

(New) Speakers in a multilingual Europe - Crossing boundaries and negotiating new spaces

Bernadette O'Rourke¹ and Joan Pujolar Cos²

Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, UK¹ and Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Spain²

In the field of applied linguistics and related strands, we have seen an extensive amount of writing and discussion amongst scholars around the theme of multilingualism and we have begun to see a paradigmatic shift in the way we now understand language itself and multilingual societies more generally. There now seems to be a very explicit attempt to move away from a monolithic approach to the study of 'languages' as bounded objects to more fine-grained approaches that focus on the socially and spatially situated nature of linguistic repertoires. In our network, we look at how 'new speakers' and processes of new speakerness fit into that broader discussion. We propose that using the 'new speaker' lens helps us move away from looking at language as the object of analysis to what it means for speakers themselves to use, adopt and become speakers of a language that is not their 'native' language, moving towards a sociolinguistics of the 'speaker'.

Bernie O'Rourke is Professor of Sociolinguistics in School of Social Sciences at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, Her research focuses on the role of language in the construction of social difference and social inequality. Drawing on theoretical frameworks and concepts in the area of sociolinguistics and the sociology of language in her work she has examined these processes as they unfold in bilingual and multilingual communities. She is Deputy Director of the Intercultural Research Centre and leads a research cluster on language planning and policy, language rights and language ideologies. She is Chair of COST Action IS1306 (2013-2017) *New Speakers in a Multilingual Europe: Opportunities and Challenges*.

Joan Pujolar (Olot, 1964) has degrees in Catalan Philology and in Anglogermanic Philology from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona; an MA in Language Studies and a PhD from the University of Lancaster (UK). He is associate professor of the Department of Arts and Humanities at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, where he is responsible for courses on Sociolinguistics, Applied Linguistics and Discourse Analysis. He is the director of the research group on "Language, culture and identity in the global era". His research focuses on how language use is mobilized in the construction of identities and its implications for access to symbolic and economic resources. He has conducted research on the use of Catalan amongst young people, immigrants and in the economic sector, as well as on multilingualism and gender. He now runs a research project on "new speakers" and the experience of people who ordinarily speak a language that is not their native one and is vice chair of the COST New Speakers network.

The effects of language and culture on verbal and non-verbal cognitive performance

Fofi Constantinidou

University of Cyprus, Center for Applied Neuroscience

The use of linguistically and culturally appropriate measures is an essential condition in order to properly assess the cognitive-linguistic abilities of children and adults. Research suggests that the linguistic structure of a given language may influence performance on cognitive and language tasks. Furthermore, cultural differences and variability in the education system can influence performance on tests that are influenced by western cultures and systems. Therefore, merely translating tests from one language to another is not an adequate approach to testing. In this presentation we present findings from a series of studies investigating cognitive-linguistic performance in English and Greek-Cypriot speakers. Our studies incorporated common clinical tools used to assess cognitive and language performance which were translated and adapted from English to Greek. It was hypothesized that native language would have an effect on certain measures that require fast processing time due to the differences in the linguistic structure between English and Greek. The presentation will conclude with implications for clinical testing, of native speakers and second language learners.

Professor Fofi Constantinidou is Director of the Center for Applied Neuroscience and Professor of Language Disorders and Clinical Neuropsychology and former Chair of Psychology at the University of Cyprus. Professor Constantinidou is a certified and licensed speech-language pathologist in the USA (ASHA) and Cyprus and a Certified Brain Injury Specialist (BIAA). Her research, teaching, and clinical expertise center on acquired adult neurological disorders and their effects on language, learning, memory, executive systems, and categorization. She has published extensively in this area and has received several grants (= 2m euros as PI) for her work, including funding for clinical trials research from the National Institutes of Health (USA), the Cyprus Research Promotion Foundation, and the European Union's Regional Development Fund and is a partner in large EU Horizon grants. Constantinidou is a member of various US, European and International organizations and has held several leadership positions. Currently, she is Chair of the International Networking Group of the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine and the first international member to be elected on the Board of Governors of the same organization. Constantinidou is the 2013 recipient of the Experienced Researcher Award of the Cyprus Research Promotion Foundation for her work on the Neurocognitive Study on Aging. She is Fellow of the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine (October 2014) and the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (November 2014) for her contributions to research, education, and service in rehabilitation sciences.

Performing 'linguaging': multilingual practices among youth and young children in Cyprus

Elena Ioannidou

University of Cyprus

Current trends in sociolinguistics and in a social theory of language point forward to the idea of language as performance (Bauman and Briggs 1990; Bauman 2002) and speakers as actors who often act against standards and norms in their language choice (Jørgensen 2008). Individual linguistic repertoires are composed by different linguistic varieties, registers, and languages. In this sense, speakers have at their disposal various linguistic choices from diverse systems and they make use of these, depending on their communicative aim, either in order to represent their world (ideational function) or to enact social roles (interpersonal function). The current presentation elaborates on the idea of language as performance and on the notion of “linguaging” drawing upon data from the following three research projects which explore language use in the Cypriot context: a). Preschool children using different varieties of the Greek language during play time at home (Ioannidou, forthcoming), b). Teenage girls describing their multilingual linguistic and literacy practices in out of school contexts (Shaili & Ioannidou 2016), c). A multilingual classroom in a private secondary school where the students and the teacher use different languages and different varieties as tools to act upon in classroom discourse (Christodoulou & Ioannidou 2015). In all three studies it becomes evident that young children and teenagers use language as a resource for meaning-making, representation and enactment, often mixing codes or “crossing” and mixing (Rampton 2006) different linguistic systems.

Dr Elena Ioannidou is an Assistant Professor in Language and Literacy Education and in Sociolinguistics at the Department of Education, University of Cyprus. Her research interests focus on the concept of a social theory of language, on language variation and on the interrelations of language and identity. In terms of language teaching her focus is on literacy as a social practice, genre-based education and multiliteracies and multimodality. Elena Ioannidou is an ethnographer, with a special interest in linguistic ethnography and discourse analysis as dynamic research tools. Her research projects have been funded by EU, Leventis foundation, the Ministry of Education of Cyprus and the University of Cyprus. She is a founding member of the Literacy Association of Cyprus and a board member of the Linguistic Society of Cyprus. Her work has been published in international journals (e.g. *Language and Education*, *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *Linguistics and Education*).

Constructing a Validity Argument: The Case of the Greek Language Test 'Milas Ellinika I' in Cyprus Schools

Yiasemina Karagiorgi and Alexandra Petridou

Centre for Educational Research and Evaluation, Pedagogical Institute, Cyprus

With increasing numbers of students with Greek as an Additional Language (GAL) in public primary schools over the past few years, the appropriate assessment of language competence of these students has emerged as a need within the Cyprus educational system. At the same time, appropriate diagnostic tests for the identification of these students' language proficiency levels remained scarce.

The diagnostic tests "Milas Ellinika I" (Parts A and B) addressed to pupils aged 7-11 were developed in Greece by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki to assess three levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (A1, A2, B1). However, the employment of these tests in another context (Cyprus) raised issues of validity. To address this concern, the Center for Educational Research and Evaluation proceeded with one a-posteriori validation study on the use of these tests in the Cypriot context. The study involved participation of 382 students from 17 schools from all the districts in Cyprus, who received remedial teaching in Greek language at the time of the study.

The process of operationalising validity in another setting involved two stages: the test results and the evidence on abilities they produced, as well as the empirical validation of the procedures by which the test judgments were reached through the collection of possible test-related evidence from multiple sources. In particular, validity evidence was collected in relation to four key elements of Weir's (2005) validation framework - namely, scoring validity, criterion-validity, context-validity and consequential validity- as well as on one additional dimension i.e. content-validity. Beyond the tests, student and teacher questionnaires were also employed to provide data on the dimensions explored within the particular framework. Data were analysed through various quantitative techniques, such as frequencies, chi-square-tests and Rasch models.

The validation results indicated that both tests could be confidently used for the identification of GAL students' language proficiency levels in Cyprus schools. Results also highlighted areas for minor adjustments/improvements. At the same time, the study confirmed that validity remains a multifaceted concept; various aspects need to be taken into consideration, while employing language tests in a context, other than the setting in which the testing instruments are originally developed.

Dr Yiasemina Karagiorgi is the Head of Educational Research and Evaluation (CERE) of the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture since September 2011. Yiasemina is a graduate of the Cyprus Pedagogical Academy, Boston University, the University of Texas at Austin and the University of London. She also works as a tutor for the University of London for the postgraduate programme in Applied Educational Leadership and Management. As the Head of the CERE, she is currently supervising international and national research programmes and evaluation studies for the Ministry of Education and Culture. Her research interests include the implementation of innovative projects, teachers' professional development and school leadership. Yiasemina has participated in several European projects and has published her work in various international educational journals.

Dr Alexandra Petridou works as a researcher at the Centre for Educational Research and Evaluation (CERE) of the Ministry of Education in Cyprus since 2007. She also worked as an adjunct faculty at Open University of Cyprus, teaching Research Methods in Education at a postgraduate level. She holds an MSc in Educational Research and a PhD in Educational Measurement from the University of Manchester, UK. After completing her PhD she received an ESRC Post-doctoral fellowship. Her work focuses on educational measurement, assessment and evaluation. She has published her work in a wide range of academic journals.

The case of Cyprus: a multilingual contradiction

Martha Neokleous

European Commission Representation in Cyprus,
Directorate-General for Translation Field Office in Nicosia

With 24 official languages and at least another 60 regional and minority languages, the EU constantly strives to develop strategies that promote language learning and linguistic diversity in order to give citizens more opportunities and strengthen cultural identities. The harmonious co-existence of so many languages in Europe symbolizes the EU's strong aspiration to be united in diversity: a cornerstone of the European project. To this end, the EU is working together with national governments to meet an ambitious goal: enabling citizens to communicate in two languages other than their own mother tongue (Barcelona objective 2002). Yet, as each Member State is responsible for its own educational and language policies, the expectations for a truly integrated language-diverse Europe are constantly being challenged. In the case of Cyprus, multilingualism and language learning present a particularly interesting contradiction, attributed for the most part to the conflicting language identities among Cypriots and the ever-changing education landscape in Cyprus with regard to the promotion and encouragement of language learning and the further evolvement of language-related fields, such as translation and interpretation. Against this backdrop, the presentation will describe the efforts and actions of the European Commission "on the ground" aimed toward shaping the profile of current and future "new speakers" in Cyprus.

Ms Martha Neokleous completed her undergraduate and graduate studies in Translation (Diplom Übersetzerin) at the University of Mainz in Germany, having specialized in the translation of medical and economic texts. Subsequently, she pursued an additional Master's degree in Conference Interpreting at the University of Leeds in the United Kingdom. Upon her return to Cyprus, she worked at the German Embassy as a translator/interpreter and afterwards as a freelancer, providing translation and interpretation services in the private and public sector for several years, until she was appointed to the position of Language Officer at the local Nicosia Field Office of the Directorate-General for Translation in the European Commission Representation in Cyprus. Apart from translation, her duties include the organization of events and activities on the topics of translation and/or interpretation, language learning and terminology. Ms Neokleous is the first translator of Cypriot nationality ever to be employed in the EU institutions.