

Workshop: - *New speakers in minority diasporic contexts: life trajectories and mudes*

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Universität Bremen, FB 10, AG Romanische Sprachwissenschaft

Event Report

Carolin Patzelt & Facundo Reyna Muniain

Aims

The goal of this meeting was to coordinate a cross-case analysis of new speaker profiles related to revitalisation projects in diaspora and migration contexts. The Workshop brought together young researchers from the UK, the Basque country, Germany and Switzerland and served as a starting point to develop a comparative framework within and across three multilingual communities: the Galician, the Basque and the Sephardic Community. Through an analysis of life trajectories and mudes (Pujolar and Gonzalez 2012; O'Rourke et.al. 2015), we seek to understand and discussed how new speakers within these three contexts manage their 'linguistic repertoire', and how they involve themselves in their respective 'communities of practice' or 'networks' (Blommaert 2011). We also focused on the role of family language policy in intergenerational transmission of heritage languages (Curdt-Christiansen 2009, 2014; Kasares, 2014). At this point we also discussed which kind of impact the language policies applied in the original homeland may have on the language policies of the families, taking into account that the three cases show quite distinct policy features. Another aspect of our cross-case study represents the influence of school in these processes, given that the role of education has been considered a crucial factor for minority language revitalisation (Hornberger, 2008; Manterola et al., 2013; Reyna Muniain 2013).

Themes and discussions

This event has contributed to explore how new speakers develop themselves as multilinguals in global and transnational contexts and spaces such as the diaspora. As planned, we adopted

a comparative perspective about the way the new speakers take part in the language networks and manage their linguistic repertoires.

Both language trajectories and spaces of language socialisation are critical research topics of the working group 8, so the discussions we had at the Workshop served to deepen these aspects. The cases analysed and the perspectives adopted in our discussions include experiences of language learning and becoming new speakers in (Basque / Galician) diaspora contexts in the United States and Argentina. As a crucial outcome of the discussions, we consider that a further cross-case analysis would certainly be useful to contrast the complexity of the integration and migration phenomena in Europe as well.

Conclusions and outcomes

This working meeting was, among other points, a great opportunity to share the knowledge and expertise on methodology and fieldwork experiences of three active members of the New Speakers network: Anik Nandi (Heriot-Watt University) presented recent findings concerning his research on the Galician context using ‘Ethnography of Family language policies’ (EFLP) as part of his doctoral research. Ibon Manterola of the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU) discussed the contribution of research about Basque new speakers and immersion education to the study of language learning and socialisation in diasporic contexts. Facundo Reyna Muniain provided a contrastive analysis of Galician and Basque diaspora in Argentina, referring to socialisation, life trajectories and mudes. The three presentations were complemented by three more talks focusing on the outcomes of language contact in diasporic situations: Carolina Spiegel (Bremen) presented her research on Judeo-Spanish in Turkey, Tabea Salzmänn (Bremen) on Latin American migrants in Germany and Víctor Fernández Mallat (Bern) on the question of indexicality of certain linguistic features in the Spanish of Bolivian migrants in Chile.

Apart from a comparison of different contact situations, a discussion on the definition of ‘newspeakerness’ in these different diasporic situations - as well as its applicability to language use in the diaspora in general - was a central point of discussion between the

participants. This aspect seems very important, since the concept of *newspeakerness* has been used to describe cases of revitalization of minority languages communities in present European contexts (O'Rourke - Ramallo 2015 / O'Rourke - Pujolar 2013), but has so far barely been applied to diaspora situations. Nevertheless, both globalization and superdiversity trends in urban contexts are likely to be highly productive in expanding the scope to other contexts such as South America or the United States.

Overall, the discussions regarding the role *newspeakers* play in diaspora contexts, as in the Galician community in Buenos Aires or the Basque in Boise, revealed strikingly similar patterns in many ways, an observation which encourages a more profound investigation.

We discovered many coincidences between language reversing shift and language revitalization in the home countries and in the diaspora regarding concepts related to New Speakers matters like family language policy, mudes, or trajectories. These led to a lively debate about the relevance and appropriateness of the term 'new speaker' in this context and it seems advisable to continue discussions about the different profiles of present speakers.

This event was an excellent opportunity to explore a wide range of approaches to the study of new speakers in diasporic contexts and to discover possible connections between research areas. In addition, this kind of event presents a great chance for PhD students working in the field of diasporic studies to start or deepen collaborations across universities and countries and make helpful new acquaintances in the frame of the Cost New Speakers program.

For instance, the workshop also allowed for progress on a joint article about the role of bilingual education based on the relationship between minority languages, ideologies and strategies of family language policies (FLP) in the context of the Galician and Basque diaspora and the forthcoming joint participation about Extended Family Language Policy (Nandi et al., 2015) in the Colloquium "Modes of 'new speakerness': Routes and trajectories of transmission in becoming a new speaker" at the 11th International Symposium on Bilingualism in Limerick.

We would like to thank the New Speakers Network for supporting this Workshop and making this valuable exchange of research ideas possible!