Language diversity is a feature of all contemporary differentiated societies around the globe. Due to migration, globalization and new communication technologies, individuals need to cope with and be able to use multiple languages in order to actively participate in the society. This symposium contextualizes the potential of multiliteracy throughout an individuals’ lifespan in multiple contexts (academia, education, home and workplace). For one, the symposium looks at the development and support of multiliteracy in the family, through the educational path, until integration in the work place. More specifically, the talks give insight into how families use digital media and how professionals in school deal and foster multiliteracy. Subsequently, as individuals get older, multilateral skills become an asset for professional success, also in academic settings.

Registration: https://uni-hamburg.zoom.us/meeting/register/u5coc-qrqTwqEthHUP31KoUv6Guj-U8_B9d
Gaining protection as a refugee requires asylum seekers to convince migration authorities that they and their claims are believable and trustworthy. Language is central to these processes, as asylum seekers often have very little to present as “proof” of their fears and experiences other than their story.

Migration departments emphasize their efforts to ensure fair processes by creating and citing policies and practices that seek to accommodate the linguistic and cultural diversity inherent in this setting. Yet, a closer look at the way asylum seekers’ credibility is assessed, and the broader social and political contexts in which these assessments occur, raises serious issues. This presentation shares findings from original research on credibility assessment in Australian asylum procedures. Examining credibility assessment guidelines, a collection of review decisions, and a court appeal, the research uses critical discourse analysis to identify problematic language ideologies, or “common sense” assumptions on which institutions rely. It draws on sociolinguistic scholarship to challenge these ideologies, and therefore to problematize the ways in which cultural and linguistic diversity is apparently accommodated in this setting.

In doing so, the research finds that the design and application of credibility assessments undermine fair participation in visa application processes, meaning that refugee protection may not be available to all those who need it. The study also demonstrates how drawing on sociolinguistic evidence and methods in legal settings such as this can help to uncover and challenge inequality and injustice that may otherwise remain invisible. The presentation closes by discussing the implications that the study’s findings have more broadly on how minority speakers and their linguistic performance are perceived in society.

*Friday, Dec. 10, 8:00 – 8:45 am*
Does the language of publication change research content?

English has undoubtedly become the global language of research and knowledge production. The consequences of English hegemony in academia have been discussed at length and there is widespread agreement that it creates advantages for researchers who are native speakers of English and/or based in Anglophone institutions. Less attention has been paid to the fact that language choice is not only about language and speakers but about content. I will show that the pressure to publish in English privileges particular types of knowledge — knowledge that is conceptualized in the Anglophone tradition, that is abstracted away from the local context, and that is globally legible. I will illustrate my argument with examples from multilingualism research.

Suggested readings:
You've got to keep above the water not to drown: The translingual journey of a multilingual scholar's academic publishing practices

In response to pressures for greater accountability in higher education around the world, there has been a rise in the development and use of codified ‘evaluation regimes’ (Curry & Lillis, 2017), which increasingly use bibliometrics that involve English-dominating key journal indexes such as the Web of Science. Within this mechanism, researchers’ ability to publish in English has become the key ‘symbolic capital’ (Englander & Uzuner-Smith, 2013) to gain promotion, access funding opportunities and guarantee tenure positions.

In this presentation, we intend to share the autoethnographic accounts of the first presenter, who is a Chinese scholar specialized in Japanese language teaching, and who managed to mobilize three languages (Chinese, Japanese, English) to conduct applied linguistic research from 2009 and 2020. We will discuss the use of first-person diaries and reflective accounts as well as co-constructed interpretations of these autoethnographic accounts to identify the key stages of her struggle to incorporate multiple languages into academic research. The findings uncovered the constant interplay of researcher’s own purposefulness, the research spaces and research networks when multilingual scholars navigate the possibilities and complexities of writing for research publications in a challenging environment. This presentation intends to demonstrate the potential of using autoethnographic accounts of individual scholars’ life-long process of language shift. By sharing the findings, we intend to show how this method enables researchers to identify the critical incidents in an individual’s experience and to reveal the subjectivity and interpretive complexity involved in the translingual practices for research publication.
How does language diversity affect access to the workplace? In this paper, I will not simply reflect on access to work but also within work because the two are intimately related. To highlight the implications of language diversity for both, I will examine examples from my historical research on migrant railway employment and employees from the 1950s to the 1980s and the management strategies that sought to address problems associated with language diversity in the workplace. By exposing issues raised by different styles of communication and responses to English language classes, this case indicates the importance of work and occupational context and of verbal forms of communication for work. On this basis, I will briefly examine responses to questions about approaches to English language teaching and learning from the Australian Government’s Building a New Life in Australia survey of Humanitarian Migrants conducted from 2013 until 2018. The paper will conclude with attention to ongoing concerns about the orientation of programs designed to provide access to work for those from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Friday, Dec. 10, 11:15 – 12:15 am
Session 2 “Access to the work place”
Multiple languages and their return on the labor market

In this talk, we address the labor market consequences of bilingual upbringing. We first discuss the theoretical implications from both economics and sociology and related empirical literature. Then, we present first findings from own research, where we compare the earnings of monolingual and competent bilingual immigrants in Germany. We define competent bilingualism as fluency in both German and the heritage language, while monolinguals speak only German. We expect heterogeneous returns to bilingualism depending on the respective role of language skills as human capital or as a trigger of ethnic marginalization. With data of the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) for the years 2007 to 2018, we find no or small negative effects of self-reported bilingualism on earnings when averaging across all immigrant groups, but positive effects for the largest immigrant community in Germany, the Turkish population. We then investigate with data from the two LevelOne studies (LEO) from 2010 and 2018, whether the effect holds when competent bilingualism is derived from validated competence measures instead and compare the findings of both data sets.
Coping with the dynamics of language and inequality in a primary school in Germany

In this presentation, I will discuss the dynamics of language and inequality in education through the presentation of data collected by means of an on-going ethnographic research in a primary school in Hamburg. More precisely, I will present how the school actors, particularly teachers, educators and families, work together to cope with linguistic and intercultural challenges. Data presented will include vignettes created by the researcher during school visits, photos of the schoolscape, and interactions obtained via focus group interviews with the families and via individual interviews with teachers and educators. All the participants agree on the importance of knowing the majority language to empower families and students and to increase their participation in schooling life, but they also unanimously see inequality as embedded in the intersection of housing/neighborhood, race, religion, gender, and educational past experiences, among other social aspects.

Saturday, Dec. 11, 12:00 – 1:00 Pm
Session 1 “Empowering vulnerable groups in education”
Translanguaging as a pedagogy of empowerment: insight from a composition course for bilingual Latinxs in a US university

This talk engages with translanguaging as a pedagogy of empowerment and its implications for educators working with (and for) language-minoritized students. US bilingual Latinxs often describe having endured episodes of linguistic violence, oppression and stigmatization, as people in power problematize their legitimacy as rightful speakers, their belonging as community members, and their profiles as language learners. Recognizing this, the field of heritage language education emerged through pedagogical proposals that, instead, seek to support them, their histories and their communities. In this presentation, I describe a composition course specifically designed for 'heritage/native' speakers of Spanish, with special attention to how multilingualism, multimodality and multiliteracies interact to provide a space for empowerment and resistance. At the heart of my proposal is translanguaging as a theory-practice. The talk will begin with a brief overview of heritage language education through a translanguaging lens; then, I will share the curricular structure of the course as a translanguaging space while highlighting pedagogical aspects/assignments that seek to promote empowerment. In the second part of the talk, I will discuss translingual segments from three data sets (a digital collage project, a digital story project, and a podcast project) which capture the nexus between translanguaging and empowerment in this context.

Saturday, Dec. 11, 12:00 – 1:00 Pm
Session 1 “Empowering vulnerable groups in education”
Yes, they can! Development of multiliteracy in secondary education

About one third of pupils in Germany has a migrant background. A major part of these lives bi- or multilingual, because the families maintain their heritage languages. But only less than 10 per cent of them have the chance to receive heritage language tuition in the German education system. In family language practice, the heritage languages are usually used orally. In order to achieve extensive language competence, it is necessary to have access to writing not only in the majority language, but as well in the heritage language. In a current research project, we have pursued the question if migrant pupils in Germany have the chance to develop multiliterate competences despite the very limited official teaching of heritage languages on offer. In my talk, I will present our findings. For information on the study we carried out, please have a look at https://www.mez.uni-hamburg.de/en.html

Saturday, Dec. 11, 1:00 – 2:00 Pm
Session 2 “Multilingual potential across the life span”
This talk discusses implications of digital connectivity for the use, maintenance and development of multilingual repertoires, drawing on findings of a multi-sited ethnographic study of digital language and literacy practices of four Senegalese-heritage families in Norway (Androutsopoulos & Lexander 2021, Lexander & Androutsopoulos 2021). Our adult and adolescent informants use a variety of digital media to engage with family members and friends, in Senegal and elsewhere in the world, thereby drawing on rich linguistic repertoires. To make sense of their language and media practices, the study adapted the notion of polycentricity, originally coined to study multilingualism in urban neighborhoods (Blommaert et al. 2005), to the conditions of mediated communication. A sociolinguistic and discourse analysis of message threads, social media profiles, and interviews with family members leads to identifying four ‘centres’, in which particular language choices are associated with distinct discourses, genres, and imagery. These findings illustrate the impact of digital connectivity on multilingual practices and the value of multilingual resources for transnational participation and community-building in a digitally interconnected world.
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**Coordination:**
The network is coordinated by Universität Hamburg (Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Ingrid Gogolin, Prof. Dr. Silvia Melo-Pfeifer), Macquarie University Sydney (Prof. Dr. Ingrid Piller) and Fudan University Shanghai (Prof. Dr. Yongyan Zheng).

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