

Ringvorlesung des FRIAS Forschungsschwerpunkts *Diversity in Language and Cognition*

Thu 2-4 ct

online

<https://uni-freiburg.zoom.us/j/68852945350?pwd=MkVlaDVqa1BaUTc5UDDqeVJoZHI2dz09>

Meeting-ID: 688 5294 5350

Password: Div+LC/21

Date	Topic	Speaker
Oct 21	<i>Diversity in Language and Cognition: Introduction to the FRIAS Research Focus and the Lecture Series</i>	Prof. Evelyn Ferstl, Prof. Anelis Kaiser, Prof. Alice Blumethal-Dramé, Prof. Adriana Hanulíková University of Freiburg
Oct 28	“Individual differences in first language acquisition”	Prof. Evan Kidd The Australian National University, Canberra & Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen
Nov 11	"Intersectionality as a sensitizing concept. Dealing with classifications in social and life sciences"	Prof. Nina Degele & Dr. Andrea zur Nieden University of Freiburg
Dec 9	“Diversity in language: Impressions based on accent and ethnic appearance”	Dr. Karolina Hansen University of Warsaw
Jan 20	“Stereotypes may help you when listening to speech”	Prof. Holger Mitterer University of Malta
Feb 3	“How individuals’ social networks shape their linguistic abilities”	Prof. Shiri Lev-Ari Royal Holloway, University of London
Feb 10	“Beyond WISPy languages and Native Speakers: What transcending disciplinary boundaries can do for psycholinguistics”	Prof. Savithry Nambodiripad University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Abstracts

Evan Kidd: Inter-individual variation is pervasive in human cognition, including language. In this talk I discuss individual differences in first language acquisition, including its sources and consequences. Drawing upon data from several longitudinal studies tracking variability in young children, I show that variation is detectable early, has multiple likely sources, and endures throughout childhood.

Nina Degele & Andrea zur Nieden: Instead of merely summarising the effects of one, two or three oppressive categories, the concept of intersectionality, coined in the 1990s, emphasizes the interwoven nature of categories such as gender, class, race or sexuality and how they can mutually strengthen and weaken each other. Against this background, we will introduce the historical and theoretical background of this concept, discuss methodological challenges, and present some empirical findings. In the second part, Andrea zur Nieden from the research group SoSciBio will critically discuss their findings how human diversity is operationalised in the life sciences along the categories race/ethnicity/migration background in different national contexts (US and Germany).

Karolina Hansen: On the one hand most research on ethnicity in social psychology, as well as in neuroscience, has focused on visual cues. On the other hand, a lot of linguistic research has studied the influence of foreign-accented speech omitting visual cues. In my talk I will show that accents are strong markers of ethnicity and influence social categorization, evaluations, and even brain reactions to others. I will do it on a basis of experiments conducted in Germany, where participants evaluated Turkish-origins and native German job candidates. Varying their accent and facial appearance evoked surprise and caused interesting reactions.

Holger Mitterer: Research over the last decades has shown how powerful statistical learning is and how the brain makes use of every co-variation that exists in language (Hagoort & Van Berkum, 2007, Hanulíková et al., 2012). We investigated how probabilistic aspects related to speakers' group identity (in particular, age and gender) influence language processing using eye-tracking in the Semitic language Maltese, exploiting the fact that many verb roots carry multiple meanings which differentially associated with different types of speakers, with distinctions by age and gender. Results show that speaker-identity influenced speech processing when the speaker identity was established before hearing the critical verb. It remains an open problem whether such results reflect potentially harmful sexist or ageist stereotypes or simply statistical learning.

Shiri Lev-Ari: Language is learned and used in social circumstances. Yet individuals' social environments differ. This talk will take a social network perspective to language and review how differences in individuals' social networks (e.g., their size) can influence individuals' ability to understand others or to communicate to them. It will thus demonstrate how aspects of our social environment shape our linguistic abilities.

Savithry Namboodiripad: In this talk, I discuss three interrelated strands of my research: Psycholinguistic methods designed to include more languages/varieties and participants (e.g. Sedarous & Namboodiripad 2020), the problematic concept of "native speaker" (e.g. Cheng et al. 2021), and inclusion in linguistics (e.g. Namboodiripad, Occhino, & Hou 2019). I argue that these issues must be addressed in order to work toward answering central questions in psycholinguistics, in particular, how language experience influences language processing.