount of input (Barrière et al, 2024). While English does not mark nouns for grammatical gender, Polish differentiates masculine, feminine and neuter. Their expression involves suffixes and their realization partly depends on animacy, as well as on their phonological form. The same phonological gender constraints apply to other Polish grammatical categories, including pronouns and diminutives. Diminutivization is productive in Polish and the selection of the diminutive suffixes depend on gender.



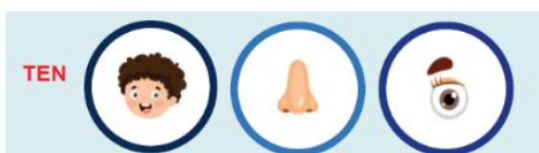
**Figure 1: Phonological constraints on Polish grammatical gender-marking**



**Figure 2: morphological processes involved in Polish diminutivization**

Polish monolingual children have mastered gender marking skills, by age 4 (Smiczynka, 1985, Dabrowska et al., 2013). The objectives of the present study were to determine 1. at what age Polish-English speaking children master Polish gender morphology; 2. whether quantity of input in Polish impacts the acquisition of Polish gender morphology.

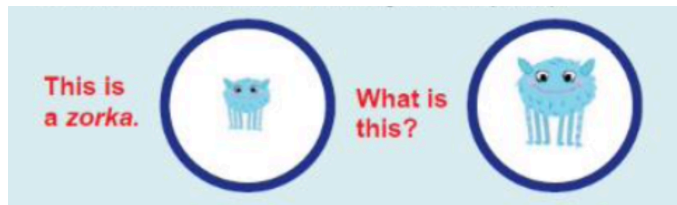
Nine bilingual children between the age of 3 and 9 participated in the pilot study; they attended the same dual (Polish-English) language preschool and afterschool program. A parental questionnaire enabled us to collect information on their percentages of exposure to Polish and English. The children were administered the FLAC-1 Polish Test (Milar-Wilson et al., 2013) and PLS-5 Screener for English (Zimmerman et al., 2013) that both assess vocabulary and morphosyntax and three tasks developed for the purpose of this study: T1-Picture-matching- receptive task: child provided with a demonstrative pronoun and asked to match the picture that refers to a noun marked for the same gender, out of three pictures.



T2: Picture Naming- real word: child presented with noun and matching picture. They were asked to produce the diminutive form, or vice-versa.



T3: Picture Naming- nonce/invented words: nonce words borrowed from Dabrowska (2006); child was presented with an nonce word that matched a picture and asked to produce a diminutive when shown a smaller version of the picture, or vice-versa.



Results: The significant positive correlations across T1, T2 and T3 suggest that they are tapping the same grammatical skill. Children performed above chance across tasks. Age was significantly correlated with the results of each task. The results on T3 were positively correlated with the performance on the FLAC, indicating that they are related to and/or reflect more general developing Polish language skills. These results indicate that Polish bilingual children acquire gender marking skills but become productive (results obtained on T3- nonce words) later than their monolingual peers. The pilot study did not involve enough participants to assess the impact of the quantity of input. We are currently collecting data on more participants.

**Keywords:** Bilingualism; Gender marking; Polish; Diminutives; Morphology; Nonce words

## Quantity versus Consistency in the Input and Transfer across Languages in Monolingual and Bilingual Development invited

Isabelle Barrière

Saint Elizabeth University, NJ; Yeled V'Yalda, Research Institute, NY; RISLUS, City University of New York

This presentation will demonstrate how the results of four studies involving 230 monolingual and bilingual English and Spanish-speaking preschoolers between 2;6 and 5 enable us to determine the respective roles of quantity versus consistency in the input as well as the role of transfer across languages in acquisition. The four studies focus on the comprehension of subject-verb agreement. The overt marking of 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular subject verb agreement in the habitual present tense is obligatory in General/Mainstream American English (e.g. *the boyØ swims*) while it is optional and rarely realized (in less than 20% of relevant contexts, Barrière et al., 2019) in many other varieties of English including African-American English, Jamaican English and Chicano English (Kortmann et al., 2020). Similarly, although Spanish subject verb agreement involves many more contrastive verb forms across persons, numbers and tenses than English, its realization also reflects dialectal variation. While 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural marking in the present tense is consistently marked in Mexican Spanish, the realization of this marker varies in Dominican Spanish in which it may be realized as a /n/ , velarized /ɲ/ or omitted (due to the tendency to drop consonants in coda positions in that variety).

In order to explore the effects of this variation on acquisition, a similar video-matching subject-verb comprehension task was administered to 1. monolingual speakers of different varieties of English in NY (Barrière et al., 2019); 2. monolingual Mexican Spanish-speaking children in Mexico (Gonzalez-Gomez et al. , 2017 and Hsin et al., 2022) ; 3. monolingual Dominican Spanish-speaking children in the Dominican Republic (Poline et al., 2019) and 4. bilingual Mexican Spanish-English speaking children in NY (Barrière et al., 2024). In both English and Spanish the contrast between the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular and the plural forms of the verbs involves stimuli a) in which only the ending of the verbs indicated whether the subject was singular or plural and b) that exhibited different structures (see tables 1 and 2 below).

Table 1: Conditions in English

Condition English	Singular	Plural
<b>Intransitive Medial with Adverb</b>	The boy $\emptyset$ sleeps deeply.	The boys sleep $\emptyset$ deeply.
<b>Intransitive Medial with Prepositional Phrase</b>	The boy $\emptyset$ sleeps on the bed.	The boys $\emptyset$ sleep on the bed.
<b>Intransitive Final</b>	The boy $\emptyset$ sleeps.	The boys sleep $\emptyset$ .

Table 2: Conditions in Spanish

Condition Spanish	Singular	Plural
<b>Transitive Medial with ‘el objeto’</b>	Amarra el objeto.	Amarran el objeto.
<b>Intransitive Medial with Prepositional Phrase</b>	Juega en el parque.	Juegan en el parque.
<b>Intransitive Final</b>	En la calle corre.	Ela la calle corren.

The results on monolinguals reveal that those children exposed to varieties in which the agreement markers vary in their manifestations- children who are exposed to varieties of English other than General/Mainstream American English or Dominican Spanish- show more limited evidence of comprehension than children exposed to languages in which the markers are obligatory- including preschoolers acquiring General/Mainstream American English or Mexican Spanish. Similarly bilingual Mexican-Spanish-English bilinguals perform above chance in most conditions in Spanish, despite being exposed to a smaller quantity of Spanish than both their Mexican and Dominican monolingual age peers. Regression analyses also revealed that the bilinguals’ performance on English is significantly correlated with their performance in Spanish ( $r= .87$ ,  $df=19$ ,  $p=.000$ ), rather than chronological age or percentage of exposure to English.

The results on the monolingual English and Spanish-speaking children exposed to different varieties reveal the facilitating role of consistency in the input (rather than quantity of input) on language acquisition. The second set of results on bilinguals demonstrate that the highly contrastive agreement system of Spanish bootstraps the acquisition of the limited subject-verb agreement system of English, despite the fact that both agreement systems give rise to different phonological forms, providing evidence that this transfer occurs at a relatively abstract level. We conclude by showing that these results on English and Spanish monolinguals and bilinguals are compatible with those obtained on the acquisition of variable subject pronouns in Haitian-Creole-speaking monolinguals (Barrière et al., in press) and that emerge from a parallel study on the acquisition agreement inflectional markers in Russian-English bilinguals (Barrière et al., 2024).

## Poster Session

### How does a City tell about History?

Mariusz Rutkowski

University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn

Street naming is strictly connected with perpetuating a hegemonic version of history (Azaryahu 1996). The study aims to examine commemorative street names that become carriers of values and ideologies. These values inscribed in street names become part of social practice and thus undergo naturalization and banalization (Billig 1995). The processes of 'hiding the ideological layer' turn street names into signs of exceptional importance for perpetuating the official version of history and an identity shaped by it (Rose-Redwood, Alderman & Azaryahu 2017).

The paper presents the process of introducing value-laden names in cities, using street names in Poland as an example. The material base of the study is a collection of almost 70,000 commemorative street names from all cities in Poland listed in the official register of the National Statistical Office. The overall methodological framework will be onomastic discourse analysis, which is a new, holistic method for studying proper names in broad discursive contexts (communication and social practices) (Rutkowski & Skowronek 2019). The analysis will reveal the most important ranking lists, i.e. people, historical events, and dates. The quantitative analysis will show correlations between street names and the Polish cultural canon. We will also present the most important ideologies, values, and cultural and patriotic models. In addition to the quantitative and qualitative linguistic analysis, a spatial analysis will be carried out, including the distribution of street names on city maps. We will focus on differences in the values associated with a particular location of a name on the city map: is it the name of a central and important street or a peripheral and local one? Taking into account the axiological network of a city will make the linguistic observations more complete and, consequently, a fuller description of how the city is marked will be possible. The city, with its network of street names, becomes a semiotic and symbolic system, and symbols undergo the process of habituation when street names are used in communication. At the same time, such use of names in practice hides the ideological layer, which makes it even more evocative.

Keyword: street names; city discourse; commemorative names; history; ideology

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# Morphophonological Effects in the Acceptability and Processing of Code-Switching

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The alternation between languages within sentences, or code-switching (CS), is a trademark of many multilingual communities. Descriptions of Spanish-English CS patterns show an asymmetry between progressive (i) and perfect (ii) sentences, i.e., (i) is more frequent (1), more acceptable (2), and read faster (3) than (ii). The asymmetrical costs in comprehension have been attributed to distributional patterns in production because perfect switches are rare (1) (3). It remains unclear, however, what blocks switching in perfect constructions. This project investigates whether morphophonological variables play a role in the asymmetry.

- (i) *Los estudiantes están* writing papers.  
the students are
- (ii) *Los estudiantes han* written papers.  
the students have

All previous experimental studies used the auxiliaries *están* (disyllabic) and *han* (monosyllabic). Syntactic evidence from monolingual Spanish shows that the monosyllabic auxiliary *ha* is blocked in movement phenomena (e.g., subject inversion) (4) behaving like a clitic (5). Therefore, Experiment 1 asks whether the aspectual asymmetry in acceptability and processing holds when matching the phonological length of the progressive and perfect auxiliaries. Experiment 2 compares perfect forms *han* and *habían*.

Whereas present participles in English (V + *-ing*) and Spanish (V + *-ndo*) are equivalent (6) (7), past participles are not. First, their inflection can be regular (compositional) or irregular (non-compositional), and evidence suggests these are stored and processed differently (8). Furthermore, the raw reading times from a self-paced reading study indicate that irregular past participles had longer reading times compared to present participles (9). Experiment 3 asks whether inflection on the past participle (regular vs. irregular) modulates acceptability ratings and processing costs. Second, Spanish past participles are at least disyllabic, but many English past participles are monosyllabic. A code-switch from *habían* into a monosyllabic verb may violate the phonological schema of Spanish participles. Experiment 4 addresses this distinction. Findings from this study will provide evidence to show that non-distributional (namely morphophonological) factors can modulate the acceptability and processing costs that drive the aspectual asymmetry in CS.

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## Multilingual Literacy Assessment for Newcomers

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This poster introduces a tool which addresses the needs of immigrant students and New York State teachers, the Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener. The screener helps identify gaps in literacy and math in the student's language of prior education and provides educators with immediate results in English. The poster describes core functionality of the screener and how it supports the educational community.

## The Role of Morphosyntax in the Processing of Object Relative Clauses: Evidence from L2 Italian

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**Introduction.** The present study investigates the role played by morphosyntactic features in the processing strategies that L2 adult learners of Italian adopt while reading object relative clauses. **Background.** Object relative clauses (e.g., the journalist who the politician pushed was arrested) are generally more difficult to comprehend than subject relative clauses (e.g., the journalist who pushed the politician was arrested), a robust finding attested across languages, speakers' populations and modes of acquisition. However, recent findings conducted in Italian, have shown that the processing overload with these constructions is decreased in adult native speakers when the two nouns of the relative clause mismatch in number (e.g., *il giornalista che i politici hanno spinto è stato arrestato*/ the journalist who the politicians have pushed was arrested) and the verbal morphology of the relative clause verb cannot agree with the first noun in the singular form (e.g., *hanno spinto*/have pushed). **Research Question.** This study asks whether L1 English-L2 Italian adult learners experience the same processing advantage as Italian native speakers while reading object relatives with a number mismatch manipulation. **Methodology.** A group of N=36 L2 Italian learners (Mean Age = 22; SD = 3.32; N = 18 intermediate, N = 18 advanced) and N = 28 Italian native controls (Mean Age = 27; SD = 4.9) took part in a self-paced reading experiment that included as one experimental condition object relative clauses with number matched and mismatched nouns. **Findings & Discussion.** Results show that neither L2

intermediate nor L2 advanced learners were facilitated by the number manipulation as found in the control group, suggesting that L2 grammar-specific properties must be fully acquired and stable in L2 development to influence processing strategies. Further research is needed to confirm this hypothesis, for example by testing speakers who are near-native in L2 Italian.

## **Consolidating Literacy and Language Development Programs in Schools Serving Students of African Origins in New York City**

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New York City is home to several communities of Francophone West African origins with population estimates varying in the tens of thousands. Many newcomer immigrants from Francophone West Africa enter the K-12 system as English Language Learners and face challenges that stem from language attrition and interrupted formal education. We envisage a two-pronged project to consolidate their literacy development by supporting existing community networks and developing the K-12 curriculum to cater to the needs of ELLs of Francophone West African descent. To launch the project, we use census data to identify clusters of West African communities across New York City boroughs. The Endangered Language Alliance' NYC Languages map may offer a fine-grained view of the home languages spoken in these communities.

## **Pronoun Interpretation and Use in Turkish Heritage Speakers. A Comparative Study in Germany and the US**

Ilaria Porru

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This study explores pronoun interpretation and use among Turkish heritage speakers in the United States and Germany, comparing their interpretation of pronouns (*o*, *pro* and *kendisi*) with that of late bilinguals. This research is motivated by findings from previous studies (Sorace & Filiaci, 2006; Knospe, 2019; Koban-Koç, 2016 and others), which suggest that bilinguals of pro-drop languages (such as Turkish) and non-pro-drop languages (like English and German) may exhibit different pronominal interpretation and use.

In order to answer the research questions, participants completed an interpretation task, preference task, and a questionnaire assessing their active use of Turkish.

Turkish-German and Turkish-American participants' responses were analyzed descriptively, and logistic regression models were employed for the Turkish-German group to predict pronoun interpretation based on active language use. It was hypothesized that Turkish-German speakers, who use Turkish more, would show a stronger preference for null pronouns and a higher rate of using *o* for topic shifts compared to their American counterparts.

This study contributes to understanding how bilingualism and heritage language maintenance influence pronoun interpretation and use, with implications for the broader field of heritage linguistics.



## **Individual Language Experience Impacts L2 Scope Ambiguity Among Mandarin-English Bilinguals**

LeeAnn Stover

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The present study probes the interpretation of doubly quantified constructions among Mandarin-English bilinguals in L2 English. We sought to expand on a proposal that Mandarin Heritage Speakers (HSs), bilinguals whose language experience involves an early shift in language dominance, may reject inverse scope readings in both the heritage Mandarin and in their 'dominant' English (Polinsky & Scontras, 2020; Scontras et al., 2017), possibly due to its absence in heritage grammars (Polinsky, 2018). We conducted an individual analysis across a spectrum of language experience factors to explore if inverse scope is activated during a forced choice task which sometimes does not have the preferred surface scope interpretation available while bilinguals behaved predictably when a surface image was available, highly English-dominant participants selected the inverse image at a higher rate than Mandarin-dominant participants when forced to choose between images depicting an inverse interpretation and a non-corresponding distractor image. In the picture selection task, Mandarin-dominant participants showed a larger gap based on sentence type (e.g., A cat is chasing every mouse vs. Every shark is attacking a pirate). These results show that while inverse scope readings are indeed available to heritage speakers, individual variation in language dominance plays a significant role in bilingual parsing of scope ambiguity.

## **Acquisition and Predictive Processing of Structural, Lexical, and Inherent Cases in Russian L2 Learners**

Reid Vancelette

CUNY Graduate Center/Queens College

In this study, we explore how second language learners of Russian in New York City acquire four types of cases (Structural Accusative, Lexical Instrumental, Lexical Dative, and Inherent Dative) and how they use these cases to predict upcoming linguistic information, such as thematic roles, during online sentence comprehension. Three experimental tasks will be conducted:

**Task 1:** A Self-Paced Reading Acceptability Judgment Task assesses participants' understanding of structural, lexical, and inherent cases through their judgments on sentences with correct and incorrect usages of these cases in canonical word order.

**Task 2:** A Word Picture Matching Task using eye-tracking tests whether participants predict an upcoming word in a sequence of four words, presented aurally one at a time, by clicking on the picture that matches the fourth word as quickly as possible. This task assesses their ability to anticipate information in a simplified design with reduced task demands.

**Task 3:** A Picture Matching Task using eye-tracking in a visual world paradigm examines whether participants use the same case markers from Task 1 to predict upcoming linguistic information in both canonical and non-canonical word orders by matching what they hear to one of two action pictures. This task aims to determine whether English L1 Russian L2 learners rely more on word order (as in English) or case morphology (as in Russian) as a cue for sentence comprehension.

This study will provide insights into the acquisition of a variety of different cases and will contribute to the growing research on predictive processing in L2 learners.