

# Languages in contact

*New challenges for planning and policies*

Conference

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# Introduction

## Languages in contact: new challenges for planning and policies

The Friuli Venezia Giulia (Friulian: Friûl–Vignesie Julie, Slovene: Furlanija – Julijska krajina, German: Friaul–Julisch Venetien) is one of the 20 regions of Italy, and one of the five autonomous regions with special statute because of its multiethnic sociocultural context. Friuli Venezia Giulia is Italy's north-easternmost region bordering with Austria, Slovenia and the Adriatic sea.

Despite of the multicultural history and the current cultural landscape of the region, Italian is the only official language; the autochthonous regional and national minority languages (such as Friulan, Slovenian and German) are widespread in certain areas, but they enjoy different rights and have at least partly different statuses in terms of official recognition, services, and perceptions. In addition, a multitude of other languages have been introduced by different communities that have moved here over the centuries (Croatian, Serbs, Greeks, Jews, and many others).

On the other hand, the proximity and the coexistence of different languages from at least three different groups (Italic, Germanic, and Slavic) have generated various communication habits and practices among speakers and a wide range of language phenomena, such as code mixing and switching, convergence, hybridisation, relexification, compensation strategies, and others. Moreover, this complexity of uses has led to a very dynamic and diversified sociolinguistic picture.

This picture is replicated beyond regional and national borders: on the Slovenian coast, a large Italian community is settled and the region is officially recognised as bilingual. However, in spite of their different

official statuses, both minority languages (the Slovenian language in Italy and the Italian in Slovenia) and both communities of speakers show trends such as language attrition, shift and secessionism.

The aim of this conference is to show some language contact phenomena among minorities and/or border communities in the region and, more generally, in Europe. In particular, we will discuss topics such as:

- everyday language practices among speakers in “contact areas”, their communication, and compensations strategies (code switching, code mixing, hybridisation, calques, borrowings ...);
- formal analysis of language contact phenomena (phonology, morphology, syntax structures ...);
- consequences and challenges: language loss or obsolescence; parallel standard, language secessionism, new koiné; status change (“minority language” -> “heritage language”) ...
- the exposure to different uses, registers, and lects of the minority language continuum as a possible key factor of a successful language policy;
- the contact phenomena in language education and training programmes.

The Open World Research Initiative is a major project funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). Cross-Language Dynamics: Reshaping Community is one of four consortia connecting universities and organisations across the UK and internationally. The CLD:RC consortium is led by the University of Manchester in collaboration with Durham University and the Institute of Modern Languages Research (IMLR) at the School of Advanced Study.

The aim of the AHRC's investment in its priority area of modern languages is to demonstrate the central role that languages play in relation to key contemporary issues such as social cohesion, migration, and diplomacy, and to have a substantial impact on the study of modern languages in the UK.

The Institute of Modern Languages Research at the School of Advanced Study (SAS) focuses on Translingual Communities.

### **Translingual Communities**

The SAS- and IMLR-led Translingual Communities strand explores how translingual communities transcend perceived language barriers by negotiating across and between languages and by maximising the community-creating potential of translanguaging, translation, multimodal communication and non-verbal or semi-verbal forms (music, visual culture, social media, digital humanities). SAS and IMLR researchers will question the importance of language in community formation with emphasis on translingual modernities, translingual minorities, translingual music and translingual networks. They will work in collaboration with several universities in the UK and abroad,

as well as with non-academic organisations, notably the Royal Opera House and the British Library. The Translingual Communities research strand is led by Professor Catherine Davies, Director of the Institute of Modern Languages Research, with subproject researchers Professor Jane Winters (SAS), Dr Naomi Wells (IMLR), Dr Godela Weiss-Sussex (IMLR), Dr Katia Pizzi (IMLR), Dr Paul Archbold (IMLR), Professor Margaret Littler (Manchester), Professor Philip Grange (Manchester), Dr Qing Cao (Durham) and Professor Luis Pérez-González (Manchester).



## ABOUT SLORI

### SLOVENE RESEARCH INSTITUTE



SLORI is a Slovenian organisation in Italy that professionally engages in research since 1974. The institute was founded and developed as an important centre of scientific and intellectual discussion, whilst its programmatic orientation is based on promoting research activities focused on questions related to the cultural, social and spatial development of the Slovenian community in Italy, as well as on its connection with the Italian majority, with that of the homeland Slovenia and with the wider international context.

The research activities of Slori range from pure to applied research in the fields of ethnic studies, minority questions and development processes of cross-border areas. Researchers are experts in the following fields: sociology, linguistics, psychology, pedagogy, geography, political studies and economics. Our research projects are based on the study of theoretical and empirical findings connected to the Slovenian national question and to the coexistence in multiethnic and multilingual societies. Particular attention is given to the monitoring and comprehension of the social and cultural environment of the Slovenian national community in Italy.

Along with the development of the European integration processes, in particular after the entrance of Slovenia into the EU, Slori strengthened its traditional mediation role between the Slovenia and Italy. By promoting several cross-border projects, it established a tight network of collaborations with both the Slovenian and Italian research community, as well as with organisations of other minority communities on both sides of the border. Slori promotes a similar

approach also on the local level, where it stimulates dialogue and collaboration with public administrations, universities and other institutions so as to put into practice the principle of positive integration with the majority environment, which is based on mutual communication, on mutual exchange and collaboration.

# Programme

**8.30-9.00: Registration**

**9.00: Welcome speeches**

**9.30-11.00: PART 1**

**9.30-10.00:** Janice Carruthers: *Language and Identity. Multi-ethnolects and minoritised languages in France and Ireland.*

**10.00-10.30:** Christian Voss: *Language planning and revitalisation among Slavic-speaking minorities in Greek Macedonia and Greek Thrace. Lessons to be learned?*

**10.30-11.00:** Discussion

**11.00-11.30: Coffee break**

**11.30-13.30: PART 2**

**11.30-12.00:** Fabiana Fusco: *Plurilingualism and contact in Friuli Venezia Giulia*

**12.00-12.30:** Franc Marušič & Rok Žaucer: *Contact-induced change in Slovenian modality*

**12.30-13.00:** Matejka Grgič: *Terminology in contact: how translation shapes the linguistic landscape*

**13.00-13.45:** Discussion/Conclusions

**13.45-14.30: Lunch**



# Abstracts



Janice Carruthers

## Language and Identity. Multi-ethnolects and minoritised languages in France and Ireland.

This paper will draw on the Queen's University strand of the AHRC-funded MEITS project, 'Multilingualism: Empowering Individuals, Transforming Societies' ([www.meits.org](http://www.meits.org)). The strand focuses on the relationship between language and identity in contexts where languages are in contact and where issues around national, political and local identity are complex. In the case of France, a country with a strong sense of a national 'standard' language, the paper will discuss language and identity in the multi-ethnolects that have developed in urban areas where a range of community languages are spoken. The paper will also touch on the question of minoritised regional languages, problematizing in particular some of the distinctions currently made between 'traditional' and 'new' varieties of Breton. Finally, I will discuss recent political and social ramifications around language and identity in Northern Ireland, a community emerging from conflict, where the Irish language has been at the centre of recent political debate.

Christian Voss

## Language planning and revitalisation among Slavic-speaking minorities in Greek Macedonia and Greek Thrace. Lessons to be learned?

My paper explores the revitalisation attempts of Slavic varieties along the Greek-South Slavic borders after the fall of the Iron Curtain.

Based on fieldwork carried out in the region between 2000 and 2016, it compares the situation of the local Slavic-speaking population in Greek Macedonia with the so-called Pomaks (Bulgarian-speaking Muslims) in Western Thrace.

Both regions have been cut through the state border since the 1910s and have been isolated from the standard language to the north of the border. As a consequence of repressive assimilation and/or discrimination both „roofless“ varieties today are threatened by language death. In both regions, the liberalisation since the 1990s has given floor to ethnic activism and/or regionalism and to various codification attempts that mostly are rejected by the community itself.

Additionally, the reopened border in the Macedonian case allows intense small border traffic, a revival movement and linguistic advergence towards the Macedonian standard. In the Pomak region, however, a cross-border cohesion to Bulgaria and/or to the Bulgarian Pomaks is not taking place – despite EU cohesion policy, e.g. the Pan-European Corridor Nr. 9 combining Bulgarian and Greek Pomak regions. As a consequence of the Greek-Turkish bilateral minority policy during Cold War, the Pomaks have been subject to Turkification



and continue a historical conflation of Islam and Turkdom in the Balkans.

On the basis of these two case studies, the paper reflects the relationship of codification attempts and language loyalty among linguistic minorities with special emphasis on border minorities and their cultural and linguistic resources.

Fabiana Fusco

## Plurilingualism and contact in Friuli Venezia Giulia

The use of Friulian, also in official contexts, has always been an outstanding cultural and social issue which has raised very strong feelings both in favour as well against it. This paper presents and discuss plurilingualism and contact in Friuli Venezia Giulia, especially focusing on the relations among the Friulian language and the other historical minorities (such as the Slovene and the German idioms) e the 'new' minorities (the so-called immigrant languages). It is also important describe the contact between the Friulian language and the official language, that means Italian. The sociolinguistic reality is in fact interesting, because the two languages are not always in opposition: concerning this aspect we intend discuss some of the results published in a sociolinguistic research promoted by the ARLeF (*Agjenzie regionâl pe lenghe furlane - Agenzia regionale per la lingua friulana - Regional agency for the Friulian language*).

## Franc Marušič & Rok Žaucer

### Contact-induced change in Slovenian modality

Slovenian stands out among Slavic languages (with Russian) in having a modal specialized for impossibility, (1a,2a), and more generally, in exhibiting a typologically rare pattern where possibility expressed with a modal adverb combines with a finite verb rather than an infinitival or 'that'-clause complement, (1b) (Hansen 2005, Olmen/Auwers 2016).

- |     |    |   |    |   |                    |
|-----|----|---|----|---|--------------------|
| (1) | a. | Ne morem iti v kino.<br>not can1SG goINF in cinema<br>'I can't go to the cinema.' | b. | Lahko grem v kino.<br>easily go1SG in cinema<br>'I can go to the cinema.' | (Hansen 2005)      |
| (2) | a. | *Morem iti v kino.<br>can1SG goINF in cinema                                      | b. | *Ne lahko grem v kino.<br>not easily go1SG in cinema                      | ((2b) Hansen 2005) |

Hansen (2005) claims the modal use of *lahko* is initially due to contact with German, through *vielleicht* (=much.lightly) 'maybe'. We will trace the history of the pattern in (1-2) from i) a stage which only had the modal auxiliary for both possibility and impossibility, ii) a stage which had a modal auxiliary cooccurring with a bleached manner adverb *lahko*, iii) the current stage with the distribution in (1-2) (Marušič/Žaucer 2016). We will argue that whereas contact with German is a likely factor in the emergence of (1b), it is as a facilitator rather than direct source, and via doublings such as *können leicht* (=can easily) 'may well' rather than *vielleicht*. We explain the complementary distribution of *lahko* and the modal auxiliary in (1-2) through the nature of the negator *ne* (Ilc/Sheppard 2003), of *lahko*, the verb

and their relative hierarchical positions, which conspire against lahko generalizing to negated sentences. Further, we will discuss a western dialect where, partly contrary to (2b), lahko also occurs under negation, explaining it as a result of an Italian/Friulian contact-induced change – introduction of a high use of negator ne.

Matejka Grgič

## Terminology in contact: how translation shapes the linguistic landscape

When we speak about terminology, we speak about the (only?) highly standardized and codified use of language: in terminology, variation, change, and diversification are supposed to be avoided or, at least, restricted. However, in contact areas the varieties are common and have a specific social or cultural impact.

The terminology used for special purposes, such as public administration, law, banking, insurances, and management, is actually also part of our everyday life. In fact, it shapes our linguistic landscape: signboards, indications, banners, brands, labels, tickets are some of the most common places where terminology is prevailing. Furthermore, terminology patterns our world in terms of common knowledge, beliefs and perceptions.

In this sense, terminology establishes the (perceived) communities of speakers: until its use is consistent, we perceive a group of speakers as a community “living” in the same language continuum and sharing

the same knowledge, beliefs and perceptions.

As soon as the speakers start to set different standards in their every-day terminology, they start also shaping a different group, a different network, and, finally, a different (micro) community. My paper investigates the results of these processes, especially in an area of language contact where a dominant and a recessive (minority) language converge.

## The authors

**Janice Carruthers** is Professor of French Linguistics at Queen's University, Belfast and Leadership Fellow for Modern Languages with the Arts and Humanities Research Council. She is also a strand lead on the AHRC MEITS project on Multilingualism (meits.org) and PI on a Marie Curie project on Occitan. Her publications and research interests are in sociolinguistics, oral discourse, temporality, corpus linguistics and language policy.

**Christian Voß** since 2006 Professor and Head of the Department for South Slavic Studies at Humboldt University in Berlin. From 2008 until 2016 he served as Vice-Dean for Research at the Faculty of Arts there. His research addresses the interface of sociolinguistics, historiography and anthropology and focuses the South Slavic-Greek border region; he is Principal Investigator in several projects.

He has extensively published on socio- and contact linguistics in the Balkans, especially on language decay and revitalization of Slavic varieties in Northern Greece. Since 2016, he is supervisor of the emerging Competence Network „Liberal Arts in the Western Balkans“ bringing together the Universities of Montenegro, Kragujevac, Belgrade, Sarajevo, Prishtina and Tirana (supported by ERASMUS+/DAAD).

**Matejka Grgič** studied philosophy and Slovenian language at the University of Trieste. After graduating in 1997, she obtained a PhD at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana. She has been a young researcher, assistant, lecturer and professor in the field of linguistic studies, collaborating with several universities in Slovenia and Italy. She is moreover a translator, conference interpreter and editor. From 2008 to 2016 she used to be the scientific director of the Slovenian

education consortium Slovik; since 2016 she has been working as a researcher at the Slovenian Research Institute in Italy.

**Fabiana Fusco** is Professor of Linguistics at the University of Udine, where she holds courses on General Linguistics, Educational Linguistics and Translation Studies. She studied at the University of Udine, Zürich and Graz. She has specialized in languages in contact, especially focusing on the relations between the Italian language and other European languages (“Che cos’è l’interlinguistica”, Roma, Carocci 2008). Her main areas of research include plurilingualism in Friuli, plurilingual education and sociolinguistic aspects of migration. On these topics, she has recently published “Le lingue della città. Plurilinguismo e immigrazione”, Roma, Carocci 2017).

**Franc Marušič** is an associate professor of Linguistics at the University of Nova Gorica. His main area of interest is syntax, more specifically Slovenian syntax, Experimental syntax, Agreement phenomena, and DP syntax. He has published also in the area of language acquisition and morphosyntax. He was also a team member of the [www.jesv.eu](http://www.jesv.eu) language consultancy which focused on Slovenian-Italian language contact phenomena.

**Rok Žaucer** is an assistant professor of Linguistics and head of the Center for Cognitive Science of Language at the University of Nova Gorica. His main areas of interest are syntax and morphosyntax, more specifically Slovenian syntax, Slavic prefixes, the expression of Aspect, and DP syntax. He has published also in the area of language acquisition. He was also a team member of the [www.jesv.eu](http://www.jesv.eu) language consultancy which focused on Slovenian-Italian language contact phenomena.